

# Public Opinion on Veiling and Hijab for Women in Pakistan

## Further Details from Survey work in 2012 ,2015 and 2016

**GALLUP**  
P A K I S T A N  
Affiliated with Gallup International  
Pakistan's Foremost Social Research Lab

*4<sup>th</sup> July 2019*

## **Section 1: Executive Summary**

Section 2: On Women Covering Themselves  
in Public Places

Section 3: Hijab: Compulsory or Not?

Section 4: Methodology

# Executive Summary

---

**i**

**A majority of Pakistanis are of the view that women should cover themselves when they go out in public. In comparison to men, fewer women hold this view.**

**Gender Divide: Although most women support hijab (both as a compulsory dress code and a preference), men are more passionate about the issue than women which shows that there is a gender divide.**

**Interestingly, the gender gap in views with regards to hijab being a compulsion is 10%, whereas for the more casual 'should cover in public' assertion, the gap is lower, i.e. 7%.**

**ii**

**Older generations are more tolerant about the matter of Hijab. On the other hand, middle-aged Pakistanis (30-50) are staunch supporters of women covering themselves in public. Millennial Pakistanis are less supportive of veiling than middle-aged Pakistanis but far more supportive than the older generations.**

---

# Executive Summary

---

**Could this be because the current middle aged population of Pakistan was born in the 1970's and 1980's—a time of social Islamisation in the country?**

**iii**

**A shift from urban to rural areas reduces support of veiling in public substantially—a 12% difference exists in the respective respondents' support of veiling in public.**

**However, on whether hijab should be a compulsion, the difference in opinion between urban and rural dwellers is minimal.**

Section 1: Executive Summary

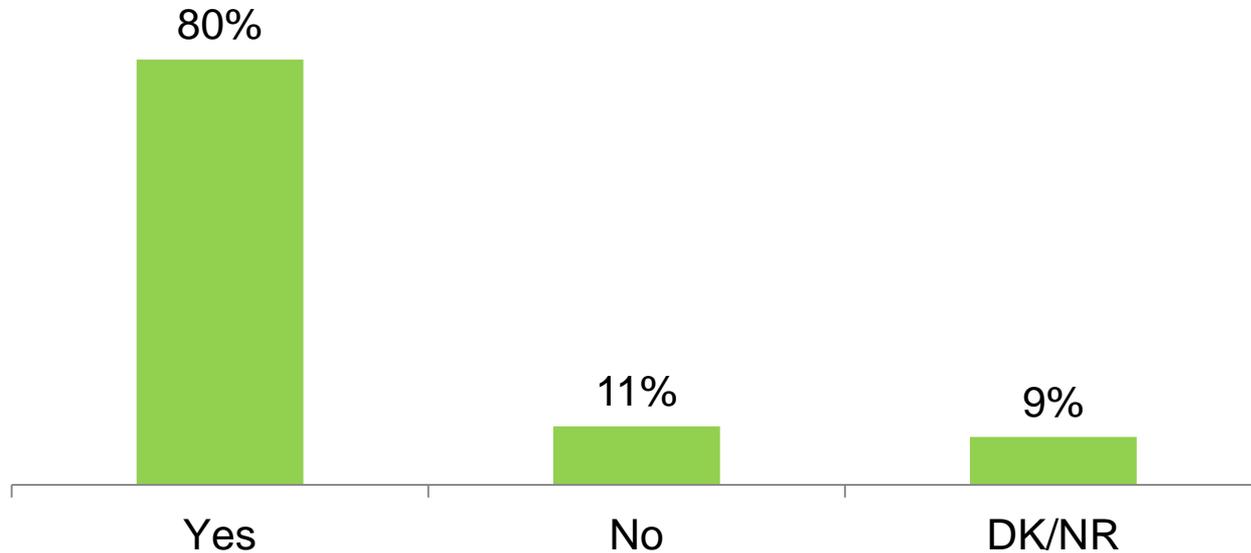
**Section 2: On Women Covering  
Themselves in Public Places**

Section 3: Hijab: Compulsory or Not?

Section 4: Methodology

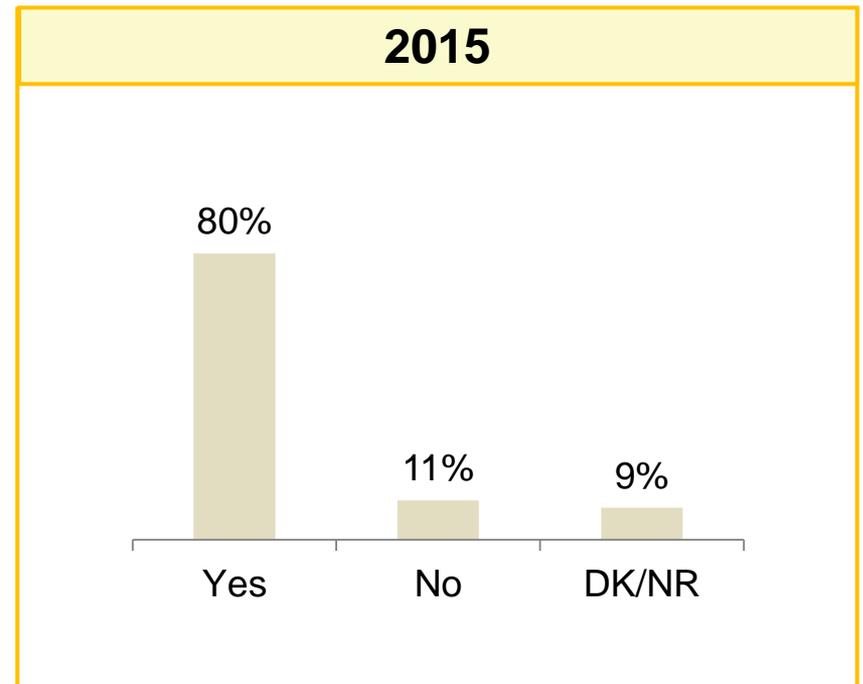
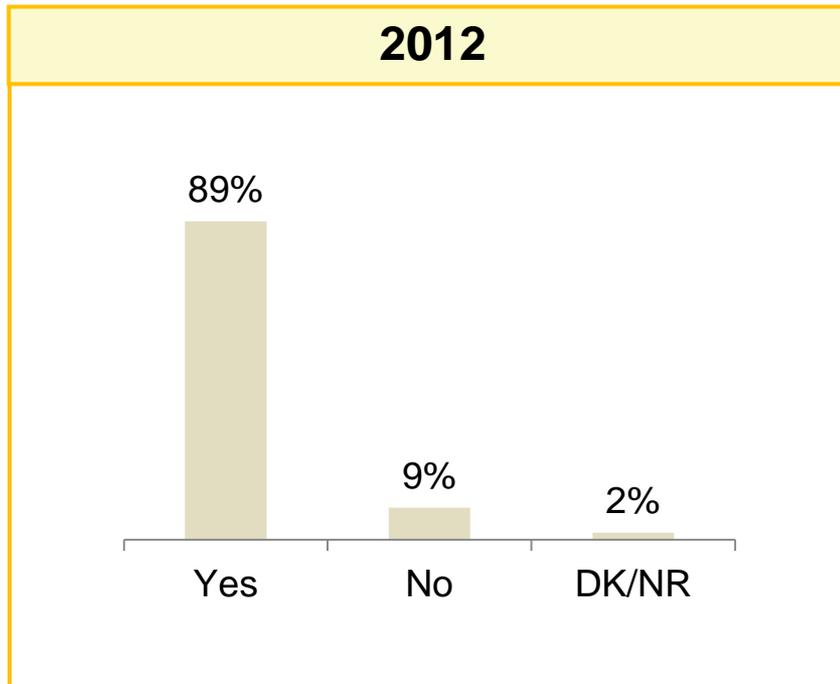
**A vast majority of Pakistanis (80%) believe that a woman should cover herself when going out in public.**

**In 2015, a nationally representative sample of men and women were asked , “Should a woman cover herself when going out in public”  
(All Pakistan)**



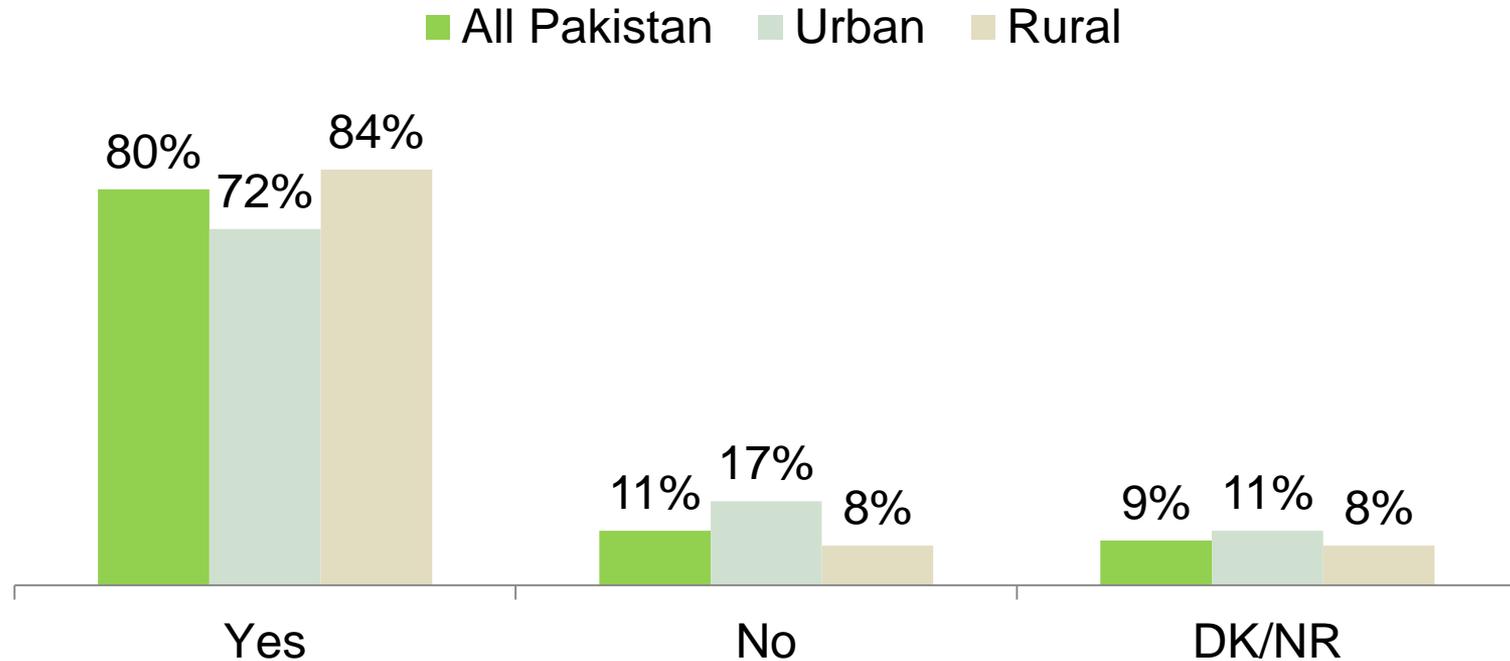
A vast majority of Pakistanis (80%) believe that a woman should cover herself when going out in public. A similar poll conducted by Pew Research Center in 2014 on how people in Muslim countries prefer women to dress in public showed that nearly 90% of people living in Egypt, Iraq and Saudi Arabia prefer women to wear a Hijab or Niqab in public. This number drops down to 63% in Tunisia and 50% in Turkey.

## All Pakistan – Looking back



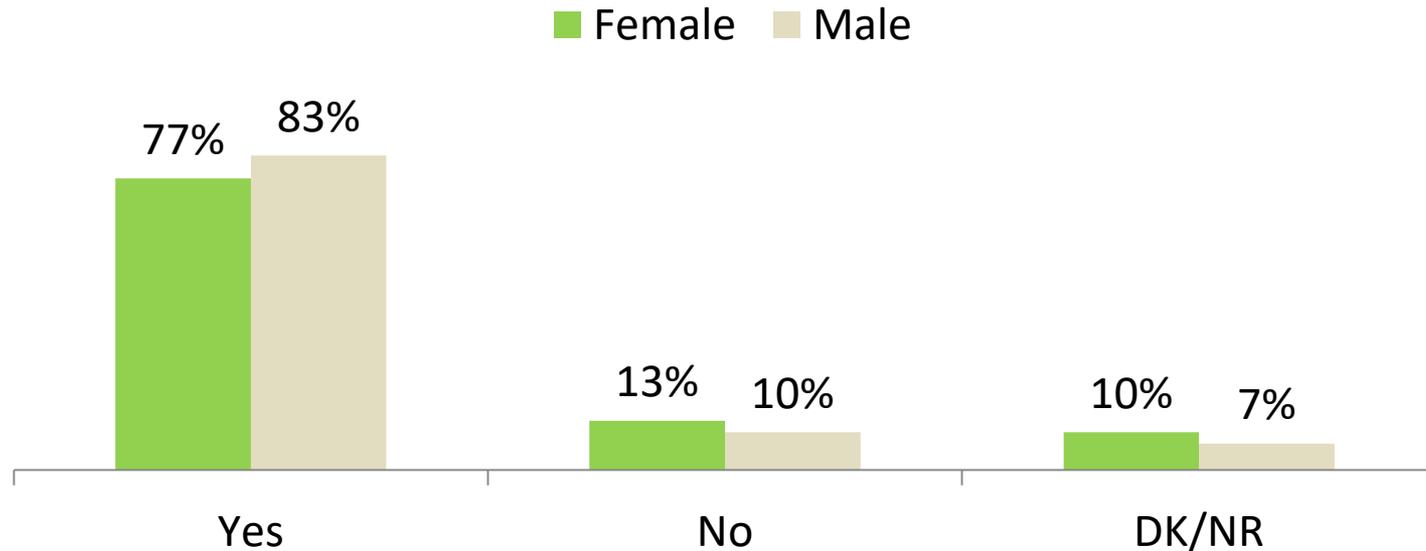
The same question was asked in 2012. 9% more Pakistanis said a woman should cover herself when going out in public and 2% fewer said she should not. So while there has been some change in people's perceptions regarding the appropriate outdoor attire for a woman, it is minimal.

## Differences based on Region - Urban vs. Rural



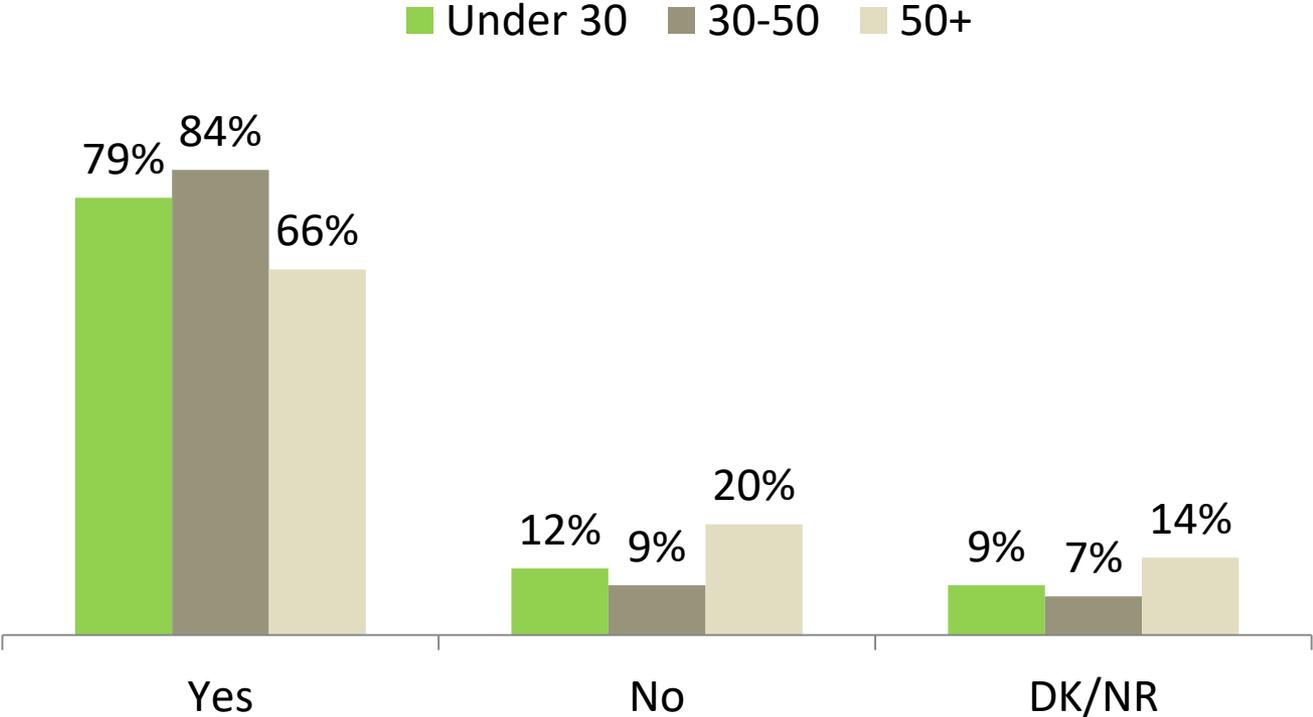
More rural dwellers (84%) believe that a woman should cover herself in public than urban dwellers (72%). Conversely, more urban dwellers (17%) believe that a woman should not cover herself in public than rural dwellers (8%).

## Differences based on Gender



Fewer women (77%) believe that a woman should cover herself in public than men (83%), and more women (13%) believe that a woman should not cover herself in public than men (10%). While this shows a disconnect between what women think is appropriate outdoor attire for themselves and what men think is appropriate attire for women, it seems that a majority of women are more comfortable covering up than not.

# Differences based on Age



More people aged under 30 (79%) and between 30 and 50 (84%) believe a woman should cover herself in public than people aged above 50 (66%). This shows that the younger generations have more conservative values when it comes to dressing than the older generations.

Section 1: Executive Summary

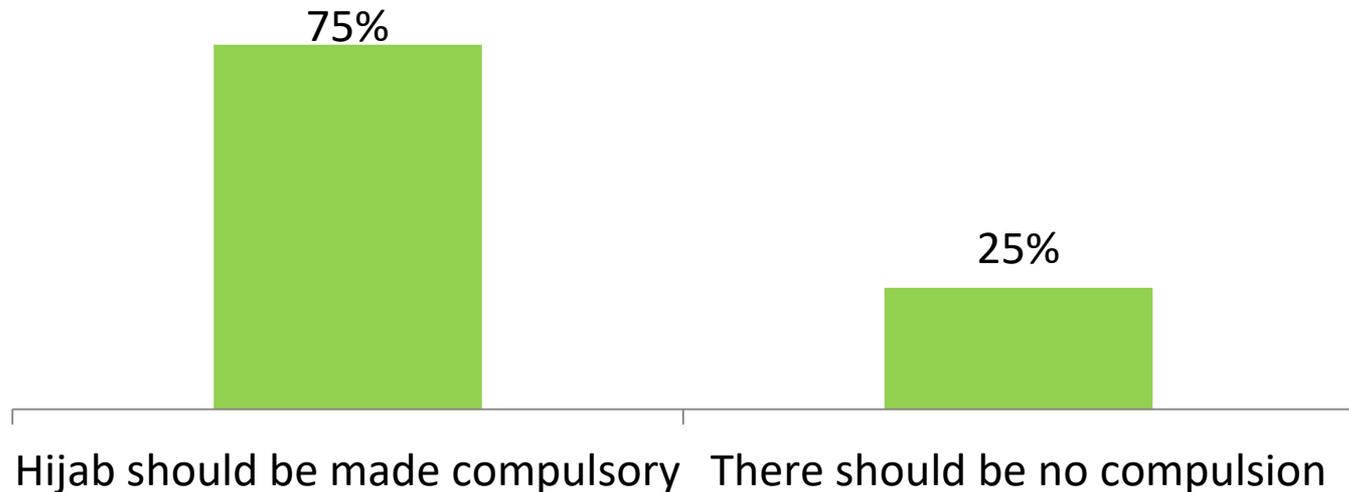
Section 2: On Women Covering Themselves  
in Public Places

**Section 3: Hijab: Compulsory or Not?**

Section 4: Methodology

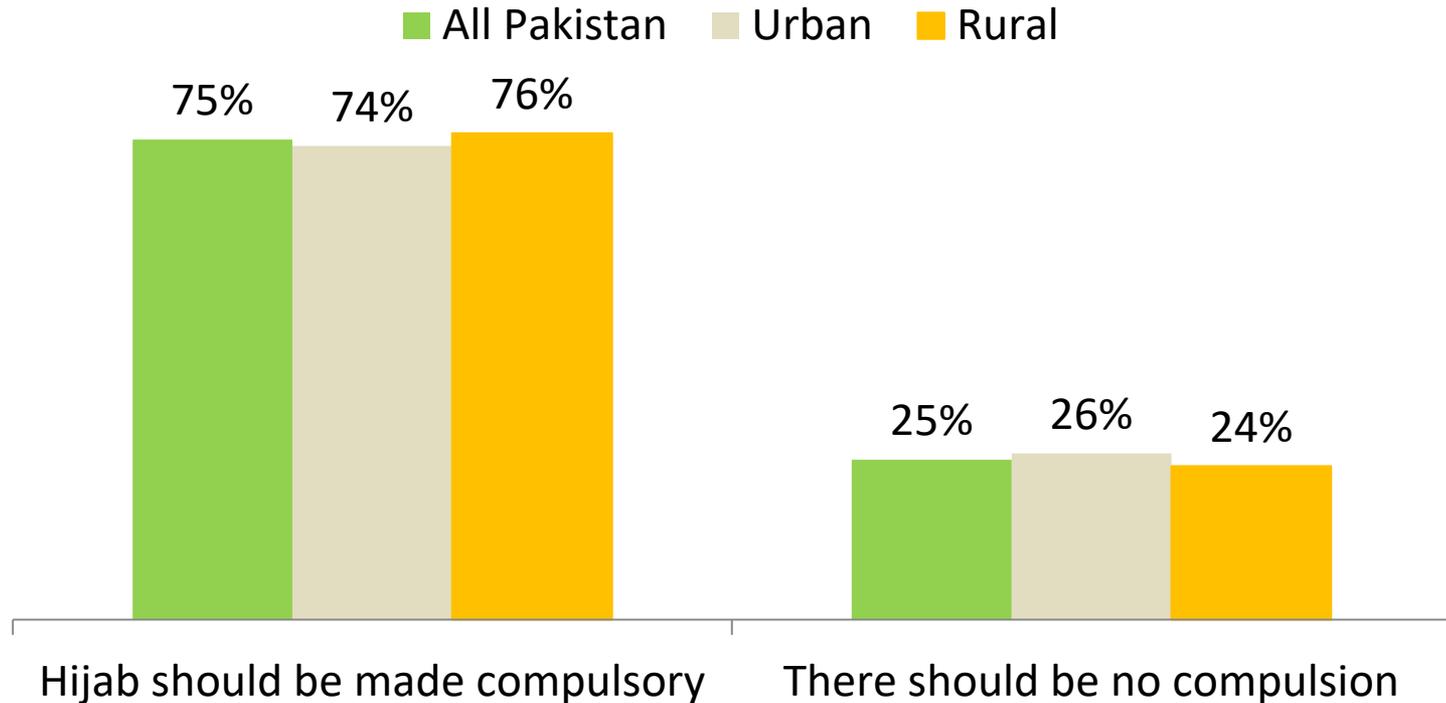
**75% of Pakistanis believe that hijab should be made compulsory.**

**In 2016, a nationally representative sample of men and women was asked, “Some people think that hijab should be compulsory for all Muslim women, while others think that there should be no compulsion, whoever wants to can wear a veil. What do you think about this?”  
(All Pakistan)**



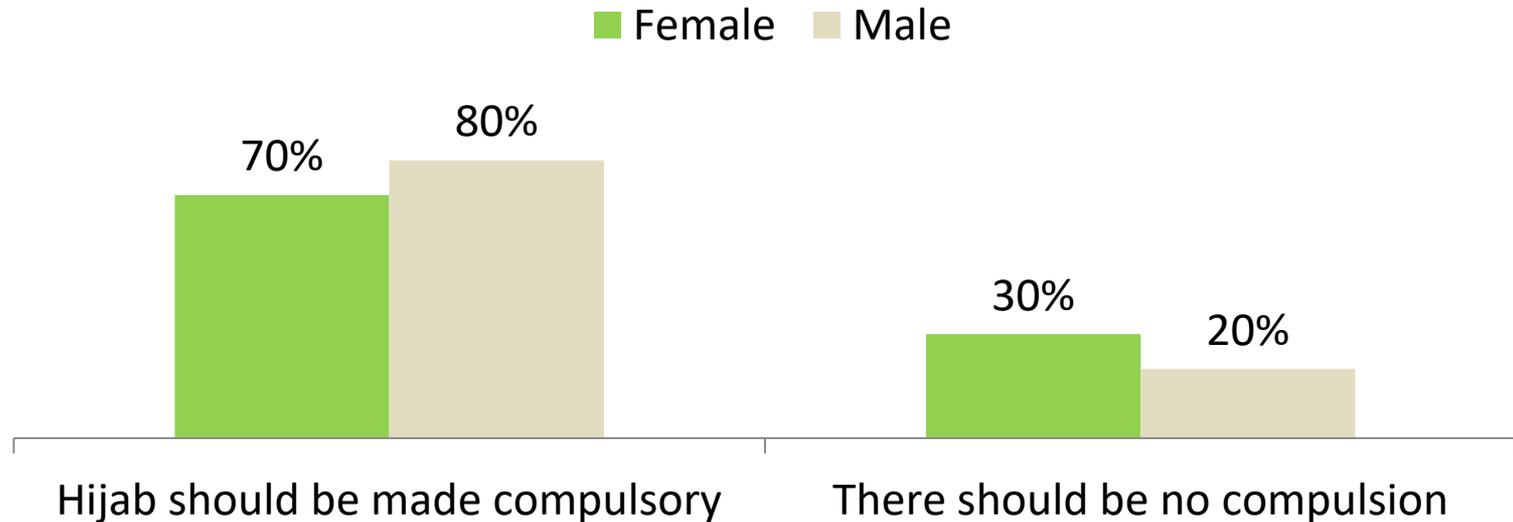
75% of Pakistanis believe that hijab should be made compulsory, whereas 25% think that it should not be a compulsion to wear hijab. Although Pakistan is a predominantly Muslim country, it is home to several minority groups belonging to other religions who would be adversely affected by such a rule.

## Differences based on Region - Urban vs. Rural



Variations in the opinion of urban and rural dwellers regarding hijab are minimal. A large majority in both areas believes that hijab should be made compulsory for all Pakistani women.

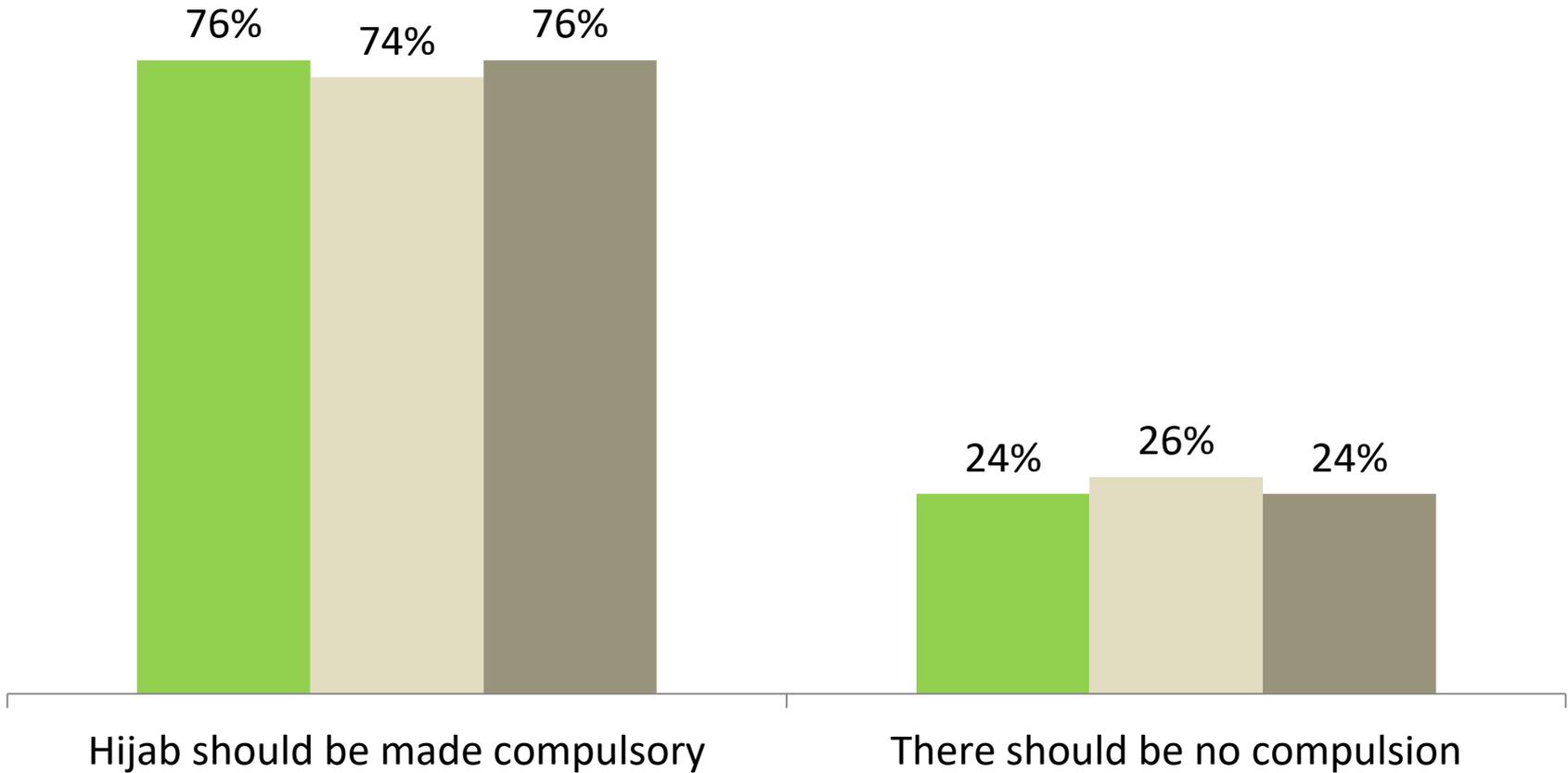
## Differences based on Gender



10% fewer women believe that hijab should be made compulsory than men, and 10% more women believe that hijab should not be a compulsion than men. However, women who believe that it should be made compulsory still make up a majority of the population which shows that for a lot of women, it is an autonomous decision.

## Differences based on Age

Under 30 30-50 50+



Section 1: Role of Customs Authorities and Problem Identification

Section 2: Questionnaire Design

Section 3: Steps to Field Completion

**Section 4: Methodology**

## Methodology

**Method of Data Collection:** Face to face interviews

**Survey Collection Agency:** Gallup Pakistan (established since 1980)

**FOR MORE DETAILS ON METHODOLOGY, PLEASE WRITE TO  
GALLUP PAKISTAN: ISB@GALLUP.COM.PK**

**Thank you.**

Gallup Pakistan is not related to Gallup Inc. headquartered in Washington D.C. USA. We require that our surveys be credited fully as Gallup Pakistan (not Gallup or Gallup Poll). We disclaim any responsibility for surveys pertaining to Pakistani public opinion except those carried out by Gallup Pakistan, the Pakistani affiliate of Gallup International Association. For details on Gallup International Association see website: [www.gallup-international.com](http://www.gallup-international.com)