

Wearing hijab as a new religious identity for women Muslim convert

ABSTRACT

Hijab significantly addresses one of the religious identities for Muslim women either those who are born Muslim or new Muslim. The new Muslim women adopt new style of identity markers by changing new lifestyle through wearing hijab. It is also a form of new bodily practices and new forms of behaviour that the new Muslim expresses herself as an observant and practicing Muslim. However, the journey towards changing lifestyle through wearing hijab is not an easy task for new Muslim women as there are some kind of adverse reaction from family, friends and work colleagues. In this article an attempt is made to present the daily life experience of new Muslim women from diverse cultural backgrounds who take on hijab as a way for expressing commitment of Muslim identity. In the process of conveying a true impression of becoming observant Muslim women, most of them face a lot of challenges and difficulties as they don't get support from their family and friends. The method used is qualitative approach through discourse analysis by examining the secondary data from the extract of interviews with new Muslim women living in majority non-Muslim countries in Britain and America and the primary data from the majority Muslim country in Malaysia. The study concludes that the new Muslim women across boundaries of nation in any surrounding they are living at, most likely would come across the similar challenge of life experience when they took hijab as a progression of their religious practice and a permanent announcement to the outside world of the religious identity.