



university of
 groningen

faculty of theology and
 religious studies

The age of Islamophobia

Generational differences in Islamophobia among women in the Netherlands

Aukje Hopmans

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Department of Theology and Religious studies
 University of Groningen

Examiner/Daily supervisor:

Dr. Manoela Carpenedo Rodrigues

Second supervisor:

Dr. Tina Otten

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Abstract

This research looked at the effects of age and generational differences on Islamophobia among women in the Netherlands. We conducted semi-structured interviews on two generations (ages 20-25 versus 54-57) with each three participants and used critical discourse analysis, the Islamophobia framework by Iqbal (2020) and Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) to investigate the similarities and differences of Islamophobia in the two groups. It was concluded that the effects of age and generational differences on Islamophobia among women in de Netherlands are that a younger generation had more contact opportunities with Muslims than an older generation, as during their lifetime more Muslims (of their age) were in the Netherlands, while they also experienced other terrorist attacks (consciously) than the older generation. This shaped their understandings of Islam and Muslims differently, as the older generation might have been more influenced by the (negative) media, making for the seen differences in perceived support of Muslims/Islam on gender-equality, while it also shaped their fear of terrorism differently, thereby shaping Islamophobia differently. These differences should be taken into account in Iqbal's (2020) framework. Future Islamophobia studies, theories, and interventions should keep these differences in mind, also.

Keywords: Islamophobia, generation, age, Social Identity Theory, discrimination, religion, Islam, Muslim, othering, Netherlands, women, threat perception

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Introduction

Problem analysis

“The values that we are fighting against ISIS for are precisely that we don’t discriminate against people for their faith.” – President of the United States of America, Barack Obama.

The attacks on Paris in 2015, 9/11 in the United States, and Brussels in 2016; all these are incidents of terrorist attacks in the West. Moreover, they are examples of attacks that were organized by extremist religious groups in the name of Islam. These extremists spread fear amongst the West for other terrorist attacks.

This fear has led the West to be extremely focused on the threat posed by such extremist Muslims. In the U.S., the counterreactions that followed after 9/11 is even called the “war on terror”. In Sweden, a preexisting special aliens control law that allowed non-citizens that were acquitted in court of terrorist allegations to be detained or even deported has been applied again in 2019 (Schclarek Mulinari, 2019).

Additionally, discriminatory behaviour towards Muslims has become more prominent after 9/11 (Allen & Nielsen, 2002). This type of discrimination also shows in the Netherlands: Leila Kallal, a Muslima that lived in the Netherlands, was not allowed to do an internship according to an employment agency, because she wore a hijab (Unknown, 2014). It also shows in Dutch politics. For instance, the far-right Freedom Party of the Netherlands (PVV) made statements and announced political platforms that included “de-Islamization” of the Netherlands (Abdelkader, 2017).

Intriguingly, the Netherlands is often seen as progressive in its minority rights, as it was the first country to allow marriage rights to homosexuals, and people tend to think that the Netherlands has completed women’s and gay emancipation (Bracke, 2012). However, as previous examples showed, discriminatory behaviour towards the minority group of Muslims is still present in the Netherlands. This type of discrimination is called “Islamophobia”. In other words, the allegedly tolerant character of the Netherlands towards minority groups can be reconsidered because of the intolerance towards the minority group of Muslims.

Aim of the thesis

It is important to theorize about incidents of Islamophobia, because of the aforementioned clash with the perceived tolerance of the Netherlands, and because this (unfair) discrimination and violence is something that should be avoided. Researching where this Islamophobia (including prejudice) stems from and how it is promoted, is important in

theorizing about prevention strategies. Substantial research has been done on this subject (Abdelkader, 2017; Allport, 1954; Bakali, 2016; Bracke, 2012; Ernst, 2013; George, 2017; Hornsey, 2008; Iqbal, 2020; Jackson, 2018; LaViolette & Silvert, 1951; Lean, Esposito & Shaheen, 2017; Saenger, 1953; Simpson & Yinger, 1965; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Tajfel, 1981), but what is studied less is the generational differences in Islamophobia. It is possible that different generations differ in their Islamophobic tendencies, but this has not been researched up until now.

If these differences exist, it is important to know and understand in which ways these differences present themselves and why. Moreover, it is important to find out which factors contributed to more (less) Islamophobic tendencies, as they present ways to contribute to prevention strategies. Furthermore, anti-Islamophobia campaigns should incorporate such differences, if they exist, to improve their effects (towards their target audience). Additionally, if these differences exist, it shows that it is important for studies on Islamophobia to incorporate this generational dimension into their research strategies. Therefore, in my research I would like to look at generational differences in expressions and understandings of Islamophobia.

Research questions

The main research question of this study will be “What is the effect of age and generational differences on Islamophobia among women in the Netherlands?”

Two sub-questions will be answered in this study. First, “In which ways is Islamophobia specifically shown in the Netherlands amongst non-religious, middle class, highly educated, Dutch females, how do Dutch values contribute to this, and why is Islamophobia presented this way?”. Secondly, “What is the effect of age and generation on Islamophobia amongst non-religious, middle class, highly educated, Dutch females, how do Dutch values contribute to this, and why does this happen?”.

Relevance

Currently, most Dutch anti-Islamophobia campaigns are focused upon making Muslims report Islamophobia, while it is also important to pay attention to those that produce this behaviour. However, little has this been done by campaigns. Moreover, those that actually do try to focus attention to this never specifically target groups depending on age.

For example, during the elections in the Netherlands in 2018, project “Nora” started, which was a digital character that registered Islam-related statements by (mostly) politicians, journalists and opinionmakers and commented on those that were discriminating, stigmatising

or Islamophobic. This is a project that focused on confronting people that showed Islamophobic tendencies. However, this was never directed to specific age groups. If age differences regarding (themes of) Islamophobia exist, this could help make campaigns more efficient by directing them to those groups that need to be confronted most (on certain themes).

Structure of the thesis

This research has been divided into multiple parts. First, previously done research on the subjects of importance (prejudice, Islamophobia, and age and its influence on prejudice) will be presented. Next, theories and frameworks used to analyse the data of this research will be introduced. This includes Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and the framework of antecedents to Islamophobia by Iqbal (2020). Then, the methodology of this research will be given. Afterwards, two analytical chapters will be presented. The first will focus on the first sub-question, and thus on similar Islamophobia themes between the two generational groups in the Netherlands. The two generations consist of one younger participant group (age 20-25) and one older participant group (age 54-57). It will be argued that the themes of sociocultural threat, fear of terrorism and the perception that Muslims try to impose their religion onto others are important in creating Islamophobia in both generations, and that this can be explained by the role of the (negative) media in shaping people's knowledge on Islam.

The second analytical chapter focuses on sub-question two, and thus on the differences between generations regarding themes of Islamophobia and explanations for this. Here, I demonstrate that there exist differences in the sociocultural threat aspect, mostly regarding the perceptions of generations that differences in the support of the value of gender-equality by Muslims/Islam versus in the Netherlands exist. Moreover, the way security threat is shaped within generations will be argued to differ, as both generations solely mention attacks that occurred during their adolescence/early adulthood as important terrorist events. This differently shaped security threat might affect Islamophobia differently, and thus, different generational collective memories of terrorist attacks might account for generational differences in Islamophobia. Also, differences in themes might occur because the amount of contact (opportunities) with Muslims generations have differ, while contact can shape the knowledge on Islam/Muslims in less negatively stereotyped ways. Finally, a conclusion will be given, in which the research is summarized and directions for future research are presented.

Literature review

Introduction

This section functions to give an overview of previous research on Islamophobia and the effect of age on prejudice. The Western perspectives to these subjects will be important throughout this section. Important scholars such as Said (1978), Bakali (2016), and Iqbal (2020) will be discussed and evaluated in order to build towards the current subject of interest and substantiate arguments for why this is an important inquiry.

Islam in the West

In the West, Islamophobia is still very present. According to Allen and Nielsen (2002), it has become more prominent in European countries since 9/11. Furthermore, Strabac and Listhaug (2008) showed that prejudice against Muslims in Europe is more widespread than prejudice against any other type of immigrants. Thus, Muslims in Europe are prone to becoming targets of prejudice. In the Netherlands, solely, a study has shown that one out of two students held negative perceptions towards Muslims (Velasco González et al., 2008). Another study showed that between 136 and 158 bias incidents against Muslims were reported in 2015 in the Netherlands (Abdelkader, 2017), and more than one-third of the 475 mosques in the Netherlands had experienced hate crime. Islamophobia was also seen in the employment setting, and is often condoned by Dutch officials.

As these studies show, Islamophobia is currently present, and might be growing, in the Netherlands. What remains undiscussed by the authors, however, are the ways it manifests itself in this country, and which factors influence it (such as age). This is important to research as to incorporate such aspects in future research and interventions, which is why the current study will focus on that.

Islamophobia

It is important to define what Islamophobia encompasses in order to know which aspects should be investigated to identify how Islamophobia presents itself in the Netherlands. This is not easy, however, because it is a construct of multiple phenomena and phobias; “hatred, fear, prejudice, racism, othering, orientalism, terror and Western opposing ideologies” (Iqbal, 2020, p. 37) are combined together to form Islamophobia. Thus, it is difficult to differentiate Islamophobia from other forms of racism and discrimination that are based on religion, ethnicity, gender or skin colour (Larsson, 2010; Modood, 1997; Vertovec, 2002). Still, multiple authors have tried to define it. I will present the ways in which this is

done and discuss their importance to the current study.

Said (1978) had laid some foundational work on the field of Islamophobia by researching what he named “Orientalists”. As the first to systematically research anti-Muslim/Islam perceptions, his work is still important to scholars studying Islamophobia. Said (1978) discussed the misrepresentations, over-simplifications and binaries that led to the interpretation of the West being opposed to the East. This included the view that the East is the “Orient”: overly sensual, primitive, and violent in contrast with the West. Moreover, diversity across the Orient is ignored, leading to stereotypes. Said argued that Orientalism was a way of the academic West to assert dominance over the East. Although this is not entirely the same as Islamophobia, his research has laid groundwork for following studies and influences our current understandings of Islamophobia (Bakali, 2016). According to Kumar (2012), the myths of the Orientalists are still dominant in the Western views of Islam. While orientalism might be important to Islamophobia, and should be kept in mind, other factors might also contribute that are not mentioned here.

Authors defining Islamophobia have focused on different aspects. Abbas (2004), Sherman, Lee, Gibbons, Thomson and Timani (2009), Zúquete (2008) and others defined Islamophobia in terms of fear of Muslims/Islam. Prejudice has been seen as the most important factor by authors such as Said (1978) and Tolan (2002). Others like Massari (2006) and Tyrer (2013) focused more on (cultural or religious) racism when explaining Islamophobia. These different aspects being used to define Islamophobia, respectively, are important, but it remains unclear what Islamophobia exactly encompasses when different authors mention different things. Moreover, it has not been investigated by such authors whether differences between (age) groups might arise in these aspects, whereas this is important as explained earlier.

Iqbal (2020) has tried to combine the factors, while keeping in mind some assumptions to explain Islamophobia clearly. Islamophobia has been realized in his work as “the negative posturing to Islam and Muslims” and “mainly refers to prejudice, threat perceptions and racism” (p. 51). Iqbal’s (2020) definition refers to some antecedents of Islamophobia, which may or may not be present at a time, but it still encompasses Islamophobia. Which are present can depend on the context; the geo-political-religio situation at the time. For this reason, he argues, the definitions of Islamophobia have changed over time. He also explains that, though there may be similar antecedents to Islamophobia, its manifestations may differ, such as fear, hatred, or dislike. Moreover, the reasons for the dimensions may differ in nature. The antecedents Iqbal (2020) uses are “prejudice”, which is subcategorized as “othering”, and

“threat perceptions”, which is subcategorized in symbolic threats (sociocultural threats), security threats, realistic threats (political threats and economic threats), and civilization threats (clash of civilizations). Another antecedent he mentions is racism, with which he refers to religious racism and cultural racism. What he does not discuss, however, is whether there might be differences between certain (age) groups regarding these aspects.

In this thesis, I take the definition and antecedents by Iqbal (2020) to look into which antecedents for Islamophobia differences between the generations in this study (young: 20-25; older: 54-57) might lie.

Age, generation, and prejudice

Additionally important to this thesis, is the effect of age and generation on prejudice. Previous studies have been done on prejudice and different life stages. For example, Degner and Wentura (2010) studied children’s and adolescents’ (ages 9 to 15; German and Dutch) automatic activation of prejudice using the affective priming task and the Implicit Association Test (IAT). It was shown that automatic prejudice includes the ability to spontaneously categorize people, and that this is developed further in children’s lives. Therefore, young children show less automatic prejudice than adolescents, as those have already developed this spontaneous categorization process. When younger children were presented with forced categorization in combination with the affective priming task, they showed similar results to adolescents. Outgroup pictures used were Turkish and Moroccan people, whereas ingroup pictures included white German and Dutch people. Apparently, different life stages affect the amount of prejudice shown towards others, specifically Turkish and Moroccans that can be categorized as Muslims. However, as the current study focuses on the differences between the ages of young adults (20-25) and older adults (54-57), it is fair to assume that these all have developed spontaneous categorization processes. It is therefore important to see whether other things later in life could affect prejudice.

Research by Gonsalkorale, Sherman and Klauer (2009) has looked at implicit bias and different ages, from teenagers to people in their nineties. They tested the capacity by people to inhibit biased associations, and showed that older adults show greater implicit bias because they are less able to control their automatic associations. These associations were namely equal to those by younger people, but younger adults were more capable of regulating them. This suggests that age-related increases in (implicit) racial bias might be due to self-regulatory failure of older adults, not cohort effects (effects that show by growing up in different eras). The same results were obtained by Stewart, Hippel and Radvansky (2009), while focusing on

older versus younger adults (age 40). These studies, however, focused upon racial bias. It could be that differences occur when looking at biases regarding Islamophobia, as this is argued to be influenced by (fear of) terrorist attacks (see above), and not every generation has, with full awareness, witnessed (that many) terrorist attacks. These results also show that there are, indeed, generational/age differences regarding prejudice between younger and older adults, contributing to my hypothesis.

When looking at other factors that can contribute to cohort differences in prejudice, social experiences are important. Researchers mention the effects of contact opportunities (Dowd, 1980; Raabe & Beelmann, 2011). According to Dowd (1980), older people have less contact with blacks and therefore show more prejudice towards them than younger people. Interestingly though, in some cases contact can be linked to greater prejudice. According to the author, it is precisely the interaction between age and contact that plays an important part in creating greater prejudice.

Miklikowska (2017) showed that, among adolescents, those with immigrants friends were less affected by parental prejudice than those without immigrant friends. Only while the friendships lasted, these effects were seen. As adolescents develop attitudes, friendships influence their beliefs (Gifford-Smith & Brownell, 2003, as mentioned in Miklowska, 2017). Therefore, the amount of outgroup friends the adolescent has in this period affects their future attitudes towards this outgroup, and thus also their potential future discrimination towards the outgroup. Van Zalk and Kerr (2014) also contributed to this by arguing that intergroup friendships among adolescents predicted increases in tolerance, and thus decreases in prejudice towards immigrants.

Raabe and Beelmann (2011) say that prejudice increased significantly less between early and middle childhood, and decreased from middle to late childhood, if majority children had contact opportunities with lower status outgroup members (even if the proportion outgroup members in the school or region was only 5%). This allowed for less anxiety and unfamiliarity towards the outgroup (Stephan & Stephan, 2000, as mentioned in Raabe and Beelmann (2011)), which allowed less salience of outgroup membership (Bigler & Liben, 2007, as mentioned in Raabe and Beelmann (2011)), leading to perceptions of outgroup heterogeneity (Aboud, 2003, as mentioned in Raabe and Beelmann, (2011)), or facilitation of a common ingroup identity (Gaertner et al., 2008, as mentioned in Raabe and Beelmann (2011)). The ages from 7 until 10 years are a sensitive period for environmental influences on prejudice, and the lack of contact opportunities in this period might lead to stabilization of the social information processes for perceiving and recalling stereotype-consistent information in

the environment and less willingness to seek (future) possibilities for outgroup contact, making prejudice reduction increasingly unlikely. They argue it is important to express social norms regarding equality to children during this stage, in order to reduce prejudice.

The current research will take into account the contact (opportunities) participants had and have with Muslims (the outgroup), to see whether this affected possible generational differences in Islamophobia. I argue that contact opportunities are and were much more present for the younger generation in comparison to the older generation, because the Muslim population in the Netherlands is relatively young (8.6% of the population of Dutch people that were 15 to 25 years old were Muslim versus 2.4% of 55 to 65 years old; Unknown, 2020), and therefore the older generation is less likely to meet Muslims during their daily activities, while the Muslim population was also smaller in the youth-years (1970s and 1980s) of the older generation than it was during the youth of the younger generation (2000s and 2010s; Tas, 2004), indicating that the older generation had smaller chances of Muslim friends or contact during the sensitive period of environmental influence of prejudice and during the time that their attitudes were formed (7-10 years and adolescence).

Conclusion

This chapter focused on explaining previously done research on the subject of inquiry, while evaluating them in order to point out gaps in the research, and substantiate arguments for the current research. It was concluded that Islamophobia is indeed present in the Netherlands, but it has not been researched yet in which ways it manifests itself in this country, which themes lead to it, and whether there are differences between certain (age) groups. Iqbal's (2020) definition and antecedents to Islamophobia are a great start to understanding the phenomenon, and will therefore be used throughout this essay to investigate the ways in which Islamophobia presents itself in the Netherlands and in which antecedents differences between ages may lie and why. Earlier research on the effects of age and generation on prejudice showed the importance of investigating whether such differences might show regarding Islamophobia, while contact (opportunities) with Muslims might be important to account for such differences. It was argued to be important to investigate this as it has not been researched yet and might lead to better focused future studies and interventions of Islamophobia.

Theoretical and conceptual framework

Introduction

This chapter will explain the theories and concepts chosen to investigate the research question. As explained, Iqbal (2020) gives a framework of antecedents of Islamophobia. Below, the framework is visually graphed (see figure 1).

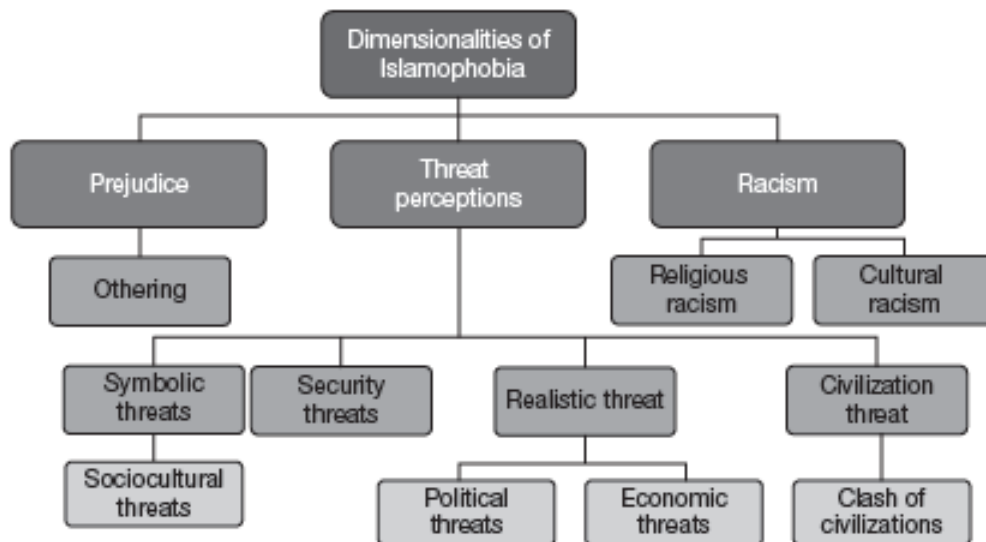


Figure 1: Antecedents of Islamophobia (Iqbal, 2020, p.51)

Iqbal's (2020) antecedents of Islamophobia give clear directions in which to research the current subject. It is important to see whether these antecedents indeed are present in the Netherlands, and also whether differences might exist between certain (age) groups within these themes. This is something that has not yet been investigated. Iqbal's (2020) framework will be explained in this chapter, while explaining Social Identity Theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) as this theory was used in Iqbal's (2020) framework and will also be used in this essay.

First, the antecedent of "prejudice" (othering) will be explained using SIT. Next, the subcategories "security threat" and "symbolic (sociocultural) threat" of the antecedent "threat perceptions" will be explained in two separate sections. Although Iqbal (2020) divides threat perceptions into four sub-categories, I will look at these two, as they present concrete categories which can be tested and came forth explicitly in this study. A conclusion will be drawn afterwards.

Prejudice (othering)

To investigate the influence of age on Islamophobia, it is firstly important to explain where prejudice stems from, as prejudice is a facet of Islamophobia (Iqbal, 2020) and Islamophobia is a specific case of prejudice (Brown, 1995). This category mostly refers to the lens through which the other antecedents are viewed, created and maintained.

Prejudice has been identified as a basic human need; the process of categorization makes one capable of thinking (Iqbal, 2020), by allowing mental shortcuts (Allport, 1954). When prejudicing, people categorize others by generalization, linking their characteristics to negative assumptions, allowing antipathy (Allport, 1954). It is only natural for people to categorize things and people, and therefore, prejudgment and categorization (“us” and “them”) is common. However, prejudice can be open to alterations, and is not a permanent hostility.

The most important issue for prejudice can be explained by SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). It theorizes that people are inclined to identify themselves by which “groups” they belong to. Such groups can indicate “a Dutch person” or “a white person”, etcetera. These group with which people identify themselves, are called ingroups. Research suggests that distinctions between ingroup and outgroup can influence attitudes towards the outgroup (Erisen & Kentmen-Cin, 2016; Mummendey et al., 1992; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). People become less favorable to those groups that are not part of this ingroup: an outgroup (Hornsey, 2008). This leads to the institutional discrimination against those that are less often represented in society, such as Muslims in the Netherlands by those whom identify as non-Muslims. Another way of saying this is “the discrimination of a minority group by a majority group”, as Muslims in the Netherlands are a minority group, and the non-Muslims are a majority group. Negative stereotypes towards outgroups contribute to this phenomenon, as these allow the rationalization of prejudices (Allport, 1954; Iqbal, 2020; LaViolette & Silvert, 1951; Saenger, 1953; Simpson & Yinger, 1965; Tajfel, 1981). Importantly, (changes in) the environment can influence in- and outgroup perceptions, because the context influences which identities are important to a person, and thus influences prejudices (Iqbal, 2020).

Ingroup and outgroup distinctions made by individuals can be compared to the process of “othering”; those that are not seen as similar to one’s own ingroup identity, become perceived as different and eventually as “the others” (Stephans, 2013). This includes having negative views towards the other (out)group, because bad qualities are assigned to them, while this is considered to be natural. Meanwhile, positive qualities are assigned to

themselves. In other words, when an individual or group identifies themselves by opposing their own identity to others, based on their religion, ethnicity, race, etc., othering takes place (Iqbal, 2020, Nurullah, 2010). Differences are highlighted rather than similarities, and the “other” becomes “judged, repressed and mediated in an unequal and biased way” (Mertens, 2016; Nurullah, 2010; Tsagarousianou, 2016, as mentioned in Iqbal, 2020, p. 244).

To separate oneself from the “other” is essential to establishing one’s own identity (Ashcroft, 2013; Jensen, 2011). To establish this “other”, people or groups are “homogenized” and “collectivized” into “them” (Pratt, 1985, as mentioned in Iqbal, 2020), same as the process that happens when we talk about prejudice. Creating “others” is essential in how minority versus majority identities are built and kept in society (Iqbal, 2020), as it allows the most prominent groups to make the decisions on what constitutes people’s identities.

In Islamophobic discourses, the dichotomy between the West versus the “other” East is indicated by stressing “our” tolerance, and how it is being mistreated by “those” who aim to “Islamitize” “our” lifestyles (Poole, 2016), because they are “against” “our” values, such as democracy and freedom of speech. However, the exact characteristics pointed to these “others” can differ per person, because these beliefs are influenced by people’s environments and other beliefs (such as their religion), and hence, Islamophobia can stem from different antecedents (Allen, 2010). In any case, though, Islamophobia takes place based on the perception that Muslims are “none of us” (Iqbal, 2020).

Security threat: Terrorism

Another antecedent of Islamophobia Iqbal (2020) identifies is security threats. Security threats can be divided into two subcategories, namely “ideological threats” and “existential threats”, in which ideological threats are mostly about perceived threats by totalitarianism, jihadism, Wahhabism and Sharia law, whereas existential threats are perceived threats regarding immigrants and refugees (Iqbal, 2020). The first is mostly linked to a fear of terrorism by Muslims/instigated by Islam, as those attacks pose a security threat. This is also the most important security threat for this essay and will therefore be explained in more detail below.

Terrorism is currently perceived to be “the key threat for international peace and security (Rychnovska, 2014)” (Iqbal, 2020, p. 187). After 9/11, “terrorism” has increasingly been used as comparable to “Islamic” in culture talk (Mamdani, 2004), and Islam is seen as the same thing as the ISIS movement and Al-Qaeda (Cesari, 2012). Islam is often labelled as

a fanatical, totalizing religion that controls every aspect of the private, social and political lives of humans (Bonansinga, 2018). It is seen as an ideology that threatens Western society (Iqbal, 2020; Juergensmeyer, 1993; Mitchell, 1993). Jihadism and Wahhabism are often seen as the threats to Western society because jihadism is believed to indicate that Islam wants to achieve Islamism globally and that this is called for by Allah, and because Wahhabism is seen as the source for global terrorism; the cause for ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and violent jihadists (Iqbal, 2020). Sharia law is seen more as a threat towards the Western (secular) culture, practices, and politics (this is also the most important factor to the perceived political threats), because it is seen as incompatible with Western democracy (Iqbal, 2020). It is also seen as a security threat because it is seen as comparable with jihadist ideology, which is believed to eventually lead to the implementation of an Islamic state (Iqbal, 2020).

Contributing, the media and right-wing political figures in Europe and America have helped increase this fear towards Muslims, by negative representation of Muslims in sociocultural aspects and especially regarding terrorism and extremism (Bakali, 2016; Poole & Richardson, 2006), and representing Muslims as the “other” (Iqbal 2020). The media claims that Islam and political violence are inherently linked (Bolt, 2017, as mentioned in Iqbal (2020)), while this fear also leads to exaggeration about the sociocultural and economic threats by Islam and Muslims (Iqbal, 2020).

Muslims are, thus, perceived to have some characteristics and features, such as predispositions to violence and aggression, barbarism and misogyny, which “drive them to commit terrorist attacks”, while the West gets put in the position of being inherently civil, progressive, and liberal (Bakali, 2016). This, when Islam is also perceived to be a threat to the West, justifies and leads to Islamophobic behaviour and policies (Hansen, 2016); it is labelled as an act of self-defence, because Muslims are seen as the “real aggressors” (Abdelkader, 2017), and as “others”.

Symbolic (sociocultural) threat

Another important factor to Islamophobia is the threat Westerners feel towards their sociocultural environment, which is the social, political and economic culture (Iqbal, 2020; Bakali, 2016). It encompasses customs, lifestyles and values that are characteristic to a society (Ajami & Goddard, 2018) and includes the social and cultural systems of a society, and thus a common cognitive evaluative framework for every aspect of human life in the individuals of a society (Iqbal, 2020). If differences between these frameworks are (believed to be) present, Iqbal (2020) argues that sociocultural conflict is mostly unavoidable, especially if there exists

historical cultural estrangement. It is argued that the social anxiety by Westerners towards Islam/Muslims is the primary reason for the rise of Islamophobia in most parts of Europe, the USA and Australia (Bakali, 2016; Gottschalk & Greenberg, 2008).

Such conflicts are possible to take place between Westerners and Muslims, because the ingroup of Westerners believe that the outgroup of Muslims differ in the sociocultural factor, especially regarding religion (Iqbal, 2020). Muslims/Islam is viewed to be against Western civilization and different in their values and norms (Allen, 2010), also because of the media (Bakali, 2016), and because of Huntington's (1996) theory of "Clash of Civilizations". According to this theory, enemies are somewhat essential to creating ingroup identities, and the world's major civilizations (which are argued to differ in crucial parts; such as the West versus Islam) can therefore form the most dangerous conflicts. This line of thought has led people to think that Western and Islamic cultures differ significantly, and that the "clash of civilizations" is logical (Iqbal, 2020).

This perceived difference between the two sociocultural environments justifies negative behaviour towards Muslims because of "othering" and because it acts as a way to "protect" the Western values (Iqbal, 2020). Moreover, the values in which Muslims might differ, can be crucial to the ingroup identity (the cohesion) of Western countries (Bakali, 2016), allowing negative behaviour towards those that oppose it.

Perceived differences between Western civilization versus Muslims/Islam are corroborated by the media and consist of multiple aspects, such as that (1) Westerners are seen as civil versus Muslims/Islam as violent (terrorism; violating human rights; Bakali, 2016; Iqbal, 2020), (2) Westerners are seen as tolerant (Abdelkader, 2017; Bilge, 2012; Bracke, 2012) versus Muslims/Islam as intolerant (towards other religions (Iqbal, 2020) and minority groups such as homosexuals (Bracke, 2012)), (3) the West is seen as perpetuating gender-equality (specifically the Netherlands; Bracke, 2012) while Muslims/Islam as perpetuating gender-based discrimination and oppression (Bakali, 2016; Iqbal, 2020; Selby, 2011). In this case women are seen as lacking agency and in need of rescue by the cultural qualities the West possesses which Muslim men are "incapable of" (Bakali, 2016). The notion of "Western feminist" society has, moreover, been used to justify Islamophobic practices such as the war on terror (Iqbal, 2020) and the banning of the hijab (as this is seen as oppressive to women; Bakali, 2016), which again confirm Islamophobic views ("Muslim men are dangerous"; "Hijabs are oppressive").

Lastly, (4) the West is perceived to stand for secularism (the co-existence of multiple religious and non-religious perspectives in a social context (Taylor, 2007); religion and state

are mostly kept separate (Bakali, 2016)), while Muslims/Islam is seen as being overly political (Selby, 2011). Muslims and Islam are perceived to be monolithic (Iqbal 2020), stuck in the past ways of society (Cesari, 2012), incapable of democracy (Bakali, 2016; Iqbal, 2020) and Western political development (secularism; Cesari, 2012). “Their” type of politics is seen as intolerant and predominated with fundamentalism (Iqbal, 2020). Dominant perceptions of political Islam are that Muslims want to impose their religious and cultural identities to the West (Islamization; Iqbal, 2020). Especially Sharia is feared in the West, while it is often misunderstood by the media (who present it as negative and in opposition to the above-mentioned Western values; Iqbal, 2020), consequently making Westerners’ understandings of it inaccurate, while it is also taken very seriously by those that do not know much of Muslims.

The reason that the above-mentioned perceived differences lead to Islamophobia is that a strong ingroup identity promotes a lack of tolerance towards out-/minority groups (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), and the strong ingroup identity of Westerners is perceived to stand in contrast to the outgroup of Muslims regarding the above-mentioned values, allowing “Othering” and thus Islamophobia. Moreover, this perceived contrast justifies “protection” of “our” values/norms/customs/identities (Schiffer, 2011, as mentioned in Iqbal, 2020), as Westerners are afraid to lose them to these “Others” through “Islamization” (Bakali, 2016; Iqbal, 2020; Krumme, 2010), and thus Islamophobia. Ironically, this stands in contrast with the multicultural and tolerant values of these Western countries.

Conclusion

This chapter focused on presenting the theories and concepts that will be used to investigate the current research question. Iqbal’s (2020) theory of antecedents to Islamophobia in combination with Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) were demonstrated and explained. The antecedents of prejudice (othering), security threat (specifically terrorism) and symbolic (sociocultural) threat to Islamophobia were laid out in detail, as a means to which data can be interpreted in future chapters. Fear of terrorism is a relatively new contribution to the already existing perceived sociocultural threats, and negative representations of both in the media makes Muslims and Islam seem as entirely the “Other”, and a potential danger to the solidarity and safety of the majority ingroup of Westerners (Iqbal, 2020), allowing Islamophobia. These antecedents might contribute to Islamophobia in the Netherlands among the participant group and differences between generations might arise in those themes. This will be investigated in the analytical chapters of this essay.

Methodology

Introduction

This section will focus on explaining and accounting for the chosen methodology. A qualitative approach was taken, which looks at the ways that people construct and interpret and give meaning to experiences (dynamic processes; May, 2002). That is important for my research question: in-depth understandings of people's Islamophobic tendencies require these sorts of information. Quantitative research, in contrast, would not be adequate as this looks more objectively at measurable "events" and static categories (May, 2002). Therefore, in-depth interviews have been chosen as the primary means for data collection, and this was used in combination with critical discourse analysis to answer my research question(s). My aim was to gain better understandings of Islamophobia (in the Netherlands) and how it may differ across (generational) groups, thereby opening new ways for future research and interventions of Islamophobia.

Participants and design

Interviews of about ninety minutes were done to answer the research question. They were conducted in Dutch as this was the mother tongue of the participants.

The sample consisted of three participants that were of the younger generation (age range: 20-25), and three participants that were of the older generation (age range: 54-57). The religious affiliation of the participants was asked (all non-religious). For sake of analysis, participants were given a fake name. For the younger generation, the first participant was named Anne, the second Emma and the third Olivia. For the older generation, the first participant was named Iris, the second Hannah and the third Sarah. The interviews were done either at participants' home or mine, to make participants as comfortable as possible. The interviewee and I were positioned at an angle, to give participants opportunity to look away from me when they said something they might feel uncomfortable with.

Participants as homogeneous as possible were gathered, except on age, in order to control other factors that could influence results. I choose to focus on middle class, non-religious women that received higher level education (younger generation: two university level, one HBO level; older generation: one university level, two HBO level) and were natively Dutch. These characteristics were chosen because I fit into this category, which made participants most comfortable when talking about their thoughts. Moreover, I wanted to study

the opinions of non-religious (secular) people in the Netherlands, as these people can perceive themselves as standing opposite in their values and opinions in relation to tolerance, and the relationship between religion and the state (as explained earlier). Participants were gathered through acquaintances, as people with the requirements were present in my environment.

Methods and procedure

The generational similarities and differences in Islamophobia were investigated using self-conducted, face to face, semi-structured interviews for which I used critical discourse analysis to analyse the data. Thus, the (manner of) talk of the participants, and the beliefs and ideas behind it (Johnstone, 2017) were used as an important primary source for my thesis. Interviews were the best research strategy because the research question required an examination of how social phenomena are experienced, interpreted and shaped by the reactions of social actors, and interviews provide that (May, 2002).

Participants received an informed consent to sign before the study (see appendix A), in which it was mentioned that their identity would remain anonymous aside from me (Boellstorff, Nardi, Pearce & Taylor, 2012), that it was always possible to withdraw from the research, and what the research was about. It also included what participants could expect while taking part and asked participants to give permission for recording the interviews and to publish their statements in the thesis.

After the informed consent was signed, the interviews were done. The interviews consisted of multiple parts (see appendix B for the full interview guide). Afterwards, the participants were given a debriefing (see appendix C).

Deceptive practices were avoided (Boellstorff, Nardi, Pearce & Taylor, 2012). Participants were told in the informed consent that the interest of the study was towards Dutch values, opinions on minority groups and morals around security. These things were, indeed, what the interview asked questions about. Although it was not specifically mentioned beforehand that I would look at Islamophobia, this was indicated in the notion that my interest was on opinions towards minority groups. Moreover, this was mentioned specifically in the debriefing (Resnik & Finn, 2018).

Strengths and limitations

Some limitations to this research were that objectivity is impossible to achieve (Ratner, 2002). Because interview data is interpretative data (Corbetta, 2003), we cannot be certain that quotes by interviewees are exactly meant as used here. However, research is never

entirely objective, as in any case, the social background of the researcher influences conclusions (Ratner, 2002). The participant pool of this study was rather small to make reliable conclusions (Corbetta, 2003). With three participants in both pools, it cannot be said for certain that results are compatible with the entire population.

The strengths of this research exist of its possibility to collect more in-depth understanding of individuals' opinions and the pools' differences, as these interviews give opportunity to give more undivided attention to each individual's thoughts (Corbetta, 2003). Through interaction, I could gain direct access to the world of the participants, reconstruct the reality of their world and achieve a "vision from within", which some argue to be the only true form of social knowledge (Corbetta, 2003).

Methods of analysis

The conducted interviews were analysed using discourse analysis, where the language used by participants was used as a way to investigate their beliefs and thoughts (Johnstone, 2017). Interpretative phenomenological analysis was used to investigate participant's views of the topic (Smith, et al., 1999). This approach looks at the participant's subjective perception of an event, instead of an objective view of the event, while looking at the way participants make sense of their world, keeping in mind that the researcher also has their own interpretative field (Hennink, 2010). This allowed me to completely understand participant's reasonings and thoughts behind their opinions.

The interviews were transcribed and thematically organized. This was done by assessing the data and looking for patterns among the participants. Moreover, contrasts and similarities between the groups were searched, in order to see whether differences occurred. The themes were compared and linked to the antecedents by Iqbal (2020) that were mentioned in the previous chapter, in order to see whether Islamophobia was indeed present and in which ways. Themes that surfaced but were not anticipated were also used in analysis.

Research positionality

As interviews and critical discourse analysis cannot entirely be done objectively, because interpretative research is subject to the social background of the researcher (Carpenedo, 2021; Ratner, 2002), it is important to discuss the positionality of the researcher in this study. I, myself, am a white, Dutch, highly educated, middle class, secular woman that is 24 years old. My political orientation is far-left, which includes that I vote for equality. This position gives me a biased view towards people's Islamophobic tendencies: I did not agree

with Islamophobic or other discriminatory tendencies. Although I did not express this consciously, it might have happened implicitly, which might have influenced participants' openness in expressing their opinions (Chew-Graham, May & Perry, 2002), but again, this objectivity is impossible as emotions and social background are always involved when trying to understand others (Carpenedo, 2021).

Moreover, I could also be somewhat prejudiced and therefore might not have noticed when some answers were Islamophobic. I tried to avoid this, by constantly reflecting on how my understandings could be influenced by my social background and trying to step away from this, but it is important to keep this in mind when evaluating this research.

Analytical chapter 1: Similarities in Islamophobia across generations

Introduction

Throughout history, discriminatory behaviour and prejudice towards Muslims/Islam have been perceived frequently. In the Netherlands, research has shown that negative feelings towards Muslim are often present in students, politics and law. Specific laws such as the burqa ban have been institutionalized, justified by calling it a “security measure”, which directly affects Muslims’ freedom of religious expression (Iqbal, 2020). It remains unclear, however, which antecedents of Islamophobia are most present in the Netherlands, and why. This chapter focuses on the question “In which ways is Islamophobia specifically shown in the Netherlands amongst non-religious, middle class, highly educated, Dutch females, how do Dutch values contribute to this, and why is Islamophobia presented this way?”. In other words, this chapter will use critical discourse analysis and the antecedents of Islamophobia by Iqbal (2020) to analyse overarching themes of, and the relation of Dutch values to Islamophobia among the two groups studied in this research and theorize about underlying reasons for their presence.

Tolerance in the Netherlands

First of all, when using Iqbal’s (2020) theoretical framework, the perceived sociocultural threats for the Netherlands by Muslims/Islam were important to take into consideration. It was necessary to identify which sociocultural factors participants thought were crucial to the Dutch identity. Therefore, questions regarding their perceptions of Dutch values and which they thought were important were asked. It was noticeable that both generations mentioned that tolerance/acceptance was present in the Netherlands, and important to themselves, specifically. For example, when being asked what she would describe to be (important) Dutch values, Olivia (22) answered:

“And I find it also very important, and maybe that is also a value that I often come across in the Netherlands, that we do not only accept ourselves as Dutch people, but also people from a different background or refugees, or anything like that. That we accept them..”

Hannah (54), additionally, mentioned:

“I find that acceptance is very important. I think that you should be able to be yourselves, and if you are different, that you are just accepted then. And I also find

important that everybody can participate and that we all work to make that possible for each other.”

Every other participant also mentioned some form of tolerance to be very important in the Netherlands. Hence, both generations find tolerance/acceptance important.

Lynch (2014) identified that humanity and nationality are sacred in modern society. He focuses on the West. In his theory, he explains that humanity is about human rights, equality and acceptance. He indicates that in modern society, humanity has become sacred to people as a moral value, and that this is something that people want to incorporate in the world. This is done through, among other things, NGO's and humanitarian organisations. That both generations indicate tolerance/acceptance to be important to themselves and the Netherlands contributes to Lynch's (2014) theory that this is indeed valuable to them, also specifically in the Netherlands.

Interestingly, also, every participant mentioned that they did not think that the Netherlands was tolerant towards every minority group in the Netherlands. They thought that Islamophobia was the most prominent form of intolerance in the Netherlands. Anne (20) mentioned about Islamophobia:

“I think that that is still a very big thing. [...] So I think that regarding that... that people still really have an aversion against that.”

Iris (55) said that she thinks Islamophobia is present in the Netherlands, but she questions to what extent:

“I think that that is one of the religions that Dutch people generally have more issues with than other religions, but whether we are really Islamophobic... I think that regarding that, it is also important how it is shown. So yeah, that if people are Islamic but look a bit Dutch, or act Dutchified, that people have less issues with that, but once it comes coupled with headscarves and such, that many Dutch people find that hard. And I also think that it depends on where you live.”

However, she still mentions that she thinks it is the most present form of intolerance in the Netherlands. In other words, both generations are aware of the presence of Islamophobia in the Netherlands, but also indicate that tolerance is an important value of the Dutch identity, which clashes. This is also explained in Lynch's (2014) work, where he indicates that, although humanity is sacred in the modern Western world, people might still choose to whom this applies. Who is seen as “human” can differ, allowing people to not apply this value to

everyone. Moreover, Lynch explains that it can be believed that it is an application of this humanity-value to impose it onto others, to “save” them, if believed that these “others” differ on this aspect, such as can be the case with Muslims. This might also be the case in the Netherlands. This will be explained more in the following section.

The contradiction of the “tolerant” character of the Netherlands versus how they treat and perceive Islam/Muslims is also indicated by Van der Veer (2006). He shows the ways in which the Netherlands has wanted to incorporate tolerance into every aspect of society, while they also perceive that Muslims/Islam contrast this value and therefore pose a threat to their society and values. This has led Dutch people to become discriminatory and even aggressive towards these “others”. Current results show that, indeed, Dutch people value tolerance, but, still, are not that tolerant towards Muslims as they believe that Islamophobia is the most present form of discrimination in the Netherlands, which affirms Van der Veer’s (2006) work, while we should still investigate whether this intolerance towards Islam/Muslims indeed exists because of the perceived differences between the two cultures.

It is interesting to see in which ways Islamophobia presents itself in the Netherlands, to see why this tolerance contradiction takes place.

Sociocultural threat

Iqbal (2020) discusses the effects of Westerners perceiving threat to the sociocultural environment by Muslims/Islam. He calls this the antecedent of sociocultural threat to Islamophobia. Iqbal argues that once the ingroup of Westerners perceive that the outgroup of Muslims/Islam differs (substantially) regarding values and culture, this might lead to Islamophobia. That is because Muslims become subject to “othering” (Iqbal, 2020), and are perceived as a threat to Western culture, as fear of Islamization arises, and it is believed that the Western culture needs to be protected (Schiffer, 2011, as mentioned in Iqbal, 2020).

Moreover, authors such as Lynch (2014) and Van der Veer (2006) have argued that, while a value of humanity/tolerance might be crucial to the Dutch identity, the intolerance towards Muslims/Islam that is present in the Netherlands might be explained by perceived differences of the importance of this value to each culture. When Dutch people believe that Muslims/Islam are/is not tolerant, while they themselves find this value essential, this explains why it might not be applied to this outgroup, according to Lynch (2014). He argues that the “tolerant” (Western) group wants the “intolerant” group to incorporate humanity into their culture, as a means to “save” those that are in this “intolerant” society. In other words, if participants in this research identify that they perceive Muslims to not share their tolerance-

value, this might explain why Islamophobia is present in the Netherlands. Lynch does, however, not explain whether perceived differences on other values might affect Islamophobia, too. Van der Veer (2006) argues that, in Dutch society, Muslims are perceived as a threat to the unity of the nation because they do not have the same values. He argues that this allows disrespect and aggression towards this outgroup, in order to protect the Dutch nation. If participants in the current study identify to believe that Muslims differ on values (such as tolerance), Islamophobia might be present because of this threat.

It is therefore meaningful to investigate whether the current participant groups identify differences between their ingroup versus the outgroup of Muslims. If that is the case, they might think that Muslims oppose their own, and personally important, values, justifying negative behaviour towards them. When asked to compare Dutch values to Muslim values, Anne (20) said:

“Well, partly, yes [there are differences between Muslim versus Dutch values], and they [Muslims] also take much from their own culture with them [to the Netherlands], of course, so they will have other values, partly, that absolutely. But I also think that, once you live in the Netherlands, that you also take over many things after a while. That you then, a little bit, kind of, really take on those norms and values, once you see it more.”

While Sarah (57) said:

“Yes, certainly. Those [differences] exist plenty, right? That there are many more restrictions, that women are not allowed, and uh... yeah and that..., we are of course raised more freely here. Here, you decide yourself what you want to do, and that is all imposed on you from higher up [in Muslim culture], and uh... yeah that is maybe also really clear, and for us, that of course does not fit in our country anymore.”

Both generations thus mentioned differences.

This can be compared to Huntington's (1996) theory of Clash of Civilizations. Here, Huntington describes how the world's major civilizations (such as the West versus Islam) differ greatly, and conflicts between those are therefore barely avoidable. That is also because such “enemies” are important in creating ingroup identities. Apparently, both generations indeed identify such differences, which can lead to a perception that their civilizations inevitably will clash. This might contribute to the perception that they need to protect their own values, and justify Islamophobia.

Iqbal (2020) also mentions in his framework the aspect of racism on Islamophobia. He explains that it partly contributes to Islamophobia, while it is not one of the main aspects. This form of racism has mostly to do with ideals of cultural and religious factors instead of colour. Iris (55) said, when asked about the influence of dark-skinned people on Dutch society:

“It does matter for me to what extent their culture differs from ours. So I do have more issues with a women wearing a burqa, or something, for example.”

It seems that, in general, both the generations agreed that the Dutch ingroup identity and its culture and values (sociocultural aspects) differed from the Muslim outgroup identity and its culture and values. This is in accord with Lynch (2014), Van der Veer (2006), and Bracke (2012), whom argued that Muslims are seen as inherently different in culture and identity from the tolerant Dutch one. Bracke (2012) argued that Muslims are seen as a danger to the progressive values of the Netherlands towards homosexuals and women, which justifies discrimination towards them. This might also be the case in the current research. The aspects in which participants perceived the differences to occur differed between generations, however. The following chapter will explain more on this subject. For now, it is relevant that both groups perceived differences between the two groups, which allows people to “other” the outgroup of Muslims, which gives rise to and justifies Islamophobia, also to protect their own culture and values. The perceived difference in values, leading to sociocultural threat, is an important theme to keep in mind when considering Islamophobia in the Netherlands.

Security threat: Fear of terrorism

Iqbal (2020) mentions that an antecedent for Islamophobia could be the perception of security threat. This indicates a fear of terrorism, or other forms of aggressive behaviour by Muslims, perceived to be indicated by Islam. It is not unexpected that fear regarding terrorism would be present in the Netherlands, as attacks such as 9/11 made a big impact on Dutch society. These were broadcasted widely and generated fear in people. Moreover, authors have argued that Islamophobic attitudes rise after terrorist attacks, such as happened after 9/11 in the USA (Allen & Nielsen, 2002), France and the UK (Bleich, 2009). This might also indicate that security threat, specifically through (fear of) terrorism, is important in generating Islamophobia. Far-right Dutch politicians like Wilders and Baudet fuel security threat by hate speech (Davison, 2006; Hamelink, 2011; Lanning, 2010), and by linking Qur’an texts with violence and terrorism (Bakali, 2016). Also, security threat leads to Islamophobic societal practices, such as in Sweden (Schclarek Mulinari, 2019; see introduction) and Britain:

counter-terrorism and anti-extremism practices meant to reduce security risks and cultural threats have risen after 9/11, that are actually more focused on the “Muslim” itself, instead of the “terrorist Muslim” (Bonino, 2016).

In this study, it was interesting to see to what extent security threat influenced people’s feelings towards Islam/Muslims. Overall, every participant made clear that they do not feel especially threatened by extremist, conservative terrorist groups, currently. When asked whether they felt threatened by them, Emma (25) said:

“No, only when you see something in the news. Then there has, once again, been a bomb somewhere, and then you always think “Oh I am glad I was not there”. At the same time, it could happen on Utrecht Central just when I am there. But no, I am not consciously focused on it in my daily life.”

Sarah (57) said:

“I do not feel that way myself. But, I do think that we must pay attention to it. That we... that all of us have to be focused and absolutely must not accept it, and also must not uh... let it happen. Yeah... and uhm... yeah I think that you must set your boundaries like “This is really... this is just outrageous” and I do find that important. Yes. And if it is really a threat? No, I do not feel that way myself.”

However, participants did mention in a more veiled way that they perceived some threat regarding their safety and terrorist attacks:

Olivia (22): *“I have also had a period that I did not dare to get into busy spaces. Purely because you hear those stories, and that is scary, but I do not really have that... no.”*

Iris (55): *“You realize it when you go to an airport and you see, like “Oh right. They still have certain measures.” But it does not really influence me, no, I cannot say that.”*

One person made explicit that they felt threatened by Muslims:

Olivia (22): *“Well, that [fear of terrorists] I have more quickly [than a fear of psychopaths], but that is also, uh, because you can... can notice it? That sounds pretty unkind. I told you earlier that I have a fear of flying, and one time I was in an airplane and there was a man sitting in front of me wearing such a robe... like really the clothes that extremist people also wear, such an outfit. That was really a hellish flight.”*

I did not like that. But that is solely because right then those thoughts are going through your head, like “Oh such a person looks the same, so what if...” so that is what I experience then.”

Apparently, both generations experience some security threat, though not all very consciously. Fear of terrorism might thus be important in the Netherlands in generating Islamophobia, which adds to previous findings about the importance of fear of terrorism to Islamophobia, such as the study by Wike and Grim (2010). They showed that security threat is the main contributor to prejudiced attitudes towards Muslims in the UK, France, Germany, Spain, and the USA. Interestingly, those with high perceived security threat also associated Muslims more quickly with negative qualities (i.e. they perceive that Islamist terrorist groups are similar to ordinary Muslims in Europe), contributing to more Islamophobia.

It is interesting to see whether the same feelings hold when talking about attacks by crazy people, to see whether the fear has to do with terrorism by Muslims specifically or more with fear of terrorism and attacks generally. Such attacks by crazy people, can be called lone wolf terrorism. Those are defined as “the use or threat of violence or nonviolent sabotage [...] by an individual acting alone, or with minimal support from one to two other people, to further a political, social, religious, financial or other related goal, or, when not having such an objective, nevertheless has the same effect upon government and society in terms of creating fear and/or disrupting daily life and/or causing government and society to react with heightened security and/or other responses” (Simon, 2016, p. 26). They are thus not organised by extremist organisations, but are perpetrated by the individuals acting alone, though such individuals may be informed by these organisations (Spaij, 2012). It can be seen that there were some differences in this regard; participants generally thought less often of possibilities of attacks by psychopaths, and were less afraid of it.

Olivia (22): “I do not think that I necessarily have a feeling at every corner of the street as if like “Oh, maybe that is a psychopath”. No, I do not have that very much.”

Interviewer: “And do you experience that the same with terrorism?”

Olivia (22): “Well, yes I do experience that more easily. [...] I mean, you can be a psychopath, you do not know. So then I would have to be afraid of everything and everyone. Then I am more inclined to be afraid of something I can

recognize in the person [which is being Muslim by clothing and ethnicity], let's say."

Iris (55) said regarding fear of terrorism:

"Well, when there were more attacks in the Netherlands, I found that a little bit tense at some point, of course"

But regarding fear of attacks by psychopaths she said:

"No [I am not afraid of that], because that is so... that are such things that you cannot control. That is something that can happen all of the sudden, then it is just your fate. So no, not necessarily [...]."

That people think more often about attacks by Muslim organisations, in comparison to attacks by individuals, is interesting as previous studies have shown the importance of the remembrance of certain terrorist attacks on increases in prejudice. Islamophobia rose after 9/11 in the USA (Allen & Nielsen, 2002), UK and France (Bleich, 2009). In this study, Muslim organisations were more influential in generating fear of terrorism than crazy individuals, as participants were more fixed on the previous, which thus might also lead to more Islamophobia in the Netherlands.

Interestingly, on one hand, the presence of this fear thus influences the saliency of the "us versus them" mentality, by creating reason for one to think that the outgroup of Muslims is more different (violent) from the ingroup of Western, Dutch people (as these are framed to be non-violent; Iqbal, 2020). On the other hand, however, the salience of this "the ingroup of non-violent Western, Dutch people versus the violent outgroup of Muslims"-mentality, makes this negative thought of Muslims much more present in the participant's lives than the negative thoughts of the outgroup of psychopaths (as the salience of this in- versus outgroup mentality is much less present). This effect is thus a spiral leading to more and more Islamophobia.

Taken together, fear of terrorism is, in both generations, a more implicit theme to Islamophobia. Results show that security threat is also present in the Netherlands, same as in other countries (Wike & Grimm, 2010). Fear in this regard instigates Islamophobia in the Netherlands, same as was shown by the increase of Islamophobia after 9/11 in the USA (Allen & Nielsen, 2002), UK and France (Bleich, 2009). Fear leads to ingroup versus outgroup salience, while fear is also caused by this salience. It is a spiral of Islamophobia. Importantly, security threat might lead to Islamophobic policies and practices in the

Netherlands such as in the UK (Bonino, 2016) and Sweden (Schclarek Mulinari, 2019), which, again, lead to more Islamophobia (Bonino, 2016). The theme of security threat and specifically fear of terrorism is important to keep in mind, as it was important to both generations in the current study.

Imposing the religion of Islam

Terrorism can be defined as a violent attack by an identifiable organization, with at least one non-state actor as the perpetrator, victim or both, involving political aims and motives, designed to generate fear in a target audience that extends beyond the immediate victims of the violence, and that is organized to create power for the responsible organization, for which this power previously lacked (Lutz & Lutz, 2011). In the case of Islamic terrorism, it can be said that the political aim would be to persuade the state and its people to convert to the Islam way of life. Terrorism is also linked to Jihad (Iqbal, 2020), which is the sacred war mentioned in the Qur'an in which non-Muslim people must be convinced to convert to Islam. Fear of terrorism can therefore be linked to the belief that Islam justifies and even instigates terrorism and violence. Moreover, it can be linked to the belief that Muslims want to impose their religion onto Western people.

This belief has also been mentioned by other authors as a way in which Islamophobia can be caused. Ekman (2016) explains in his work how Islamophobia is created through discourses in the media and politics that focus on, among other things, the “silent infiltration of Islam” in the West (p. 1993) and how “Muslims are imposing Sharia law on Western societies” (p. 1993). Such discourses might create the idea that Muslims try to impose their religion onto Dutch society (in this case), which allows Islamophobia. Moreover, Poole (2016) mentions that Islamophobia is also present in the UK and that the British media poses that the British tolerance is abused by ““them” as they seek to impose their way of life on “us”” (p. 31). Again, the theme of “imposing their religion on us” is mentioned.

That “Muslims try to impose their religion onto Dutch people” often came forth in the current research. Both generations mentioned that Muslims should not try to convince others of their religion, but accept that people have their own beliefs. It was interesting that when some participants were asked what they thought Islam encompassed, participants said things like:

Sarah (57): *“They [Muslims] believe in Allah of course, in uh, yeah... and then I also think like, uh.... For them, it is fasting and I think that that is fine if they believe in that, but they should not expect us to do the same.”*

Hannah (54): *“I have an issue when it [Islam] is imposed or something, or a feeling like, that what I do, or what I believe – I am not very religious – that that is less good or is inferior [to Islam][...]”*

These participants were inclined to think about Muslims/Islam as people/a religion that tries to impose itself onto others when they were asked what Islam encompassed, even though nothing in this regard was mentioned or hinted on earlier in the interview. Apparently, this was something that they thought about easily when the contents of Islam were asked. Indeed, this theme of “imposing their way of life on us” is also present in the Netherlands, just as it is mentioned to be in the UK (Poole, 2016).

Moreover, one younger participant said, when talking about the existence of Islamophobia in the Netherlands, and being asked what she thought of this being present in the Netherlands:

Emma (25): *“No, no [I do not like that this exists in the Netherlands]. The only thing I find scary is that somebody [Muslim] is going to impose to me that I should do it as well. That [fear] I do have. But I do not think that will happen, so that is not... it is... is not realistic in my head.”*

Sarah (57) mentioned this when she spoke of the integration of Muslims in the Netherlands:

“I find that they [Muslims] may have their own norms and values. However, you must.... You [a Muslim immigrant] should go along with it [the culture of the Netherlands], you should learn the language and you should understand other people, and uh, yeah that we do not believe in that [Islam].”

In summary, the theme of Muslims imposing their religion onto others came forth in both generations, and is apparently something important to them. Interestingly, not all researchers on Islamophobia mention this theme as important. Green (2019) in his explanation of Islamophobia focuses mostly on the ways Islam can be seen as a threat in Western society, but does not specifically mention that Muslims can be perceived as trying to impose their religion onto these Western societies. The current study shows the importance of this theme.

It can be interesting to link this view of Muslims to the values which people found important and inherent to the Dutch identity, namely tolerance/acceptance. As mentioned before, both generations mentioned these values to be important to them. It could be argued that the belief that Muslims want to convince others of their religion, stands in contrast to the

Dutch value of tolerance/acceptance. That is because it can be viewed that Muslims do not accept others because they have a different religion. Olivia (22) actually mentions this:

“When I look at my niece for instance, she is only accepted in the family of her [Muslim] boyfriend when she converts [to Islam]. Look, I seriously have issues with that. Then I seriously think like “Okay, so she is actually pushed to join you, because otherwise...” yeah, again the case of “We [Muslims] are not open, you have to join us, otherwise...” , you know, then I am really done with it. So, yeah, I really have issues with that, and then I do understand well that people also feel like “Yeah, sorry, but... you guys apparently cannot accept our ways of living, why would we accept you?”. I understand that.”

This contrast of values explains in some regard the previously mentioned perceived difference between Muslim versus Dutch culture. This is important in creating the “Us versus them” principle of “Othering”, as mentioned by Iqbal (2020). In other words, the ingroup identity versus outgroup identity, according to SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), leading to negative behaviour and thus causing Islamophobia. Moreover, Lynch’s (2014) and Van der Veer’s (2006) theories that perceived intolerance by Muslims, while tolerance is important to Western/Dutch society, leads to Islamophobia, indicates that this might also be the reason why both generations indicate Islamophobia to be present in the Netherlands.

It is important to mention, though, that Olivia (22) also mentioned that she did not feel like Muslims wanted to impose their religion onto people:

Olivia (22): “Maybe because they [Muslims] are like... “Yeah this is our circle and we do not necessarily want people to join that are not... well, did not grew up in it or something.”.”

Interviewer: “Because you do not feel like they really try to... impose things onto people or something?”

Olivia (22): “No, no I do not think that, necessarily.”

This contrasted with what she said at other times, such as in the earlier quote, where she mentions that Muslims try to convince people to join them because they otherwise will not accept them. Olivia (22) made clear that she felt that Muslims were not very open towards people with other religions and only accept people that are Muslim, too. She also explained, as mentioned in the earlier quote, that she felt like Muslims pushed people to convert to Islam

because they would not accept them otherwise. However, she mentions too, that this so-called unacceptability of Muslims towards non-Muslims leads them to be less open to others to join in Islam. Again, this is a contradiction, from which I theorize she was not sure herself that she totally agreed with. In my point of view, Olivia (22) did think that Muslims try to impose their religion because they will not accept non-Muslims, but she also believed that this unacceptability of non-Muslims leads to less contact with non-Muslims. I theorize that she believed that, when Muslims do eventually come into contact with non-Muslims, they try to impose their religion on them, because otherwise the contact would be eliminated.

Additionally, this belief regarding Muslims has been compared by some participants to the extent to which this belief was held regarding Christians. Interestingly, some people thought that Christians were less inclined to try to impose their religion onto others than Muslims were. Emma (25), when asked what she thought Islam encompassed, actually started comparing it with Christianity without any instruction to do so.

“Well, I always find that Christianity is pretty similar [to Islam] regarding norms and values, funnily enough. [...] The only thing I find scary of Islam is that they really have the... the, the... they really want to spread their religion and make other people Islam, as well. And I have the idea that Islam is somewhat more extreme in that regard than other religions. So I do find that, when Islam is in the Netherlands... but I have the idea that Islam in the Netherlands is much more moderate in that regard than the Islam you find in the East. So I always think like... yeah, you come to live here with a certain religion, but I also think... because... you are not supposed to start conveying everyone that lives in that place that they should also have that religion.”

Solely one person, Iris (55), did not mention anything regarding inclination of religion(s) to impose it on others. Additionally, only one person from the younger generation, Anne (20), mentions that she felt like this in regard to any and all religions, not solely Muslims:

“[It is okay to show your religion in public] As long as you do not try to provoke people. But that is something I feel towards every religion. I think that you should appreciate everyone and that that is fine. [...] That they will not actively be like “I have a headscarf, why don’t you?”, because then it will certainly go wrong, that you know for sure.”

Still, the majority of both generations mentioned that they believed that Muslims specifically tried to convince others to join their religion and might only accept these others if they do so, showing the importance of this theme.

In sum, the belief that (Islam instigates) Muslims try to impose their religion onto Western, Dutch people, was shown to be present in both generations. This can be linked to negative feelings towards Muslims and Islam and thus lead to more Islamophobia. That is because it contradicts the perceived Dutch ingroup identity that reflects acceptability/tolerance, and because it may lead to fear regarding terrorism and/or fear regarding sociocultural values and threats, as Iqbal (2020) explains in his framework. The media might be important in creating this idea, as mentioned by Ekman (2016). The discourses he presents might indeed create the belief that Muslims try to impose their religion onto Dutch society. However, while the work of Ekman (2016) explains which specific discourses create such fear, these discourses are not necessarily repeated by the participants in this study. Here, people just generally believe that Muslims want others to become Muslim too, or at least they fear that Muslims want to do this and that Islam indicates them to do so. The theme of “imposing” should be incorporated in Islamophobia explanations, as it was shown to be important for both generations in this research.

Media

As to why participants believe that Muslims try to impose their religion and why fear of terrorism is implicitly shown, both generations mention that the media add important information in this regard and influences their thoughts, just as Ekman (2016) theorized. This section will focus on that.

The media play an important role in shaping people’s feelings and attitudes towards Islam, as it informs people’s understanding of it (Belinda, 2016, as mentioned in Iqbal, 2020). Mediatization theory by Hjarvard (2008) suggests that media has become increasingly important in shaping all spheres of modern society. The media thus shapes social and cultural processes. Iqbal (2020) discusses the influence of media on the perceptions of security and sociocultural threat. He argues that the media stimulates fear of Muslims by presenting them as “others” (Iqbal, 2020; Silva, 2016). Discourses that put Islam and Muslims in a negative perspective are often used by the media to emphasize differences between the Islam and the West. These discourses allow people to gather only certain information about the contents of Islam, and therefore create a narrow understanding of it according to these negative views. That is because the media currently is the primary source of information about religious issues

in society (Hjarvard, 2008), while the media also shapes religious experiences according to popular media genres (as mentioned in Lövheim & Lynch (2011)). These negative views are contrasted by the media against the “great” West, thus contrasting the ingroup identity of the West against the outgroup of Islam. Moreover, these discourses allow fear to grow because Islam is, according to them, a danger to the Westerner culture and general safety. This all creates Islamophobia (Iqbal, 2020).

The interviews of this research showed that both generations were at least somewhat influenced by the media, and believed the media to play an important role in creating Islamophobia. First of all, we can argue that both generations formed (some of) their knowledge of Islam based on media. Hannah (54) answered, when asked whether she could describe more clearly what she meant about something she mentioned to be connected to Islam:

“Well, some time ago, we watched a series, I do not remember now what it was called. There were five Muslim girls that grew up in the Netherlands and how different they were... different things were featured... For example, something was about that it seemed really self-evident that she as a woman would move with him to Saudi Arabia because he was going to work there, and then some connections from Saudi Arabia came to have dinner with them, and then it went like “Maybe you can wear this, or serve this as dinner” but in the end, when those two were talking with each other, it turned out that he as a man did not find it self-evident that she went with him and... so then it was all straightened or something.”

Apparently, this series shaped her knowledge of Islam. This was also made clear by Olivia (22) when she was asked about terrorism in the news:

“That is indeed one of those things were I think like “Yes, that happens in that religion”. I hear that so often.”

And she mentioned that her feelings of safety were influenced by such discourses in the media:

Olivia (22): “I have had a period that I did not dare to go to busy spaces. Purely because you hear stories, and that is scary [...].”

Interviewer: “And where did you hear such stories?”

Olivia (22): "On the news. So that is once again the media. It is again the media that shapes a certain thought in your head, which can maybe lead to you getting anxiety, or form an opinion in certain matters."

Anne (20) said about the influence of media on Islamophobia:

"I think that that [Islamophobia] is still a very big thing. Yeah, that is just, Islam is often represented as something bad. Also, often in the news you can see that, if you see Islam, then it is I.S. [Islamic State] and such things that you see. So those are always the bad people."

So, participants of both generations agree that media influences, at least in some way, (their) knowledge on Islam and thereby also Islamophobic tendencies. Authors such as Ahmed and Matthes (2016), Akbarzadeh and Smith (2005), and Poole and Richardson (2006) have previously claimed that the media is showing negative representations of Muslims and Islam, same as both generations seem to indicate. Moreover, Akbarzadeh and Smith (2005) mention the implicit effects of this type of media coverage of Islam and Muslims on their readers; how it can shape their knowledge and understandings of it in negative ways. Their study focused on the Australian context, but results seem to indicate that this is also true in the Netherlands.

The influence of media on people's knowledge of Islam can, secondly, be seen by the differences in knowledge on Islam, Christianity and Judaism. It was remarkable that, when participants were asked about their knowledge on the contents of each religion, Judaism was the one religion which both generations mentioned to know little to nothing about. Anne (20) said:

"I am not very familiar with Judaism. We had... at home we went to the synagogue once with school to experience it, but the Jewish community at our village solely exists of two people throughout the whole village. So, it was very hard to really learn something about that. So I do not know very much about it, actually."

Emma (25) mentioned

"For me, that is almost the same as Christianity. I think it is a little bit different, but I would not know what the difference is. For me, Judaism, you directly link it with the second world war, of course."

Sarah (57) said, when asked if she knew what Judaism encompasses

"No, I actually do not know that."

In contrast, when asked about Islam or Christianity, both generations always had something to say about their contents. In regard to Christianity, this was not surprising, as all older generation participants were raised with Christian parents, and all younger generation had grandparents that were or had been Christian. Regarding Islam, however, this was surprising, as not everyone mentioned to have been in real contact with Muslims or to have followed some kind of education in this regard. This is where a generational difference occurs, which I will discuss in the next chapter. For now, it is important to acknowledge that it is reasonable to theorize that, because both generations mentioned to have no knowledge on Judaism, but they did regarding Islam, a logical source of their knowledge to Islam would be the media.

Thus, the negative influence of media's discourses on Islam/Muslims (somewhat) influenced both generations in their knowledge on the subject, making them believe they knew what it stood for, and forming some (implicit) negative assumptions about Muslims. The current case seems to fit with mediatisation theory (Hjarvard, 2008); Islamic or Muslim happenings are framed according to popular media genres on Islam and Muslims (which are often negative), making the primary source of information people have on Islam and Muslims negatively shaped, making people's understandings of it negative. This justifies negative feelings towards Muslims and Islam. This is linked to in- versus outgroup saliency, such as explained by Iqbal (2020) and SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). That is because the media presents Islam and Muslims as entirely different from the idealized Western identity, contrasting it. Results of this include that the ingroup identity of the West, and in this case specifically the Netherlands, is strengthened, and the outgroup identity of Muslims is shaped with less variability and more negative stereotyping, allowing for a great contrast between the two, justifying negative behaviour and opinions regarding this outgroup in ways explained earlier. This theme was important for both generations.

An important factor, however, is also the amount of contact participants have had with Muslim people, as this allowed them to learn more about Islam through less biased ways. In the following chapter, I will show that this makes for differences between the generations and their Islamophobia.

Conclusion

The current chapter focused upon the antecedents regarding Islamophobia that were similar in both generations. The main question in this chapter was "In which ways is Islamophobia specifically shown in the Netherlands amongst non-religious, middle class, highly educated, Dutch females, how do Dutch values contribute to this, and why is

Islamophobia presented this way?”. First, it was shown that there was indeed a contradiction in both generations claiming to find tolerance/acceptance an important value of the Netherlands, but also agreeing that Islamophobia was very present in the country. Using the framework of antecedents of Islamophobia by Iqbal (2020) and SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), and taking in mind the interviews from this study, it was shown that both generations identified contrasts in culture and values between Islam and the Netherlands. This is something that can lead to clashes and Islamophobia, and allows people to “other” the outgroup of Muslims, while it also gives justification of discrimination in order to “protect” their own values. Secondly, it was clear that there was a more implicit influence of fear of terrorism in both generations. It was shown that an Islamophobic spiral was created by the saliency of the in- versus outgroup mentality regarding Dutch Westerners versus Muslims and the fear regarding terrorism, and that the latter is linked to Muslim organisations. Another similar theme across the generations was the belief that Muslims try to impose their religion onto Western, Dutch people, or that Islam instigates Muslims to do this. This leads to Islamophobia as it may lead to fear regarding terrorism and/or fear regarding sociocultural values and threats, and it is contrasted against the (perceived) Dutch ingroup identity of acceptability/tolerance.

Regarding why these themes came up, both generations mentioned the media as an important factor in shaping people’s (negative) thoughts and knowledge on Islam/Muslims. Media focuses mostly on presenting Islam and Muslims in negative, stereotyped ways, and contrasts this to positive Western discourses. This leads to negative perceptions of Islam/Muslims, and justification of negative feelings and behaviour to it/them. It gives, moreover, rise to in- versus outgroup saliency regarding Dutch Westerners and Muslims, also allowing negativity towards this outgroup.

All themes above showed to be important for both generations in shaping Islamophobia in the Netherlands, showing some of the applicability of Iqbal’s (2020) framework of Islamophobia. However, as the following chapter will explain, the framework is not complete, as it does not take into account the generational differences of Islamophobia that are important.

Analytical chapter 2: Differences in Islamophobia across generations

Introduction

After discussing the general themes and similarities of Islamophobia, this chapter will focus on the differences between the younger participant group (age: 18-25), and the older one (age: 50-65). The main question investigated will be “What is the effect of age and generation on Islamophobia amongst non-religious, middle class, highly educated, Dutch females, how do Dutch values contribute to this, and why does this happen?”. Theories by Iqbal (2020) and Tajfel and Turner (1979) and discourse analysis will be used to identify and explain antecedents in which differences occur.

It can be expected that differences between generations and their Islamophobia (not only the extent to which it is shown, but also the general themes and reasons behind it) occur, as studies have shown that older people tend to show more prejudiced behaviour, as their control of cognitive abilities have lessened in comparison to a younger generation (Gonsalkorale, Sherman & Klauer, 2009; Stewart, Hippel & Radvansky, 2009). Moreover, contact with a minority group gives opportunity to decrease prejudice. As there are significantly less Muslims in the Netherlands that are similar in age as the older generation versus the younger generation (Unknown, 2020), it is likely that the older generation had less contact with Muslims than the younger participant group, and therefore had less opportunity to expend their (positive) knowledge of Islam, which has led to more prejudiced views.

Sociocultural threat: Gender equality

The previous chapter talked about the common belief that the outgroup of Muslims differ from the ingroup of Dutch people regarding culture and values, and how this might lead to Islamophobia. As mentioned before, it is often believed that Muslims/Islam are/is against Western values and norms (Allen, 2010); they are often perceived to be intolerant of other religions (Iqbal, 2020) and homosexuals (Bracke, 2012), to be violent (Bakali, 2016), and to often violate human rights (Iqbal, 2020), their religion is believed to be overly political (Selby, 2011), and – important for this chapter – Islam is believed to bolster gender-based discrimination, while Muslims are believed to oppress women because of this (Bakali, 2016; Iqbal, 2010; Selby, 2011). These contrast the values that are often considered to be Western and Dutch and therefore justify Islamophobic behaviour.

In the previous chapter, participants were shown to identify tolerance/acceptance as an important Dutch value, and, indeed, held the belief that Muslims might be less accepting and

tolerant as they try to impose their religion on others. Also present in this study, was the view that Islam perpetuates gender-based discrimination and that Muslims oppress women. While both generations agreed on differences between Dutch versus Muslim culture and values, differences occurred on this aspect. It is interesting that, without any inclination in this regard, Iris (55) mentioned the following things when asked about the contents of Islam:

“I went to Malaysia about ten years ago, that is a Muslim country, but rather... not very conservative. And we were in a hotel the first few nights where, concerning Kuala Lumpur, were a lot of locals, and then I do get annoyed that those men walk in shorts, and the women are all veiled. So then I notice in myself something like “Yeah, but I do not find that to be fair.”, despite the fact that I also saw women with cell phones and that were in MacDonalds and drove cars. So it also was not that bad I think, but, yeah... I find that hard. I think that of every religion where the oppression of women... [...] And I also notice that in myself, that if you live in the Netherlands, that I find difficult, like, how much... we are a free country on the one hand, so you can look each way you want to, but on the other hand I think that it just does not correspond with my values, that somebody walks around all veiled, and that somebody cannot pursue a certain profession and such things.”

Sarah (57) talked about that she believed that the different lifestyle of Muslims versus Europeans led to less support for the war in Syria than the war in Ukraine. When asked which differences she meant, she said:

“[...] those girls, that they are still..., the women are oppressed. Yeah, that is, of course, a completely different world that we do not know [...]”

Hannah (54) also mentioned this value of feminism and how Islam and Muslims might differ from it.

“When it concerns extreme values, that does not correspond very much [with Dutch values], because [...] if you cannot drive a car as a women, or may not work or... than I think “Well, how ridiculous? Nonsense.”, and then it absolutely does not correspond, but I do not know if that necessarily is similar everywhere in that religion, or that these are outliers. That is a bit of the feeling I have.”

She, however, did explain that she was not sure whether she believed this to be an all-Muslim contrasting value. It is something that she noticed, though, and found important. It might still

shape her thoughts about Muslims.

In contrast, the younger generation participants rarely mentioned anything regarding feminism, Islam showing gender-discrimination, or Muslims oppressing women. Only Emma (25) mentioned something in this regard.

“For example, in extreme Islam, that the women is seen as inferior to men. I find that equality, for example, very important, so I think that is weird. That that is still the case. So then I can feel something like “Hey, it is your culture” and such. But I do have an issue sometimes with that true faith, that those women in those countries also think that is fine. I also had a discussion about this with someone the other day. They said like “Those women are used to that, they want that. That is in their culture.”. And I do have issues with believing that, because it so does not correspond with your views. And I am also aware of, but I still think like “Yeah, if you are in the Netherlands, and you become a Dutch citizen...” I do not find you can suddenly treat women like garbage, because that just does not belong here.”

However, as this is still one of the three participants of the generation, we can derive that the majority of younger generation did not think of the treatment of women as a value-difference between Muslims and Dutch people, whereas all older generation participants thought of this. Apparently, differences in this perception arise.

Moss, O’Brien and Blodorn (2019) showed the importance of this value to Islamophobia. They did two experiments that showed that the more people believed that Muslims valued gender equality less, the more prejudice they reported, whereas when participants were shown evidence of support by Muslims to women’s rights, prejudice and desire for social distance decreased. In other words, value-sharing is important for reducing prejudice, while perceived differences in values lead to Islamophobia, and gender equality was an important value in this regard. While their study shows that the currently found perceived value-difference on gender-equality leads to Islamophobia, the current study also shows that generations differ in the extent to which they think of this.

Moreover, Bracke (2012) argued that the perceived difference between Muslim culture/identity and the Dutch culture/identity regarding gender and sexuality equality, led to threat perceptions on those tolerant values, justifying discrimination. The current results show that this perceived threat to gender equality was mostly present in the older generation, and therefore there might be more Islamophobia in this generation. Apparently, there are generational differences on this aspect. This should be implemented in future research and

models.

Iqbal (2020) also explains in his framework how the “Us versus Them” mentality can lead to rejection of sociocultural traits of Muslims such as headscarves and mosques, as these represent the Islam outgroup culture (Bleich, 2012), and thus a rejection of (and threat to) the Western ingroup culture (Cesari, 2013; Fregosi, 1998; Maussen, 2007). Interestingly, Iris (55) mentioned a certain Muslim aspect that symbolized anti-feminism for her, and that led to some kind of rejection by her.

“Well, totally fine that she just wears a head... nice that she just could wear her headscarf in class, that I do not find difficult, but she participated in society and I think everybody should have that right. That is why I find it stands as a symbol when somebody wears a burqa and cannot participate in society, it feels like that, and that gives rise to resistance in me.”

Apparently, a burqa symbolized gender inequality for her, as well as an inability to participate in society. Iris (55) forms certain opinions on certain Muslim women and Muslim culture and values based on the appearances of a Muslim woman. Moreover, she specifically mentions that this leads to resistance and rejection in her. In other words, she admits to having some Islamophobic tendencies when she sees women in burqas, based on the view that Muslims differ in their values regarding women and that burqas symbolize this. Other participants did not mention this perception.

Previous studies have shown that the visibility of the veil may lead to discrimination towards Muslims women in the UK, as it represents submission, passivity and little power in the eyes of Western people, which makes them easy targets, while making them seem more threatening than Muslim men that are harder to identify (Chakraborti & Zempi, 2011). The current study indicates that, in the Netherlands, it might not be the veil, but a complete burqa that creates this view. However, this should be investigated more as it was solely shown in one participant in this study.

Reasons that the majority of younger generation participants did not think of the treatment of women as a value-difference between Muslims and Dutch people, while all older generation participants thought of this, might be that the amount of contact the younger generation had with Muslims is higher than the amount the older generation had. Therefore, the younger generation might have learned from experience with Muslims that gender inequality is not necessarily Muslim, while the older generation thinks so, as the media focuses on this. Previous studies have shown that the news in the U.S. indicates that Muslims

are inherently sexist, which shapes attitudes towards Muslims while it also influences policies that involve Muslims (Terman, 2017). Hasan (2012) also argued that “gendered Islamophobia” (the discourse of representing Islam as inherently gender oppressive, and Muslim women as oppressed by it; Zine, 2004, p. 117, as mentioned in Hasan (2012)) is very much present, while women do not fare very well in the doctrinal teachings of other world religions too. Those religions, however, are prejudiced to a lesser extent based on this perception, or are not perceived to be against gender equality at all. Hasan (2012) argues that that is the case because those religious traditions are not at the forefront of media and academics, while Islam is. He also argued that the belief that Islam is against women’s rights is the result of inadequate knowledge on Islam.

Studies have also shown that highly prejudiced Australians were significantly more likely to have concerns about gender equality within the Muslim community, and to report that Muslims were not conforming to Australian values, while scoring higher on reporting negative media-related beliefs (Pedersen & Hartley, 2012). It seems that, indeed, the media plays an important role in shaping such beliefs, while prejudice is dependent on the belief that Muslims differ in the value of gender equality. The current research shows that this belief is also present in the Netherlands, but differs in presence across generations.

Taking these studies together, it is very possible that solely receiving information on Islam/Muslims through the news affects the perceived value-difference of gender-equality, while it might affect those that also have contact with Muslims less. This generational difference will be explained more thoroughly in the “contact” section.

Another reason that perceptions on gender-equality in the Muslim community differ might be that younger generations are possibly more aware of Islamic feminism. That is, feminism through new readings and interpretations of Qur’an to give feminism an Islamic voice (Badran, 2005; Moghadam, 2002). It uses the equality of all human beings as mentioned in the Qur’an (*insān*) to proclaim equality of women and men across the public and private domain (Badran, 2005). It views and proclaims that genuine Islam calls for equal status of women and men in the household and in society (Moghadam, 2002), and should therefore be implemented. Thus, Muslims might also support gender-equality, and Islam might also proclaim this. If the younger generation is more aware of the existence of this line of thought than the older generation, they might be less inclined to believe that Muslims/Islam differs on the value of gender-equality. The current study does not reveal whether this is the reason for the generational differences, but future research should study that.

In sum, generational differences between the two groups arose in such a way that the

older generation was more focused on a perceived value-difference between the ingroup of Dutch people versus the outgroup of Muslims regarding gender equality than the younger generation. This perceived value-difference between the ingroup of Dutch people versus the outgroup of Muslims gives rise to Islamophobia, as a means to protect Dutch culture and because of differences in opinions. These views might be shaped by the media. This theme and its differences is important to acknowledge when studying Islamophobia and making interventions (in the Netherlands).

Terrorist threat: collective memories

The previous chapter has focused on the similarities regarding fear of terrorism across the two generations. It was clear that, implicitly, there was a tendency of people to fear terrorism by Muslims. The current study does not specifically show whether one generation has more fear than the other, but it could be that such generational differences are present, if generations have different reasonings behind the development of such threat perceptions. Such reasonings can be shaped by memories of previous terrorist attacks.

Previous studies have shown the importance of collective memories of (national) traumas on people's perceived threat and fear (Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal, 2006). When people remember certain events, these shape their fear of future attacks according to these specific events. Hence, if different events are remembered, security threat may take different shapes. Also shown in earlier studies, is that generations may differ in which memories they hold of important events in history. In 1989, participants of different ages were asked which events they found particularly important (for society) in the last 50 years, and mentioned events that took place during their adolescence/early adulthood, which thus led to different events being mentioned (Schuman & Scott, 1989). In other words, collective memories of important events differ per generation. Importantly, traumatic events such as terrorist attacks can become part of collective memory (of generations; Hirschberger, 2018).

In sum then, because of such different generational collective memories, different shapes of security threat might arise between the generations because they remember different terrorist attacks, which might account for different reasonings for and shapes of Islamophobia. It is therefore important to see whether the generations in this study indeed show such different collective memories of terrorist attacks.

It could be seen that there was some difference in this regard. When participants were asked which events impacted their feelings of safety in the Netherlands, different things were mentioned. It was notable that Iris (55) mentioned 9/11:

“[...] well, 9/11, of course, was pretty tense. Closely after, I flew to Mexico through America and I found the stress people experienced... very intense to see. [...] then you do realize like “Dear, the world changed.”.”

In the younger generation, however, 9/11 was never mentioned. As the older generation were in their thirties, and the younger generation was either not born or still an infant during 9/11, its impact differed. Importantly, though, solely one older-generation participant mentioned this event, so apparently it was not that notable for every older generation participant.

On the other hand, there was another event that took place while the younger generation was in their adolescence. Namely, the attacks in Paris in 2015. It is striking that two participants of the younger generation referred to this attack, whereas none of the older generation participants mentioned this event. Emma (25) mentioned, when talking about the threat of terrorist attacks:

“What has always stuck, is that soccer stadium in Paris, for example.”

Olivia (22) mentioned:

Olivia (22): “Yes, I always have fear. I remember, a few years ago, that the threat was rather high. [...]”

Interviewer: “[...], could you maybe mention a year [...]?”

Olivia (22): “When would that have been? That is a few years ago, I think 2015, 2016, something like that. That then uh... what had happened then? Somewhere, there had been a... a.... There was a big threat.”

It is plausible that Olivia (22) refers to the attacks on Paris that happened in 2015, as it was the largest terrorist attack to happen in the West during that time. This event influenced the safety perceptions and/or perceived threat of terrorism of the younger generation participants. No participants from the older generation mentioned the attacks in Paris. Indeed, some events are more important for one generation than another, as Schuman and Scott (1989) showed.

Neal (1998), same as Schuman and Scott (1989), draws the conclusion that late adolescence/early adulthood are important years in which the traumatic events of society influence future remembrance and behaviour, which then leads to different collective memories per generation. It is argued that this is because, during these years, many major life decisions are made at the individual level, which leaves people in hyper-receptivity to events

that occur in their communities/nation. National traumas during the formative years tend to have a disproportionate effect on each generation (Neal, 1998).

Schuman and Rodgers (2004) also showed that events that take place during the formative years remain important throughout people's entire lives: older adults mentioned mostly the same events – those that happened during their formative years – as important to society as they did 15 years earlier, even though other important events had taken place in between these years. The current study showed that, indeed, the frame of adolescence/early adulthood is so important that people that were in later adulthood (the older generation) during certain events (Paris), were less inclined to mention these events than people that were of this critical age (the younger generation) during the attacks. It also makes sense that the younger generation did not mention 9/11 while the older generation did, because 9/11 took place before the younger generation had reached their formative years, while the older generation was in their thirties during this event.

The current study shows that, also here, the collective memories of generations, and thus the traumas, differ, in that terrorist events that took place during each generation's adolescence/early adulthood were thought of when thinking about terrorism, which shaped each generation's fear of terrorism differently.

Different generational collective memories can have consequences on the behaviour of each group. Studies have shown that collective memories inform people in their future behaviour, such as their political positions (Neal, 1998). For example, when the US Senate discussed the Gulf War, older Senate members used their experiences with World War II to shape their opinions; they saw similarities between Saddam Hussein and Hitler and argued against any form of compromise, whereas those that were Vietnam veterans worried, among other things, about the long-term implications of the involvement of Americans. Collective memories of each generation thus inform opinions and behaviour. It might therefore be that Islamophobia also presents itself differently in the generations, as they take different types of events into account and base their conclusions and behaviour on that.

In the younger generation, the impact of the attacks in Paris was much greater than it was for the older generation, and results point to that there might also be an effect in which 9/11 was more impactful for the older generation than the younger generation. These results, showing different collective memories in each generation, and thus fear of terrorism based on different traumas, might affect Islamophobia. Previous studies have shown the importance of (remembered) terrorist attacks on specifically Islamophobia: Borell's (2015) literature review showed that Islamophobic attitudes seem mostly to be event-driven and reactive. Events that

are explicitly important are terrorist attacks. Borell (2015) explains that prejudice towards Islam/Muslims flare up after such events, but subside again in calmer times, although to a relatively high level. Moreover, Sheridan and Gillet (2005) showed that in the UK, after 9/11, British Muslims showed a significant increase in the number of perceived hate crimes, while Sikhs, Hindus, Jews and Christians did not. 9/11 affected the daily lives of British Muslims in such a way that 74% said that they experienced an increase in open abuse, and 17% had personal experience of violence (Sheridan, 2006). In Spain, Echebarria-Echabe and Fernandez-Guede (2006; 2007) measured anti-Arab prejudice (which can be compared to Islamophobia) before and after the terrorist attack in Madrid, where they showed a strong increase in anti-Muslims prejudice after the attacks. In sum, the specific terrorist attacks participants mention/remember show the differences in collective memories between the generations, showing that they experience different traumas, which impact the fear of terrorism they experience, and reactions are Islamophobic.

Altogether, it can be concluded that differences in the fear of terrorism existed through which events affected it. In the younger generation, the impact of the attacks in Paris was much greater than it was for the older generation, and results point to that there might also be an effect in which 9/11 was more impactful for the older generation than the younger generation. Events that happen when people are in their adolescence/young adulthood are impactful on their collective memories and thereby their fear of terrorism, which affects future behaviour such as Islamophobia. These events and thus collective memories differ per generation, and hence, generational differences in the fear of terrorism and therefore Islamophobia arise. This generational difference of collective memories of terrorist attacks is important in explaining for differences in security threat, and should be taken into account in future studies or interventions of Islamophobia.

Contact (opportunities) with Muslims

The previous chapter focused in part on why participants might be showing some Islamophobia. It was indicated that the media might play an important role in shaping people's understandings and knowledge of Islam/Muslims. However, also important to the shaping of one's knowledge on the contents of Islam/Muslims is the amount of contact (opportunities) one has with Muslims/Islam. This might explain why some differences between generations occur.

Previous studies have shown that contact with an outgroup can decrease the amount of prejudice one holds against this group (Dowd, 1980; Miklowska, 2017; Raabe & Beelmann,

2011; Van Zalk & Kerr, 2014). Especially important was contact with an outgroup during the ages of 7 until 10 (Raabe & Beelmann, 2011) and adolescence (Miklikowska, 2017) if this contact was to have long-term effects on prejudice reduction. Contact leads to declines in stereotypic views of the outgroup (such as Muslims) and allows more divergent judgment of them. It would therefore be interesting to see whether one generation might have had more contact with Muslims than the other. This might explain the differences found.

It can be expected that the younger generation has had more contact (during their seventh to tenth year of life and during their adolescence) with Muslims and therefore formed different opinions regarding them, as the group of Muslims in the Netherlands is statistically rather young, and the proportion of Muslims in the older category is statistically rather small (Unknown, 2020), while the population of Muslims during the youth-years of the older generation was smaller than it was during the youth-years of the younger generation (Tas, 2004). In the current study, one can see that younger participants mentioned (at least) opportunities for contact with Muslims and Islam.

Anne (20): "I live in a village where there live rather many Muslims. I therefore used to have friends in preschool that were Muslim. Also, at our school we used to go to a mosque, synagogue and that kind of stuff each year, to get into contact with such things. When I was eight or nine, we went to Morocco for three weeks and we made a whole tour and we saw how that looks in the daily live. That was rather awesome."

Olivia (22) said, when asked whether she had had much contact with Muslims:

"Yeah, in high school... but also not extraordinary much, no."

Emma (25) mentioned not to have had much contact with Muslims, but she did mention to have had lectures about it in high school.

Emma (25): "[...] because you get to know it [a religion] at a personal level [when you get in contact with its followers], you can empathize much better then when you hear at school like "In Islam they call it this and that", let's say."

Interviewer: "Yeah, because you had that at school?"

Emma (25): "Yeah, I also had a course on religions for six years. I was taught about all religions, [...]"

As shown, most younger participants mention to have had opportunities for, or actually had, personal contact with Muslims. Moreover, they received education on religions such as Islam.

The positive effect of contact with Muslims on prejudice reduction towards them has been shown by multiple authors. Merino (2010) showed that prior contact with Muslims, Buddhists and Hindus led to more positive views of religious diversity in society in Americans, while contact with Muslims was also associated with greater tolerance for a mosque in one's community. In other words, Muslims were accepted more when Americans had had contact with them. Moreover, Abrams, McGaughey and Haghghat (2018) showed that the amount and closeness of intergroup contact predicted positive attitudes towards Muslim Americans in Americans. Even when participants reported relatively little contact with these Muslims, this still had impact, indicating the importance of even small encounters or opportunities of contact.

In contrast, the older generation said to have (had) fewer contact opportunities with Muslims or Islam. Hannah (54) said:

"I have very few friends or people in my environment that come from a totally... or yeah, a different culture. I did have, when I... I used to play softball for a very long time and there were people from the Antilles, and also some Moluccas, that way [...] I actually do not have people in my circle of friends that, well... with a totally different background, or completely different culture, religion, or... no."

Iris (55) said:

"I, thus, do not really have Muslim friends. I have been in contact with it, and I did have students [that were Muslim], but they did not carry out their religion in that way. So in that sense, not very deep contact, no. Not in the Netherlands at least. I have been in many Muslim countries, though. That I have."

Sarah (57) said to have had some form of contact, which I think to still not have been personal. She said to have taught some Muslim children in preschool, and also met their mothers.

"Well, I did have, when I worked at [name preschool], the preschool I worked at from 2012 until 2018, there I did have uh... pretty much contact with the mothers, the children were in my class, of course."

However, this, I believe, is not very close personal contact that corresponds with the requirements of contact theory (the theory that explains how close contact may decrease prejudice; Allport, 1954). These requirements are equal status, common goals, intergroup

cooperation, and support of authorities. However, no equal status is present in this situation, as the participant was the teacher of the Muslim children that does not match equal status with the children, nor their parents. In other words, the older generation participants all mentioned to have had less contact (opportunities) that may lead to less prejudice than most younger generation participants mentioned.

Important to note, is that Iris (55) also mentioned some contact or opportunities, however not very close ones.

“I have been in many Muslim countries, though. That I have. And I did find it a very interesting culture, but also... it is kind of... it stands far from us [Dutch people] regarding some values. And some I do find very positive; the hospitality, and they are kind of... open to you, but on the other hand also not. It is a bit weird, a bit double sided, I think. I did have really nice experiences in some countries, but at the same time also have had a lot of issues with some things.”

As we can see, this interaction consisted of some opportunities abroad. Younger generation participants also mentioned to have had such opportunities in foreign countries as can be seen in earlier quotes. Such opportunities abroad can have some influence. However, we can still conclude that opportunities of contact, and actual close contact, has been more present in the younger generation than in the older one, which indicates that youth has larger chances of positive attitudes towards Muslims, such as was the case in the US (Abrams, McGaughey & Haghghat, 2018; Merino, 2010).

Furthermore, Abrams, McGaughey and Haghghat (2018) showed that negative attitudes towards Muslim Americans were predicted by news consumption, indicating that the older generation in this study might indeed be more prejudiced than the younger generation as they solely had the opportunity to gather information on Muslims/Islam through the news, while they had fewer opportunities for prejudice reduction through contact with Muslims.

Important to keep in mind is that studies have also shown that if the contact is experienced as negative, this has more negative effects on prejudice reduction than positive contact has positive effects on prejudice reduction (Barlow et al., 2012). This was shown in the setting of Australians' prejudice towards Black Australians, Muslims Australians and asylum seekers, and in the setting of White Americans' prejudice towards Black Americans. Thus, the contact that is experienced with Muslims must be positive in order to reduce prejudice. The current study shows that the younger generation might have had more contact opportunities than the older generation, but not necessarily whether these were positive or

negative encounters. Future research could look at that and whether it indeed makes a difference in the current setting.

All in all, we can conclude that the younger generation had more opportunities to come in contact with Muslims or Islam, or had actual close contact with this outgroup than the older generation had. This gives rise to decreases in prejudice and therefore Islamophobia. It is probable that younger generation participants therefore formed their knowledge on the contents of Islam and Muslims in less biased, negative, manners, as opposed to the older generation, because it was not solely based upon discourses in the (biased and negative) media, and more based upon less stereotyped and more ambiguous ways. In other words, contact with Muslims gives rise to less saliency of the in- versus outgroup perception, leading to less othering and less justification Islamophobia. Whether this is actually the case – that the younger generation is less prejudiced than the older generation – , should be investigated more thoroughly using quantitative research methods.

At least, the current study adds to earlier findings on the effects of (positive) contact (opportunities) with Muslims on prejudice reduction by showing that a younger generation had more (opportunities for) contact with Muslims than an older generation, indicating that such prejudice reduction might be more possible for one generation than another, making Islamophobia therefore less present in this younger group, while the negative influence of the media might be more important for the older group. This contact is an important theme as to why differences in the amount of Islamophobia between generations might occur.

Conclusion

This chapter focused upon the differences between a younger generation (age: 20-25) versus an older generation (age: 54-57), within the antecedents of Islamophobia by Iqbal (2020). The central question of this chapter was “What is the effect of age and generation on Islamophobia amongst non-religious, middle class, highly educated, Dutch females, how do Dutch values contribute to this, and why does this happen?”. Iqbal’s (2020) framework, SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and discourse analysis showed multiple things. Firstly, the sociocultural threat to the value of gender-equality differed between the generations. The younger generation barely talked about different views on this value, while all older generation participants mentioned this as a cultural/value difference. This might influence the sociocultural threat of participants in such a way that the older generation might feel more threatened than the younger generation, at least in this regard. This gives rise to Islamophobia as it allows in- versus outgroup saliency and protective tendencies for the Dutch identity.

Secondly, participants of the younger generation mentioned other examples of terrorist attacks than the older generation did, which might explain different shapes of security threat and thus Islamophobia. It was clear that the age the participant had at the time attacks occurred, influenced whether they recollected it. Attacks/national trauma that happen during someone's adolescence/early adulthood become part of each generation's collective memory, which explains why the attacks of Paris were recalled in the younger participant group, but not 9/11, and why Paris was not mentioned by older generation participants, but 9/11 was. Such different collective memories influence people's fear (of terrorist attacks) in different ways, which leads to Islamophobia based on different aspects. Future research should investigate whether one generation might indeed be differently Islamophobic than the other because of this.

Another reason why differences occurred was shown to be the difference in the amount of contact (opportunities) with Muslims each generation had. The younger generation had had more contact (opportunities) than the older generation, which could explain why younger generations might be less affected by negative discourses on Muslims/Islam by the media, such as that Islam/Muslims support gender inequality. This might affect younger generations to be less Islamophobic than the older generation. Quantitative research is needed to explore this.

All mentioned themes and antecedents of Islamophobia and their differences between generations should be taken into account when studying Islamophobia and developing interventions. Iqbal's (2020) framework of Islamophobia is not complete, as it does not take into account the shown generational differences. These should be incorporated in future frameworks of Islamophobia.

Conclusion

This study focused on the effects of age and generational differences on Islamophobia amongst women in the Netherlands. The main researched the question was “What is the effect of age and generational differences on Islamophobia among women in the Netherlands?”. Two sub-questions were answered using qualitative research methods (interviews) and critical discourse analysis, namely “In which ways is Islamophobia specifically shown in the Netherlands amongst non-religious, middle class, highly educated, Dutch females, how do Dutch values contribute to this, and why is Islamophobia presented in this way?” and “What is the effect of age and generation on Islamophobia amongst non-religious, middle class, highly educated, Dutch females, how do Dutch values contribute to this, and why does this happen?”. The generations investigated were young women (ages 20-25) and women in their late adulthood (ages 54-57).

It was important to answer these questions, as Islamophobia was shown to still be very present in the self-identified “tolerant” Netherlands, and this type of discrimination which can also cause violence is something that should be avoided. Moreover, research up until now has not yet focused on the differences between certain groups regarding Islamophobia, but different reasons for Islamophobic behaviour between certain groups might show, which should be kept in mind when creating anti-Islamophobia interventions.

First, an introduction to the topic was given, after which previous research on the subject of interest was presented. Next, the theoretical and conceptual framework was presented, which consisted of Iqbal’s (2020) definition and antecedents of Islamophobia, which also used Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) to explain certain points. The themes of prejudice (othering), security threat (terrorism) and symbolic (sociocultural) threat to Islamophobia were given and explained in detail as a means to compare the data of this research with. Continuing, the methodology of the study was presented. Afterwards, two analytical chapters were presented, where each focused on one of the two sub-questions.

The first analytical chapter looked at the similarities between the two generations and showed that, while all participants indicated that they found tolerance an important Dutch value, they also agreed that Islamophobia was present in the Netherlands. This Islamophobia was shown by both generations in the antecedents of sociocultural threat, where all participants indicated to find that Muslims differ regarding their values from us, security threat (fear of terrorism), which they all showed to some extent, and the perception that Muslims try to impose their religion onto “us”. It was argued that the role of the media was

important in shaping people's (negative) understandings of Islam and Muslims.

The second analytical chapter focused on the differences between the two generations and showed that differences between the two generations were present in the theme of sociocultural threat when looking at the perception of support of gender-equality by Islam/Muslims versus in the Netherlands, in which the older generation perceived Muslims/Islam to be unsupportive of it, while the younger generation did not think about this, explicitly. Another theme in which differences occurred was security threat regarding terrorism, where the specific terrorist attacks generations mentioned differed. Attacks that occurred during someone's adolescence/early adulthood influenced this theme, while attacks that happened outside of this frame were not that influential. Because collective memories shape people's security threat and future behaviours, this might influence the forms Islamophobia takes, which thus might be different between generations. Future research should investigate whether this is indeed true. In other words, differences between the generations might be due to different collective memories of terrorist attacks. Moreover, they might be due to the amount of contact (opportunities) with Muslims each generation had. The younger generation had more contact (opportunities) than the older generation did, which might have affected their knowledge about Muslims/Islam in positive ways, while the older generation depended on the (negative) media for their views of Muslims/Islam.

It can be concluded that the effects of age and generational differences on Islamophobia among women in de Netherlands are that the younger generation had more contact opportunities with Muslims than an older generation, as during their lifetime more Muslims (of their age) were in the Netherlands, while they also experienced other terrorist attacks during their formative years than the older generation. This shaped their understandings of Islam and Muslims differently, as the older generation might have been more influenced by the (negative) media – the younger generation indicated no direct association of Muslims or Islam with gender-inequality, while the older generation did – while it also shaped their collective memories and thus their fear of terrorism differently, thereby shaping Islamophobia differently. These differences should be taken into account in Iqbal's (2020) framework, but were not. Hence, his framework is not complete. Future Islamophobia studies, theories, frameworks and interventions should keep these differences in mind, as they were shown to be present in this study.

A new framework that expands Iqbal's (2020) one keeps in mind the moderator of "Generation" on symbolic and security threat perceptions (see figure 2). Generational

differences are kept in mind if this moderator is added to the framework. The specific ways in which generation influences the model is shown in figure 3.

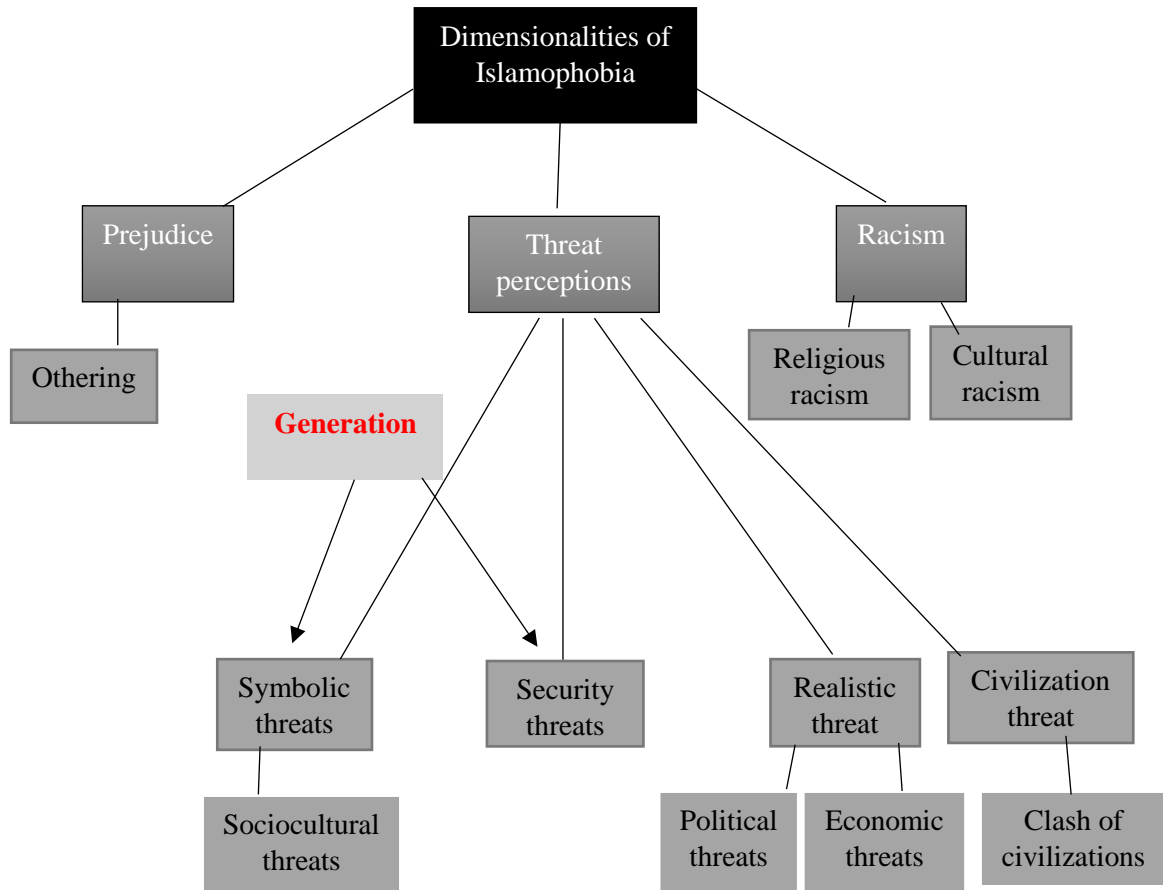


Figure 2: New analytical framework of antecedents of Islamophobia

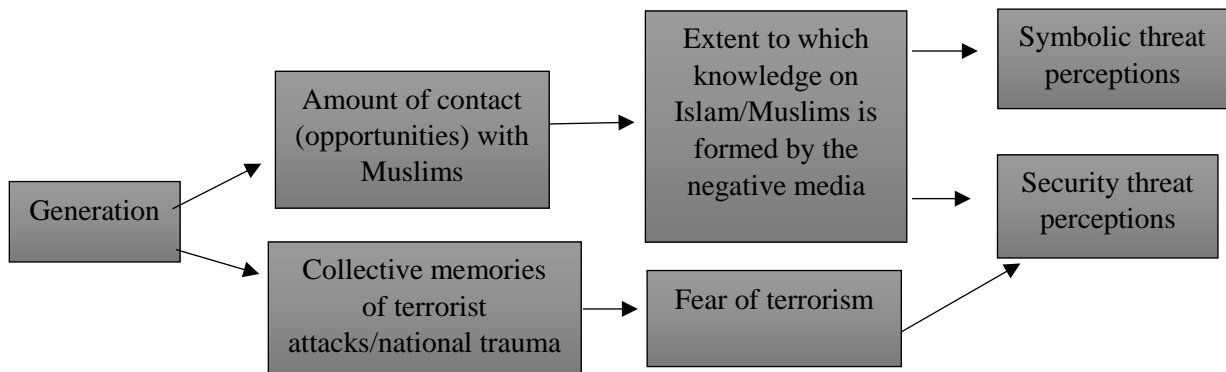


Figure 3: How generation influences symbolic and security threat perceptions

The generational differences should be checked before concluding to what extent symbolic or security threats are present, and be kept in mind when studying why these threats present themselves. These generational differences can also be checked through the ways figure 3 presents. First, check the amount of Muslims that were present during the youth years of the generation, as this influences the amount of contact (opportunities) with Muslims this generation had, and therefore to what extent their knowledge on Muslims/Islam is formed by negative media discourses, which may lead to symbolic and security threat perceptions. Second, check which terrorist attacks occurred during the adolescence/early adulthood of the generation, as these shaped the collective memories of terrorist attacks/national trauma of the generation, which shapes their fear of terrorism, which may lead to security threat perceptions. I theorize that including this new framework and analysis model gives way to more specific measurements of antecedents to Islamophobia in certain societal groups, making studies and interventions more effective, as they can be specifically targeted.

Limitations to this research should be kept in mind, such as that no objective interpretation of the data was entirely possible. That is because interpretative research is influenced by the interviewee/researcher, who is always biased. However, research is always somewhat subjective, and I tried to remain as objective as possible. Moreover, the participant pools consisted of three participants for both two generations investigated. It is therefore a long shot to conclude that all conclusions from this study remain true once studied in larger groups. However, the current research provided deeper understandings on Islamophobia.

Future research should see whether the younger generation might actually be less Islamophobic than the older generation due to more contact (opportunities) with Muslims. It should also be researched whether the younger generation is more aware of the existence of Islamic feminism than the older generation, and whether this leads to differences in the perception that Muslims do or do not differ on the value of gender-equality. Future studies can, additionally, focus more specifically on themes by Iqbal (2020) that did not come forth during this research, such as cultural racism, or research can look at whether such differences also apply to discrimination regarding other religions, such as antisemitism.

Implications of this study are that studies of Islamophobia should keep in mind that differences between certain (generational) groups exist. Moreover, security and societal threat perceptions are important to Islamophobic tendencies (amongst the women in the Netherlands), which should thus be focused on in future Islamophobia prevention strategies. Moreover, it is important for anti-Islamophobia campaigns to incorporate the differences

found between generations, to improve their effects by focusing on the aspects that are important for each target audience.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Informed consent

INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH

“Dutch values and reactions to minorities”

➤ **Why do I receive this information?**

You are being invited to take part in this research project. Before you decide to participate, you must know that this project has been ethically approved by the Exam Committee of Theology and Religious studies of the University of Groningen. This research project aims to investigate what you perceive as Dutch values and how this corresponds with your thoughts about minorities in Dutch society. The start date of the project is 20-03-2022 to finish on 20-04-2022. The study is conducted by A. Hopmans and Prof. Manoela Carpenedo Rodrigues.

➤ **Do I have to participate in this research?**

Participation in the research is voluntary. However, your consent is needed. Therefore, please read this information carefully. Only afterwards you decide if you want to participate. If you decide to not participate, you do not need to explain why, and there will be no negative consequences for you. You have this right at all times, including after you have consented to participate in the research.

➤ **Why this research?**

This project aims to investigate people's reactions to minority groups and how this intertwines with their national values (see next question).

➤ **What do we ask of you during the research?**

First, we ask you to read the present information and if you agree, sign the consent in order to participate. Then, you will be asked to answer some questions in an interview which we estimate to take about 90 minutes. The interview consists of multiple parts, first some general

information about you will be asked, then, we will discuss what you perceive as Dutch values, after which we will discuss your thoughts about minorities in the Netherlands and how this affects you.

In the first part, I will ask your ethnic group information because the Netherlands is a diverse country, with a lot of cultures.

➤ **What are the consequences of participation?**

Whilst there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will have a beneficial impact on how we understand the reactions that people produce regarding minorities in their country based on their national values. Also, if you decide to participate in this research, we inform you that you are not going to feel any disadvantages or discomfort. The potential psychological harm or distress will be the same as any experienced in everyday life.

➤ **How will we treat your data?**

Your name will be deleted from our files and all the information that we collect about you during this research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified or identifiable in any reports or publications. Any data collected about you in the interview will be stored online along with other participants in a form protected by passwords and other relevant security processes and technologies. You will not be identified in any report or publication. If you wish to know more about this study, please email us using the email addresses mentioned below.

➤ **What else do you need to know?**

You may always ask questions about the research. You can do so by emailing (a.hopmans@student.rug.nl) the principal investigator and Manoela Carpenedo Rodrigues (m.carpenedo.rodrigues@rug.nl).

Do you have questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant? For this, you may also contact the Ethics Committee of Theology and Religious Studies of the University of Groningen: ethicscommittee.ggw@rug.nl.

Do you have questions or concerns regarding your privacy, or regarding the handling of your personal data? For this, you may also contact the Data Protection Officer of the University of Groningen: privacy@rug.nl.

As a research participant, you have the right to a copy of this research information.

INFORMED CONSENT

“Dutch values and reactions to minorities”

I have read the information about the research and I have enough chance to ask questions about it.

I understand what the research is about, what is being asked of me, which consequences participation can have, how my data will be handled, that the personal data I provide will be handled anonymously, and what my rights are.

I understand that participation in the research is voluntary. I myself choose to participate. I can stop participating at any moment. If I stop, I do not need to explain why. Stopping will have no negative consequences for me.

Below I indicate what I am consenting to.

Consent to participate in the research:

Yes, I consent to participate.

No, I do not consent to participate

The researcher declares that the participant has been extensively informed about the research.

Appendix B: Interview guide (Dutch)

Interview handleiding**Algemeen**

1. Kan je me iets over jezelf vertellen?
2. Voel jij je verbonden met een religieuze leefwijze?
 - a. Was dit altijd zo? Hoe oud was je toen je je zo begon te voelen?
3. Welke datum ben je geboren?
4. Waar ben je geboren?
5. Wat is je etniciteit en nationale achtergrond?
6. Waar woon je momenteel?
7. Wat doe je voor werk?
8. Wat is de hoogste onderwijsgraad die je hebt afgerond?

Familie

1. Waar zijn je ouders geboren? (reden voor migratie, indien toepasbaar)
2. Welke talen worden er in jouw familie gesproken?
3. Wat doen of deden jouw ouders voor werk?
4. Identificeerden jouw ouders zich met bepaalde religie(s)?
5. En je grootouders?
6. En je broers of zussen als je die hebt?
7. (Ben je getrouwd?
8. Etniciteit man
9. Religieuze achtergrond man
10. Religieuze identiteit man
11. Werk man

12. Kinderen? Hun religieuze identiteit?)

Nederlandse waarden

1. Wat denk jij dat het inhoudt om Nederlandse te zijn?
2. Wat betekent “Nederlands zijn” voor jou?
3. Wat zijn een aantal Nederlandse waardes die je belangrijk vindt? Waren deze belangrijk in je opvoeding?
4. Welke Nederlandse waarden vind jij heilig/onschendbaar voor de Nederlandse samenleving?
5. Wat denk jij dat de Nederlandse staat inhoudt en waar deze voor staat? Hoe zie je dat voor je in combinatie met religie?
6. Zijn er bepaalde gebeurtenissen die grote invloed hebben gehad op jouw percepties van Nederlandse waardes?
7. Hoe voer jij de waardes uit die jij bepalend vindt voor de Nederlandse samenleving?

Minderheidsgroepen in Nederland

1. Kan je me vertellen het contact dat je hebt gehad met een migrant? Wat is je mening over migranten in Nederland? Vind je dat ze de Nederlandse samenleving beïnvloeden of invloed hebben op de samenleving? Hoe? Hoe zouden ze behandeld moeten worden in de maatschappij volgens jou?
2. Kan je me vertellen over het contact dat je hebt gehad met iemand met een donkere huidskleur? Wat vind je van donkere mensen in Nederland? Vind je dat ze de Nederlandse samenleving beïnvloeden of invloed hebben op de samenleving? Hoe? Hoe zouden ze behandeld moeten worden in de maatschappij volgens jou?

3. Kan je me vertellen over het contact dat je hebt gehad met homoseksuelen?
Hoe voel je je tegenover homoseksuelen? Hebben ze invloed op de Nederlandse samenleving in jouw opzicht? Beïnvloeden ze de maatschappij? Hoe? Hoe zouden ze behandeld moeten worden in de maatschappij volgens jou?
4. Kan je me vertellen over het contact dat je hebt gehad met een Christen? Met een Moslim? Een Jood? Wat denk je over religieuze mensen in de Nederlandse samenleving? (Joden, Moslims, Christenen). Hebben ze invloed op de Nederlandse maatschappij? Welke specifiek en hoe? Hoe zouden ze volgens jou behandeld moeten worden in de maatschappij?
5. Denk je dat minderheidsgroepen in Nederland goed geïntegreerd zijn in de Nederlandse samenleving? Welke groepen? Zijn er ook bepaalde groepen minder goed geïntegreerd? Kan je me vertellen over een ervaring die je dat doet denken?
6. Wat vind je van het integratiebeleid van Nederland?
7. Wat denk je over mensen die in de publieke sfeer hun religieuze overtuiging laten zien door middel van bijvoorbeeld het dragen van een kruis, het joodse hoofdkapje of de hijab? Waarom?
8. Denk je dat migranten goed kunnen leven in en met de Nederlandse samenleving? Waarom?
9. Denk je dat Moslims goed kunnen leven met de Nederlandse samenleving? Waarom?
10. Denk je dat Joden goed kunnen leven met de Nederlandse samenleving? Waarom?
11. Denk je dat Christenen goed kunnen leven met de Nederlandse samenleving? Waarom?
12. Wat denk je dat erg belangrijk is voor Joden? Wat hun waarden zijn?
13. Voor Christenen?
14. Voor Moslims?

15. Denk je dat de waarden van Moslim verschillen van de onze?
16. Denk je dat de Nederlandse samenleving erg verwelkomend is naar minderheidsgroepen? Ben je daar een supporter van?
17. Wat denk je dat de rol van migranten is in Nederland? (specifically Jewish, Muslims, black...)
18. Zou je meer willen weten over het Jodendom? Waarom denk je dat?
19. Islam? Waarom?
20. Afrikaanse culturen? Waarom?
21. Homoseksuelen? Waarom?

Veiligheid

1. Voel je je veilig in Nederland? Waarom
2. Denk je dat Nederland veilig is of denk je dat er ook wel dreigingen zijn? Waarom?
3. Wat zijn de factoren of waarden die jij het meest belangrijk vindt om te beschermen in Nederland en waarom?
4. Zijn er gebeurtenissen die je het gevoel gaven dat Nederland bedreigd werd? Kan je me daar wat meer over vertellen? Hebben deze gebeurtenissen nog invloed op je huidige leven?
5. Heb je het gevoel dat conservatieve terroristische groepen invloed op jou hebben of een bedreiging vormen?
6. Hebben aanvallen bij conservatieve terroristische groepen effect gehad op je veiligheidsgevoel? Op welke manier?
7. Heb je het gevoel dat *psychotische mensen* invloed op jou hebben of een bedreiging vormen? Seriemoordenaars bijvoorbeeld?

8. Hebben aanvallen door gestoorde mensen je veiligheidsgevoel beïnvloed? Op welke manier?

Minderheidsgroepen en tolerantie

1. Denk je dat Nederlanders tolerant zijn? Wat vind je daarvan?
2. Denk je dat Nederlanders racistisch zijn? Wat vind je daarvan?
3. Homofob? Wat vind je daarvan?
4. Anti-Semitistisch? Wat vind je daarvan?
5. Islamofobisch? Wat vind je daarvan?
6. Denk je dat de overheid goed omgaat met de percepties van Nederlanders tegenover minderheidsgroepen? En met de representaties van deze minderheidsgroepen?
7. Denk je dat Nederland (staat en de mensen) zich goed gedragen tegenover minderheidsgroepen? (Specifiek homoseksuelen, joden, donkere mensen, moslims?)
Waarom wel of niet? Wat vind je daarvan?
8. Denk je dat jouw meningen overeenkomen met de rest van Nederland? Nederlanders specifiek? Over vorige vraag, maar eigenlijk over alle vragen

Laatste vragen

9. Denk je dat er verschillende meningen zijn tussen verschillende generaties wanneer we het hebben over de manier waarop mensen kijken naar minderheidsgroepen in Nederland? Wat voor verschillen?

Is er iets wat je graag zou willen toevoegen nog? Heb je nog iets te zeggen?

Appendix C: Debriefing

Debriefing

Thank you for participating in this research. This research investigated the generational differences in understandings and presentations of Islamophobia and how this is intertwined with your perceptions on how tolerant Dutch people are to minority groups, and your perceptions on how tolerant Muslim people are to minority groups. You participated in one of two participation groups, depending on your age. The first group included youth (ages 18-25). The second group included an older generation (ages 50-65). We expected that generational differences in Islamophobia existed. If you wish to receive more information, please contact a.hopmans@student.rug.nl.