

Islam Question & Answer

General Supervisor:
Shaykh Muhammad Saalih al-Munajjid

220069 - She wants to study gynaecology but that may require her to take off the niqab sometimes

the question

I am a 16 year old muslim girl who lives in the U.K. I am in year 11 and finishing secondary school in a couple of weeks.

I am of the opinion that covering the face and hands is obligatory. I want to go to sixth form but only a minority are not mixed . So I am trying to find some schools that have an an all girls sixth form or more females than males in the school. In order to reduce and prevent free-mixing as much as possible. As, I have seen the evil consequences of free mixing(in regards to others not personally me) ; my secondary school is a mixed school. At the time I wanted to leave my parents didnt allow me. I would be disallowed to wear the niqab to secondary school so I wear it outside of school.

I fear that these few sixth forms and colleges that accepted me wearing niqab, may want me to remove my niqab and gloves during science practical lessons. Such as, when things are being heated or burnt due to health and safety reasons. Also when I am sitting exams for identification purposes.

Am I allowed to compromise and remove my niqab during these practicals? Or even when I inshaAllah go to medical school to become a gyneacologist/obetrician. I think the niqab will not be permitted. So am I sinworthy if I take my niqab off whilst in the school? Even though males will be around? Or am I permitted because I want a career path that can benefit muslims and women in particular?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

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Firstly:

Mixing of men and women in education, work or otherwise leads to serious consequences and many evils, and the harmful outcomes have become very clear and cannot be denied. Shaykh al-Islam ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

If men mix with women, it is like fire mixing with wood. End quote from al-Istiqamah (1/361)

For more information, please see the answer to question no. [1200](#).

Hence what you must do is look for a place where there is no mixing between men and women.

Secondly:

Covering the face and hands for women is a matter concerning which there is a difference of scholarly opinion. The most correct view is that on which fatwas on this website are based, which is that it is obligatory to cover them because of the evidence which has been explained in detail in fatwa no. [11774](#).

Thirdly:

It is known that knowledge of medicine is a communal obligation, especially with regard to women learning gynaecology and obstetrics, so that there will be sufficient female Muslim doctors, which will spare women the problem of having to uncover their 'awrahs in front of male doctors. The basic principle is that a woman is encouraged to study medicine in a proper environment that is controlled by Islamic guidelines. But if you have no opportunity to study medicine except by uncovering your face and hands on occasion, then there is no blame on you for that, especially since the obligation of covering the face and hands is a matter concerning which the scholars differed. The scholars have stated that concessions are allowed in the case of a woman studying medicine regarding matters that are more serious than that, such as uncovering 'awrahs, touching

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them, and so on. This has been explained previously in fatwa no. [169979](#)

But you must hasten to cover up again once the need has passed, and strive hard to avoid occasions of mixing and interacting with those with whom you are not obliged to interact and mix.

And Allah knows best.