



MUSLIM GYM WARRIORS AND THE MAN

A STUDY IN INTERSECTIONAL TENSIONS

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CONCEPTS & DEFINITIONS

The Man:

slang referring to government or authority and in this case the Armed Forces



RESEARCH QUESTION

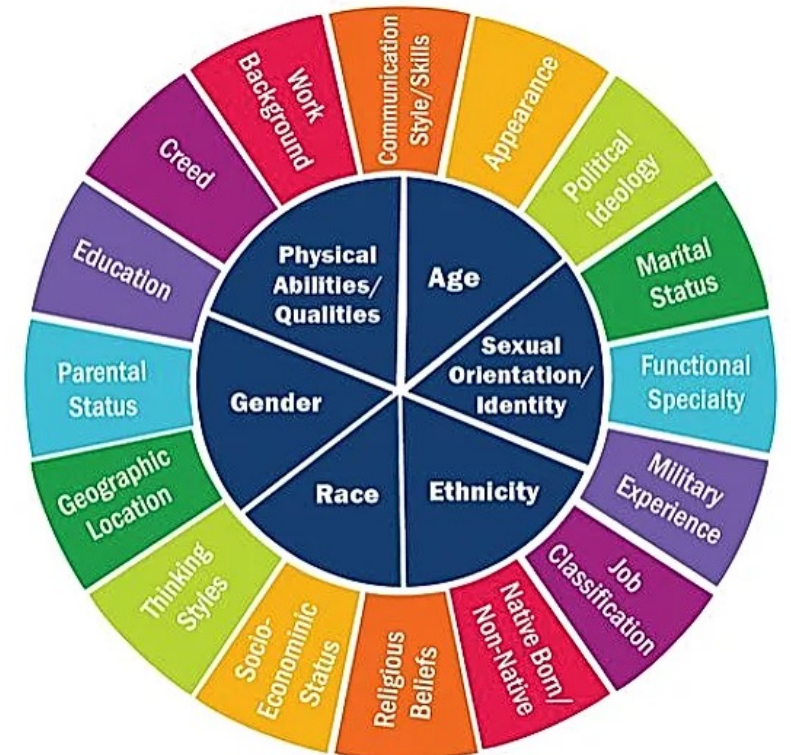
Are youngsters of ethnic cultural minorities willing to join the NLAF?



THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Intersectionality (Kimberlé Crenshaw, 1989)

How systems of oppression, and identities overlap



(SYMBOLIC) VIOLENCE IN DUTCH CONTEXT

- Richard Dyer
- Paul Willis
- Bourdieu
- Dana Grosswirth Kachtan
- Gloria Wekker (*White Innocence*, 2016)

Legal systems

Othering

Stereotyping


- Islamophobia

Cultural historical traditions



RESEARCH DESIGN

- 20 male respondents (Gym, The Hague)
- 9 female respondents (various gyms due to lack of respondents)
- Semi-structured interviews



We use kickboxing as a method to keep children off the streets, to offer them an atmosphere of discipline and structure. Some of my pupils made mistakes at a young age, we keep them on the right track. We foster them. I wish the media wrote about that. (trainer/owner)

RESULTS MALE RESPONDENTS

- Criteria kickboxing meets demands of NLAF
 - Discipline
 - Rules of the sport
- Affiliation with the Netherlands (loyalty issue)
- Support of parents
- NLAF is not on their radar as a career option

RESULTS FEMALE RESPONDENTS

- Ambitious about possible military career
- Clear expectations of what NLAF could offer them, and how they could contribute to NLAF
- Support parents again a factor, but more independent in their views
- 66% of female respondents have thought about a job in the military

CONCLUSION

- Positive attitudes towards NLAF
- Female respondents seem more ambitious and have considered a military career more
- For the male respondents it is simply out of their frame of reference

DISCUSSION

Why is the NLAF invisible in the career options of Muslim youngsters in the Netherlands? (esp. male respondents)

- What is the role of representation and excluding systems of NLAF in this context?
- A critical sidenote needs to be made here. Talking about (symbolic) and excluding violence, the researcher was not able to arrange an excursion to the military base because army officials did not trust the Muslim youngsters.
- Despite being a predominantly white male organisation, Muslim women are more prone to give it a chance.
- What parts of their identities intersect in a more positive way to this end compared to the male respondents?