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Islam, LGBTQI+ Identity and Education: What to do?



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Who are Hidayah?

- Nationwide U.K organisation for LGBTQI+ Muslims;
- Run groups in London, Manchester and Leeds;
- ‘Contact points’ in Newcastle and Glasgow;
- New contact points being set up in cities across the U.K;
- Work with asylum seekers and often with people with complex backgrounds;
- Have worked with the Government Equalities Office, schools, Malaysian Foreign Diplomats and we speak at events and run campaigns/events;
- Documentaries and media discussions;
- Roundtable events with British Muslims for Secular Democracy;
- LGBTQI+, Intersectionality and Islam Conference (Birmingham);
- Life as an LGBTQI+ Muslim survey (ongoing)...



HIDAYAH

Gender, Sexuality & Islam

Islam and LGBTQI+: In conflict?

- The Quran says itself that Allah sent prophets and religions to teach people to act equitably and just (5:48, 6:165, 11:7, 11:118-119, 67:2) but instead we want to hold onto unjust rulings because "our sheikh says so and we've always done it this way". Even though Ibn Al Qayyim warned us about practicing taqleed (blind following).
- The people of Lut...
- **وَجَاءَهُ قَوْمُهُ يُهْرَعُونَ إِلَيْهِ وَمِنْ قَبْلُ كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ۚ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ هُوَ لَاءِ بَنَاتِي هُنَّ أَطْهَرُ لَكُمْ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُخْزُونِ فِي ضَيْفِي ۗ أَلَيْسَ مِنْكُمْ رَجُلٌ رَشِيدٌ (78)**
- Lut was not offering his daughters as 'female alternative to males,' but rather as a peace agreement in exchange for respecting his guests. Lut did not say "don't have sex with men," he said, "don't embarrass me in front my guests"
- N.B. The word (تفدحون tafdahoon) can also be translated to mean 'to violate'. Which was highlighted in another ayah (verse) where Lut ordered his people 'and do not violate.' This is consistent with the narrative of rape.
- The people of Lut themselves were already married to women, hence they were likely not homosexual (Kugle, 2010).

• **قَالُوا لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَمَا لَنَا فِي بَنَاتِكَ مِنْ حَقٍّ وَإِنَّكَ لَتَعْلَمُ مَا نُرِيدُ (79)**

- **Lut's people said to him "you already know that we have no entitlement to your daughters, and you know exactly what we want" - they wanted to rape the guests, so they declined the peace treaty.**
- **Whereas Lut wasn't trying to forbid them from "same-sex" per se, he was trying to forbid them from raping his visitors; which goes to confirm that they had something against foreigners.**
- **At the same time they were already married to women (plus Lut's wife was helping them in the rape process and she got punished for that too) which confirms they were not homosexual; so the punishment was not for homosexuality.**
- **The story of Lut is a story about attempted rape and inhospitality as travelers were under Lut's protection.**
- **Contemporary scholars disagree sharply about the Qur'anic perspective on same-sex intimacy (Ali, 2016).**
- **Even classical Islamic jurists struggled with this issue and had a more sophisticated attitude than many contemporary Muslims (Kutty, 2014).**

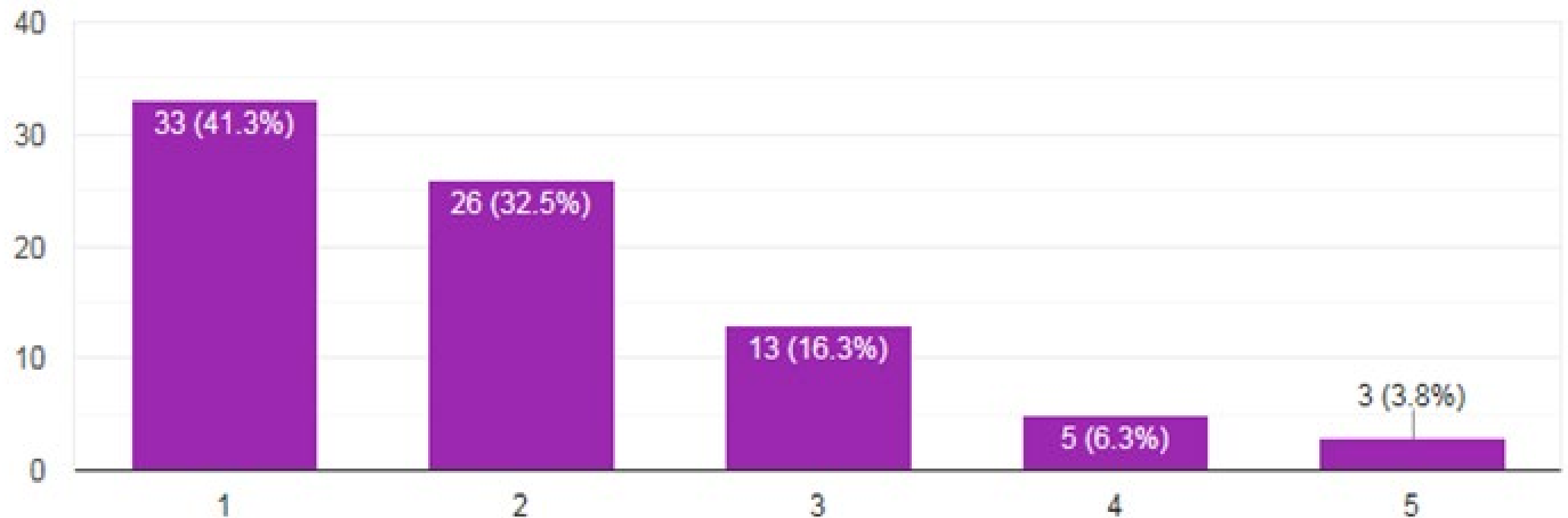
Important to know: religious context

- In Islam obedience to the law of the land is a religious duty. The Qur'an commands Muslims to remain faithful to not only Allah and the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), but to the authority of the land:
- *“O ye who believe! obey Allah, and obey His Messenger and those who are in authority over you” (CH.4: V. 60).*
- Any country or government that guarantees religious freedom to followers of different faiths (not just Islam) must be owed loyalty. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:
- *“One who obeys his authority, obeys me. One who disobeys his authority, disobeys me”*
- Some Muslims are under the impression that it is permissible to violate the laws of countries that are not an Islamic state (al-Khilafa), which is totally incorrect.
- Muslims must adhere to the laws of any country they live in, whether in the west or the east, as long as the law is not in contradiction with one's religion.

Communities: 1 'strongly agree' – 5 'strong disagree'

I am hopeful for the future of LGBTQIA+ Muslims in the UK

80 responses



Are there any specific issues that LGBTQIA+ Muslims face that LGBTQIA+ people do not?

- “In Muslim communities, men who are gay and effeminate are discriminated against. Being gay is something to be ashamed of and is seen to be dishonourable. When I was growing up I was conditioned from a young age to be silent and not speak out. I always felt that if I did anything that could bring dishonour and shame to my family then this could trigger them to become abusive towards me.”

- “Religious persecution and hate from some in the LGBT+ community.”
- “Having discussion about sexuality without it being passed on to the community.”
- “Racism and Islamophobia.”
- “Homophobia and rejection from within their own community. It's like being caught in a hate sandwich, constantly having to explain yourself.”

What are the biggest challenges you face on a daily basis?

- “Being my true self.”
- “My parents finding out are is probably the biggest issue to my mental health.”
- “Racism and Islamophobia.”
- “Adapting my gender behaviour to pass.”
- “Constant lies to family. Living a double life.”
- “Being worried about my safety.”
- “Hearing my family shaming and insulting gay people.”

- “Knowing that if I want to have a normal and happy life, getting married, having a family, then I need to move out from my home town, knowing that I may never be able to move back. And knowing that once I am fully "out", things will have changed irreversibly for me in that I will no longer be a welcome member of the Muslim community in my home town.”
- “Isolation and not feeling like I belong anywhere.”
- “Fear of the Pakistani community knowing my sexuality. Whether it’s at work or public areas.”

How do you see the future of the Muslim LGBTQIA+ community?

- “Online and physical presence of such groups have already grown 100% compared to when I was growing up, so that's really positive within itself. There needs to be a Muslim LGBTQIA+ presence in mosques and in communities across the world, where practising Muslims can pray without prejudice. I know some imams across Europe and the world have opened their own places of worship, and that's really positive! We need that in the UK too!”
- “Progressive. Inclusive. Hopefully individual strength to not conform to the needs of family/community.”

- “Dismally disconnected.”
- “Unsafe with the rise of far right and anti-Islam. I see people becoming more secular and losing their families to be free.”
- “Visibility is increasing, in fictional mainstream shows, social media, pride events and more. I have straight Muslim friends for whom homophobia sits uncomfortably with them, so I think the future will be better.”
- “Yes I am, as the dialogue has started, change will come in two or three generations.”

Why is this?

- Wahabi and Salafi madrasas set up with Saudi preachers and money. Imam's who are U.K born tend to be more tolerant toward LGBTQI+ people than foreign imams (not a guarantee).
- A lack of contact with LGBTQI+ people in the South Asian and some African communities due to structural (cultural taboos about sexuality and sex) and family pressures.
- A fear that 'homosexuality' taught in schools will be about physical sex (and so will encourage zina –extramarital sex).
- A widely held view that there is only one Muslim community: 'it's a Muslim community'...
- "Our argument is, it's not OK. It's OK to be gay for you, but we are a majority Muslim community, this is a majority Muslim school — it's not OK. Let's get it out there, let's get it straight, no beating around the bush, no water under the bridge, it is not OK for our children to be gay. Let's just put it there" (Fatima Shah: Protester Parkfield School). This silences dissenting voices or voices who believe differently.
- Significant editing of Islam's deeply rich past of same-sex desire and love.
- Belief amongst conservative Muslims that same sex desires have no scientific basis and so people can be changed. We are all created equal by Allah and to deny Muslim faith (queer Muslim or not) is deeply sinful.



Say NO to
Undermining Parental
Rights & Authority

“Say No to
“No Outsiders”
Program
STOP NOW!

Groups: How can you challenge mainstream Muslims and Muslim majority places of education, schooling and care in your own work?



To ensure that the voices of LGBTQI+ Muslims are heard and understood



HIDAYAH
Gender, Sexuality & Islam

What does Hidayah mean?

The word 'Hidayah' derives from the Arabic word for 'guidance.' Hidayah is a nationwide organisation for LGBTQI+ Muslims in the United Kingdom. We campaign for social justice to defeat the stigma, taboo and discrimination faced by many within our communities and to give LGBTQI+ Muslims a voice and visibility to gain social acceptance and change. We offer community and educational workshops as well as safe spaces to meet and

www.hidayahlgbt.co.uk

