

# Educated Muslim women much less likely to be in professional jobs than white women

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Muslim women are much less likely to be in professional jobs than white women, even when they are as well educated, new research shows.

The full extent of the disadvantages facing Muslim women in the UK jobs market are revealed by research presented at the British Sociological Association's annual conference in Birmingham today [Thursday 7 April 2016]

Dr Nabil Khattab, of the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, Qatar, told the conference that he analysed [survey data](#) on 245,000 women in the UK, 8,400 of them Muslim. Working with Dr Shereen Hussein, of King's College London, he found:

- The [unemployment rate](#) for Muslim women was between 5.9% and 27%, depending on their ethnic background, and that for [white](#) non-Muslim women was 3.5%.
- The proportion of Muslim women working in professional and managerial jobs varied from 8.5% to 23%, depending on their ethnicity, compared to 32% for white non-Muslim women.

The researchers then adjusted the data to compare Muslim and non-Muslim women who had the same level of education, family situation and age, and found that Muslim women were less likely to be employed. Significant results were obtained for:

- First-generation Muslim women of Bangladeshi origin, who were

over six times more likely to be unemployed than white non-Muslim women with the same background. First generation Muslim Pakistani and Muslim Black women were four times more likely to be unemployed.

- The proportion of Muslim women who had managerial or professional [jobs](#) varied from around 20% to 40% of that of white British women, depending on their ethnicity.

In general, the researchers found that Muslim women who were of Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Black ethnicity did worse than those of Indian ethnicity. Those who were first generation – who arrived in Britain after the age of six – did worse than those born here or who moved here as a young child.

"Muslim women thus face a multitude of challenges when entering the labour market on the basis of their gender, race, culture and religion," the researchers say.

The researchers also note that a better educational level helped Muslim women to find work, and that they were paid the same as [white women](#) when they were in employment.

The study used data from the April-June quarters of the Labour Force Survey from 2002 to 2013 for the study of 245,392 [women](#) aged 19-65, of whom 8,444 were Muslim.

Provided by British Sociological Association

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