

Why do Muslim Women Cover

by Aneela Jawaid

Kate Moss, Angelina Jolie and Keira Knightly. Every man's dream and every girl's envy. Stereotypes have been laid down by the society and media that girls have to be: thin, good looking and have to have an up to date fashion sense. In the UK, the amount of money spent on designer clothes and shoes, on make-up and jewellery would be enough to save a third world country from poverty! What does this say about how we perceive ourselves. Are we really as comfortable with ourselves as we seem to be on the outside?

"I want to be judged by who I am, not what I look like"

Quoted anonymous

Many people share this view and logically it is understandable, but practically it is not so simple anymore. Let's take Muslim women for example, what is the truth behind the veil?

Muslim women are seen mostly as poor oppressed females of a very sexist religion. However, in almost all scenarios, this is not the case. For Muslim women, wearing the headscarf is a privilege. It is a form of modesty and privacy that every woman is entitled to. This is not only a practice of the Muslims; it is also common in other religions and societies in history.

If we look back 100 years ago in England, it wasn't uncommon for a woman to almost entirely cover herself. It is also the case if we look at the Orthodox Jewish Women, they also cover their heads, this is just less commonly seen by most people. One of the most chaste and modest women in Islam and Christianity is, Mary – mother of Jesus. A woman of great respect and dignity. A role model to women of both the religions and also a uniting bond.

A similarity between the two religions can be seen if you look at the Christian nuns. They are highly respected women in the Christian society. Their dress is almost identical to that of the Muslim women's dress. The full body covering and the head cover. Yet the first impressions of people, when seeing a nun and a Muslim woman are completely different.

If we look at the headscarf from a scientific point of view, we notice that it has many advantages. Facts that have been proven, that in the summer and in the heat, it protects the person from the sun and the damages caused by the heat rays from the sun on the head. The main source of heat loss is the head, and in cold weather it prevents a lot of heat from escaping via that route.

Choosing to cover can also save you from the wrongful first impressions of others. People cannot always make proper first impressions just by looking at someone who covers up. In some cases it can intrigue them to learn more and to come and talk to

you because it is the inner beauty that counts and like they say, "Never judge a book by its cover..."

All in all, covering up can save people from the ill and false judgements made by others. It helps protect one's dignity. It builds respect. It prevents unnecessary problems with peer pressure. It helps build self-esteem and a good character. It helps build confidence. It can help bring out the best in you. It helps build spirituality. It brings out the real you. It's even good for your health! So next time you see a woman/Muslim woman who covers, why not ask her, what made her choose to wear the veil/headscarf. You may be surprised...

If we spend all our time trying to look good in front of others, where will that leave us in the end?

"Why do people choose to develop their outer-self more than their inner-self"
Quoted anonymous

Which do you think is more important to you?