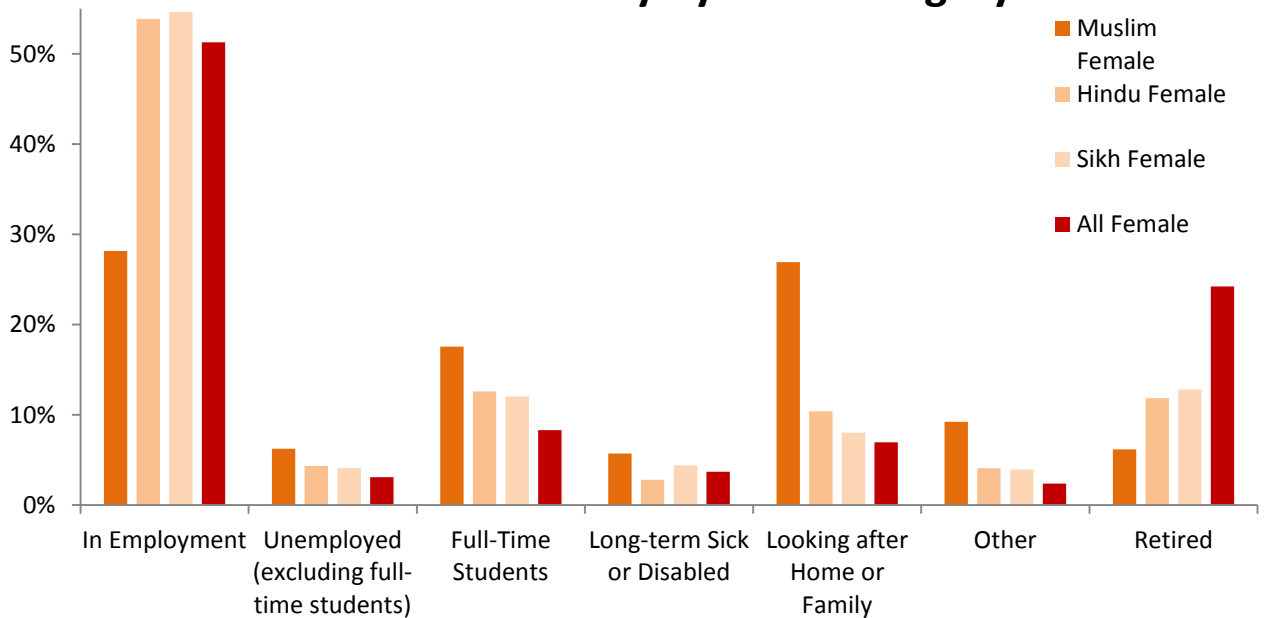


Employment is more challenging for Muslim women

Economic Activity by Faith Category



What does this mean?

- 28% of Muslim women (aged 16+ years old) are in employment, significantly lower than the approximately 51% of the overall female population. This is also lower than other faith categories that also have a significant Asian ethnic demographic. Furthermore, 27% of Muslim women are categorised as 'Looking After Home and Family', compared to the overall female population (7%).
- Factors attributable to this lower employment rate include an age demographic of Muslim women with young families and religio-cultural values. Some factors for this lower employment rate affect all women, including accessing affordable childcare or gender discrimination.
- Studies also indicate "a strong 'Muslim penalty' for both women and men from different ethnic groups with respect to economic activity and unemployment" (Anthony Heath and Jean Martin 2012). For women, further contributory factors could include the wearing of a headscarf, and this is an area that warrants further research. What research is being undertaken to provide an evidence base for discrimination (direct or indirect) for wearing a headscarf?
- The increasing number of young Muslim women in full-time education is leading to high career aspirations. There have been previous studies with policy recommendations to facilitate entry and progression of Muslim women in the labour market (e.g. Zamila Bunglawala 2008). What has been the outcome of such policy recommendations?

Data sources and references at: www.mcb.org.uk/muslimstatistics

Note that in Table 31 of the 'British Muslims in Numbers' report, the percentage of Muslim women 'Looking after home or family' (18%) is based on Muslim women of all ages, rather than just those 16+ years old.