

becoming a woman, she said that it was time for me to wear the veil, the white piece of cotton or silk that women wore then in Algeria. My grandmother's argument struck me at the time for its bluntness. A woman should hide her ugliness or her beauty. That's the way it should be. You must protect yourself! She said, to my dismay.

White (2006) writes a statistical survey in his book, that

American Muslim women are economically much better than their European counterparts, who have been traditionally relegated to the lowest level of the workforce. European countries brought in low-skilled Muslim ladies to do job.

Kidwai (2007) says, that

Most Muslim women wearing a Hijab say they have been harassed in some way, usually with foul language.

If we read the Holy Quran, if find that before mentioning of the *Hijab* for women, the Quran mentioned the *Hijab*, for the man. It is mentioned in Surah Nur, Ch. No. 24, Verse No. 30, it says to the believing man, that

He should lower his gaze and guard his modesty.

It was reported in the news paper about the raising trend of *Hijab* in Pakistan, that

With the invading western culture in our society, the Islamic culture and obligation motivation among the Muslim people has witnessed a positive change. At one place where the western norms and culture have become part of our daily lives, on the other side there has been a rise in trend of observing Hijab, Abaya among Muslim women. Gradually women of all age group, working in various professions, may they be nurses, lawyers, teachers, girls students, office going ladies, mostly are seen with veil.

Guindi (1999) says that

The increasing awareness among women of the religious obligation is a hurdle to the western following people locally. Part of this positive change can be attributed to the humiliation and the ill attitude shown by the western countries over the practice of religion.

Caner (2003) writes that

Since Muslim women are more conspicuous because of their appearance, it is easier for people to associate them with the warped images they see in the print and broadcast media. Hence, stereotypes are perpetuated and Muslim women often seem mysterious to those not acquainted with the religious meaning hijab. This aura of mystery cannot be removed until their lifestyles, beliefs and thought-systems are genuinely explored. And this cannot be achieved until one is not afraid respectfully to approach Muslim women or men for matter. So, the next time you see a Muslim, stop and talk to them.

Bano (2012) writes that

The veil is the prestige and honors of every woman and it also a protection of ethical norms. The veil is a right and identity of the Muslim women of entire Muslim World struggling for their due rights.

The Deputy Secretary JI Women Wing Durdana Siddiqui during a press conference held on World Women Veil Day on August 30, 2013 said that

The different programs would be arranged on World Women Veil Day in order to foster the importance of veil among Muslim women. She welcomed the increasing trend of veil in new

generation, who are living in western countries and cover their faces according to the Islamic rules.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The quotes of the different writers indicate or this is a common statement or rumor everywhere that Muslims women are forced to wear veil and are not allowed to come out from their houses without veil. This is also claimed that forcing someone to do against his/her will is the violation of human rights, as women using veil feel discomfort.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Following research questions were raised to solve the problem:

1. What is the response of Muslim women toward the use of veil?
2. Do the Muslims women using veil face any kind of problem/discrimination?

METHODOLOGY

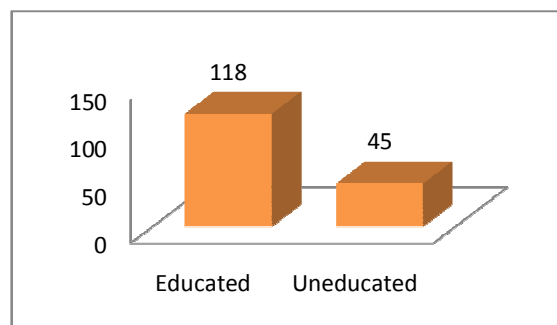
Mixed approach was used; during the research both qualitative as well as quantitative methods were used to analyze the study. The research was based on descriptive study because it describes the feelings of women and effects of veil on their personalities. The population of the study was Muslim women living in Karachi used to come out from their houses veiled or unveiled

Procedure

Both educated/uneducated and veiled/unveiled women were asked to fill the tailor-made questionnaire consisting closed-ended and open-ended questions and the questionnaire of uneducated ladies was filled by the researcher or by the trained representatives by interviewing. The instrument was served to 150 women 108 veiled and 42 unveiled. The demographic detail of the respondents is as under:

Table 1. Demographic detail of the respondents

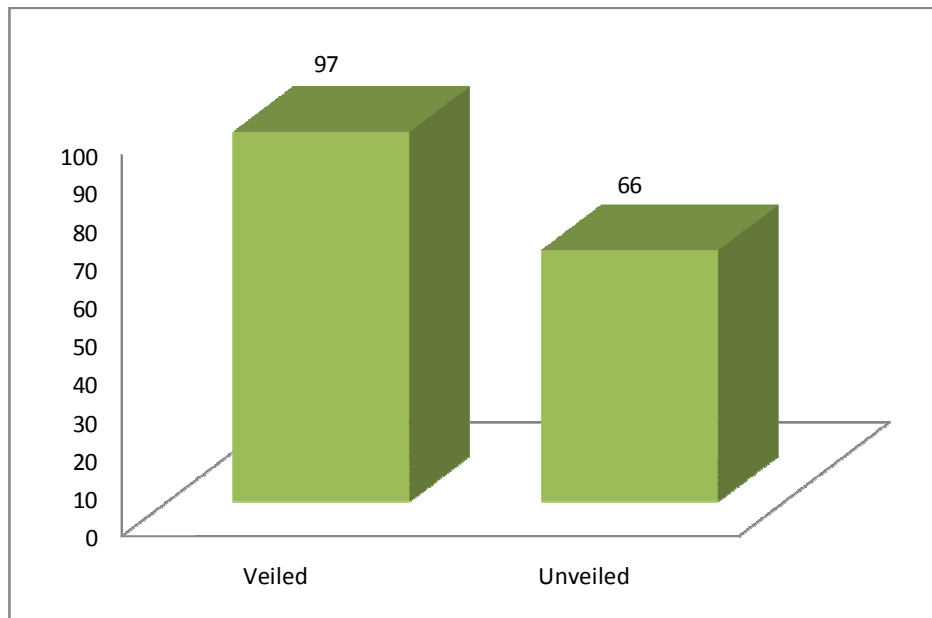
<i>S No.</i>	<i>Specification</i>	<i>No of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1.	Educated	118	72.39%
2.	Uneducated	45	27.61%
	Total	163	100%



In the present research more willingly educated women participated, as educated ladies were more confident in filling the questionnaire and giving proper/relevant answer to the asked questions.

Table 2. Veiled and unveiled participants

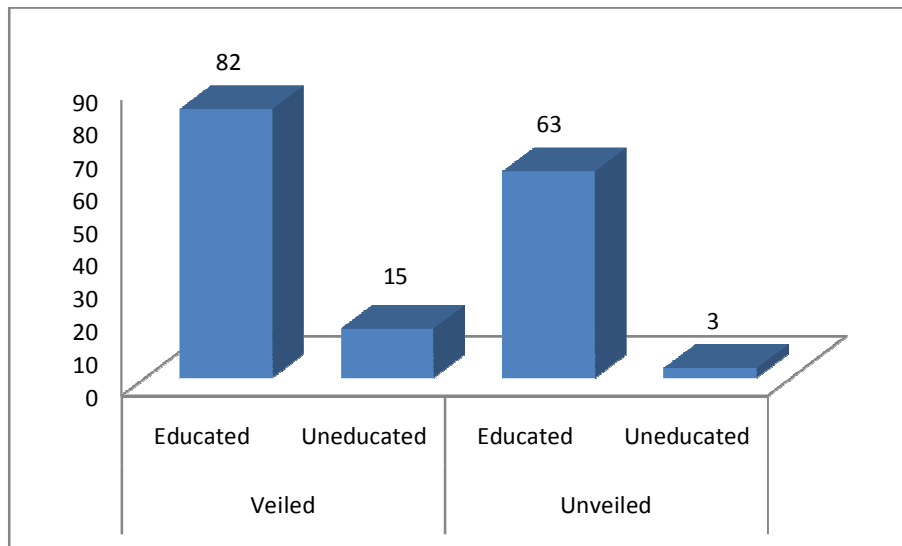
<i>S No.</i>	<i>Specification</i>	<i>No of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1.	Veiled	97	59.50%
2.	Unveiled	66	40.49%
	Total	163	100%



The researcher intentionally focused to get point of view from the veiled women, therefore in the collected data more veiled women participated than the unveiled.

Table 3. Participation of educated and uneducated women

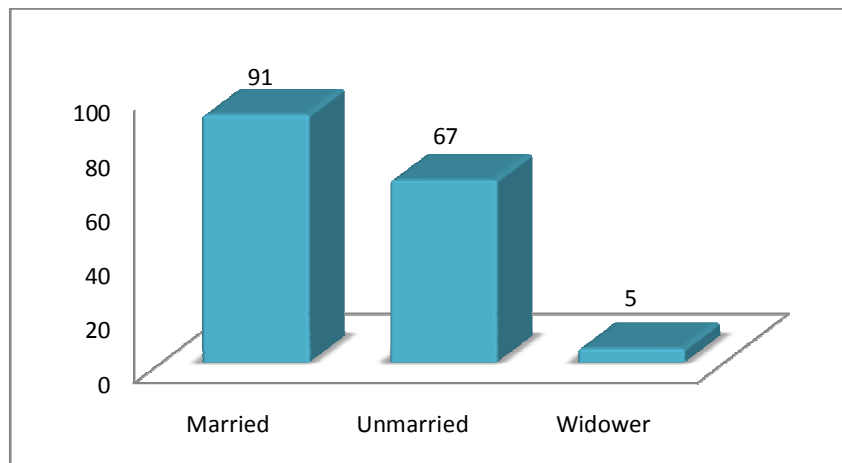
<i>S No.</i>	<i>Specification</i>	<i>No of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	
1.	Veiled	Educated	82	84.53%
		Uneducated	15	15.46%
2.	Unveiled	Educated	63	95.45%
		Uneducated	03	4.55%
	Total		163	100%



The above collected data reveals that majority of veiled women (84.53%) were educated, which indicates that educated women have knowledge about religious obligations and also understand their rights as well as limits. While on the other hand most (95.45%) of the unveiled women in Metropolitan city like Karachi is educated.

Table 4. Maternal status of participants women

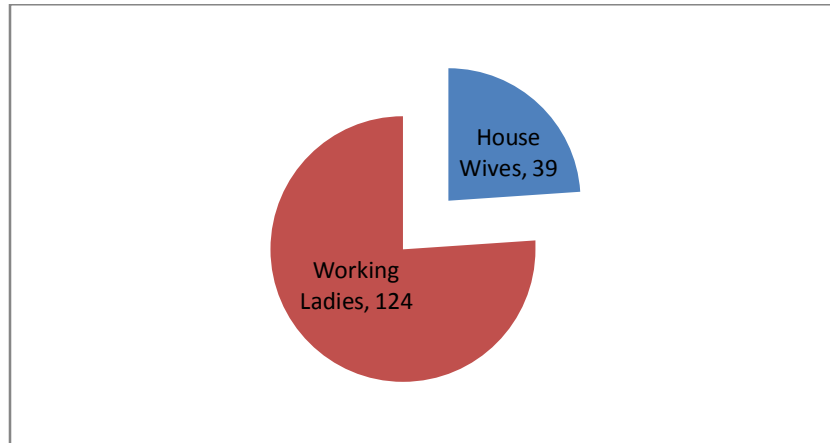
S No.	Specification	No of Participants	Percentage
1.	Married	91	55.82%
2.	Unmarried	67	41.10%
3.	Widower	05	03.06%
	Total	163	100%



The collected data reveals that majority of the respondents were married, who willingly participated in the research.

Table 5. Status of profession of participants

<i>S No.</i>	<i>Specification</i>	<i>No of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1.	House Wife	39	23.39%
2.	Working Lady	124	76.07%
	Total	163	100%

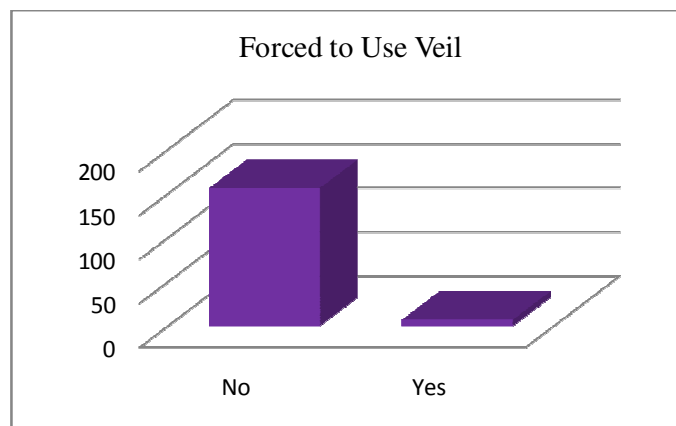


It is revealed from the data that most (76.07%) the participants who took part in the present study were working women.

Out 163, 97 were veiled women and in response to the first and second asked questions, large majority of women used the option ‘no’, being shown in the table and the graph below:

Table 6. Willingness about using veil

<i>S No.</i>	<i>Forced to Use Veil</i>	<i>No of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1.	No	90	92.78%
2.	Yes	07	7.21%
	Total	97	100%



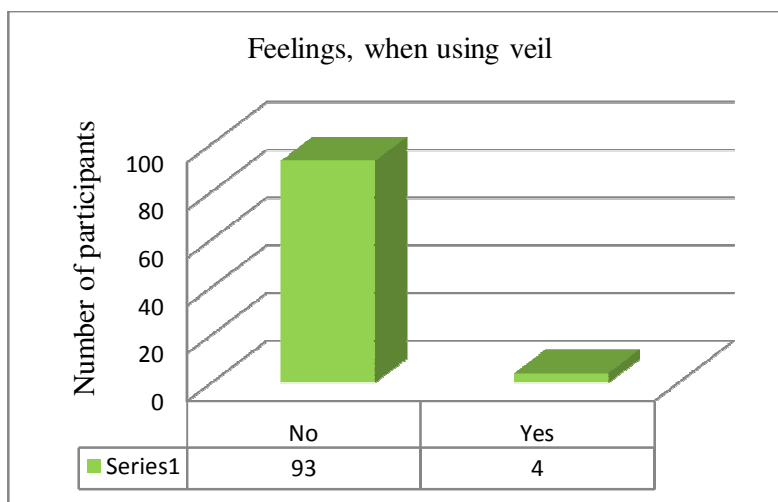
Only 07 out of 97 respondents disclosed that they are forced to use veil, but 03 out of 07 participants used the words of husband, grandmother and father, that they force them to use

veil while going out of the house. While on the other hand 90 respondents used the option 'no' means that they are using veil willingly.

In response to the asked third and fourth questions, most of the respondents 93 out of 97 used the option yes, means they feel comfortable when use veil. The detail is as under:

Table 7. feelings during use of veil

<i>S No.</i>	<i>Feeling, when use veil</i>	<i>No of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1.	No	93	95.87%
2.	Yes	04	4.12%
	Total	97	100%



The women using veil only 04 indicated the sign of discomfort and used the words i.e. irritation, warmth during summer season.

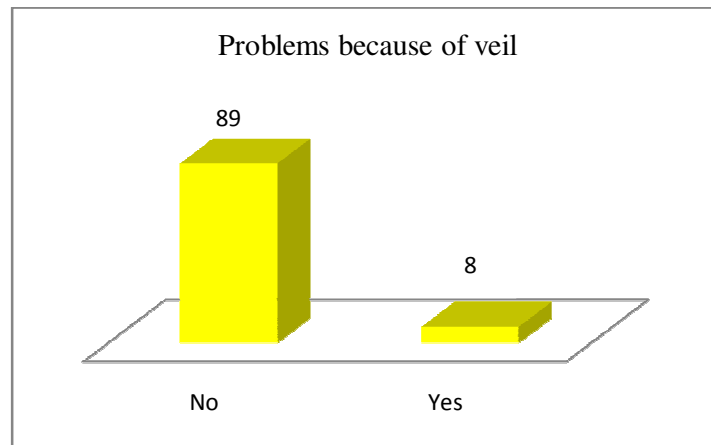
In response to fifth asked question, the words used by the respondents can be concluded by the following statements i.e. religious obligation (129), sign of modesty (10), command of Almighty Allah (13), show obedience.

In response to question six, the veiled women used number of words to express the benefits of the veil i.e. sense of security, remain confident, giving other people sense of modesty, etc.

In response to question seven 89 women used the option 'no' only 8 women used the option 'yes'.

Table 8. problems due to use of veil

<i>S No.</i>	<i>Problems because of veil</i>	<i>No of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1.	No	89	91.75%
2.	Yes	08	8.25%
	Total	97	100%

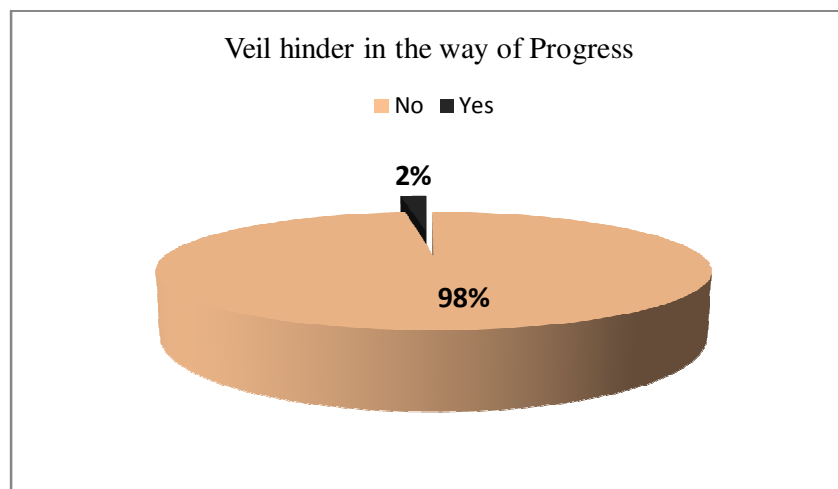


The collected data reveals that the women using veil are face no problem, when using veil. The women used option 'yes' out 8 women 6 used no word to clarify the option 'yes'. Only two used the words 'isolated' and 'problem during summer'.

In response to the question nine 95 out of 97 used the option 'no' only two used the option 'yes'

Table 9. Veil hinderance in the way of progress

<i>S No.</i>	<i>Veil hinder in the way of progress</i>	<i>No of Participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1.	No	95	97.95%
2.	Yes	02	2.06%
	Total	97	100%



The collected data reveals that veil does not hinder in the way of progress. The women, who used the option 'yes' said that sometimes when they go job and they have to part in any event then the authorities ask them to disclose their identity and mostly they are not provided opportunity to take part or not allowed to enter somewhere where the identity is to be disclosed.

CONCLUSION

1. It is common perception that most of the uneducated women use veil, while educated ladies do not give due consideration to the religious obligations, but the present research reveals that in Karachi most of the educated ladies are using veils.
2. It is concluded from the present research study that not only working women but house wives also use veil in their routine life.
3. The present research study has rejected the concept that ladies in the Muslim World are forced to use veil, as most of the women responded that they willingly use veil.
4. Number of people was always arguing that veil create number of problems for the ladies but the present research discloses that the veiled ladies find no problem in their daily life.
5. Veiled women also feel that the veil does not hinder in their way of progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations given under are suggested on the bases of findings from the collected data:

1. The increasing trend of using veil among the young girls should not be discouraged.
2. Arrangement should be done to celebrate World Veil-Day.
3. Veil should be declared National Women Dress in Pakistan.

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NOTION OF VEIL IN ISLAM: A SIGN OF PLACATE OR DISCONCERT AMONG THE WOMEN OF KARACHI, PAKISTAN

Questionnaire

Qualification----- **Use Veil**----- (Yes / Not)

Marital Status: Married/Unmarried/Widower **Work Status:** House Wife/Working Lady

Note: Please try to write the answers of the asked questions in points.

1. Are you forced to wear veil? (Yes/No)
2. If yes, then who and why?

3. Do you feel comfortable, when you wear veil? (Yes/No)
4. If yes, then what are your feelings?

5. Why do Muslim women wear veil?

6. What are benefits of wearing veil? (Writing only words)

7. Does veil create any problem while performing work? (Yes/No)
8. If yes, then what problems do you face while performing you works?

9. Does veil hinder in your way of development/progress? (Yes/No)

10. If yes, then how does veil hinder?

