



## ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WOMEN AND ISLAMIC CULTURES

### Muslim Women in Broadcasting: United Kingdom

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#### EWIC Staff: Datasheet

- ❖ Muslims make up 4.4% of the population of the United Kingdom, representing the second largest religious group in the U.K.<sup>1</sup> Of that population, 48% are women.<sup>2</sup> Although broadcasting and journalism in the U.K. are traditionally male-dominated professions, with a ratio of 4:1 male reporters to female reporters on the main news programs, Muslim women have a presence in media as broadcasters, journalists, directors and reporters.<sup>3</sup> The following women are some examples of the many Muslim women in U.K. broadcasting.
- ❖ Mishal Husain is a British news presenter for BBC. She appears on *Radio 4's Today*, *BBC World News* and *BBC Weekend News*. In 2013 Husain was appointed as the first-ever Muslim journalist for *Radio 4*. She is known internationally for her work on the BBC World News. Husain was also the BBC's first Washington-based anchor in the United States. She has produced two critically acclaimed documentaries, on the Arab Spring and Mahatma Gandhi.<sup>4,5</sup>
- ❖ Fareena Alam is a London born Bengali journalist and managing editor of the Muslim current affairs publication, *Q News*. In 2006 she wrote a cover story for *Newsweek International* titled, "Beyond the Veil" that discussed discrimination against Muslims particularly women who choose to wear the hijab. She is the President of the United Nations Students' Association for the National University of Singapore where she organized "The Children of Bangladesh" campaign. The campaign drew attention to poverty found in Bangladesh and encouraged students from the University to carry out relief work in Bangladesh.<sup>6</sup>
- ❖ Tazeen Ahmad is a British and American broadcaster, writer and award-winning journalist. Ahmad has been an investigative reporter for Channel 4's current affairs show *Dispatches* for over 8 years, a foreign correspondent for the American network NBC, and a regular feature writer and commentator for British newspapers and magazines. Ahmad's investigation into "The Hunt for Britain's Sex Gangs" has been nominated for a British Academy of Film and Television Award (BAFTA). She was one of the first foreign correspondents on the ground in Pakistan when Osama Bin Laden was assassinated. She also made several investigative documentaries on the credit card and cosmetics industries, and exposés on the fashion industry.<sup>7</sup>
- ❖ Shereen Nanjiani a reporter for the BBC Scotland was the first Asian-Scottish presenter on television in Scotland. Nanjiani is the longest serving female news presenter on *Scotland Today*. Nanjiani has her own radio show, on BBC Scotland, "Shereen" on which she provides live commentary on current affairs.<sup>8,9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/uk.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/reality-check/2013/sep/20/how-many-wear-niqab-uk>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2014/apr/03/male-experts-female-tv-radio-research>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/profiles/4cnk8l9KysNXv8Cp6Qp1bMF/mishal-husain>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/media/2013/nov/23/mishal-husain-radio-4-today>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.wisemuslimwomen.org/muslimwomen/bio/fareena\\_alam/](http://www.wisemuslimwomen.org/muslimwomen/bio/fareena_alam/)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.knightayton.co.uk/female-presenters/tazeen-ahmad>

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2006/06\\_june/20/scotland.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2006/06_june/20/scotland.shtml)

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/uk-world-news/gallery-scotlands-favourite-news-readers-1085906>