

**Muslim Women's Experiences
And Career Paths in New Zealand Hotels**

Ghadair Alshemari

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Faculty of Culture and Society - School of Hospitality and Tourism

Primary Supervisor – Dr. David Williamson

Abstract

The population of Muslims in New Zealand has increased substantially in recent decades, from about 6000 in 1991 to approximately 46,000 in 2013, and the number is projected to reach more than 100,000 by 2030 (Foroutan, 2017). However, on Friday March 15, 2019, the Christchurch Mosque shooting occurred in New Zealand, which deeply impacted the Muslim community and resulted in significant policy changes and discussion related to matters such as hate crimes, racism, discrimination, gun laws and Islamophobia (Salahshour & Boamah, 2020).

Islam holds significant importance for Muslims and their lifestyles, encompassing certain duties that may potentially conflict with the concept of hospitality. Muslim women may face multiple layers of discrimination in various aspects of society in non-Muslim societies, including employment and other significant societal structures, which places them in a state of 'triple to quadruple jeopardy' (Ahmed & Gorey, 2023). However, the emergence of the hospitality industry as the most rapidly expanding sector globally has coincided with the increasing participation of women in the workforce.

There have been many studies globally where research has explored the theme of women challenging traditional roles within the hotel industry. In light of the existing challenges that women encounter in the hotel industry, such as gender pay inequality, discrimination, sexual harassment, limited career advancement opportunities, and various other concerns, it is important to consider the additional challenges faced by Muslim women, particularly in the context of Islamophobia and their faith contracting with some of the hotel role descriptions that they may encounter. These encounters can be seen as challenging such as serving alcohol and pork and the uniform.

This study explores the process of career progression within the New Zealand hotel industry for Muslim women. This research is the first research that has been conducted in New Zealand regarding Muslim women and their career progression in hotels. This study used an interpretive paradigm, with a qualitative methodology. This involved semi-structured interviews five participants who consider themselves followers of the Islamic faith and have worked in the hotel sector in New Zealand. The themes were uncovered via semi-structured interviews where the participants shared their in-depth experiences with their hotel career progression and their personal encounters. The research findings

identified significant difficulties and opportunities in Muslim womens' professional lives, particularly in the areas of diversity management and discrimination regarding the prohibitions of Islam.

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Attestation of Authorship

I, Ghadair Alshemari, hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the Acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or another institution of higher learning.

Signed غدير

Ghadair Alshemari July 2023

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“In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful”

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The current semester has presented significant challenges, due to the demands of my personal and professional commitments. Additionally, the limited timeframe within which I had to complete this dissertation constrained my progress in its completion. This research is the first research in New Zealand regarding Muslim women’s career progression New Zealand hotels. This has given me challenges due to limited literature. Nevertheless, this research holds significant importance to me and my journey in the field of hospitality, during which I have encountered numerous challenges. Despite these difficulties, I have remained determined and have persevered without considering giving up. My achievement would have remained unattainable had it not been for the almighty known as Allah, as well as the profound wisdom and guidance handed down by the sacred text known as the Quran. Without their existence, my ability to navigate through this mission would have been impossible.

As a refugee, and as an individual who has not completed traditional schooling but has graduated three times from AUT, I would not have anticipated the possibility that I would ever obtain a master’s degree. I am eagerly anticipating the pursuit of a PhD in hospitality management. This represents a profound aspiration for my father, as well as a significant wishing from my passing mother. I would like to thank my eldest sister, who raised me and challenged me to go further in studies. However, it is important to acknowledge that my progress to date would not have been possible without the constant trust and unconditional support of my husband. His encouragement and dedication have been instrumental in motivating me to persist to this stage. Also his support and understanding of the importance of education has pushed me towards my passion of education and hospitality.

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understanding, motivation and belief pushed me to go further and make it work regardless of the distance learning while I have been located in the UAE.

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Ethics Approval

Ethics Application Number: 23/120

Approved on 11 July 2023

by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Confidential Material

The female participants from the Muslim hotel community involved in this study have expressed a desire to maintain their anonymity. In order to ensure their privacy and protect their identities within the small minority Muslim community, each participant has been assigned an English name for the purposes of this research. This precautionary measure aims to prevent any potential harm that could have arisen from disclosing their actual names. The prioritization of reputation and safety for each woman is duly acknowledged. This study represents the inaugural research conducted in New Zealand, and the findings obtained from this research hold considerable importance.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background and Context

Islam is the world's second-largest religion and has a long heritage of emphasising hospitality. Hotels and restaurants around the world often serve alcohol, pork, and non-halal food (all of which are prohibited under Islam) and can require uniforms that some consider inappropriate for Muslim women. The hospitality profession has been portrayed as a "Cinderella" role. According to Williamson (2017), "In the 1950s, the New Zealand tourism sector was known as the 'Cinderella of industries,' underfunded, of 'doubtful value,' and home to poor-quality jobs". This study will investigate the lives and experiences of Muslim women. While a significant amount of research has focused on the gender gap and career issues between men and women in the hospitality industry, not many studies have examined the confluence of being Muslim and a woman working in the hotel sector.

Research Significance

This research is significant because it is the first study to explore the experiences of Muslim women in their pursuit of career advancement within the hotel industry in New Zealand. There is a considerable body of literature pertaining to migrant Muslim workers in the hospitality industry across various global contexts, but no such research has been conducted in New Zealand thus far. Hospitality is an essential aspect in today's economy. While New Zealand has experienced a rapid increase in the hospitality sector, this growth has been accompanied by a shortage of workers as mentioned below. Furthermore, this study serves as an initial investigation into the growing population of Muslim individuals in New Zealand and Western societies. It acknowledges the significant role that Islam plays in various aspects of daily life, such as hospitality and the increasing participation of women in the workforce. The question at hand is how can we effectively collaborate and embark on this journey of understanding and integration? This study will make a substantial contribution to the existing gap in the academic literature. The empirical research presented in this study provides novel insights that will enhance and broaden our understanding in various domains, including the career paths of Muslim women and theories related to hospitality, such as human resource management, diversity management, and career theory.

Reflective statement

My journey in the field of hospitality has proven to be a challenging one. However, these challenges have ignited a deep passion within me to pursue hospitality further. Since 2004, I have gained experience working in the fields of events, diversity, and hosting. However, my involvement was primarily limited to university events and Muslim events. I never anticipated that I would become so deeply engaged that I would embark on a journey of studying event management at university. I am delighted to express my profound satisfaction in discovering my true passion and aptitude. During my academic pursuits, I encountered a challenging phase while working on an important paper, which was a prerequisite for obtaining my diploma in event management and acquiring the necessary licence for organising events. In my third year of practising Islam, I embarked on a journey to deepen my understanding and commitment to the faith. Despite being born into a Muslim family, I previously had limited knowledge and had not actively engaged in Muslim practices.

However, when I started wearing the hijab, a traditional Muslim head covering, I underwent a significant transformation in my personal style and dedicated myself to upholding its principles to the best of my ability. Therefore, when I started studying food and beverages, I found myself in a dilemma that tested the compatibility between my religious beliefs and personal interests. My first day in that class was a strange half-hour in which I could smell and see alcohol all around me, to the point that I was unable to stay. I left and talked with the programme supervisor to find a way in which I could continue my studies without taking that paper. The institution had never encountered a circumstance like this before, but they were helpful and empathetic.

Consequently, I had to modify my paperwork and give up my licence, which prevented me from working in the events business. I thought I could find a way to work without a licence and see if I could run events for a certain target demographic that did not serve alcohol or pork. However, when I failed in this regard, I pursued a bachelor's degree in business, an international hospitality management postgraduate degree and now a master's degree.

Although I resigned and planned to transfer to a Muslim country where I could work in hospitality, I instead worked in an art gallery and found myself with the same dilemma I had faced in the past, where alcohol was around me at events. I found this a daunting experience. I did not have the opportunity to work, so I turned to education until recently, when I realised that there are halal hotels that conform to the Islamic faith. That motivated me to create a consulting firm and work in hospitality.

This study motivated me to build a bridge linking the two worlds and learn about Muslim women's experiences in this sector. I had over 15 years of job experience in educational and corporate environments and felt hopeless that I was unable, after over 10 years of study, to progress in my hospitality career particularly in hotels. And I wonder, if I ever return to New Zealand, will I have this opportunity. This made me want to explore other Muslim kiwi's experiences in hotels in New Zealand and if there were any Muslim women working in hotels. This study has opened my eyes and given me hope to bridge the gap between both worlds.

Aim of the Research

The objective of this study was to investigate the impact of hospitality on the career advancement of Muslim women who are migrants, residents or citizens of New Zealand. Three Research Questions were formulated in order to accomplish this goal:

1. What employment experiences affect Muslim careers in New Zealand hotels?
2. To what extent does the intersection between being Muslim and being a woman affect the participants' careers in New Zealand hotels?
3. To what extent do diversity and inclusion policies and actions in hotels help advance or hinder the careers of Muslim women?

Research Design

The methodology framework and data used to conduct this study were collected based on the principles of ontology and epistemology, with the objective of uncovering the truth and essence of the qualitative research structure. To determine real-life events and narratives, I explored the interpretive paradigm, specifically utilising narrative inquiry, constructivism, and relativism. The data collection process involved conducting semi-

structured interviews with a set of 20 guiding questions. The analysis was conducted using the ANOVA framework for data analysis. The process of data collection, sampling, and analysis, an essential component in research, has met the process of this research as the five participants will be sharing in-depth information and experience in semi-structured interviews. Additionally, data analysis played a crucial role in examining and interpreting the collected data.

Conclusions

The present study explores Muslim women's job experiences in New Zealand's hospitality industry. Most of these women entered through learning English, finding jobs, and moving to New Zealand. However, in this study four out of five faced challenges like discouragement, high turnover, staff deficits, Islamophobia and discrimination. The study emphasises the importance of indirect diversity and inclusion in helping Muslim women work in hotels. It raises questions about how diversity management, HR, and hotels can adapt to Muslim women's needs.

Overview of the Dissertation

There are total of five chapters in this dissertation, which are briefly summarised as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter provided a brief description of the abstract, identified the research objectives, and clarified the theoretical framework of the study design. The elements included in this study consist of the research question, research aim, research background, research design, and research conclusion.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter presents an in-depth literature review that takes place with a broad overview of information, which is subsequently analysed into specific topics that are relevant to the research and the topics' connections to one another.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter presents the study design framework implemented in this research, encompassing the study paradigm, the structure of the qualitative research employed in

the research process, and the chosen direction of the research methodology that concluded the data analysis. It also includes a section of reflective statement.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

This chapter presents the findings and discussion that resulted from the research conducted and correlates to the literature review. This chapter employs the themes of data collection and subsequently analyses the research questions in a manner consistent with academic standards.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This chapter discusses the outcomes of the research, identifying the study's objectives and questions, and provides an outline of the analysed findings. It also includes a discussion of the data, but also the limitations of the study and recommendations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter starts with an overview of the literature on the importance of hospitality service, then focuses on the international hospitality industry. I then discuss New Zealand's hospitality sector and careers in hospitality, especially women's careers. The chapter focuses on the minority group by introducing Islam, Muslim women's careers, and Islam. It also discusses Muslim women and hospitality careers. The last section of the literature explores Muslim women's progression in hospitality in New Zealand. However, the review of the literature indicated that there was a gap in Muslim women's careers in New Zealand hotels.

The Importance of Service in Hospitality

In a business setting, hospitality refers to the provision of services such as food, beverages, and other facilities in return for monetary compensation. Hotels, cafés, restaurants, and catering firms are standard providers of these services. Alcántara-Alcover et al. (2013) suggested that the economics of the service sector are shifting from one that is "delivery-focused" placing emphasis on the quality of the offerings, to one that is "staged" and places emphasis on the creation of experiences that engage customers on a personal level. For instance, clients and consumers often expect staff members to connect personally and provide them with world-class services. Hospitality employees and customers are involved in the service delivery process, which creates a high level of interaction between them. Employees are part of the hospitality product and companies look for customer-facing employees who have a positive attitude and a passion for serving customers. Bowen and Morosan (2018) suggested that another illustration of this would be the ability and expertise to provide exceptional customer service, greeting customers with a smile and exceeding their expectations. Selling services is not enough to differentiate offerings; it is also necessary to provide hotel guests with memorable experiences (Khan et al., 2015). For instance, service employees are both the beginning and the end of an engagement with a consumer. This interaction is required for a customer to be happy with the service they received. In the hospitality business, the result is judged by how well a customer is taken care of by a service worker. There is now a lack of qualified hospitality employees around the globe, which is impacting the hospitality

business (Mooney & Ryan, 2009). Hospitality businesses currently operate in an environment that is not only complicated but also very competitive. Additionally, travellers are becoming increasingly demanding and seeking more individualised experiences. Therefore, providing services of high quality while simultaneously creating a favourable experience for the consumer is essential for their continued success and viability (Castro-Casal et al., 2019).

Hotel owners and managers now place greater emphasis on quality standards to fulfil the fundamental requirements and expectations of their clients. Once the clients' conditions have been appropriately recognised and understood, hotel operators will have a greater likelihood of anticipating and satisfying the needs and wants of their customers (Rao & Sahu, 2013). Companies that provide hospitality must make an effort to deliver outstanding service by emphasising creating experiences for customers that engage their senses (Ariffin & Maghzi, 2012). Customers and workers in the tourism and hospitality sectors are expected to maintain consistent and comprehensive contact with one another, as well as participate in activities that encourage engagement and social interchange (Koc, 2019). At the same time, the service delivery involves participation from both employees and customers, which results in a significant degree of interaction between the two groups. Because they are an essential part of the hospitality offering, businesses look for employees who interact directly with customers and have a lead for improvement and a strong desire to provide excellent customer service (Bowen & Morosan, 2018).

International Hospitality Industry

Until 2020, New Zealand's travel and tourism industry was one of the country's largest earners, with tourist expenditure accounting for a substantial share of exports and supporting the livelihood of many businesses and employees (Statista, 2022). In 2022, there were approximately 24,000 businesses or service providers in New Zealand's hospitality industry. Since 2013, when just over 18.5 thousand hospitality businesses were in operation, the number of hospitality businesses has increased on an annual basis (Statista, 2022). According to Ali et al. (2021), "At present, the tourism and hospitality industries are essential because the fact is that they are considered an essential source of income for the country. Therefore, many countries are attempting to attract the attention of guests and tourists to their destinations. As a result, they will be able to grow and enhance their nation's life" (Ali et al., 2021). Other academics argue that tourism and hospitality have expanded at an extraordinary rate over the last few decades, surpassing

all other service industries to become the world's largest service providers (Duncan et al., 2013). When COVID-19 struck, and borders were closed, the world was forced to make significant adjustments and adopt new policies to reopen the walls, either domestically or internationally. In 2020, travel restrictions were implemented around the world, which caused an unprecedented scale of economic turmoil (Shapoval et al., 2021). In addition to the pressures of COVID, hospitality has suffered from a severe lack of workers. This contrasts with the fact that older tourists did not mind having their vacations filled with mass-produced activities and attractions (Crick & Spencer, 2011). New Zealand's travel and tourism industry was one of the country's largest earners until 2020, but the decline in value added tourism and international visitor arrivals in 2021 had a negative impact on annual international tourist expenditures (Statista, 2022).

New Zealand Hospitality Sector

In New Zealand, approximately four out of five service workers work in the hospitality sector (Mooney, 2014). According to the New Zealand Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (NZMBIE), "In 2021, the sector included almost 31,000 businesses and employed over 64,000 people in Tāmaki Makaurau [Auckland] (almost 7% of regional jobs), contributing 3% of regional GDP" (NZMBIE, 2023). Unfortunately, the sector, viewed as a modern Cinderella industry in New Zealand, appears to lack the charm to attract local jobseekers (Williamson, 2017). By 2022 income is expected to increase to \$41 billion dollars (Park & Min, 2020). However, in 2015, it was estimated that over 30,000 new full-time workers would be required in the following 10 years, including at least 8,000 accommodation managers and 13,000 food and beverage service workers (Zheng et al., 2020). According to studies (Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, 2023) the hospitality industry in Auckland experienced a decline in employment in 2021, compared to an average annual increase of 3.4 per cent over the previous decade. Employment in the sector is projected to increase by 2.7 per cent per year between 2021 and 2027, while employment in Auckland is projected to increase by 1.8 per cent per year during the same period (NZMBIE, 2023).

Some researchers have claimed that a significant challenge for managers has been the high employee turnover rate in the hotel sector. When there is a lot of staff turnover, there are both direct and indirect costs, such as hiring and training new people and losing organisational knowledge and a cohesive culture (Park & Min, 2020). Baum (2019) explained that the professions in hospitality would remain "Cinderella" options for young

graduates unless stakeholders take steps to reposition the kind of careers on offer and the emphasis on training designed to prepare them (Baum, 2019). In general, additional results from a previous study indicated that there is a sizeable population of international students who are employed on a part-time basis and that this population accounts for one-third of the workforce in the hospitality industry in Auckland (Zhu et al., 2020). On the other hand, when it comes to education in the hotel industry, the data reveals that the number of applicants in Auckland has decreased by approximately 52 per cent (substantially higher than the national decrease of 24 per cent in New Zealand (NZMBIE, 2023). There are now six educational establishments in New Zealand that provide students with the opportunity to earn degrees in hospitality (Smith & Schott, 2004).

Careers in Hospitality

Sullivan and Baruch suggested that “Careers were traditionally defined in terms of an individual’s connection to the business that employed them” (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). When it comes to defining career theory, which concerns the structure of a career, a vast variety of studies have been conducted. Gander (2022) claimed, there are around seven different career hypotheses. Theories like “Holland’s theory of occupational choice,” “the theory of work adjustment,” “life span/life space,” “career anchor,” and “career construction” are all examples of these types of ideas. Each career theory has its own meaning, central ideas, and motivating requirements, and it places more emphasis on the person’s relationship to their own performance than on the person’s relationship to the environment (Gander, 2022). A career is often thought of as a sequential process. Interactions between people and their respective organisations (Meliou & Maroudas, 2011). Although most people think of a career as “the unfolding sequences of a person’s work experiences across time” (Parker et al., 2009), an occupation may also be considered a career in its own right (Mooney et al., 2017). A person’s career may be seen as a means of satisfying their goals and aspirations via the acquisition of achievements, accomplishments and power (Akrivos et al., 2007). Career success is a combination of one’s satisfying work and the psychological outcomes resulting from those experiences; it is a crucial factor in retaining employees (Chang & Busser, 2020).

Arthur (2014) indicated that “career development” may be described as “a focus on the interaction of the person and the organization over time. They also include a partnership that is mutually beneficial to both parties” (Arthur, 2014, p. 629). Moreover, the commonly recognised definition of a career, as provided by various authors, reflects the

following contemporary meanings: “A person’s work-related experiences and other related accomplishments, both inside and outside of organisations, that establish a distinctive pattern throughout the course of an individual’s life span are what constitute a career” (Mooney, et al., 2016, p. 2591).

However, internal elements such as a person’s views and ideas, as well as external ones such as the degree of knowledge and information about the professional path that a graduate or student wants to pursue, may impact the career path that a person ultimately decides to pursue (Aizan, Ahmad, & Rahman, 2020). According to the scholars who defined it, career theory comprises a broad and diverse body of knowledge (Mooney, 2014). The concept of a career has evolved throughout the years, and now there are many different career models, including traditional careers and boundaryless careers. The traditional model is based on the concept of a formal career path within a particular field until the person reaches the highest ranks of an organisation (Smith, Clement, & Pitts, 2017). The boundaryless career actor is able to move within or between organisations, as well as acquire new knowledge or skills necessary to make a psychological shift beyond their existing professional training. The boundaryless career actor is also able to move between different types of acting roles (Cassel, Thulemark, & Duncan, 2017). Such choices are influenced by a range of variables, including family, school, neighbourhood, and social issues.

The literature suggests that there are three career competences that predict career success: knowing why, knowing whom, and knowing how. Knowing why is related to having realistic job expectations, being aware of one’s own skills and flaws and having a proactive mentality. Knowing whom relates to networking abilities and the capacity to connect with people. Knowing how includes job-related skills and information (Hertzman et al., 2015). The nature of employment has evolved away from corporate careers, in which the corporation was identified as the key career motivator for individuals. Factors such as globalisation, organisational downsizing, and technology improvements have prompted economic and professional shifts (Hong et al. 2020). People, in the form of service workers, are vital to the delivery of services (Sandoff, 2005). According to contemporary career theory, to understand a career, one must consider its historical and cultural context (Mooney & Jameson, 2018). One of the most important challenges a hospitality company faces every day is getting its employees to work harder (Alemayehu et al., 2021). For example, the NZMBIE conducted a survey in 2022 regarding hospitality workers’ employment agreements. In the survey, 62.3 per cent of respondents were

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permanent full-time employees, 17.9 per cent were permanent part-time workers, 6.9 per cent were on fixed-term agreements for full or part-time employment, and 8.2 per cent were on casual or contractor agreements (NZMBIE, 2023). The study found a high ratio of female respondents (60.4 per cent of the total) to male respondents (37.4 per cent), which is largely comparable to the data provided by Statistics New Zealand for the industry.

The hospitality industry shows an outstanding amount of employee diversity, particularly in terms of ethnic backgrounds (Manoharan, Sardeshmukh, & Gross, 2019). Researchers have found a close relationship between the management of diversity and the improvement of service quality, which is considered the fundamental offering of the hospitality industry (Furunes & Mykletun, 2007). The primary objective of diversity management is to optimise the productivity and effectiveness of a diverse workforce, while also fostering an environment that promotes the equitable growth and advancement of individuals with varying gender, ethnic, national, cultural, and educational backgrounds (Yadav & Lenka, 2020). As Syed and Pio (2009, p. 117) stated, “effective diversity management can be beneficial to organisations in terms of cost, creativity, marketing, problem solving, resource acquisition and system flexibility.” Human resources managers worldwide have shown growing concern regarding the implementation of diversity programmes in the field of human resource management (HRM). A variety of programmes have been specifically designed to cater to ethnic minorities, including migrant communities (Turchick Hakak & Al Ariss, 2013). Research has found that managers utilise informal diversity management practices, including sharing employment opportunities with their communities to manage ethnically diverse workers. For example, hotels in Australia advertise in the *Indian Link* and *Australia Chinese Daily* newspapers to employ more ethnically diverse workers (Manoharan, Sardeshmukh, & Gross, 2019).

Furthermore, according to Gajjar and Okumus (2018), “The diversity management practices recommended for hospitality leaders include: (1) taking all employees seriously, (2) recognizing the capabilities of all employees, (3) supporting all employees, (4) communicating effectively with all employees, (5) valuing a diverse work group, (6) respecting the cultural beliefs and needs of employees and (7) accepting non-English speaking employees” (Gajjar & Okumus, 2018, 908). Furthermore, the literature has suggested that the implementation of well-trained and diverse selection panels might

reduce discriminatory effects in hotels. Calls have been made for support from senior-level management to effectively establish these changes (Poulston & Jenkins, 2016).

Women's Careers in Hospitality

According to the literature discussed above, the hospitality industry in New Zealand is dominated by women in terms of management. Koc (2020) suggested that women are less likely to advance in their careers in the tourism and hospitality industries and are more likely to work in low-paying, lower-level positions. The hospitality sector employs many women, and women are twice as likely as men to be employers in hospitality and tourism (Dashper, 2020). When striving to enter managerial roles, many women experience what is known as a “broken rung” on the career ladder. According to Bhatia (2022), this refers to a situation whereby women in entry-level employment are promoted to management positions at much lower rates than males. Whereas a study by McKinsey and LeanIn.Org in 2021 found that, for every 100 males promoted to manager, only 86 females get promoted (Bhatia, 2022). If hospitality and tourism businesses can restore this broken rung, it will presumably result in more women in leadership roles and better organisational results for all stakeholders involved (Russen et al., 2021).

According to Boone et al. (2013), the barriers to women's career advancement in their jobs – which include a lack of confidence, a focus on work-life balance, and a preference for family duties (Chen et al., 2021) – are typically self-imposed, and organisations frequently fail to support women in overcoming these barriers. Women who work in the tourism and hospitality industries are subject to a variety of disadvantages, including sexual harassment and exploitation, stereotyping, discrimination in advancement and salary, and a lack of access to opportunities for mentoring. These disadvantages are more likely to affect women than men and occur because of the low opinion that others have of their capabilities in their chosen professional sector (Koc, 2020). The difficulty of combining hotel working conditions with family commitments was frequently stressed as an issue concerning hotel school graduates, particularly women (Mooney, 2009). Several difficulties seem to be universal, such as gender stereotypes, the “glass ceiling,” work-life balance, and industry-specific impediments (Tam et al., 2021). Studies have shown that, on average, a woman's position in hotels is not considered desirable. In the hotel industry, women are often assigned the tasks that have the lowest prestige and are considered the most unattractive (Mooney & Ryan, 2009).

Many female employees work in the lower levels of hospitality, such as in housekeeping and reception (Mooney, 2018). A significant body of research has found that the demands of their personal lives and the responsibilities they have for their families are the primary reasons why women are more likely to leave their jobs or be unable to take on additional responsibilities (Chen et al., 2021). The geographical options available to women are more limited than those available to males (Zhang, 2019). Regrettably, little attention has been given to making overt the power relations in hospitality workplaces (or taking an explicitly intersectional approach to better understand the underlying questions of difference, privilege, and penalty that influence career progression in specific sectors (Mooney et al., 2017). Previous research (e.g., Mooney & Ryan, 2009) suggested that gender-biased and judgmental attitudes influence individual career outcomes in New Zealand and Australian hotels. In contrast, at the micro-level in New Zealand, empirical data on how gender or ethnicity affects personal career progress in tourism career paths is scarce (Mooney et al., 2017). In the NZMBIE study mentioned above, from 2020 approximately 62 per cent of the respondents identified as European, followed by Asian (13.4 per cent), Māori (6.7 per cent), and Pacific Island (5.5 per cent), while Middle Eastern (0.80 per cent), American African (0.8 per cent) and other ethnicities represented 8 per cent of the total. This shows that New Zealand hospitality is a diverse industry.

It is crucial to comprehend the intricate connections among gender, ethnicity, religion, and migration, as these factors can subject migrant women to various forms of discrimination and disadvantage at multiple levels (Syed & Pio, 2010). Migrant workers are frequently subject to such precarious work conditions as work insecurity, underemployment, and unemployment (Turchick Hakak & Al Ariss, 2013). Individuals belonging to ethnic minority groups, including migrants, frequently encounter discriminatory treatment within organisations, particularly in relation to recruitment, selection, and opportunities for career progression, alongside other human resource practices (Turchick Hakak & Al Ariss, 2013). The same study found that there are three main hospitality inequality challenges that women face in the workplace: “(1) the human resource policies are often objective and gender-blinded operate as a form of indirect discrimination, (2) the formal policies and procedures for promotion and competency assessment are often replaced by informal processes and networking, and (3) the senior management position is inherent with the requirement of working long hours without any availability of flexible work” (Turchick Hakak & Al Ariss, 2013, p. 909). As a result,

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migrants, ethnic minorities, and women exhibit a significant disparity in their representation within the lowest levels of the workforce (Mooney, 2014). Macpherson (2021) stated that, “The hospitality sector represents the most challenging environment for women for career advancement and job satisfaction” (p. 680). With that in mind, the present study sought to investigate the professional progression of Muslim migrant women in New Zealand hotels.

Islam

As of 2023, there are approximately 41,000 Muslims in New Zealand (World Population Review, 2023). Sharia law, drawn largely from the Quran, has historically served as a guiding principle for Islamic society (Stephenson, 2014). The foundation of the Islamic civilisation was built on a huge number of ethical principles and legal guidelines (Rababah & Rababah, 2016). Sharia is responsible for the construction of a social framework for Muslim communities and therefore acts as a moral guideline for day-to-day living. It educates behaviours associated with different aspects of the social environment, such as food, drink, dress, entertainment, hygiene, politeness, and communication (Stephenson, 2014). The term *halal* refers to anything that is “permitted and permissible” and should be used in every element of Muslim life. In other words, *halal* refers to the acts and behaviours that Muslims are permitted to participate in according to Sharia (Al-Ansi et al., 2022). For example, Muslims have refused alcohol-related jobs because they believe it is forbidden (Gong & Jia, 2022). Certain aspects of Muslim practice have life rules that Muslims are not permitted to follow, while other laws in Islam allow certain behaviours, such as “honouring the guest,” which is one of the most significant values and rules that have contributed significantly to the welfare and righteousness of Muslim society (Rababah & Rababah, 2016). Furthermore, several studies have found that Islamic ideology influences what is considered *halal* in a wide range of fields, including the hospitality industry, the food and beverage industry, the cosmetics and pharmaceutical industries, banking, Islamic finance, modest fashion and accessories, lifestyle and travel, wellness and health care, and areas of study (Al-Ansi et al., 2022).

Muslim Women's Roles in Islam

In the Quran, Allah (Arabic name for God) is said to have responded to Muslim prayer by saying, "I will not suffer the work of any of you, whether male or female, to go to waste; each of you is from the other" (Quran, Chapter Al 'Imran Verse 3:195; Abul Ala Maududi, 2023). According to Islamic studies organisations in the United Kingdom working towards an understanding of the Quran, that line in question can be interpreted as meaning, "All humans are equal in the sight of God." God does not judge people according to different standards depending on whether they are male or female, who their master is or whether they are lowly slaves or high-ranking masters. (Islamic Studies Information, 2023). Although this verse indicates that women and men are treated equally in Islam and that they worship together, Islam has been portrayed in a negative light in many places, particularly following the terrorist acts of September 11, 2001 (Salahshour & Boamah, 2020). The widespread nature of discrimination within Western societies is a concerning aspect, particularly the everyday discrimination experienced by Muslim women (Robinson, 2016). Islamophobia can be understood as the expression of anti-Muslim racism (Chaudry, 2020). In the United States, the religious discrimination in employment experienced by Muslim women in particular has worsened (Ahmed & Gorey, 2023). In Europe and North America, Islamophobia has resulted in many negative mental health impacts, including depression, anxiety, isolation, and feelings of exclusion (Hunt, Wilson, Fauzia, & Mazhar, 2020).

A researcher defined Islamophobia as "any distinction, exclusion, or restriction towards, or preference against, Muslims (or those perceived to be Muslims) that has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life" (Chaudry, 2021, p. 258). Nevertheless, theorists argue that, as a result of Islamophobia, dominant Western European narratives have frequently homogenised and dehumanised Muslims. In particular, Muslim women have been portrayed as a standardised group of subjugated victims (Hunt, Wilson, Fauzia, & Mazhar, 2020). This narrative includes such forms of oppression as racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism (Hunt, Wilson, Fauzia, & Mazhar, 2020). For example, there is a misunderstanding that all Muslim women have been oppressed by the Islamic faith and by Muslim men, which is not the case. There is no denying the importance of women's contributions to Islam. Women have played significant roles in Islam and attained high levels of prominence; as a result, they are adored and admired throughout

Islamic history. For instance, “Among the women of mankind, sufficient for you are Mariam bint ‘Imran, Khadijah bint Khuwailid, Fatimah bint Muhammad, and Asiyah the wife of Fir’awn” (Jami’ at-Tirmidhi, 2023). These women have led important historical events; for instance, Khadijah, the first wife of the Prophet Muhammad, was a prosperous trader who ran the company that her late father had bequeathed to her with great success. Despite her riches, she never stopped helping those in need and made sure that everyone in her family was provided for (Onepath Network, 2022).

Muslim Women’s Careers

Muslim women are a diverse group, originating from a variety of ethnic, cultural, and linguistic contexts, in addition to having varying levels of religiosity (Almaki et al, 2016). Islam permits women to work if they adhere to specific conditions; for example, however if their spouses forbid them from working, they must comply with their husbands’ desire (Women Making Careers in Islam, 2021). According to the pluralism project’s women in Islam research, the Quran granted women the right to own property and be financially independent in the seventh century (Harvard University, 2020). Furthermore, as stated in the Quran, Islam recognises the equality of men and women with regard to their physical, spiritual, and intellectual potential as propounded in the Quran: “O people! Be careful of your duty to your lord, who created you from a single soul and created its mate of the same and spread from these two a multitude of men and women” Surat An-Nisa' [4:1], (Almaki, 2016).

Islam continues to uphold the status of women, despite the fact that career women is a challenging topic (Maftuhah, 2022). A study conducted in the UK found that Muslim women continue to face a variety of challenges in the workplace in the United Kingdom, and a singular concentration on women fails to fully clarify the work-related experiences of second-generation Muslim women in the United Kingdom (Tariq & Syed, 2018). Since the Christchurch attack mass shooting, more research has been conducted in New Zealand on discrimination against Muslims. However, research on this topic in the workplace remains limited (Boamah & Salahshour, 2022). When exploring other industries in hospitality such as hospitals where a New Zealand hospital had to modify a few policies due to the professions of Muslim women. For instance, one District Health Board (DHB) rewrote its policy and guidelines to accommodate female staff who wished to cover their heads with the hijab and extended it to covering their arms with short-sleeved nursing attire (Barber, M., 2012). Therefore, DHB executives standardised head coverings for

Muslim employees, which are readily washed and can be utilised into the uniform (Barber, M., 2012). However, there has been no study of Muslim women in New Zealand hotels. Therefore, this research purpose is to investigate Muslim women's career progression in the hospitality industry, particularly in New Zealand hotels, and fill the gap. The literature shows that when it comes to Muslim women, they frequently face obstacles because they are incorrectly defined as submissive, weak, and oppressed (Ali, Malik, Pereira, & Al Ariss, 2017).

Muslim Women's Careers in Hospitality

Muslim women now face several obstacles while working in the hospitality industry around the world. One is that the work practices that hotel service demands often conflict with the religious beliefs and practices that Islam allows (Aizan et al., 2020). Hotels and restaurants usually provide alcoholic beverages, and some food items include ingredients that are not permitted in Islam. In addition, the vast majority of large hospitality organisations provide staff with uniforms which often do not comply with the dress code for Muslim women (Ahmad et al., 2015). For example, some hotel owners forbid Muslim female employees from wearing hijabs during working hours (Aizan et al., 2020). As Osman and Brown (2010, p. 3) stated, "life for a Muslim in the West is characterised by turmoil and tension". The tourist market in the United Arab Emirates is now the most competitive in travel of any country in the Middle East and North Africa region (Travel and Tourism Competitive Report, 2017). However, exploring hotel workers who are Muslims in Muslim nation we find only a small percentage of individuals born and raised in the UAE choose to work in hotels or other enterprises directly associated with the hospitality industry, even though a growing number of UAE residents are finding jobs in the country's airlines (Mannaa & Abou-Shouk, 2020). Although this is an understudied topic, it has been argued that, in an Islamic and Arab environment, cultural and religious values may have impacts on the image and reputation of tourist employment in Arab Gulf nations (Bontenbal & Aziz, 2013). That there are less females employed in the tourism sector may be part of the reason why there is limited in-depth research concerning the experience of women working in tourism and hotels in Arab countries (Al-Ismail et al., 2019)

Researchers have noted that most of the challenges that women face in the tourism and hospitality sector stem from the beliefs and customs, traditions, impressions and constants that have been passed down through generations without any real reason (Yasin et al., 2019). Women suffer from many challenges and obstacles that hinder their work in this sector, which is one of the largest employment sectors (Yasin et al., 2019). On the other hand, in a neighbouring country such as Oman employment in the tourist industry is incompatible with the cultural and religious values (Griffin et al., 2021). Whereas Afifi (2015) found that most students opposed working in the alcohol industry and Rashid (2011) proposed that religious factors such as prayer times, halal food and drinks, and alcohol impacted their perceptions of future participation in tourism employment (Rashid, 2011). With hospitality being the lowest-paid occupation in the country's service industry positions are held by women from ethnic minority groups (Parker & Arrowsmith, 2012; Mooney et al., 2017; Hegewisch & Mefferd, 2022). There has been limited research in New Zealand into Muslim women's hotel progression.

Muslim Women's Career Progression in Hotels in New Zealand

As mentioned there has been no particular research regarding Muslim woman in the hotel industry in New Zealand, however, this paragraph is just to explore relativity around the topic with Muslims around the world and New Zealand. The potential for New Zealand to receive more Muslim visitors necessitates a greater awareness of halal cuisine in the hospitality and tourism industries (Wan-Hassan & Awang, 2009). Halal tourism mainly provides products and services that meet the needs of Muslim travellers, facilitating worship and meeting dietary requirements that help these individuals conform to Islamic teachings (Moshin, Brochado, & Rodrigues, 2020). Furthermore, New Zealand conducted a study in which they interviewed Muslim tourists; they found that Muslim travellers value the availability of halal food and halal-friendly accommodations where they can perform their daily ritual prayers. This has repercussions for host nations like New Zealand (Wisker, Kadirov & Nizar, 2023).

This prompted hotels and accommodation developers in New Zealand to improve their service performance quality in areas such as halal restaurants, staff knowledge, information, and separate male and female facilities to attract more Muslim customers (Jeaheng, Al-Ansi, & Han, 2020). Given the limited existing research on Muslim women employed in the hotel industry in New Zealand, it is crucial to emphasise the significance of conducting a study that aims to enhance our understanding of career advancement

opportunities for this particular demographic. The majority of hotels aim to attract and manage customers during their stay through diversity, including Muslims. However, a significant portion of the hotel service workforce are migrants, some of whom have been previously discussed in academic literature. Additionally, a subgroup of these migrants follow the Islamic faith and are women.

Conclusion

This chapter comprised three primary and key ideas sections that demonstrated the fundamental definitions related to the research subject matter. I elaborated on women's careers in hospitality, then discussed the career prospects of women in the hospitality industry, with a specific focus on Muslim women. More specifically, the inquiry aims to explore the progression of Muslim women's careers within the hotel sector in New Zealand.

There is presently a significant amount of literature associated with the careers of women in the hospitality industry across various countries. Within this literature, several challenges faced by women in their hospitality careers have been identified, including issues related to gender pay inequality, gender equality, employment of migrant workers, and diversity and discrimination in relation to leadership positions. This has had a significant influence on both the social and organisational aspects. It is important to reiterate that women continue to face unresolved issues and challenges in their career advancement.

Chapter 3: Research Design

Introduction

This chapter explains the research design that was used for the current investigation, discusses the research methodology used for the study, and offers an outline of the research. The framework supports a constructivist ontology and epistemological model, and narrative inquiry is the selected research approach. The research comprises conducting five semi-structured interviews, followed by the use of thematic analysis using open coding and ANOVA software for data analysis. Finally, the chapter discusses the limitations and ethics of this research.

Methodology

The term *methodology* refers to a set of systematic procedures employed to acquire knowledge pertaining to a research problem. These procedures may include data collection, selection of participants, utilisation of instruments, and analysis of the data. The subject matter pertains to epistemology, which concerns the acquisition of knowledge or the process of gaining understanding about a particular aspect of the world (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Methodological assumptions refer to the researcher's approach in determining what they consider to be knowable. The approach of qualitative description entails commencing with a tangible illustration of the phenomenon, and its methodological framework can be derived from various theorists (Bradshaw, Atkinson, & Doody, 2017). Methodology refers to "How do we know the world, or gain knowledge of it?" (Denzin & Lincoln: 2008, pg31). The abovementioned techniques establish the modalities of gathering information or determining the manner in which a particular outcome will be computed.

According to Alharahsheh and Pius (2020), the focus of the definition is on the nature and types of processes that are utilised to achieve a specific objective or carry out a particular procedure, rather than on specific methods. According to Igwenagu (2016), methodology refers to the systematic approach employed when conducting research and should not be confused with the tools or techniques used in the process. Research methods pertain to the methodologies employed for gathering and scrutinising data in order to generate and advance knowledge. One advantage of qualitative research is its ability to

accurately portray complex human behavioural processes and patterns that are challenging to quantify (Tenny, Brannan, Brannan, & Sharts-Hopko, 2017). The primary objective of qualitative research is to offer a specific comprehension of a phenomenon, relying on the first-hand experiences of those who have encountered it, with a reduced emphasis on generalisation (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). Qualitative research is “the systematic study of social phenomena, expressed in ways that qualify – describe, illuminate, explain, and explore – the object of study” (Bearman, 2019, p. 2). To elucidate, qualitative research is a systematic approach employed to explore and comprehend complex real-world phenomena (Tenny, Brannan, Brannan, & Sharts-Hopko, 2017).

Paradigm

According to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), scholars have suggested that a paradigm serves as a fundamental perspective that directs scholarly inquiry and exploration. A paradigm is a theoretical framework that encompasses four key components: ontology, epistemology, methodology, and methods (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). According to Kankam (2019), research paradigms are the fundamental assumptions, norms, and standards that guide the application of diverse research methodologies. Tenny, Brannan and Sharts-Hopko (2017) argued that research paradigms can be considered as the fundamental perspective that directs research. Levers stated that, “In order to establish an effective research design, it is essential for researchers to select a research paradigm that aligns with their ontological principles regarding the fundamental nature of reality. By deliberately subjecting such beliefs to an ontological inquiry initially, one can shed light on the epistemological and methodological opportunities that exist” (Levers, 2013, p. 1).

The paradigm refers to one’s perspective on reality and the various approaches applied to investigate and understand it. Various research approaches can be used, including positivism, interpretivism, critical theory, and the utilisation of paradigms. These approaches are applied with distinct components and structures (Rehman, & Alharthi, 2016). For instance, the positivist philosophical perspective proposes the existence of an objective reality independent of human perception. This perspective typically relies on empirical experimentation to acquire knowledge. In contrast, another philosophical viewpoint – interpretivism – asserts that multiple realities are socially constructed, that truth and reality are products of human creation rather than discoveries made by nature, and that critical theory corresponds with the historical realist perspective. The existence of reality is commonly believed, but it is influenced by multiple cultural, political, ethnic,

gender, and religious factors that interact with one another (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). The paradigm of the present study is presented below.

Interpretivism

As per the findings of scholars, “all qualitative researchers possess a philosophical inclination, in the sense that they are guided by abstract principles that are universally applicable, much like all human beings” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 31). The interpretivist paradigm emphasises exploring and analysing intricate variables and facets. According to Kankam (2019), from the interpretivist perspective, social construction gives rise to multiple realities, which can be accessed through diverse means. Researchers need to clarify their stance about their perception of reality and how things really function (Scotland, 2012). The primary focus of employing interpretivism is to comprehend the individualised realm of human involvement (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017), which corresponds with the narrative investigation in the present study.

Constructivism

According to the definitions of constructionism that have been put forth by researchers, the perception of reality is shaped by distinct contextual and individual factors, which leads to the possibility of the existence of multiple parallel realities (Kovács, et al, 2019). According to Denicolo and Bradley-Cole (2016), individuals who adhere to the constructivist perspective are not hindered by specific theories, beliefs, mindsets, or preconceived notions, such as social mechanisms. Instead, they maintain an open-minded approach and concentrate on the realities that individuals experience and define for themselves. The present study adopts a constructivist methodology and a relativist ontological viewpoint. The constructivist paradigm is founded on a relativist ontology, which posits the existence of multiple realities. Additionally, it is based on a subjectivist epistemology, wherein the knower and respondent collaboratively construct understandings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008).

Relativism

The relativism perspective posits that reality is subjectively construed, and as such, an individual’s perception of ‘truth’ is idiosyncratically determined (Denicolo & Bradley-Cole, 2016). According to Bryman (2015), it is not within the researcher’s capacity to exert influence over these truths. Constructivism (aligned to a relativist ontology) is the

idea that meaning is made, not found; the world is under construction by its inhabitants, who make meaning as they interpret and engage with their surroundings (Crotty, 1998). The theory of constructivism posits that an individual's perspectives are shaped by their experiences and that their experiences and perspectives collectively contribute to their perception of reality (Tenny, Brannan, Brannan, & Sharts-Hopko, 2017).

Ontology and Epistemology

Ontology is the study of the fundamental nature of reality, as it primarily concerns itself with the nature of the existence of phenomena. Therefore, it seeks an answer or reality to a research topic by identifying existing information that may be discovered (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). In addition, the concept of ontology pertains to our perceptions of existence and fundamental principles, as stated by Berryman (2019). Ontology and epistemology are significant in shaping one's viewpoints regarding the essence of truth, the nature of the universe, and the appropriate way to exist within that framework. Al-Ababneh (2020) suggests that ontology pertains to the fundamental nature of reality, while epistemology concerns the fundamental nature of knowledge (2020). This is demonstrated in the presentation of results resulting from qualitative descriptive research (Bradshaw, Atkinson, & Doody, 2017). The ontological stance adopted by naturalistic inquiry is that of relativism, which posits that reality is subjective and subject to variation across individuals, whereas epistemology describes ways of knowing, how we know what we know, and who can be a knower (Berryman, 2019).

In other words, epistemology is the relationship between the inquirer and the known (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Crotty (1998) suggested a framework that links an ontological perspective to particular and specific epistemologies, such as objectivism (aligned to a realist ontology), which is about facts, including those that are still to be discovered. In this epistemology, internal values – created by social, cultural, and religious mores or dreams and the subconscious – are imposed on the external world (Gray, 2013). The epistemological perspective of qualitative research posits that real-world phenomena are based on our understanding of them, and that the world does not exist without our knowledge (Bradshaw, Atkinson, & Doody, 2017).

Narrative inquiry

Narrative inquiry is a qualitative research approach that centres on the exploration of human experiences. Such studies employ various methods such as life story interviews, narratives, photographic voiceover projects, biographies, or other approaches to human experience storytelling to explore the human experience (Ford, 2020). The utilisation of the narrative technique facilitates a comprehensive depiction of the aforementioned occurrences and a thorough exploration of the interpretations ascribed to them by the involved parties (Wang & Geale, 2015).

According to Wolgemuth and Agosto (2019), narrative research is a qualitative methodology that involves the gathering and examination of personal experiences in order to gain a deeper comprehension of individuals, cultures, and society. Wolgemuth and Agosto (2019) argued that narrative inquiry involves the examination and interpretation of story content and structure, including scripts, texts, and visual images, in order to construct a narrative understanding of individuals and society. Qualitative research has the capacity to generate a comprehensive and detailed narrative by amalgamating the encounters of one or more individuals, as per Tenny, Brannan, Brannan, J. M., and Sharts-Hopko (2017).

Data collection

Various methodologies are employed in qualitative research, such as interviews, focus groups, and observation (Tenny, Brannan, Brannan, & Sharts-Hopko, 2017). Semi-structured in-depth interviews are frequently the main sources of data collection in qualitative description research, but other techniques are not disregarded (Bradshaw, Atkinson, & Doody, 2017). Semi-structured interviews represent a qualitative approach to gathering data. Ahlin (2019) suggested that, while standardised questions are typically used in this approach, it can also be characterised as a structured dialogue that is informed by pertinent information obtained through the course of the interactive discussion. The purpose of inquiries is to delve deeper into individuals' experiences, resulting in insightful and original explanations of the phenomenon under study (Schultze & Avital, 2011). A fundamental principle in qualitative research is the concept of collecting samples until data saturation has been achieved, which refers to the point when an adequate amount of data has been gathered (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). As a result, the present

qualitative investigation concluded the process of data collection upon attaining a sense of closure.

A researcher may also read and analyse interviews or cultural texts in a variety of different ways, including content, narrative, and semiotic strategies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). In the present study, the interviews were conducted remotely through Zoom, which gave the interviewees the option to enable or disable their camera, with only their auditory responses being captured for the interview, for the sake of confidentiality. However, in the first three interviews, respondents exhibited a level of trust in me, and activated their cameras upon seeing me on screen. The participants were obtained for a comprehensive and thorough in-depth interview. As per Moser and Korstjens (2018), a face-to-face interview refers to a one-on-one interaction between a participant and an interviewer and involves a conversation between the two parties.

Recruitment process

The recruitment process involves the dissemination of invitations, which included researcher contact details and relevant information available on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. These details were shared through advertising methods or displayed on a social media post following the submission of the advertising. It is advisable to allow a waiting period of approximately two weeks for prospective participants to initiate contact, which indicates their interest. Upon receiving communication from interested individuals, their contact details can be obtained via such methods as email or Instagram. This information will be utilised to ascertain their level of interest in participating. The researcher distributed the Participant Information Sheet (PIS) to each prospective participant who expressed interest in participating in the activity. Prior to commencing the interview, I ensured that every participant's verbal consent was documented and subsequently obtained via recording as approved, indicating their willingness to proceed with participation.

Ethical considerations

Prior to and throughout the research process, a researcher must address various ethical principles to ensure the safety of the participant and maintain the integrity of the study (Bradshaw, Atkinson, & Doody, 2017). The present investigation will adhere to ethical principles, which will be implemented in accordance with the ethical framework of the Auckland University of Technology.

Data analysis

A research design positions the researcher within the empirical world and establishes a link between the researcher and particular locations, individuals, communities, organisations, and relevant sources of interpretive data, such as documents and the archive (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Qualitative research has the potential to generate a substantial volume of data, as noted by Tenny, Brannan and Sharts-Hopko (2017). Therefore, this study was carried out and subsequently compiled into a dataset. As per conventional practice, data were transcribed and subsequently subjected to manual coding, as outlined by Tenny, Brannan and Sharts-Hopko (2017). Thus, the investigator seeks ways of managing and interpreting these documents, and here data management methods and computer-assisted models of analysis may be of use (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). The transcription in this research was done using Microsoft Word.

The present study employed a thematic analysis methodology. Braun and Clarke (2006) asserted that the process of thematic analysis involves the identification, analysis, and reporting of patterns in data, commonly referred to as themes. Thematic analysis can be employed to code and categorise qualitative data (Clarke & Braun, 2017). Coding prioritises noteworthy information and identifies pertinent or profound experiences that reveal recurring patterns. Various methods can be employed to present the outcomes of qualitative research, including a comprehensive analysis and synthesis of data extracts, as well as the formulation of novel concepts, hypotheses, or models (Tenny, Brannan, Brannan, & Sharts-Hopko, 2017).

Table 1: *Thematic Analysis: the six phases guide*

Phases	systematic tool
Phase 1	Examine the data and acquaint yourself with its contents
Phase 2	Generate codes that are considered related to the research inquiries
Phase 3	Conduct a search for relevant themes that are linked to addressing the research inquiry
Phase 4	Assess the themes
Phase 5	Define and name themes based on the fundamental nature of the data that have been obtained
Phase 6	Produce a scholarly publication of the analysis

Source: Scharp & Sanders (2019).

According to Tenny, Brannan, Brannan and Sharts-Hopko (2017), qualitative research involves collecting data from a focal site or its immediate vicinity in relation to individuals. Zamawe (2015) suggested that researchers can utilise NVivo for the purpose of data coding and theme procedures; the web-based application is intended to facilitate the implementation of the virtual interview method.

Participants are assigned a unique numerical code and provided with a distinct email address and password, ensuring anonymity during the interview process. The interviewees have the option to either express themselves audibly or present themselves visually during their interviews. Participants were recruited through various channels, including targeted advertising within the Muslim community, online platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, and outreach to Muslim organisations such as university student associations. The eligibility criteria for the selection process were Muslim women aged 21 or older who have had work experience in hotel work in New Zealand.

Conclusion

This section has identified the techniques that are suitable for the research, as it involves sharing and exploring narratives using a paradigm. The utilisation of this system has facilitated the establishment of a framework that was adhered to during the execution of this research. The research methods employed in this study have yielded the necessary thematic findings and the following discussion.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

Introduction

As discussed in the introduction, this research aimed to explore Muslim women's hotel career experiences in New Zealand. This was done so via the following questions:

1. What employment experiences affect Muslim careers in New Zealand hotels?
2. To what extent does the intersection between being Muslim and being a woman affect the participants' careers in New Zealand hotels?
3. To what extent do diversity and inclusion policies and actions in hotels help advance or hinder the careers of Muslim women?

The present study was undertaken as an initial measure to enhance comprehension regarding the employment opportunities that are available to Muslim women in New Zealand within the hospitality industry, particularly in the hotel sector. Prospective participants were eligible to participate in the study's interview if they met the following criteria: they identified with any ethnicity, were Muslim, were an adult female, had previously held or currently hold a position within the hotel industry in New Zealand hotel, and were at least 21 years of age. The participants were provided with a secure and receptive environment to express their narratives, stories, and feelings regarding their involvement in the hospitality industry in New Zealand

The study provided the participants with the opportunity to articulate the challenges and concerns they experienced in their specific careers. The participants also provided suggestions for Muslim women in New Zealand who aspire to work in the hotel industry, as well as those who are currently employed in hotels. Furthermore, the participants had the opportunity to offer suggestions to hotels in New Zealand concerning the hiring of Muslim women, including those who have already been employed, to be sincerely considered.

The research conducted interviews with five Muslim women of diverse backgrounds who were from New Zealand. The common keywords shared among these women were Islam, women, hospitality, and New Zealand. Four of the women were married and had

successfully completed their academic studies, while the fifth woman was unmarried and in the final semester of her programme. During the 30–50-minute study interviews, 20 questions served as a guide for both the interviewees and the researcher. The Zoom interviews were captured on video using a mobile device. Everyone who interacted with me during the interview expressed a degree of assurance that the audio recording would only happen once the protocol’s oral approval had been gained and no face-to-face filming was recorded. I confirmed this during the interview.

The interview participants were drawn from diverse sectors of the hospitality industry, but also from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds. The literature shows that there are many different ethnic, cultural, and linguistic groups within Islam (Almaki et al., 2016). The five groups of women came from diverse backgrounds, including India, Pakistan, Africa, and the Middle East. As a researcher and traveller, I was able to establish unique connections with each participant based on differences in cultural adaptations, language and traditions when required. This chapter provides an analysis of the findings and a thorough discussion of the results. This study is an exploratory research pursuit that has the objective of creating understanding. Table 2 below presents the participants’ demographic information.

Table 2: *Demographic data of the participants.*

Name	Age range	Ethnicity	Career roles in hotel	Family status	Qualification
Tina	20–30	African	Front-line officer	Single	Bachelor of Travel and Tourism Management
Sally	30–40	Asian	Waitress, chef	Married with children	Culinary arts. Advertisement and filming
Anna	30–40	Asian	Housekeeper	Married with children	Bachelor of Education
Sarah	40–50	Middle Eastern	Kitchen hand, waitress, supervisor, deputy manager	Married with children	Bachelor of Commerce
Zoe	40–50	African	Housekeeper	Married with children	Bachelor of Engineering

Table 2 shows that all five women are migrants and belong to diverse ethnicity backgrounds.

The presence of Muslims in Western workplaces has been on the rise due to factors such as globalisation, immigration, and political instability in certain regions of Africa and the Middle East (Pio & Syed, 2017). Additionally, five of the women possessed educational qualifications and four were married with children. Only two had pursued education in the domain of hospitality. Two participants, who held the occupation of waitressing within the establishment, had achieved upward flexibility in their professional path, whereas the remaining three had remained in one position. The findings revealed that the extended professional paths consisted of various stages. The primary themes were identified from the collected data and are as follows.

Q1: What employment experiences affect Muslim careers in New Zealand hotels?

Career entry for migrant Muslim Women in the NZ Hotel Industry

Four of the five individuals entered the hotel industry because it was easily accessible to them when they arrived in New Zealand and they needed to find work. A few expressed a desire to enhance their proficiency in the English language and saw hotel work as an option. Others mentioned that they resided in close proximity to a hotel, while others aimed to fulfil the requirements of an internship to obtain their degree or study while working.

The primary motivation for participants to pursue entry-level positions in the hotel industry was their recent arrival in New Zealand and the need to secure employment. It is evident that women exhibit a heightened tendency towards pursuing employment opportunities in the hospitality industry, particularly upon their arrival in New Zealand for various purposes such as employment, education, or migration. This phenomenon becomes particularly transparent when a group of individuals initially immigrate to New Zealand and actively pursue employment opportunities within the hospitality sector. The majority of the participants carried diverse educational backgrounds and previous work experiences; however, they were interested in accepting the offer and rapidly secured employment in the hotel industry.

Research conducted on hospitality has played a significant role in these findings. Careers in hotel management may be enticing to aspirational people of any race or gender, depending on how they are presented (Mooney, Ryan, & Harris, 2017). The hotel business has embraced the phrase “entry-level” to designate managers who occupy managerial responsibilities that may not need previous expertise in management, such as an assistant

front office manager (McGinley et al., 2014). Service workers are likely to pursue a career in the hospitality industry and achieve success without holding a formal degree (Mooney, Ryan, & Harris, 2014). It is widely acknowledged that the minimal barriers to entry in the hospitality sector often result in increased competition for employment opportunities (Zhu, Kim, & Poulston, 2020).

On the other hand, there is high demand for labour in Australia and New Zealand, so those countries have minimised their manpower shortage by introducing work permits (Zhu, Kim, & Poulston, 2020). For example, participants stated:

Anna: "I have just moved to New Zealand in 2019... Meanwhile, I start doing some hospitality work, both in restaurants and hotels."

Sally: "I came to New Zealand... I was studying at the same time as I was working in restaurants, then later moved into hotel work."

Sarah: "When I went to New Zealand, the plan was to study at the university and then work, but then I started working in a hotel."

Zoe: "I Moved with my husband to New Zealand ... I started to work in hotels."

Tina: "I'm working in hotel while studying a degree in travel and tourism."

This research provides evidence to support the theory that international students play a significant role as a source of temporary labour in the hospitality industry. Three participants explicitly stated that they were employed while pursuing their studies upon their initial arrival in New Zealand. Subsequently, they obtained work permits and eventually became New Zealand citizens (Zhu, Kim, & Poulston, 2020). The hospitality and tourism labour sectors in Australia and New Zealand face ongoing challenges, primarily due to their dependence on migrant workers (Williamson, 2019).

Five of the participants in the present study were found to be migrant workers, and three of them remained employed in the hotel industry for more than one year. One individual is currently employed in the hospitality industry, specifically in a hotel setting. The research findings indicate a consistent pattern of participants reporting instances where they were offered a role immediately, despite lacking proficiency in the required language, relevant working professional experience, or possessing a different academic

degree. Furthermore, there were resemblances in the professional prospects offered to female Muslim participants within the hospitality sector.

One participant was extended an offer for the position of kitchen hand, while two female individuals were offered positions within the housekeeping department. Another participant was extended an opportunity in the food and beverage department, while the final participant was offered a position as a frontline agent. Despite this, the majority of low-paying jobs in the hotel industry are still held by women, who are often members of racial or ethnic minority groups (Mooney, Ryan, & Harris, 2017). Women continue to hold the majority of entry-level positions in the hotel and restaurant industries (Mooney, Ryan, & Harris, 2017). The significance of female workers in the hotel industry has been steadily increasing on a global scale, surpassing their male counterparts (Pan, 2023). The hospitality industry in New Zealand is predominantly managed and operated by women (Zhang, 2019). In New Zealand, 56.6 per cent of employees in the hospitality sector are women (Macpherson, 2021). This trend can be attributed to the growing presence of women in service sectors.

New Zealand Muslim Men Influence Muslim Women's Hotel Careers

This section discusses the influence that Muslim men, such as fathers and husbands, have on the employment of Muslim women in the hotel industry. During the interviews, participants made reference to the involvement of their fathers or husbands in their decision to pursue a career in the hospitality industry in New Zealand. Only one participant reported having a male figure within their family who approved the role of working in the hotel when asked to do so. Muslim women may be required to seek permission from their parents to go to work (Arifeen & Gatrell, 2020), while four of the participants were either discouraged from taking on the role or advised to leave their work at the hotel. The career decisions of the participants were plainly influenced by male family members, particularly in terms of their professional circumstances. Following a wedding, Muslim women frequently encounter the need to obtain further consent from their husbands and, in certain cases, from their in-laws, in order to maintain their employment. This process entails engaging in negotiations, making compromises, and facing the potential risk of refusal (Arifeen & Gatrell, 2020). For example:

Sarah: "I told my dad, 'Look, there's a job I want to go for an interview for.' He went like, 'Yes, wow, go man, you will be rich'."

Tina: “My dad is like, ‘if it’s only for the internship, then you can just leave once you finish; you don’t have to deal with this’.”

Sally: “I told my dad ... he wasn’t too happy; he wasn’t, you know, too keen for me to carry on in that industry.”

Anna: “My husband wasn’t happy. To be honest, he wasn’t happy at all.”

Zoe: “My husband, when I said I got the job there, said in Arabic that we don’t have women to work in hotels.”

While four of the five women who took part in the interview process were married, all five participants highlighted the duty of having their husbands and fathers support them to work. It has been observed that the responsibilities associated with this are identical to those discussed in the literature. Islam permits women to work so long as they adhere to specific laws and regulations; if their spouses forbid them from working, they must comply with their husbands’ desires (Women Making Careers in Islam, 2021). However, researchers have suggested the imperative to conduct additional research in order to investigate the strategies that Muslim women employ in navigating career opportunities within the framework of familial obligations, religious beliefs, and workplace dynamics (Arifeen & Gatrell, 2020).

Research has been conducted on the topic of women’s obedience to their husbands within the context of Islam. The present study acknowledges the significant influence of men, but it also reveals that the majority of men do not support their wives working in hotels. Despite this, all participants in the study chose to work in the hotel industry, with some remaining employed for up to seven years, whereas the Literature above stated that women need their husbands to agree to their work entry. This demonstrates that Muslim women frequently face obstacles because they are incorrectly defined as submissive, weak, and oppressed (Ali, Malik, Pereira, & Al Ariss, 2017). Despite their hard work and education, Muslim women may experience a sense of obligation to obtain the blessings of their parents, spouses, and Allah (God) before pursuing employment opportunities beyond their household (Arifeen & Gatrell, 2020)

Q2: To what extent does the intersection between being Muslim and being a woman affect the participants’ careers in New Zealand hotels?

New Zealand migrant discrimination at the hotel workplace

Four of the women in the present study have tendered their resignation and the one remaining participant reported experiencing an ethical dilemma due to the potential conflict between their religious beliefs and their professional engagement in the industry. Despite the variations in the participants' educational and professional backgrounds, ethnicities, and employment histories, a considerable number of them showed a positive attitude towards the hospitality sector. The obstacles faced were an important aspect of their actions, and it was their spiritual beliefs that ultimately motivated their choice to withdraw, whether it was related to the offering of alcoholic beverages and pork items, or the uniforms they were required to wear. However, additional variables such as workplace harassment, conspired to generate a negative experience for employees.

Four of the women described workplace bullying due to their faith. Numerous studies have been conducted to explore the role of diversity in understanding the experiences of women and ethnic minorities within social and work environments (Reeves, McKinney, & Azam, 2012). In the UK, for example, various organisations encounter challenges related to the under-representation of ethnic minorities, particularly women (Tariq & Syed, 2018). Ethnic minority women may encounter twice as many challenges as men when striving to attain leadership positions (Welch, Siegele, & Hardin, 2021). According to research conducted on the subject of Muslim integration in Australia, a number of factors – including gender, ethnicity, and religion – create obstacles and disadvantages for Muslim women in the workplace (Khattab, Daoud, Qaysiya, & Shaath, 2020). Migrant workers have higher levels of education than the average worker, and many of these individuals prefer to work in the hospitality industry, despite the industry's negative reputation in society (Janta, 2011).

Based on the perspectives of graduates in the field of hospitality, their departure from the industry can be attributed to various factors, including inadequate remuneration, limited prospects for professional growth, unfavourable working conditions, non-compliance of uniforms with the Muslim dress code, societal challenges, and a disinclination to work non-standard shifts (Ahmad, Rashid, & Zainol, 2015). Migrant ethnic minority women face “triple jeopardy” challenges in employment due to their ethnic background, which affects their position and opportunities within the labour market (Syed & Pio, 2010). Furthermore, religious stereotypes and the presence of Islamophobia have a detrimental impact on the work experiences of individuals who identify as Muslims. These negative

experiences have the potential to influence their sense of identity (Syed & Pio, 2009). Corporations and their workforces are now facing a diverse array of obstacles, one of which could be a lack of understanding about Muslim staff and the many cultural traditions that they bring to the table (Pio & Syed, 2017).

Three of the participants stated that, due to their religious identity, they have experienced bullying and discrimination, which was sometimes motivated more by bullying than by their performance.

Sarah said she had a contract with the hotel to not offer alcohol as a waiter. Although her deputy manager was aware of this, she caused a conflict by asking her to do so.

Sarah: "I had an issue with my deputy manager where he ordered me to work at the bar. I advised that I don't work at the bar, and I had a conflict with him."

The ultimate outcome of the situation was the termination of the deputy manager's employment as a result of escalating the disagreement.

Zoe, who wore a hijab, was subjected to abuse at the hands of her fellow housekeepers. She related many instances where she felt that she was the focus of harassment and mistreatment and that she needed to protect herself. However, she also felt lonely and ignored, especially when it came to sharing room service tools.

Zoe: "I was bullied by workmates because I was a Middle Eastern Muslim ... being a minority is a vulnerability. You feel vulnerable, and because of this kind of work". Nonetheless, the harasser was praised for her exceptional leadership and management skills.

Sally shared her experience during her spiritual fasting (Ramadan) month, when her teammates kept asking why. Her coworkers struggled to understand the importance of her fasting and its influence on her personal beliefs and Muslim community. Sally observed an act of disrespect.

Sally: "I had to explain Ramadan and fasting to everyone, who would remark ... Being cruel and not good because you are Muslim."

Another participant, Tina, experienced discrimination in the workplace. She described a pleasant interaction with a customer initially but noticed a change in their behaviour over time. The customer began seeking assistance exclusively from Tina, but once they learned

of her Muslim identity during a conversation, they became distant and refused to be served by her.

Tina: "I had guest who found out I was a Muslim then she avoided talking to me during her stay ever since she found out I'm a Muslim."

Whereas Anna, who wore a hijab and worked as housekeeper, had a different experience provided in her narrative regarding interactions with customers who expressed their frustration by *raising* their voices, which can be attributed to the hotel room service's inadequate performance. Anna experienced public dismissal while in a corridor, but she said that she remained patient and accepted the situation.

Anna: "I had customers yelling at me ... but I'm quiet and open to it with open arms till they finish yelling."

The trends in this study could be traced to the effect of racial, ethnic, and religious elements. Discrimination is predominantly enacted by individuals in positions of authority, whereas harassment is frequently encountered by hotel staff from clientele (Aasland & Tyldum, 2016). It is clear that more efforts are necessary to address the problem of prejudice. Aside from the current debate, no participant individuals reported their bullying encounters to the human resources department; instead, they chose to disclose the incidences to their direct superiors or not report them at all. Research has found that immigrants face uncertain working conditions, with more than half reporting job loss, health issues, limited control, discrimination, and dissatisfaction with hotel jobs (Aasland & Tyldum, 2016). The issue of workplace bullying in New Zealand has escalated to a significant concern, as there has been a notable increase in the proportion of employees who have experienced bullying within their work environment (Liu, 2014).

New Zealand Muslim women's progression in hotel careers

All of the participants in the present study provided insights into their individual experiences regarding career advancement within the hotel industry in New Zealand. While some participants experienced discrimination, others observed their career progress to various levels. Recruiting and retaining a qualified workforce remains a challenge due to low wages, unsociable working shifts, informal recruitment practices, and migrant workers (Ndiuini & Baum, 2020). A variety of labour market segmentation processes are reflected in the varied requirements of hotel positions (Aasland & Tyldum,

2016). Sarah initially pursued a career in the hotel industry as a kitchen hand while wearing hijab, but she eventually decided to remove her hijab in order to secure a position in the bank sector after completing her education. However, she also decided to continue her work at the hotel; this decision led to her being offered a job as a waitress, and she subsequently advanced to the role of supervisor. However, Sarah experienced discrimination and conflict with her deputy manager. This resulted in the deputy manager's termination and Sarah was then hired as a deputy manager herself.

Sarah: "He got fired and I got the offer to work as deputy manager."

As mentioned in the literature review regarding career theory, "Career success is a mix of enjoyable work and the psychological results that emerge from such experiences; it is an important component in employee retention" (Chang & Busser, 2020). According to the research findings, "career development" may be defined as "a focus on the interaction of the person and the organisation over time" and features a collaboration that benefits both sides (Arthur, 2014, p. 629). Some hotels provide a high degree of employment security, skilled workforce, dependability, and pleasant working circumstances, while others provide job prospects that are distinguished by poor earnings, unstable working conditions, prolonged or irregular working hours, discriminatory practices, limited remuneration, and limited opportunities for professional advancement (Aasland & Tyldum, 2016).

Another similar situation of career progress for a Muslim woman in New Zealand was Sally, who started as a restaurant worker and was later offered a role in a hotel as a food and beverage waitress. Once she finished her course in culinary arts, she became a chef at the same hotel.

Sally: "I was hired as a chef once I finished my course... I loved cooking."

This is important in career philosophy and how the working development works for certain women in hospitality. However, not all women have had such opportunities. Two of the participants, who were closer in age to one another when they began their employment in hotels and both wore a hijab, had contrasting experiences in terms of their ability to grow in their careers. Both women had previous experience and credentials and came to New Zealand around the same time in 2019. Both participants described their experiences of having to deal with a substantial amount of work while also being denied the chance to provide frontline customer service, which is something they would have

loved to do. This confirms the findings from previous studies that the housekeeping departments in New Zealand tend to hire mature females who are primarily responsible for performing cleaning duties, such as housekeeping and laundry tasks (Poulston & Jenkins, 2016). Furthermore, “front-line” workers serve hotel guests and, for such jobs, employers appreciate appearance, service, language, and local culture. Non-native speakers may find lower status “backroom” jobs, which prioritise work skills above attractiveness and social abilities (Aasland & Tyldum, 2016).

Anna: I would want to work at the front office. It's better for us women ... women shouldn't be lifting heavy things.

Zoe: Muslim women should work in the front line ... my hotel experience caused me to require an operation due to heavy-duty work.

New Zealand has a high turnover in hospitality, for reasons such as long shifts. As a result, the present study's findings regarding hotel turnover were similar to those in the literature. Four of the participants are leaving their careers due to issues related to their faith, but other factors also affected their decisions, such as discrimination and age. The potential consequence of age-based discrimination on older employees is an increase of workforce shortages, which can also play a part with regard to recruitment, employee retention, labour turnover, and understaffing within the hospitality industry (Poulston & Jenkins, (2015). The hotel industry's high personnel turnover makes it important to understand and forecast its trends (Zhu, Kim, & Poulston, 2020).

Every participant has offered a detailed account of their professional experiences working in the hospitality sector of the business. However, although they experienced similar experiences, four of the women have since made the shift to other careers, and one of the participants is still unsure whether she should continue working at the hotel where she is now employed or explore other options owing to her religious beliefs. As the preceding chapters have noted, there is a problem with how Muslim women may advance their careers in the hospitality business. As a result, the purpose of this research is to explore the turnover rates among Muslim women working in the hospitality business in New Zealand. Considering the rise in the Muslim population and the development of Muslim hospitality, as mentioned in the literature review, this is an important question to investigate. The next few paragraphs deal with the results of turnover and retention rates

for migrant employees. Problems of this kind are not unique to New Zealand and are also prevalent in a number of other regions throughout the globe.

There is a perception of a Catch-22 situation with respect to Muslim women in hotel employment, as was covered in the literature study. In response to a question on the possibility of expanding career prospects for Muslim women in the hospitality business, four of the five participants agreed that the hospitality jobs should, within specified bounds, adhere to the principles of the Islamic religion but can also be adapted within the hotel framework. Also, if given the opportunity, these participants stated that they would gladly return to the hotel industry.

Sally: "I would love to work in hospitality again but with my own terms of boundaries according to Islamic teachings ... Yes, but not in food, but there are still many options."

Sarah: "Yes, in New Zealand ... working in the morning rather than at night to avoid the forbidden things in Islam. I would return to work in hospitality any day ... I loved working in this industry."

Tina: "Yes, if they are ready, they have to cope with beer, bacon, the outfit, and other things ... I enjoy working in hospitality work ... I would advance in management area."

Anna: "I encourage them to work in the hotel business, but according to our spiritual boundaries. I believe Muslim women should work in front-line customer service positions."

Q3: To what extent do diversity and inclusion policies and actions in hotels help advance or hinder the careers of Muslim women?

Hotel career barriers for New Zealand migrant Muslim women

Sharia serves as a governing framework for Muslim society and its moral principles. The focal point of Sharia lies in the examination and elucidation of human conduct, specifically pertaining to various aspects such as dietary practices, attire, recreational activities, hygiene, social decorum, and modes of communication in summary. Sharia establishes a framework that distinguishes between actions deemed permissible (halal)

and those deemed forbidden (haram) (Stephenson, 2014). Nevertheless, it is stated in the Quran Surah An-Naba' verse 11, "and [We] made the day to seek livelihood" and Surah At-Tawbah verse 105 "And tell them, [O Prophet]: "Keep working: Allah will behold your works and so will His Messenger and the believers; and you shall be brought back to Him Who knows that which is beyond the reach of perception and that which is within the reach of perception. He will then declare to you all that you have been doing." (Abdullah, T., Carr, N., & Lee, C. (2023) Pg 73).

According to scholarly sources (Ahmad & Owoyemi, 2012; Aldulaimi, 2016), Muslims are obligated by God to engage in productive work and actively contribute to society. In the Islamic faith, the act of working or earning a livelihood is regarded as a manifestation of worship (Abdullah, Carr, & Lee, 2023). However, Muslims residing in a secular society frequently encounter a state of tension wherein they must navigate the need to function effectively within the cultural atmosphere while maintaining their religious beliefs (Osman & Brown, 2010). Based on a scientific investigation, hotel employees, particularly those who identify as Muslims, can be classified into two distinct religious and spiritual categories. The concept of intrinsic religiosity pertains to individuals who genuinely embrace their religious beliefs and possess an internal sense of identity that is influenced by their faith. Conversely, extrinsic religiosity involves the utilisation of religion for social or economic purposes (Koburtay & Syed, 2021). Several researchers have identified that Muslims living in Western countries possess a "triple identity," which includes their religion, original nationality and new nationality (Khan, Afroze, & Zaman, 2022).

The five participants shared their extensive experiences in hotel work in New Zealand. Although they had differing ethnicities, educational backgrounds, and languages, and cultures, they shared a common bond in their faith. The minority group in New Zealand shared a common faith that served as a unifying factor. All participants identified as practising Muslims, which meant they were able to exchange ideas and identify the challenges regarding the employment of Muslim women in hotels in New Zealand. For example, each of the interviewees identified a common struggle that caused them to reflect on. Every participant employee who has worked in the hotel industry has encountered various challenges that conflict with their religious beliefs (Sharia law). These challenges include serving alcohol and bacon, adhering to uniform requirements, and finding time to pray during their working hours. Muslim women encounter difficulties in fulfilling their job responsibilities at hotels, particularly in the provision of

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alcohol and pork products. Although they have adapted to the New Zealand culture, there were situations where the individuals attempted to avoid handling or offering alcohol and pork products through negotiation with their colleagues or managers due to their faith.

Anna: "I was asked once to serve alcohol, but they knew I wouldn't do it again, so they never asked me again. And when I serve bacon, I try to avoid touching it and use tongs."

Sarah: "I have an agreement with my contract that I don't work at the bar. My boundaries at the restaurant."

Zoe: "I never wear trousers but had to at the hotel; I was hoping to wear a dress or skirt instead."

New Zealand workplace diversity and inclusion for migrant workers

The research participants have clearly demonstrated the difficult situations they have encountered. In certain instances, individuals may find themselves unable to fulfil their complete duties as a result of internal struggles arising from their conflicting beliefs. However, it is evident that hotels, managers, and co-workers are making concerted efforts to promote inclusivity and diversity, to some degree. An inclusive environment fosters respect, equitable opportunities, and connection, promoting organisational success by ensuring equal access to information and decision making (Khan, Afroze, & Zaman, 2022). A perfect example of this is when participants recall their struggle to maintain their faith while working with haram situations related to pork or alcohol. Diversity is recognised as one of the most important characteristics that may contribute to an organisation's overall effectiveness (Khan, Afroze & Zaman, 2022). The literature debates how and why employers and policymakers should consider religious standards and employees' spiritual demands at work (Koburtay & Alzoubi, 2021). This is especially the case because Muslims cannot consume or offer alcohol (Ahmad & Scott, 2021).

Sally: "In instances where I would prepare dishes containing bacon or pork, the head chef would typically taste the food before serving, and I would ask my team members to taste it for me."

Tina: I would say one of the big things is dealing with alcohol. I would ask my coworkers to serve whenever they could instead of me; when I do room service, I would wash my hands 10 times when serving bacon."

Furthermore, the diversity and inclusion that the participant highlighted was the significant impact observed when the hotel workers who identified as Muslim received comprehensive and individualised support during Ramadan.

Sarah: "My team helped me many times; they cooked me a meal at 9 p.m. when it was time to eat."

Tina: "They know it's Ramadan. It was good; they were very respectful; the people I work with, actually, my team, are really nice. They're incredibly courteous and considerate; like during Ramadan when I was fasting, they wanted to eat together but wouldn't eat until I broke my fast, even though they were hungry."

Sally: "Yes, it was hard. I was fasting. The staff was good; the manager was quite understanding; they would know that I was fasting. See, they wouldn't give me loads of work."

Anna: "Ramadan is significant to me; therefore, I didn't work."

Zoe: "I will be working, but I won't take my break; I will dine at home instead."

An additional element for four participants relates to the existence of a support system within their workplace, as provided by their fellow team members, particularly when it comes to handling situations that conflict with their faith, such as fasting during Ramadan. Previous research on hotel service workers and fasting conducted in locations other than New Zealand has indicated that Muslim service workers, specifically those employed in high-end hotels, encounter the challenge of harmonising their religious convictions with their professional responsibilities (Sakai, 2010).

As a result, diversity representations reflect an organisation's efforts to attain its intended demographic diversity characteristics, such as the incorporation of women and racial-ethnic minorities (Reeves, McKinney, & Azam, 2012). The findings indicate that there was a presence of inclusion and diversity in the workplace, which potentially contributes to addressing these challenges to some extent. However, further investigation in this area is recommended. Additional investigation is necessary to explore additional factors that may impede or enhance the progress of Muslim women in their professional paths within non-Muslim nations (Arifeen, 2020).

Summary

This chapter has linked the findings with discussion and identified themes that relate to the research's three key questions. In this research we discussed the following:

RQ 1: What employment experiences affect Muslim careers in New Zealand hotels?

Four of the participants arrived in New Zealand with no background experience in hospitality.

- The career entry for migrant Muslim women in the New Zealand hotel industry
- New Zealand Muslim men influence Muslim women's hotel careers

RQ 2: To what extent does the intersection between being Muslim and being a woman affect the participants' careers in New Zealand hotels?

Five of the participants have shared their work-related bullying and issues with four convinced it is to do with the Islamic faith.

- New Zealand migrant discrimination for Muslim (migrant) women in the hotel workplace
- New Zealand Muslim women's progression in hotel careers

RQ 3: To what extent do diversity and inclusion policies and actions in hotels help advance or hinder the careers of Muslim women?

Five of the participants offered their experiences and their feelings when it came to barriers that prevented them from performing accordingly. But also shared the informal diversity management they received from their colleagues which helped them to continue their work and their performance at the work place by sharing the responsibilities when required due to faith.

- Hotel career barriers for New Zealand migrant Muslim women
- New Zealand workplace diversity and inclusion for migrant workers

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a comprehensive analysis of the career progression of Muslim women in the New Zealand hotel industry. This study encompasses a comprehensive analysis of the data collected through semi-structured interviews. Although the interviews were conducted online, the opportunity to interact with these women through Zoom and establish a sense of trust provided insights from the narratives and lived experiences of the participants as migrants and Muslims.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Implications

Summary and key research

Employment in the hospitality sector is projected to increase between 2021 and 2027. The present study aimed to investigate the experiences of Muslim women working in the hotel sector in New Zealand in order to bridge the research gap. The aim of this research is to gain insight into the career advancement of Muslim women employed in the hospitality industry in New Zealand. The proposed focus of the project is to gather narratives and first-hand accounts within the hospitality industry, specifically from Muslim women. This study aims to investigate the employment experiences of individuals who practise the Islamic faith in New Zealand. Additionally, the study aims to determine the career advancement opportunities available to women from minority groups within the hotel industry in New Zealand.

Empirical data facilitated the ability of this study to address its three primary research questions.:

(1) What employment experiences affect Muslim careers in New Zealand hotels?

The key findings are that most participants recalled that they entered the hospitality industry in order to improve their English language skills, secure employment upon arrival in New Zealand and gain work experience. One of the five participants entered hospitality due to having studied a hospitality and tourism degree. Another factor that contributed to the Muslim women's experiences when entering their hospitality careers was that four of the five participants suggested that the male in their family discouraged their employment in hotel industry; nevertheless, the women decided to go ahead and secure employment in hotels. This has disproven the Western stereotype that Muslim women are oppressed, as these women Muslim women in New Zealand were able to have their own voice.

(2) To what extent does the intersection between being Muslim and being a woman affect the participants' careers in New Zealand hotels?

The key findings revealed an important gap between the experiences of Muslim women and women in general. As noted in the previous chapters, Islam encompasses a

comprehensive way of life, wherein adherents are obligated to adhere to prescribed religious duties and adopt a corresponding lifestyle. Islam applies a significant influence on various aspects of daily life related to areas such as work, dietary practices, behavioural norms, and more. The roles of women and men are both extensive and important. The present study has identified barriers for New Zealand Muslim women's progression in hotel careers.

(3) To what extent do diversity and inclusion policies and actions in hotels help advance or hinder the careers of Muslim women?

The key findings in this study regarding how Muslim women navigated work in hotel with the help of indirect diversity and inclusion, which played a significant part in their daily work. This led to the next matter to be explored, which was the extent to which diversity and inclusion policies and actions in hotels help advance or hinder the careers of Muslim women. In any organisation, diversity and inclusion management plays a role; however, the struggle is real with the women who participated in the present study. For example, the Muslim women had challenges that were shared by each participant when it came to pork, alcohol, uniform, prayers, and Ramadan. However, they also shared how indirect support from their colleagues and management somehow made it possible to continue to work. The question is, when diversity management plays a role, whether the human resources managers are aware of the challenges and whether the hotels are able to make possible changes. For example, when a participant, a chef, could not find a colleague to taste the pork she had cooked, would that effect the time that it took to deliver the meal to the customer.

Implications of the Study

This empirical research examined the careers of Muslim women in New Zealand via the lens of the hospitality industry. This research has laid the groundwork for an entirely new awareness of the roles that Muslim women play in the hospitality industry. There is a lot of material justifying taking a hotel job, due to guaranteed employment, the ability to earn permanent residence, and the fact that a licence or degree is not necessary. This research has also highlighted new consequences regarding the difficulties associated with duties and responsibilities that contradict Islamic beliefs, as well as how diversity in the workplace played a role in these difficulties. Several academics have pointed out that Muslim women in the West are the targets of Islamophobia. The research also suggested

that, although these women experienced a lack of official diversity and assistance at their place of employment, their discrimination and religion problem has driven them to survive within their positions. The conclusions of this research are restricted due to the fact that it was an exploratory study, there was a time constraint, and there were only five participants.

Conclusion

As suggested in the research finding, all of the participants voiced their support for the idea that hotels should be more sensitive to the requirements of Muslim guests and should make the necessary adjustments to help Muslim employees grow in their careers. Their pursuit of a profession in the hotel sector was subjected to a substantial amount of strain caused by a variety of obstacles. All the individuals who took part in this research said that they had not been subjected to the traditional characteristics that are linked with high turnover rates in the hospitality business, such as excessive working hours or poor compensation. This discovery suggests a fresh path that may be taken in study and indicates the need for further research.

Research Limitations

The findings of this research have revealed a number of obstacles that women face while working in the hospitality business over the course of a number of decades. However, many studies concern the fact that hotels have the largest employee turnover and the worst labour shortage. In addition, a substantial amount of investigation has been carried out on the subject of Islamophobia directed at Muslims living in Western cultures, as well as an investigation into the prejudice experienced by migrant workers in the hospitality sector. This research has emphasised all of these facets, as well as expanding on the experiences of Muslim women. On the other hand, there is a lack of studies about the working conditions Muslim women migrant face in New Zealand hotels. The sampling, literature and time were limitations of this study. As this study was the first study and primary research, larger sampling is recommended.

Language Barrier

Another difficulty that arose over the course of this investigation was the language barrier. The majority of the participants spoke English only as a second language. Some preferred to communicate in Arabic, while others used English in a different setting; hence, the

examination of the transcribed material was necessary, and time was a factor in the process.

Suggestions for Future Research

This research is an exploratory inquiry with the goal of studying the professional progress of Muslim women working in the hotel business in New Zealand. In order to properly understand this topic, further research is required. Five Muslim women who work in the hospitality industry in New Zealand have offered specific details about their experiences. However, the experiences of these participants do not represent those of all Muslim women who are employed in hotels in New Zealand. Given that there were only five participants in the sample, it is strongly recommended that more research be carried out over a longer period of time, with a larger sample size that includes younger and older Muslims, as well as Muslim men and Muslims born in New Zealand.

Final Remarks

Given that the number of Muslims living in New Zealand is increasing, this research of the hotel industry is quite relevant. Moreover, since Islam is not an ethical code, but rather a faith that is practised by a large number of people, Muslims don't belong to a certain ethnicity. This study could bring awareness to hotels, universities, and communities, it could be possible to start on a new route that leads to success for the communities, organisations, employees, and employers all at the same time.

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Appendices



ADVERTISMENT FOR RECRUITMENT OF MUSLIM WOMEN HOTEL WORKER

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Muslim women's experiences and career paths in New Zealand hotels.

Ghadair Alshemari is a student in the Masters of International Hospitality Management at AUT. I am gathering information about the experiences of Muslim women workers in the hotel sector in New Zealand. This research is being conducted to complete my dissertation. If you currently work in the hotel sector your experiences will provide valuable information for research about Muslim women's experiences in the New Zealand hotel sector. My goal is to gather information about the experiences of Muslim women workers in the hotel sector in New Zealand. The analysis of the data collected from this interview will inform my dissertation. The findings of this research may also be used for academic publications and presentations. The findings will be emailed to all participants by the end of 2023.

Participant Selection Criteria:

We are seeking participants who are New Zealand Muslim Women over 21 years and have resided and worked in hotel in New Zealand for 2 years or more. For this study,

the participants will be defined as Muslim women if they self-identify as such and have resided and worked in New Zealand hotels for 2 years or more.

I value your help by participating in the research.

If you are interested in responding, please go to:

Researcher Contact Details:

Ghadair Alshemari. Email: ghadair.als@gmail.com

AUTEC Approval Number: 23/120

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TE WĀNANGA ARONUI
O TĀMAKI MAKĀU RAU

Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:

29/5/23

Project Title

Muslim women's experiences and career paths in New Zealand hotels.

An Invitation

Kia Ora,

Ghadair Alshemari invites you to participate in this interview.

Ghadair Alshemari is a student in the Masters of International Hospitality Management at AUT. I am gathering information about the experiences of Muslim women workers in the hotel sector in New Zealand. This research is being conducted to complete my

dissertation. If you currently work in the New Zealand hotel sector, your experiences will provide valuable information for this research.

What is the purpose of this research?

The analysis of the data collected from this interview will primarily inform my dissertation. The findings of this research may also be used for academic publications and presentations. International research shows women continue to face a variety of challenges in the workplace with particular challenges being faced by second-generation Muslim women. However, New Zealand research on this topic in the workplace remains limited, thus there is a significant gap in New Zealand based research about the challenges, opportunities and management of Muslim women in the hospital sector. This research aims to address that gap and

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potentially provide suggestions to improve the experience of Muslim women in this important sector to the New Zealand economy.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You have been invited to participate from your membership of New Zealand Muslim organisations via the participation of your organisation on, LinkedIn, Facebook or other social networking links. Anyone who is currently working in the hotel sector in New Zealand and self-identifies as a Muslim woman is welcome to participate in the survey.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used.

However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible. Before the start of the interview, you will be asked to agree to participate in the research by completing the Oral Consent Protocol Form. You can stop doing the interview at any point.

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What will happen in this research?

This research involves answering questions about your experiences as a Muslim woman in the New Zealand hotel sector.

Interviews will be held on-line, via Zoom or other similar technology. The interviews will be at a time that is convenient for the participants. Interviews will occur within two weeks of the participant agreeing to be interviewed.

The study aims to gain insights into the nature of Muslim women's employment experiences. The resulting findings will inform my dissertation. The findings of this research may also be used for academic publications and presentations.

What are the discomforts and risks?

Some of the questions may ask for sensitive information about your employment experiences, if you don't feel comfortable answering them, please do not answer them. The interview recordings and transcripts will be completely confidential and not made available to anyone except the researcher and the supervisor of this project.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

The data gathered in this interview will remain absolutely confidential. All findings and analysis will be aggregated, so no data can be traced back to individual participants. If answering the questions triggers emotional responses, please contact the following free service:

AUT Student Counselling and Mental Health is able to offer three free sessions of confidential counselling support for adult participants in an AUT research project. These sessions are only available for issues that have arisen directly as a result of participation in the research and are not for other general counselling needs. To access these services, you will need to:

drop into our centre at WB203 City Campus, email counselling@aut.ac.nz 9292.

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let the receptionist know that you are a research participant, and provide the title of my research and my name and contact details as given in this Information Sheet.

You can find out more information about AUT counsellors and counselling on <https://www.aut.ac.nz/student-life/student-support/counselling-and-mental-health>

What are the benefits?

This research will help Ghadir complete her Master's Qualification in International Hospitality Management, and the results may inform better professional practice in the management of Muslim women's careers in the hospitality sector.

How will my privacy be protected?

All interview data will be confidential and no participants will be identified in any way in the resulting dissertation or research outputs.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The only cost to you will be approximately 1 hour of your time to complete the interview.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will have four weeks to consider this invitation.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Once analysis of the data is complete, I will email all participants the findings.

Would you like to see a copy of your interview transcript? Yes No

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, *Dr David Williamson*; *Email: david.williamson@aut.ac.nz*; *Phone: (+649) 027 521 5666*

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEK, *ethics@aut.ac.nz*, (+649) 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Ghadir Alshemari. Email: ghadair.als@gmail.com

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr David Williamson. Email: david.williamson@aut.ac.nz. Phone 921 9999 Ex 8448.

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 7 July 2023, AUTEK Reference number 23/120



Oral Consent Protocol

Project title: Muslim women's experiences and career paths in New Zealand hotels.

Project Supervisor: Dr David Williamson

Researcher: Ghadair Alshemari

The participant joins the videoconference

Do you agree to my recording your consent to participate?

If they agree, then the record function will be activated and they will be asked the following:

Have you read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated dd mmmm yyyy?

Do you have any questions about the research?

Do you understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that the interview will also be audio-recorded and transcribed?

Do you understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (your choice) and that you may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.?

Do you understand that if you withdraw from the study then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used? However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

Do you agree to take part in this research?

Do you wish to receive a summary of the research findings? (please tick one):
Yes No

Do you wish to receive a copy of your interview transcript? (please tick one):
Yes No

Do you want me to send you a copy of the audio recording for this consent?
Yes No

Please confirm your name and contact details

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

I will now turn off the recording of the Consent and then will start a separate recording for the interview.

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 7 July 2023: AUTEK Reference number 23/120

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form

Interview Questions

The interviewers and the study are introduced.

The semi-structural questions listed below will be asked:

Aslam Alkuom sister, (Islamic greetings)

How are you?

Please sister could you tell me your race, age, and educational background?

Sister, for identification purposes, Do you consider yourself a Muslim woman?

What is hospitality to you as a Muslim woman?

Could you share more about Muslim women's role in Islam

Are you currently working, Can you explain your job history?

Please share on your hospitality experience.

How did you find yourself working in the hotel industry?

Have you been able to advance in your career?

If you don't mind sharing, how was your typical day at work?

Have you faced any issues or challenges in the industry?

Which component of your hospitality profession was your favourite?

Have you ever worked at a hotel during the month of Ramadan? If yes how was that like?

Have you ever had to offer beer and bacon? How did you feel about that?

How did your family and friends respond to your hotel employment?

Does your religion impact your job or vice versa? Does your job influence your religious beliefs?

Do you think you'll ever encourage Muslim women to work in hotels?

What are your thoughts on Muslim women working in hotels?

Do you intend to advance in your hotel career? If so what is your career goal?

Could you recount when you had to choose between your religion and your job?

Do you want to tell us about any of your experiences?

Do you have any suggestions for potential Muslim ladies or hotels that hire Muslim women?

