Muslim Youth Experiences in a Visceral Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Racism Context

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Opening

<div dir="rtl">

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ
إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ
اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ
صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

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In the name of the Creator,
All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the worlds
The All-compassionate, the All-merciful.
Master of Day of Judgement
You [alone] do we worship, and You [alone] do we ask for help
Guide us to the straight path
The path of those whom You have favored
Not of those who earned your anger nor those who have gone astray.
(Surah Al Fatiha, 1:1)

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رَبِّي اشْرَحْلِي صَدْرِي وَ يَسِّرْلِي أَمْرِي وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِّن لِّسَانِي يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي

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My Creator! Uplift my heart for me, and ease for me my task. And remove the impediment from my tongue, so that they may understand my speech.
(Surah Ta Ha, 20:25–28)

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Abstract

This qualitative study critically examines Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through lens of Muslim youth. Utilizing a critical ethnographic methodology, 23 Muslim youth between the ages of 18 and 25 years of Black, South Asian and Arab heritage were interviewed. The study foregrounds Critical Race and Anticolonial theories to make sense of the stories by foregrounding racism, white supremacy, and coloniality in their everyday encounters in Canada. Muslim youth understand and experience 'Islamophobia' and 'anti-Muslim racism', and live through in their daily social relations and interactions. These have governed and shaped Muslim youth to understand themselves and their place in relations to the national building project of white Canadianness. Although the Canadian landscape (justice system, education, employment, housing, immigration and settlements, health, and media) is 'a fugitive space' for any life that is not white, there is however a performative danger for bodies who carry race, ethnicity, gender and religion intersectionally. This leaves individual Muslims with daily choices on how much of themselves they may want to reveal in public. For Muslim youth, the cost of showing up Black or Brown while carrying one's Muslimness is heavier, and it leaves undue burden on their lives as Muslims. The findings reveal that anti-Muslim racism and Islamophobia cannot be buried theoretically under the settler-colonial paradigm in Canada. The study calls for the politics of refusal and resistance at the intersections of race (Black and Brown) and religion (Muslimness) to forge new imaginaries for educational futurities without giving up on the present.

Keywords: Anticolonial Theory, Anti-Muslim racism, Critical Race Theory, Muslim youth, Islamophobia

General Summary

Despite Canada being a country of immigrants, with core policies on multiculturalism and religious freedoms, Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canada has increased dramatically over the last two decades, particularly for those living in Ontario. This has had a significant impact upon Muslims children and youth, especially after the most recent terrorist attack in London[1] that took the lives of four members of the Afzaal family. Currently there are few research studies that examine the experiences of Muslim youth with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, particularly in the field of social work. Muslim youth ages 18 – 25, from Black, Arab, and South Asian backgrounds were asked to share their opinions and experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Youth explored both terms 'Islamophobia' and 'anti-Muslim racism' and their connections to racism, white supremacy and coloniality. They described how these manifests across medium such as film, television, social media, and the news. Youth described negative stereotypes of Muslims and Islam are pervasive across all these platforms. Youth shared how they've experienced both implicit and explicit Islamophobia in school, community and within peer spaces. Significantly, youth responses illustrated how they experience ongoing rude and aggressive behavior, negative comments and questions, and varying forms of violence motivated by Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Finally, youth describe how this has impacted their capacity to navigate spaces and how they are able to cope with the effects of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Youth described how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism left indelible marks on their lives. The findings from this study will help

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[1] Lupton, A., & Dubinski, K. (2021, June 8). What we know about the Muslim family in the fatal London, Ont., truck attack. *CBC*. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/london/london-muslim-family-attack-what-we-know-1.6057745.

to gain insights into how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism is perceived and experienced across social locations, thereby allowing for more effective social work access and service delivery to Muslim youth who are negatively impacted by Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. As part of my continued concern for the welfare of Muslim youth I conducted this research to capture these experiences and work collaboratively within my community to inform action and transformation to move forward.

Acknowledgments

I'd like to begin with praise to the creator, the lord of the worlds, the beneficent and most merciful. Without your unwavering guidance and support this dissertation would not be possible.

To the group of Muslim youth who entrusted and honored me with their stories in this research. This study would have never been possible without you. Thank you.

Thank you to my Palestinian and Amazigh-Algerian grandparents, great-grandparents and ancestors. Throughout this process I realized how much of their grit and perseverance runs through these veins. May Allah SWT grant you Jannatul Firdaus.

To my parents, I thank you for all your sacrifice and everything you have done to give your children the best possible chance at life in the aftermath of war, colonization, loss of land, language and country.

My children, Amira, Adam and Iman, throughout this process you have offered me the most insightful words of wisdom. Being your mother and watching you grow has been the best part of my life. I thank Allah (SWT) every day for blessing me with such amazing children. I am so proud of you all.

To Mohammed, my husband and best friend, you have been my biggest supporter, your love, encouragement and strength have guided me from start to finish.

To my sister, friend and colleague Andrea Murray-Lichtman we started this process together and we will finish together-Inshallah. Without your sisterhood and friendship I really don't know where I would be in this process.

I would like to acknowledge the guidance, mentorship and supervision of Dr. Sobia Shaheen Shaikh. Your support throughout this process has truly been a gift. Thank you.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter will outline the significance and background of a research study that aims to examine Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through the lived experiences of 23 Muslim youth from Black, South Asian, and Arab backgrounds living in London, Ontario. The lenses of these youth—ages 18 to 25 and across different gender identities, races, ethnicities, and religious dress—highlight the varying complexities of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in local contexts. The study emphasizes how Muslim youth understand the terms *Islamophobia* and *anti-Muslim racism*, witness these across popular discourse, how they experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism and the impact this has had on their lives. This project is framed using critical race and anticolonial theories, foregrounding issues of racism, white supremacy, and coloniality.

This chapter begins by presenting the rationale and background information to set the context of this dissertation. Next, I discuss the significance of the research topic and gaps found in the existing literature. Then the research objectives and terms are outlined. The significance to social work is discussed with a description of how this study adds to the discipline. Finally, I present an overview of the entire dissertation and break down each preceding chapter.

Rationale and Background

Despite Canada being a country of immigrants, with professed tenets of multiculturalism and religious freedom, Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canada have increased dramatically over the last two decades (Angus Reid, 2017; Environics, 2016; Shaheen Shaikh & Selsby, 2023; Statistics Canada, 2022a). This has had a significant impact on the Muslim community in London, the city I call home, in more ways than one. On June 7, 2021, four

members of a Muslim family—Madiha (44 years), Salman (46); Yumna (15), and Talat (74)—

were viciously murdered by 20-year-old N. V[2]. The police referred to the incident as domestic

terrorism inspired by Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racist sentiment (Lupton & Dubinski,

2021). During the subsequent vigil, municipal, provincial and federal politicians echoed the

statement that "Islamophobia is real."[3] This drew me back to a time in 2018, less than a year

after the Quebec City mosque massacre, when colleagues and I conducted research with a group

of young Muslim children living in London to ask what it is like growing up Muslim (Elkassem

et al., 2018). Not surprisingly, this study discovered that Muslim children in London experience

regular forms of implicit and explicit Islamophobia in the community. Sadly, many children

talked about fears of being killed because of their faith. One child said, "it's just always in the

back of your head . . . am I going to pray peacefully and leave? Is something going to happen?

Am I going to die?" (Elkassem et al., 2018, p. 13). It is disturbing how their fears, which were

just apprehensiveness back then, have unfolded into reality. This demonstrates that Islamophobia

and anti-Muslim racism have a significant impact on the Muslim community in London, Ontario,

and there is a pressing need to examine how this has played out in the lives of Muslims,

particularly youth.

  The National Council of Canadian Muslims cites the growth of anti-Muslim racism and

Islamophobia sentiments through online media platforms in Canada (Byng, 2010; Farokhi &

Jiwani, 2021; Perigoe, 2007). There are also public figures who continue to spread hatred and

bigotry towards Muslims in Canada (Razack, 2022; Zine, 2022b). These activities have

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[2] The name of the person who perpetrated this crime will not be named and has been removed from this document.
[3] I attended a vigil for the Afzal family on June 10, 2021, at the London Muslim Mosque. Premier Justin Trudeau along with other politician expressed their concern for the growing number of hate crimes against Muslims in Canada and declared that Islamophobia is real.

exacerbated implicit and explicit forms of violence and hate towards Muslims, leaving many

Muslims feeling insecure and Othered in Canada (Abo-Zena et al., 2009; Elbourne et al., 2021).

In particular, Muslim women wearing the hijab are targeted, while Black Muslims are subject to

intersections of anti-Muslim racism and anti-Black racism (Abdurraqib, 2009; Mohamed, 2017;

Yourex-West, 2021). Muslim youth who experience this form of discrimination have discussed

how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism negatively impact their sense of self, identity,

security, and overall wellness (Bakali, 2016; Eid, 2015; Zine, 2022a). This points to the

importance of examining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism from the perspectives of Muslim

youth across a variety of social locations in Canada.

According to the Pew Research Center (2017a), there are close to 1.8 billion people

across the globe who identify as Muslims, and 1.8 million in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Muslims living in the West have experienced increasing levels of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim

racism, particularly after 9/11 (Allen, 2016; Beydoun, 2018; Poynting & Briskman, 2018;

Statistics Canada, 2022a). In the most recent Statistics Canada report (2022c), there are 272,820

Muslim youth in Canada between the ages of 15 and 24; 142,345 are male, 130,475 are female,

and they have South Asian (92,755),[4] Arab (80,755),[5] Black (33,480),[6] West Asian (26,555),[7]

and Southeast Asian backgrounds (1,565).[8] Muslim youth can be also located amongst those

having multiple visible youth minority status[9] (2,900), visible youth minority status[10] (7,555),

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[4] *South Asian* refers to people who identify as East Indian, Pakistani, and Sri Lankan.
[5] *Arab* refers to people who identify as Arabic-speaking people from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).
[6] *Black* refers to people from the Caribbean; Central and South America; Central, North, and West Africa; and the United States.
[7] *West Asian* refers to people who identify as Iranian and Afghan.
[8] *Southeast Asian* refers to persons who identify as Vietnamese, Cambodian, Malaysian, and Laotian.
[9] *Multiple visible minorities* category includes persons who gave more than one visible minority mark-in response (e. g., "Black" and "South Asian")
[10] *Visible minorities* category includes persons who gave one visible minority mark-in response (e. g., "Black" and "South Asian")

and non- visible youth minority status[11] (25,175) (Statistics Canada, 2022c). Given these statistics on Muslim youth in Canada, it is clear the population is comprised of a rich diversity of racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.

The current research indicates there are a handful studies that examine Muslim youth, Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the fields of education and sociology, which is relevant to this study (Bakali, 2016; Miled, 2019; Zine, 2022a). Yet there is little research in the field of social work in Canada that examines Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through the lenses and lived experiences of Muslim youth. Within the social work field, much of the literature on Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism focuses on Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Abdel-Fattah, 2021; Ahmad & Seddon, 2012; Kabir, 2012; Tindongan, 2011; Zulficar, 2016). Therefore, this study aims to add to this literature by examining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canada.

Research Objectives and Terms

This section outlines the research objectives of this dissertation and terms that are key to this study. In examining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, I focused on how Muslim youth understand the terms *Islamophobia* and *anti-Muslim racism*, how they witness these across popular discourse, and how they experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism and the impact this has had on their lives. My objectives were as follows:

1) Examine how Muslim youth define and understand Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

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[11] *Not a visible minority* category includes persons who gave a mark-in response of "White" only.

2) Identify how Muslim youth witness Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across popular discourse.

3) Investigate how Muslim youth experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in their everyday lives.

4) Uncover the impact and coping strategies of Muslim youth as they navigate Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Conceptualizing the Key Terms

The key concepts of this inquiry are listed below: anti-Muslim racism, Islamophobia, race, racialization, whiteness, white supremacy, orientalism, coloniality, Muslims, youth, and intersectionality. The terms are briefly defined here and elaborated further in Chapter 3: Theoretical Frameworks

Anti-Muslim racism is a form of racism against Muslims, or those perceived to be Muslim, that works to essentialize subjectivities of "Muslimness" through the processes of race making and racialization (Meer, 2013; Meer & Modood, 2010). Muslims are racialized based on (assigned, imagined, or actual) phenotypic characteristics such as skin colour, ethnicity, religious dress, and name. This process is supported and informed by Islamophobic discourse in society and institutional oppression against Muslims.

Islamophobia is a term used in global discourse to describe prejudice and hatred toward and fear of Islam and of Muslims. It refers to the discursive and ideological instruments that perpetuate orientalist and culturally racist discourse that essentializes Muslims and Islam as barbaric, inferior, and the Other (Bridge Initiative, 2009b; Runnymede Trust, 2017).

Race is a socially and ideologically situated construct that is maintained in society by systems of white-over-colour dominance and racial superiority (Omi & Winant, 2014).

Racism is an outcome of constructions of race. It exists beyond the scope of skin colour and phenotypic characteristics, utilizing cultural, linguistic, or religious identifiers to mark certain bodies as Other. Racism is made personal, systemic, and institutionalized through acts of power over marginalized racial groups through mechanisms such as whiteness and coloniality (Bell, 2018; Omi & Winant, 2014).

Racialization is a process where people and/or groups are essentialized based on markers of (perceived) racial identity, often to inflict racial oppression, secure privilege, and justify colonial projects (Bell, 2018).

Social Location is defined as the combination of factors including race, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, class, age, ability, and sexuality. Each person has a unique social location and this may not be exactly the same for two individuals.

Whiteness is positioned as a superior social location through white supremacist ideology (Bell, 2018; Crenshaw, 1995; Omi & Winant, 1994).

White supremacy is a racist ideology and worldview that positions whiteness as superior. It normalizes the idea that white people, beliefs, culture, and knowledge are inherently superior to other racial groups (Bell, 2018; Crenshaw, 1995; Omi & Winant, 1994).

Orientalism is a style of discourse used for colonial domination through presuppositions that racialized and Indigenous populations' cultural and ideological traditions are inferior to Western European thought. This has contributed to the evolution of Islamophobic discourses, including essentialized notions of Islam as an inherently violent religion and a militant cult (Allen, 2010; Beydoun, 2018, Said, 1978).

Coloniality is perpetuated through race logics that position whiteness and Western knowledge as superior while subjugating and Othering racialized communities' knowledge

through various forms of oppression and group-based exclusion (Chilisa, 2011; Kovach, 2009; Said, 1993; Tuhiwai-Smith, 2013).

Muslims are multifaceted religious group coming from multiple countries across the globe, from a variety racial, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds that adhere to the Islamic faith. Islam was established in the 7th century C.E. and is considered by its followers to be a continuation of the Judeo-Christian religions and rooted upon the same principles (PEW Research Centre, 2011).

Youth, people crossing ages[12] 18 to 25, are a culture-sharing group. Muslim youth may have similar and distinct experiences and opinions of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism depending on their specific social locations.

Intersectionality is an analytical tool used to understand how an individual's social location can determine multiple factors of advantage or disadvantage through converging categories of race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, class, and ability (Crenshaw, 1990; Hill-Collins & Bilge, 2020).

Research Approach and Context

This section outlines the research approach and context for this dissertation, including a brief description of the theoretical orientation, methodology and location of this study. The study used critical race (Bell, 2018; Crenshaw, 1995; Delgado & Stefanic, 2017) and anticolonial theories (Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001; Fanon, 1952, Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Memmi, 1969) to

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[12] The age range I have selected is based on the American Psychological Association's (2002) and Statistics Canada (2022c) definitions and age range of youth. This age range was selected to acquire insights from participants who are at various intervals of youth development to reveal a variety of introspective narratives and internalized discourses within their lived experiences.

underscore issues of racism, white supremacy, and coloniality. Critical race theory allows for the foregrounding of race, racism, white supremacy, while anticolonial theory centres orientalism and coloniality. These theories guided the research and provided a critical lens for the literature review, methodological design, and analysis, specifically through examining how whiteness and white supremacy inform these forms of discrimination; how race, racism, and racialization work to construct Muslimness across intersections of identity; and how coloniality and orientalism support and fuel Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Critical ethnography (CE) likewise informed the methodology and research design (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2011; Thomas, 1993) (see Chapter 3). This interpretive approach is well suited to this dissertation as it incorporates critical theory and centres the lived experience of marginalized populations to prioritize personal agency and societal transformation (Madison, 2011; Murillo, 2004; Noblit, 2003). I used CE to critically engage with the local meanings and experiences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the lives of Muslim youth across a variety of social locations.

The research was conducted in a Muslim community in London, Ontario. There are 350,000 Muslims living in Ontario (NHS, 2011) and 35,000 living in London (Statistics Canada, 2022a). London is home to the first Muslim community in Ontario, with the second oldest masjid in Canada (Hamdani, 2015; London Muslim Mosque, 2021; Munir, 2021). The Muslim community in London is comprised of members from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds (Hamdani, 2015, Munir, 2021). Although Muslims can also have settler Canadian and Indigenous backgrounds, most of the community are first-, second-, or third-generation Canadians from the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and South Asia.

Significance

Currently there are very few studies across the social sciences, education, and social work that examines Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, especially in the lives of Muslim youth, so this study will contribute to the existing pedagogical landscape of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism research and statistics.

The study is thus timely, as it offers one of the first in-depth examinations of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through the lived experiences and lenses of Muslim youth within the field of social work in Canada. Only within the last 15 years has there been documentation and statistics related to Islamophobia, anti-Muslim racism and Muslims in Canada (Angus Reid, 2013; Environics, 2016; Geddes, 2013). Most of the literature that examines Muslim youth experiences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canada can be found in the fields of social sciences and education (Ahmed, Patel, & Hashem, 2015; Bakali, 2016; Miled, 2020; Watt, 2016; Zine, 2022a). Within the social work field, most of the literature on Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism focuses on communities in Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In Canada, although a few publications discuss Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the field of social work (Beck et al., 2017; Elkassem et al., 2018; Khan, 2018; Smith, 2020), very few examine the experiences of Muslim youth.

This study aims to encourage social work to examine the impact and implications of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canada and its impact on Muslim communities, particularly youth. Although the Canadian social work code of ethics requires that we address racism and oppression (Canadian Association of Social Workers, 2005) and examine the impact of social injustice upon all people, the impacts of racism, white supremacy, and coloniality upon racialized and indigenous people are not always explored (Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2021;

Giwa & Baggs, 2022; Pon et al., 2016). In fact, the profession continues to engage in limited discussions surrounding racialized and Indigenous communities, aside from immigration, assimilation, and deficit contexts (Fortier & Wong, 2019; Murray-Lichtman & Elkassem, 2021).

My work here also contributes to critical race and anticolonial theorizing in social work through examining how racism, whiteness/white supremacy, and coloniality construct and maintain Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the Canadian context. Although there are a few social work scholars who theorize through critical race, antiracist feminist, and anti/postcolonial frameworks (Giwa et al., 2020; Razack, 2022; Shaikh et al., 2022), the profession as a whole needs to continue to examine racism, white supremacy, and coloniality in its work with racialized and Indigenous communities (Fortier & Wong, 2019; Murray-Lichtman & Elkassem, 2021), including examining and theorizing discrimination against Muslims across intersections of identity. In ascertaining how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism are perceived and experienced across social locations, the findings from this study will allow for more effective access and service delivery to Muslim youth who are negatively impacted by these issues.

The study likewise can inform future social work practice with Muslim communities and youth. Examining how long-term exposure to interpersonal and systemic Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism occur in and impact the lives, health, and wellbeing of Muslim youth is vital to better client service and support. Here, social work assessments and interventions need to highlight racialized clients' experiences with historical and ongoing racism, white supremacy, and coloniality (Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022), including, amongst Muslims, the psychological implications of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in their lives. As part of my continued concern for the welfare of Muslim youth and the need to compile evidence to support

this population, I conducted this research to capture these experiences and worked collaboratively within my community to inform action and potential avenues for transformation.

Mapping the Thesis: General Outline

This chapter began by discussing the significance of the research topic and gaps found in the existing literature, then I outlined the aims of the study, research objectives and questions, and defined key concepts. The chapter concludes by describing how this study adds to the discipline of social work as well as related fields.

Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive literature review across interdisciplinary fields and social work. Due to the limited literature on this topic in social work I broadened the scope of this review and examined scholarly work outside of Canada and across other disciplines. Most of the literature that examines Muslim youth experiences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canada is found in the social sciences and field of education.

The third chapter outlines the theoretical frameworks—critical race (CR) and anticolonial (AC) theories—that guide this research and provide a critical lens for examining how race, racism, racialization, whiteness, coloniality, and orientalism inform and characterize Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Chapter 4 discusses critical ethnography (CE), the methodology and research design that was used for this study. In choosing the methodology for this project my aim was to find an approach through which I could centre youths' lived experiences and social justice aims. CE is well suited as the methodological approach for this study, as it centres emancipatory projects that aim to interrogate systems of oppression, centres youth experience and knowledge, and incorporates CR and AC theories throughout (Jamal, 2005; Madison, 2011; Murillo, 2004).

The fifth chapter describes the findings related to Muslim youths' definitions and knowledge of the terms *Islamophobia* and *anti-Muslim racism*, which are commonly used to describe discrimination against Muslims and followers of Islam, as well as how these phenomena correlate with race, racism, whiteness, white supremacy and social location. The Muslim youth in this study are actively engaged in knowledge production about and theorizing of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, and their narratives echo critical academics in the field who have made clear distinctions between the two terms and continue to debate between the function of each (Hafez, 2017; Meer & Modood, 2017; Razack, 2022).

Chapter six explores the youths' understandings of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across discourse, specifically in film, television, social media, and news coverage. Youth are consumers of different discursive media, and these are a part of their cultural landscape (Dimanlig-Cruz et al., 2021). Youth described how essentializations of Muslims and Islam pervade social platforms (Farokhi & Jiwani, 2021), and it is important to examine how youth witness these and are impacted by them. In formulating such understandings, youth drew upon their own knowledge, personal experiences, and what they have witnessed across popular media.

Chapter 7 presents the findings related to youth experiences with both insidious and explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Insidious events are those in which they reported feeling initially unsure about the intent of looks, comments, and questions directed towards them, and after exploring these events they came to believe that these actions were primarily motivated by Islamophobia and anti-Muslim beliefs. Explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, however, occurred in the form of clear and fully revealed forms of violence towards Muslim youth, leaving no question as to the motivation or intent behind the action. According to the current literature in Canada, youth are experiencing various forms of explicit racism in school, at

work, and in public (Bakali, 2016; NCCM, 2018; Zine, 2022a). Recent reports have shown that hijab-wearing women,[13] particularly those who are Black, are experiencing the most intense and prevalent forms of Islamophobic hate crimes (Omstead, 2021; Statistics Canada, 2022b). Thus, it is vital that we continue to investigate how this is experienced by youth across social locations.

The eighth chapter explores the significant impacts of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in all aspects of their lives, as well as how they navigate and cope with these forms of oppression. Muslim youth described how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism left indelible marks on their lives, particularly regarding the way they navigate predominantly white spaces. Their stories made abundantly clear that they feel like they do not belong and anticipate violence in many of the spaces they occupy. This is consistent with research suggesting that Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the lives of Muslim youth negatively impact their sense of identity, mental health, and overall wellbeing (Bakali, 2016; Tahseen et al., 2019; Zine, 2022a). Indeed, social work needs to further examine how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism has impacted youth sense of self and security, along with the psychological consequences of these abhorrent forms of oppression. The concluding chapter discusses the limitations of the study, implications for further research and social work practice, and plans for knowledge mobilization and community sharing.

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[13] Throughout this document, the term *hijabi* will used to describe hijab wearing female youth, as this is the local vernacular used by participants.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter presents the literature review related to Islamophobia, anti-Muslim racism, and Muslim youth to provide the context and background for this study. Muslims living in the West have experienced increasing levels of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, particularly after 9/11 (Allen, 2016; Beydoun, 2018; Poynting & Briskman, 2018; Statistics Canada, 2022a). Due to this increase, academic scholarship examining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the social science fields has increased dramatically in countries where Muslims are the minority (Beydoun, 2018; Elkassem et al., 2018; Iner et al., 2019; Law et al., 2019). This includes a focus on Muslim youth experiences in schools, community settings, and amongst peers in Australia (Abdel-Fattah, 2021; Zulficar, 2016), Europe (Ahmad & Seddon, 2012; Al-deen, 2019; Lynch, 2015), the United States (Kabir, 2012; Tindongan, 2011), and Canada (Bakali, 2016; Caidi & MacDonald, 2008; Shahzad, 2014; Zine, 2022a).

Only within the last 15 years has there been documentation and statistics related to Islamophobia, anti-Muslim racism, and Muslims in Canada. One of the earliest research polls, conducted by Angus Reid in 2013, revealed a rise in anti-Muslim sentiment (Geddes, 2013). A few years later, the Environics Institute (2016) conducted a survey of Muslims in Canada that revealed the prevalence of experiences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism amongst Muslim Canadians. Most of the literature that examines Muslim youth experiences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canada can be found in the fields of social sciences and education (Ahmed, Patel, & Hashem, 2015; Bakali, 2016; Miled, 2020; Watt, 2016; Zine,

2022a). Due to the limited scholarly work in the field of social work, the scope of the literature review was broadened outside of Canada and across other disciplines.[14]

Within the social work field, most of the literature on Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism focuses on Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In Canada, although a number of authors discuss Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the field of social work (Beck et al., 2017; Elkassem et al., 2018; Khan, 2018; Smith, 2020), very few examine the experiences of Muslim youth. In fact, social work scholars Farooqui & Kaushik's (2022) review of research conducted with Muslim youth living in the West and growing up in the age of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism revealed that further study is needed on youth speaking through their own perspectives and lived experiences. This study is therefore one of the first in-depth examinations of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through the lived experiences and lenses of Muslim youth within the field of social work in Canada.

Several salient themes emerge in this literature review from amongst scholars examining Islamophobia, anti-Muslim racism, and Muslim youth experiences. These include:

- The historical and contemporary trajectory of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across the globe.
- An examination of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the Canadian context.
- Muslim youth experiences and the negative impact on their identity, sense of self, and security.
- The historical and contemporary social work approaches and discussion about racialized populations, youth, and Muslim communities.

This chapter explores these themes, providing insights and context for this study's examination of Muslim youth experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canada.

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[14] Studies on Muslim youth experiences were found in journals on education, immigration studies, deradicalization studies, global security studies, and ethnic studies.

Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Racism

A Historical and Contemporary Trajectory

As part of this literature review, I will highlight the pervasive legacy of anti-Muslim hate and contemporary trajectory of Western anti-Muslim sentiment, policy, and action. This is significant in examining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism as an enduring form of discrimination with a lengthy history, well before the events of 9/11 and its other recent forms (Allen, 2016; Bridge Initiative, 2021). An ever-increasing body of literature highlighted by experts within the field demonstrates how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism occur in cyclical periods of intensification that arise out of contextually based systems of hegemony (Allen, 2016; Ameli & Merali, 2019; Beydoun, 2016, 2018; Zempi & Awan, 2019; Kumar, 2012). Muslim communities are therefore tied to a persistent legacy of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism (Allen, 2016; Ameli & Merali, 2019; Beydoun, 2016, 2018). This is necessary to discuss as it impacts the contemporary context in which Muslim youth find themselves.

Several scholars suggest that as Islam spread across European spaces in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the Roman Catholic Church perceived it as a threat to its power (Allen, 2016; Esposito, 1994; Said, 1978, 1993; Weller et al., 2001). Islam's expansion brought out corresponding metanarratives of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist discourse, fear, myths, and rhetoric depicting the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH)[15] as the anti-Christ who was ushering in the beginning of Armageddon (Said, 1993; Weller et al., 2001). This view is supported by Allen (2016) and Kumar (2012), who argue that as Islam expanded outside of Europe, the existing non-Muslim empires began to mobilize against Muslim communities. Renton and Gidley (2017)

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[15] In Islamic traditions, when a prophet's name is mentioned or written, one must include the invocation of: may the peace and blessings of God be upon them (PBUH).

describe how this led to the First and Second Crusades, in which Muslims and Jews were expelled from Jerusalem. Kumar (2012) suggests this occurred again during the Spanish Inquisition in the fourteenth century, where Christians, led by Vatican powers, were encouraged to fight a religious war in the name of Christianity to defeat what they described as Moorish and Jewish heathens who had lived in Spain for over four centuries.

Several scholars suggest that Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism were codified by European powers from the early sixteenth century on (Allen, 2016; Lean, 2012; Said, 1978, 1993). For example, Said (1978, 1993) describes how orientalism and colonialism supported the European imperial quest to reform Islam and its followers, while perpetuating anti-Muslim racism within its newly formed French and British colonies across the Middle East and North Africa. Fanon (1952) and Memmi (1969) describe how this allowed for European powers to justify their efforts to civilize and control Muslim-majority places and people viewed as ideologically opposed to progress and in need of European enlightenment. The intention of colonialists was to reform Islam and Muslims, to extract economic labour, to obtain natural resources, and to establish empires within Muslim-majority countries (Memmi, 1969; Said, 1978, 1993). By the early 1900s, most Muslim-majority countries across the world were controlled by colonial powers. After World Wars I and II, the United States and Europe expanded their military presence, ultimately leaving Muslim-majority countries in the Middle East and Africa governed by imperial powers yet again (Said, 1978, 1993).

Allen (2016) and Massoumi and colleagues (2017) describe how each of the Iranian Revolution, Gulf Wars, Afghan invasion, Palestinian Occupation, 9/11, and the subsequent War on Terror have all contributed to the way in which Islam and Muslims are viewed in the West. This has been shaped through media and academic discourse that disproportionately highlight

violence committed by Muslims over violence committed by other groups across the globe and in Canada (Jiwani, 2010; Perigoe, 2007; Razack 2008a, 2008b). It is widely agreed amongst scholars of Islamophobia that media coverage presents and re-presents images of Islam and Muslims linked to terms such as "terrorism," "terrorist," "militant," and "fundamentalist" (Allen, 2016; Beydoun, 2018; Lean, 2012; Massoumi et al., 2017; Said, 1981). Contemporary orientalist racism has produced discourses positioning Muslims as violent and Islam as being "spread by the sword" (Arjana, 2015; Said, 1981). As Allen (2016) and Lean (2012) note, this has been supported by works such as Samuel Huntington's (1993) *Clash of Civilizations* thesis, which proposed that conflict in the twentieth century had been fuelled by geopolitical tensions along civilizational and religious lines. Establishing the dichotomy of Islam and the West, he asserted that the greatest threat to the West was from Islamic civilizations. Scholars suggest that anti-Muslim sentiment in post-9/11 public discourse has revolved around the notion of Muslims being violent and threatening to Western nations (Allen, 2016; Lean, 2012).

Several theorists have documented that since the events of 9/11, global Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism have been fuelled by the global War on Terror, the re-emergence of Western imperialism in Muslim-majority countries, and the refugee crisis (Allen, 2016; Beydoun, 2018; Razack, 2022; Zine, 2022a). Anti-immigration rhetoric across Europe and North America has been embedded with Islamophobic discourse (Abbas, 2020; Bazian, 2018), in addition to oppressive policies (Diehl, 2016; Khan & Beutel, 2014; Syed, 2013) and increasing violence against Muslims in Canada, the United States, and Europe (Bayrakli & Hafez, 2017; Pew, 2017b; Statistics Canada, 2022b). These include the "Muslim travel ban" in the United States, which prevented people from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Sudan, Somalia, and Yemen from entering the US for a period of ninety days (Criss, 2017). Policies banning Muslim females wearing the hijab

in schools, public-sector jobs, and competitive sports have been adopted in France (Al Jazeera, 2021; Woodyat, 2022) and in Quebec, Canada (Syed, 2013).

There is a considerable amount of academic literature documenting the contemporary violence, hate, and genocide committed against Muslim populations in other parts of the globe. In New Zealand, the Christchurch terrorist attack took the lives of 50 worshippers as the gunman opened fire upon them during prayer (CBC, 2019). This has been alongside the ethnic cleansing and genocide of the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar (Human Rights Watch, 2022), the persecution of Uyghur Muslims in China (United Nations Human Rights, 2022), Islamophobic Hindutva nationalism in India (Amarsingnam, et al., 2022; Kunnummal, 2022), and the oppression of Palestinian Muslims in Israel (Bazian 2015; Kundnani, 2017). Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism have had a long, enduring trajectory spanning the globe, leaving Muslim minorities in Western countries, including youth, vulnerable to harmful essentializations, discrimination, violence, and hate crimes. This is the historical and contemporary backdrop to the context in which Muslim youth now find themselves facing ongoing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canada.

The Canadian Context

Although Canada is portrayed as a model of inclusive multiculturism on the world stage, racism, white supremacy, and coloniality have been perennial fixtures in its history, relying on racial hierarchies and policies to regulate Indigenous, Black, and racialized people (Coleman, 2006; Kwak, 2020; Perry & Scrivens, 2019; Pitsula, 2013; Scrivens & Perry, 2017). Despite Canada being a country of immigrants and with a credo of multiculturalism and religious freedom, Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canada have increased dramatically over the last two decades (Angus Reid, 2017; Environics, 2016; Statistics Canada, 2022a). It is not

surprising that Canadian Muslims experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in schools (Bakali, 2017; Zinn, 2022a), the workplace (Canadian Labour Congress, 2019; Khan et al., 2022), and society generally (Environics, 2016; Statistics Canada, 2022b). Numerous studies have demonstrated that racism against Muslims is embedded within social, political, and economic systems, making it difficult for Muslims to flourish (Noor Cultural Centre, 2018; Razack, 2022), particularly youth (Bakali, 2016, 2017; Sensoy & Stonebanks, 2009; Watt, 2016). The following section examines the literature on Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the Canadian context, which is significant in setting the context for examining Muslim youths' experiences.

Muslim Communities in Canada

Muslim youth are part of the historical and contemporary trajectory of diverse Muslims living in Canada. According to Statistics Canada (2022c), 1 in 20 Canadians identify as Muslim. Muslim communities in Canada represent a diversity of races, ethnicities, and cultures. Well before the British North America Act was approved in 1867, Muslims called Canada their home (Hamdani, 2015; Munir, 2021). Although the first documented arrival of Muslims is in 1854, historians believe that Black Muslims from West Africa arrived during the transatlantic slave trade, as early as the 1700s (Cooper, 2007; Hamdani, 2015; Munir, 2021). Throughout the 1900s, the Muslim population grew with the arrival of newcomers from Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Currently, the second largest proportion of immigrants coming to Canada identify as Muslim (63.1%). By ethnicity and race, in 2022 the greatest number of Muslims were South Asian (595,085), Arab (510,620), West Asian (206,290), and Southeast Asian (9,185) (Statistics Canada, 2022c). Ontario and Quebec have the highest percentage of Muslims, with 10 percent living in the Greater Toronto Area and 8.7 percent in greater Montreal. In London, Ontario, there

are currently 35,000 Muslims (Statistics Canada, 2022b). Within this population there are over 6,000 Muslim youth between 15 and 24 across a variety of racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds (Statistics Canada, 2022b).

Muslim communities across Canada have established places of worship, advocacy organizations, and educational spaces, which are vital for Muslim populations to enhance a sense of community, safety for individuals and families and resistance against Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism (Qasqas & Chowdry, 2017). As these forms of discrimination increase, these spaces are more important than ever, serving to support community members and mobilize against this form of bigotry. Currently, there are over 250 masjids, Islamic centres and Muslim associations across Canada (Imagine Canada, 2013; Qasqas & Chowdhury, 2017). The NCCM (2014) tracks Islamophobic incidents and policies and remains the leading voice for Muslim advocacy in Canada. This organization was the leading voice during a recent National Summit on Islamophobia (NCCM, 2021). The Canadian Council of Muslim Women (2021) is dedicated to the equality and empowerment of Muslim women and organization against Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism against women. Salams Canada (2000) supports Muslims who identify as queer and trans, to create safe spaces and advocate against intersections of homophobia, transphobia, racism, and Islamophobia. The Black Muslim Initiative (2021), an advocacy group, addresses issues at the intersections of Islamophobia and anti-black racism in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). These spaces are very important in mobilizing efforts to build a sense of community for Muslims and youth in Canada. Many of these organization advocate against anti-Muslim racism and provide a place for Muslim youth to find supports as they deal with oppression in their everyday lives. Although there are clear efforts to support Muslim communities from within local organizations, Muslims are still struggling to form their own

communities in Canada and participate fully in the larger community. Nevertheless, this reflects how Muslim communities in Canada actively engage in emancipatory action and resistance in the context of ongoing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in society.

Media Characterizations of Muslims and Islam

Global mass communication enables people across the world to access, disseminate, and exchange information through media like film, television, social media, and news. In these spaces we find messaging to promote awareness of social injustice alongside pervasive forms of online hate and racism (Center for Countering Digital Hate, 2022). According to Sharma (2021), the medium that empowers "marginalized communities is also the same medium that intensifies Islamophobia and transmits it further, faster and faster, across the darkest and deepest corners of the internet" (p. 8). Within the last few decades there has been considerable academic attention given to contemporary negative characterizations of Muslims and Islam in Western media, particularly after 9/11 (Kanji, 2018; Kumar, 2012; Shaheen Shaikh, 2017). It is important to note that contemporary negative essentializations of Muslims and Islam are linked to a historical trajectory of discursive Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. As outlined in the previous section, well before the establishment of the internet, Eurocentric orientalist writings long held centre stage and cemented harmful, essentialized notions of Muslims, Islam, and Muslimness (Said, 1978).

A considerable amount of literature has been published on Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in discourse, particularly within media such as film, and television continues to be a foundational issue (Faroki & Jiwani, 2021; Jiwani, 2010, 2014; Said, 1981). Across an array of media, we see racist, orientalist myths that include the notions that Islam is an inherently violent faith and that Muslims are incapable of reason and barbaric in their thinking and actions. Words

such as "terrorist" and "terrorism" in political and media discourses are often synonymous with Arabs, Muslims, and Islam in Canada (Farokhi & Jiwani, 2021; Perigoe, 2007). Kanji (2018) and Sharma (2021) demonstrate how Islamophobic images that perpetuate negative depictions of dangerous Muslim men and oppressed Muslim women are prevalent across popular culture such as films, news media, and television. According to Kanji (2018), acts of Muslim violence received 1.5 times more coverage, on average, than instances of non-Muslim violence in the *Globe and Mail*, *National Post*, and CBC. In the United States, stories of Muslim violence receive on average 357 percent more press coverage than those on violent acts committed by non-Muslims (Kearns et al., 2018).

Muslims and Islam are essentialized through racist colonial discourse across media that often translates into Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canadian society. It is widely agreed amongst scholars that media characterizations of Muslims and Islam fuel and justify Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist social and political views, which often inform institutional policy (Farokhi & Jiwani, 2021; Mastracci, 2015; Razack, 2022; Zine, 2022b). According to Zine (2022b), the Islamophobia industry in Canada is "constituted through the intertwined interests among the diverse individuals, groups, and organizations who coordinate in various ways to achieve shared and mutually beneficial political goals" (p. 234). This industry includes media outlets, think tanks, political figures, and social media influencers, who propagate Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in discourse across the country (Farokhi & Jiwani, 2021; Mastracci, 2015; Zine, 2022b). These negative discourses may influence forms of institutionalized racism and are part of the landscape of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in which Muslim youth find themselves.

Canadian Policies: Institutionalized Racism against Muslims

According to scholars, Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism occur within the context of a global metanarrative (Gunny, 2004; Kanji, 2018) that influences national and local policy in Canada (Canadian Civil Liberties Association, 2022; Farokhi & Jiwani, 2021; Zine, 2022a). Razack (2022), Thobani (2007) and Zine (2022b), discuss how Canadian policies institutionalize and legitimize Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism action in Canada. Examples of this can be found in Canadian policies such as the Anti-Terrorism Act (Bill C-51), and the Act respecting the Laicity of the State (Bill 21) in Quebec.

The Anti-Terrorism Act (Bill C-51), passed by the Harper government in 2015, leaves Muslims more susceptible to racial profiling under the guise of public safety (Razack, 2022). The bill allows for the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) to monitor and gather information in attempts to deter terrorist plots in Canada from communities or individuals suspected as national security threats and/or so-called sympathizers of terrorism. According to organizations such as the CCLA (2015), the NCCM (2013) and scholars such as Razack (2022) and Zine (2022b) the lack of oversight and ambiguity in the language of the bill leaves Muslims in Canada, including youth, vulnerable to systemic violence within the context of Islamophobic associations of "terrorism" and "terrorist" with "Muslims" and "Islam."

Similarly, the Act respecting the Laicity of the State (Bill 21), which has been in place since June 2019, bars a range of public-sector employees such as judges, lawyers, police officers, teachers, and others from wearing or displaying religious symbols such as hijabs, niqabs, and turbans in the workplace (Razack, 2022). This has had a harmful impact on those Muslim women who wear the hijab and wish to be teachers in Quebec's public schools. For example, in 2021, Fatemeh Anvari, a Quebec elementary school teacher, was removed from her position because she wears the hijab (Andrew-Gee & Bailey, 2021). Although this policy is

currently being challenged by advocacy groups for violating Charter rights, including the freedoms of religion, expression, and equality (NCCM, 2022; CCLA, 2015), Muslim female youth wearing the hijab may find themselves in an environment where their educational and professional aspirations are actively hindered by this Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist policy.

Although Canada's policies on religious freedoms and individual and community self-determination should be enough to create a society in which Muslim youth and communities can flourish, Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism are still present. Canada's policies on multiculturalism and religious freedom are in direct tension with racist policies and laws that impact Muslim citizens. In facts, Thobani (2007) argues that in the case of such policies in Canada, it is "not that the law was discriminatory, and that racism can be found in its rulings. It is that the Canadian legal system *is* a regime of racial power" (p. 54). What is most concerning is that these policies legally authorize the essentialization of Muslims as backwards and barbaric security threats (Razack, 2008, 2022; Thobani, 2007). Public policy, media depictions, and political rhetoric have become powerful tools to initiate and influence social and personal Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism within and across communities, leaving Canadian Muslims, including youth, vulnerable to discrimination, violence, and hate crimes.

Discrimination, Violence, and Hate Crimes

According to several scholars, the manifestations of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in unfavourable media depictions and public policy in Canada likewise fuel and legitimize negative rhetoric, discriminatory views, violence, and hate crimes against Muslims (Beydoun, 2018; Razack, 2022; Zine, 2022b). This is consistent with Canadian scholars who assert that Muslims and Islam are perceived as an imminent threat to Western societies

(Bannerji, 2010; Razack, 2008, 2022; Thobani, 2007; Zine, 2008, 2012, 2022a). The following section illustrates several studies describing the prevalence of Islamophobic rhetoric, discrimination, violence, and hate crimes against Muslim communities and individuals in Canada.

Scholars have illustrated how Islamophobic, and anti-Muslim racist negative rhetoric is demonstrated through groups and individuals actively targeting Muslim communities across Canada. As noted by Beydoun (2018) and Massoumi and colleagues (2017), Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism is fuelled by rhetoric from ultra-nationalist, white supremacist, and far-right groups globally, nationally, and locally. This has also been by reported across Europe (Bayrakli & Hafez, 2017), the United States (Alexander, 2021), and Canada (Perry & Scrivens, 2019; Razack, 2022; Zine, 2022b). Scholars such as Miller (2017), Stacey (2017), and Zine (2022b) widely agree that demonstrations against Muslims and Islam across Canada have overwhelmingly been supported and mobilized through white supremacist groups, who have only recently been deemed terrorist organizations in Canada. In fact, the Coalition Against White Supremacy & Islamophobia was established in 2017 to promote education and action surrounding the ties between white supremacy and Islamophobia in Canada (CAWSI, 2021).

Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist rhetoric may influence discriminatory views against Muslims and Islam. To date there have been several surveys conducted examining views of Muslims and Islam in Canada amongst non-Muslim people. According to the surveys, Islam and Muslims are viewed most unfavourably compared to other religions (Angus Reid, 2017; Environics 2016; Noor Cultural Centre, 2018). For example, the Noor Cultural Centre (2018) survey revealed that 46 percent of Canadians hold discriminatory and negative views of Muslims and Islam. Over 50 percent of respondents believe that Islam promotes violence and suppresses

women's rights, 51 percent support the surveillance of Masjids, 47 percent support the public banning of the hijab, and 55 percent believe the issues of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canada are exaggerated. Based on these statistics, Muslim youth may find themselves amongst Canadians who hold these views across a variety of spaces in their everyday lives.

According to Statistics Canada (2022a) and the NCCM (2022), beyond unfavourable views, Muslims in Canada face both violence and hate crimes. Among hate crimes against religious populations, Muslims and Jewish communities continue to be the most targeted. Police-reported hate crime against Muslim people in Canada rose from 84 incidents in 2020 to 144 incidents in 2021; of the 575 cybercrimes recorded by police between 2016 and 2020, Muslims were also the most targeted (16%) (Statistics Canada, 2022a). Although these statistics are significant, according to NCCM (2022), "These numbers also do not tell the whole story—we know that the numbers of hate crimes vastly exceed what show up in hate crime stats." These statistics reflect the environment in which Muslim youth in this study find themselves.

Recent terrorist attacks against Muslim communities across Canada demonstrate how vulnerable these communities are to Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist hate crimes and violence in recent years (Balkissoon, 2018; Casey, 2020; Lupton & Dubinski, 2021). For example, the Quebec City mosque terrorist attack occurred on January 29, 2017, where six worshippers were killed and 19 injured after a man opened fire on congregants during evening prayers (Balkissoon, 2018). On September 12, 2020, a mosque volunteer, Mohammed Aslam Zafis, was stabbed to death outside of the International Muslims' Organization of Toronto mosque while performing COVID-19 health screening for community members (Casey, 2020). On June 6, 2021, four members of the Afzaal family in London, Ontario, were run over by a truck in what police say was an attack motivated by anti-Muslim hate (Lupton & Dubinski,

2021). According to several theorists, white supremacist motivations are reportedly linked to all three of these violent attacks (Bilfesky, 2018; McDonald, 2020; Yun, 2022). Through these incidents, including the recent one in London, the Muslim youth in this study have been reminded that they are not necessarily safe from violence even while walking down the street.

Muslim women across intersecting social locations face discrimination, violence, and hate crimes across a variety of spaces in society. According to Jiwani (2014), Muslim women are the most vulnerable to multiple forms of hate crimes and cyberviolence. Black Muslims, particularly females who wear the hijab, must contend with oppression at the intersections of anti-Black racism, gendered Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism (Jackson-Best, 2019; Zine, 2022a). White Muslim women must contend with becoming racialized and the loss of their racial privilege and deal with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism after they wear the hijab (Kanji, 2018). In the workplace, Muslim women across Canada face discrimination for exercising their right to wear what they choose (Syed, 2022). This is significant in the context of this study, as it reinforces the intersectional experiences of Muslim female youth. In examining female youth experiences across race, gender, sex, ethnicity, and religious dress, this study highlights the intensity of their experiences based upon these social locations.

Several scholars describe how Muslim males, or those perceived to be Muslim, are also vulnerable to Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism (Beydoun, 2018; Jamil, 2016). Muslim men are looked upon as having terrorist sympathies and being vulnerable to radicalization, criminality, and oppressive behaviour towards women (Abdel-Fattah, 2021; Razack, 2022; Zine, 2022a). Scholars Abdel-Fattah (2021), Razack (2022), and Zine (2022a) describe how Muslim male youth experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism at the intersection of religion, race, ethnicity, and religious dress. As Zine (2022a) observes, "[if] Muslim men are visible or Brown,

have facial hair that makes them appear as if they are Muslims, then there are challenges" (p. 64). This is consistent with police-reported hate crimes by race or ethnicity, which often target Black, Southeast Asian, and Arab populations in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2022a). The literature indicates that the Muslim male youth in this study are at risk for similar experiences based on their Black, South Asian, and Arab social locations. Further exploration upon their intersectional experiences is warranted, especially within the social work field.

In recent years there has been a growing interest in examining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canada. This is not surprising as Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism are prevalent in Canadian discourse, policy, political rhetoric, and society. Muslim communities in Canada have been witness to and victims of various terrorist attacks, forms of discrimination, violence, and hate crimes, and Muslims across Canada continue to feel unwelcomed and concerned for their safety in a country they call home (Elkassem et al., 2018; Taylor, 2022). In examining experiences of Muslim women and men, the literature indicates that Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism is prevalent and needs to be understood as an experience that varies across intersectional social location. A high proportion of hate crimes against Muslims target women, particularly those who wear the hijab (Perry, 2015; Statistics Canada, 2022a Zine, 2022a) and especially at the intersection of anti-Black racism (Jackson-Best, 2019; Zine, 2022a). Muslim males who are more readily associated with being Muslim are more susceptible to being victims of hate crimes. Being visible (race, facial hair, dress) as Muslim makes you a target of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Drawing upon this, we can assume that Muslim youth living in London, Ontario, are living within the same context, with similar experiences. This illustrates the importance of examining how they experience and cope with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Muslim Youth, Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Racism

The growing research available on Muslim youth experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canada indicates this population is facing increasing levels of this form of discrimination (Bakali, 2016; Miled, 2020; Mohamed, 2017; Sensoy & Stonebanks, 2009; Tiflati, 2017; Watt, 2016; Zine, 2012, 2022a). As noted by several authors, Muslim youth are experiencing hate crimes, harassment, and discrimination in schools and in the broader community, and this has a negative impact on their identity and sense of self (Alizai, 2017; Al Qazzaz & Valerio, 2020; Perry, 2015; Zine, 2022b). The following section presents the literature available on Muslim youth experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canada and the impact this has had in their lives. Much of the literature comes from the social sciences and education, with very little to no literature within the social work field. This indicates the need for growth in social work research on the topic Muslim youth experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Youth Experiences

A number of studies in the social science and educational fields have found that Muslim youth in Canada experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in their schooling, peer, and community environments (Bakali, 2016; Miled, 2020; Natarajan et al., 2021; NCCM, 2018). The research in Canada has tended to focus on Muslim youth in general, with analysis of their experiences across gender (Bakali, 2016; Miled, 2020; NCCM, 2018; Tiflati, 2017; Zine, 2001; 2006). However, there have been several that examine and analyze youth experiences across other social locations such as amongst females who wear the hijab (Zine, 2012); across ethnic backgrounds (Alizai, 2017; Al Qazzaz & Valerio, 2020; Watt, 2016); refugee status (Miled, 2020); and generationally (Zine, 2020a). It is important to note that many of these studies

examine the Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism experiences of the general Muslim youth population, which represents people from a diversity of ethnic, cultural, and racial backgrounds. Experiences across these social locations emerge in many of these studies.

Several studies have examined how Muslim youth are experiencing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in schools and describe how youth are exposed to Islamophobic comments, discrimination, aggression in the classroom, at the hands of their peers (Ahmed, 2016; Alazai, 2017; Bakali, 2016; Miled, 2020; NCCM, 2018). For example, a NCCM (2018) report revealed that Muslim youth living in the GTA face racist discussions, comments, and questions about Muslims and Islam in class from their peers and teachers. Muslim students in another study of an urban public high school reported challenges with Islamophobic stereotypes and biases in the school curriculum (Ahmed, 2016). Similarly, Watt (2016) specifically explores how Muslim female students negotiate the terrain of Islamophobia in school curricula and class discussion. Other studies go even further and have considered the relationship between experiences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in schools amongst newcomer Muslim youth. This indicates the significant need for this study and for examining Muslim youth experiences living in London, especially in schools.

It is important to highlight that many of these scholars have determined Muslim female youth in Canada who wear a hijab are among the most vulnerable, as they are clearly identifiable as Muslim and subsequently subjected to implicit and explicit forms of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence in schools (Bakali, 2016; Eid, 2015; Stonebanks & Sensoy, 2009; Tiflati, 2017; Watt, 2016). Elbourne and colleagues (2021) describe how in Quebec, Muslim female students report a range of ongoing microaggressions, including being called terrorists, given dirty looks, and being discriminated against in the classroom by both fellow students and teachers.

Similarly, Abo-Zena, Sahli, and colleagues (2009) assert that Muslim female youth who wear the hijab in schools "experience marginalization caused by hate speech such as being told to 'go back to your country'" (p. 13). Alizai (2017) describes how Muslim female university students who wear a hijab deal with Islamophobia on campus from faculty, non-Muslim peers, and student service providers. One theme that emerged from Alizai's (2017) research was the experiences of Black Muslim female youth in the study—specifically their experiences of intersecting oppression of anti-Black racism and Islamophobia. Muslim youth experiences are shaped by intersecting identities. Although much of the literature published on Muslim youth has examined Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across gender, some studies have emergent themes around experiences across race. This points towards the importance of examining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism amongst Black Muslim youth are also experiencing anti-Black racism.

To date, there are a handful of studies that examine the relationship between Islamophobia, anti-Muslim racism, and race. For example, scholars report Black Muslim youth, both male and female, in Canada face discrimination at the intersections of race, ethnicity, culture, sex, gender, and religion (Abdela, 2015; Abdurraqib, 2009; Jackson-Best, 2019 Mohamed, 2017; Mugabo, 2016). This is not surprising, as Black Canadians are the most frequently targeted racial group for hate crimes (Statistics Canada, 2022b). According to Ali (2021) "Black Muslims in Canada face combined oppressions of anti-Black racism and Islamophobia" (para. 1), including related to ethnicity and country of origin. For example, Mohamed (2017) describes how Black Somali youth in Canada experience a "triple consciousness" and must reconcile their Somali identity, racial category of Blackness, and religious status or "Muslimness" (p. 16). Similarly, Mugabo (2016) and Jackson-Best (2019)

point out that Black Muslim youth experience anti-Black racism in both Muslim and non-Muslim communities.

There is growing literature showing that Black Muslim female youth who wear the hijab must negotiate intersections of race, gender, and religious identity both in school and in peer spaces (Abdurraqib, 2009; Davis, 2016; Jackson-Best, 2019; Mohamed, 2017; Mugabo, 2016). In Edmonton, Canada, between 2020 and 2021, there were multiple hate crimes against Black hijabi women and youth motivated by anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism (Huncar, 2022; Omstead, 2021; Taniguchi, 2022). Other widely reported incidents include three Muslim female youth who faced Islamophobic and anti-Black racist verbal assaults in St. John's, Newfoundland, by a white male (Cowan, 2022). Both indicate that in examining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, we must also analyze race, gender, and ethnicity. This study recruited Black male and female youth and explored how their social location influences their experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Similarly, LGBTQ Muslim youth find themselves negotiating their religious expression vis-à-vis anti-Muslim racism and homo- or transphobia within and outside of their communities (Habib, 2019; Khan, 2018; Mourchid, 2009; Rahman & Valliani, 2016). Although there has been very little literature published on Muslim youth experiences with Islamophobia at the intersection of homo- or transphobia, there are a few studies that can be drawn upon to provide insight. For example, Rahman & Valliani (2016) examine experiences of LGBT Muslims in Canada, the tension of living in between Muslim and LGBTQ cultures, and experiences of oppression in both spaces. Mourchid (2009) discusses the impact of Islamophobia and homophobia upon Muslim youth who identify as gay in the United States. This study revealed that youth experience stigmatization and fear in both Muslim-majority communities and LGBTQ

spaces. Khan (2018), a social work scholar, presents lesbian Muslim women's experiences with Islamophobia within LGBTQ spaces and homophobia in Muslim-majority spaces. Similarly, Samra Habib describes in her memoir what it's like to be a queer Muslim growing up in Pakistan and then immigrating to Canada as a refugee along with her family. Her book illustrates her intersectional journey, facing racism, bullying, poverty, Islamophobia, and homophobia outside of her Muslim community, along with the fear of revealing her sexual identity to her family and within her community.

Detailed examination of the literature by experts working with Muslim youth across a variety of social locations demonstrates the variable intensities of the Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism they experience depending on their race, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, and immigration status. The review of the literature demonstrates the importance of this research, especially in its approach to sampling that includes intersectional Muslim youth experiences across social locations of gender identity, race, ethnicity, and religious dress.

Essentializing Muslim Youth Identities

Muslim youth frequently face multiple ascribed identities in educational and community spaces against the backdrop of ongoing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism (Kincheloe et al., 2010; Tiflati, 2017; Watt, 2016; Zine, 2012). There are numerous studies that describe Muslim youth struggling to deal with Islamophobic comments, questions, and remarks that essentialize their identities (Ahmed, 2016; Alizai, 2017; Al Qazzaz & Valerio, 2020; Bakali, 2016; Miled, 2020; NCCM, 2018). A study on Muslim youth living in Quebec found that Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist discourse and essentialization was common in schools, resulting in negative treatment by teachers and peers (Balkali, 2016; Miled, 2020; Tiflati, 2017). During an NCCM

(2018) high school town hall meeting, Muslim youth attending high school across the GTA reported experiencing Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist jokes about terrorism and bombing, along with racist questions from classmates and teachers. This was in addition to course curricula and teacher instruction that perpetuated Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the classroom (Bakali, 2016; NCCM, 2018).

Muslim youth must also negotiate the rigid Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist archetypes of the dangerous Muslim male and the oppressed Muslim female (Bakali, 2017; Razack, 2022; Zine, 2012, 2022a). These dominant discourses are implied and reinforced by the reporting of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Public Safety Canada (2021), and Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) on counterterrorism ventures that focus heavily on Muslim youth radicalization (Government of Canada, 2021c; Jiwani & Dessner, 2016; Monaghan, 2014; NCCM, 2013; Razack, 2008). Media commentary and political reporting likewise bolster such perceptions (Hall, 2004; Jiwani, 2010; Perigoe, 2007; Poynting & Perry, 2007; Watt, 2016). Jiwani and Dessner (2016) identified coverage of Muslim youth, Islam, and Muslims in the Canadian press as overwhelmingly associated with these assumptions, including negative ascriptions of criminality, extremism, and barbarity. Such rhetoric proposes that Canadian Muslim youth values and political affiliations are far removed from Canadian values of democracy and liberalism (Jiwani, 2010; Perigoe, 2007; Poynting & Perry, 2007; Watt, 2016).

Literature on female youth, especially those who wear the hijab, details their experiences with having their identities essentialized in schools, amongst peers, and in the broader community (Abdel-Fattah, 2021; Bakali, 2017; Mac an Ghaill et al., 2017; Shain, 2017; Zine, 2022a). Zine (2022a) describes how it is regularly assumed that Muslim female youth are victims of oppression and misogyny and without agency within their families and community. Bakali's

(2016) study describes how they are asked Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist questions about Muslims and Islam. Youth in a study conducted by NCCM (2018) shared how in schools they are asked Islamophobic questions about their general status as women in Islam from both students and staff (Bakali, 2016; Nagra, 2017; NCCM, 2018; Watt, 2016).

Muslim male youth do not escape gender-based and racialized essentialization in schools, their communities, and among peers (Abdel-Fattah, 2021; Bakali, 2017; Mac an Ghaill et al., 2017; Shain, 2017; Zine, 2022). This is not surprising, as much of the literature on Muslim male youth in Canada reinforces the prevailing discourse that they are backwards and at risk for becoming violent or radicalized (Ahmad, 2017; Eid et al., 2011; Jiwani & Dessner, 2016). Bakali (2017) describes how Muslim male youth are assumed to be supporters of violence and misogyny based on their adherence to Islam. Zine (2022a) describes how Islamophobic discourse in Canadian society, media, and policy has constructed the Muslim male youth as someone who is oppressive and highly susceptible to extremist radicalization, violence, and criminality. Numerous scholars describe how this is often influenced by their racial and ethnic status and outward appearance (e.g., black and brown skin colour, beard, Islamic dress).

Identity, Sense of Self, and Safety

Youth development is a stage in life where young people discover who they are, what they want in their lives, and how they fit in among their peers and in society. A considerable amount of literature demonstrates that Muslim youth often face Islamophobic and anti-Muslim experiences and racist essentializing of youth subjectivities (Ali, 2014; Abdel-Fattah, 2021; Bakali, 2016; Caidi & MacDonald, 2008; Sensoy & Stonebanks 2009; Zine, 2008, 2022a). The existing research affirms that Muslim youth continue to be essentialized into binary identities, as either oppressed people or dangerous terrorists, that have little to do with how they see

themselves or their beliefs and values. For example, Nagra & Marutto (2022) describe how

societal discourse perpetuates the notion that Muslim youth are barbaric, potentially violent, and

vulnerable to radicalization. This has a substantial impact on youths' identity and sense of self.

Several studies reveal how Muslim youth negotiate and navigate their identity and sense

of self within the context of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism (Al Qazzaz & Valerio, 2020;

Alizai, 2017; Bakali, 2016; Miled, 2020). Bakali's (2016) study on Muslim youth suggested that

Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist discourse in Quebec society and educational spaces

influences how youth believe non-Muslims see them. For example, one youth described how she

believes non-Muslims in society think that Muslims are "like a monster, or some bacteria."

(Bakali, 2016, p. 103). In the same study, another youth described how "in school, I hated socials

the most because they taught me to hate myself—or maybe they taught me to hide myself"

(Bakali, 2016, p. 25). Shahzad's (2014) study similarly found that Muslim youth fear being

essentialized and targeted with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in non-Muslim spaces.

Scholars such as Zine (2022a), Al Qazzaz and Valerio (2020), and Ahmed (2016)

describe in their studies how Muslim youth are aware that these essentializations are often

inevitable, and they know that anything they say or do will be used to further such views.

Because of this, there are added pressures to defend their faith and identity. Muslim youth in

schools report feeling the need to be the "ambassador" for Islam and Muslims, especially in

combatting Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist comments or interrogation about their faith (Al

Qazzaz & Valerio, 2020; NCCM, 2018; Zine, 2022a). Ahmed (2016) found that youth in Ontario

have a desire to be understood and respected in educational spaces, where they would like to be

free of the responsibility to represent their faith and be both Muslim and Canadian.

In examining the literature it is evident that Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism are embedded and salient within all systems and spaces that Muslim youth occupy. Muslim youth must navigate experiences with racialization (albeit differentially) and negative ascriptions of their faith and identity in school and community spaces. This negative essentializing of youths' Muslimness is an example of discursive Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism that can be very harmful to youths' development and sense of self and security in their schools and communities. In many of these studies, youth shared their frustration, confusion, and feelings that these essentializations are in direct tension with how they see themselves and their faith. Sadly, the stigma associated with Islam and being Muslim has made it difficult for students to fit in, feel welcome, define their identity, and develop a strong sense of self (Al Qazzaz & Valerio, 2020; Moosa-Mitha, 2009; NCCM, 2018; Zine, 2022a). Despite this saliency, it is troubling that social work has yet to examine and understand how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim constrain Muslim youths' everyday lives, which could then inform how to work more effectively work with Muslim communities and youth.

Social Work and Muslim Communities

Muslim communities are one of many racialized and equity-seeking populations living in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2022c). Social work has a history of working with these communities since its establishment as a profession (Chapman & Withers, 2019; Fortier & Wong, 2019). However, in searching for Canadian social work literature on Islamophobia, anti-Muslim racism, Muslim communities, and Muslim youth, the literature revealed very little. Therefore, the following section will examine social work with racialized populations, youth, and Muslim communities in and outside of Canada.

Racialized Populations

Close examination of the historical and contemporary literature on social work with racialized communities reveals several salient themes. These include: a legacy of racism, white supremacy, and coloniality against these communities (Chapman & Withers, 2019; Este, 2017; Jennisen & Lundy, 2019; Murray-Lichtman & Elkassem, 2021); a heavy focus on deficits through projects aimed at assimilating, educating, and "civilizing" (Fortier & Wong, 2019; Johnstone, 2016); anti-oppressive and cultural competency approaches (Carniol, 1992; Dominelli, 2002; Fook, 2002; Healy, 2005; Lundy, 2011; Mullaly, 2007); and very little discussion upon the impact of racism and social inequity upon these communities (Corley & Young, 2018; McMahon & Allen-Meares, 1992; Murray-Lichtman & Elkassem, 2021). However, in recent years, several social work scholars in Canada have begun to fill the existing literature gaps in these areas (El-Lahib & Wehbi, 2012; Duhaney et al., 2022; Elkassem et al., 2018; Giwa et al., 2020; Maiter & Joseph, 2016; Mullings et al., 2016; Khan, 2021), demonstrating how social work's trajectory in working with racialized populations often inhibits understanding the social and psychological consequences of oppressions such as xenophobia, Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism.

A Legacy of Racism, White Supremacy, and Coloniality

Social work in Canada has a legacy of committing harms against racialized and Indigenous communities, and this is rooted in racist, white supremacist and colonial practices through religious and helping organizations (Blackstock, 2009; Chapman & Withers, 2019; Este, 2017; Jennisen & Lundy, 2019; Johnstone, 2016). Several scholars describe how the racism and whiteness/white supremacy embedded in social work centre white positionality and values as racially superior and as the "default," while positioning non-white individuals and racialized

communities as inferior (Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022; Fellows & Razack, 1998).

Coloniality results in the centring of Eurocentric knowledge in education, research, and practice (Blackstock, 2009; Chapman & Withers, 2019; Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022). Chapman & Withers (2019) and Fortier and Wong (2019) outline how social work was developed within white supremacist settler colonialism and in its earliest days was used to bolster racist endeavours. In fact, several scholars discuss how many historical atrocities through these systems of oppression have been directly enforced by the social work profession (Chapman & Withers, 2019; Este et al., 2017; Pon, 2009). For example, Blackstock (2009) describes social work's direct involvement in the residential school system, Sixties Scoop, and Millennial Scoop, which saw the mass removal of Indigenous children from their homes over the span of 100 years. Several other theorists describe the institutional subjugation of Black Canadians and the mistreatment of Chinese railroad workers, which often remain unknown to most Canadians (Chapman & Withers, 2019; Este et al., 2017; Pon, 2009).

Contemporarily, the profession and its delivery agents still frequently serve to maintain racism, whiteness, coloniality, and the oppression of racialized and Indigenous communities (Adjei & Minka, 2018; Antwi-Boasiako et al., 2022; Blackstock, 2009; Quinn et al., 2022). For example, social work is still implicated in the ongoing removal of Indigenous children from their homes (Blackstock, 2009; Quinn et al., 2022) and the overrepresentation of Black children in child welfare (Antwi-Boasiako et al., 2022). Similarly, Adjei and Minka (2018) revealed how Black parenting experiences with social work services are often coupled with anti-Black racism. This evidence within the literature speaks to social work's ongoing complicity in the Othering of racialized bodies through racist, white supremacist, and colonial discourses and practices cloaked in intentions of "helping" those in need.

Assimilationist Projects and a Deficit Focus

Numerous critical scholars in the field of social work describe how much of the historical literature on racialized populations takes on a deficit focus through projects aimed at assimilating, educating, and "civilizing" racialized communities (Badwall, 2014; Chapman & Withers, 2019; Este, 2017; Jennisen & Lundy, 2019; Johnstone, 2016; Knowles, 1997). These scholars describe how social work history and practice approaches with racialized communities uphold colonialist and racist ideology, using a smoke screen of morality and civility by "saving" those in need. We can see this in the writing of early social worker J. S. Woodsworth, a student of Jane Addams and the future premier of Canada, who created a settlement manual for newcomers to measure acculturation success. It contained a hierarchical system that placed, for example, the white British first and the "oriental" and "negro" last (Johnstone, 2016). Early service providers believed that Indigenous, and racialized immigrant communities who were unable to assimilate to Canadian life should be subject to eugenic remedies such as sterilization, forced sexual abstinence, and other forms of genocide (Chapman & Withers, 2019; Johnstone, 2016).

Several scholars describe how even contemporarily, racialized communities are still discussed in terms of their deficits, with very little in the way of examining how racism, whiteness, and coloniality impact these populations (Chapman & Withers, 2019; Fortier & Wong, 2019). In 1992, McMahon and Allen-Meares conducted a content analysis of social work literature, revealing a heavy focus on community deficit issues and very few articles addressing racism and other structural inequities. Corley and Young (2018) replicated this study 30 years later, revealing a similar result. Researchers such as Fortier and Wong (2019) and Tuck & Yang

(2014) argue that deficit-centred research only perpetuates racist colonial violence without offering stories of suffering and pain in a decontextualized fashion.

Cultural Competency and Multi-Cultural Approaches

As discussed above, social work approaches with racialized communities have historically been informed by racist, white colonial ideologies through models situated in religious and helping organizations. Thankfully, as the profession has shifted towards social justice aims, there was a shift towards examining the impact of structural inequities through anti-oppressive practice, in addition to incorporating multicultural and culturally competent approaches when working with racialized populations (Chapman & Withers, 2019; Fortier & Wong, 2019; Healy, 2008; Johnstone, 2016). However, several scholars, criticize these approaches because they do not explicitly explore the effects and consequences of racism, white supremacy, and coloniality upon racialized communities (Pon et al., 2016; Murray-Lichtman & Elkassem, 2021; Razack & Jeffery, 2002).

As economic and social oppression began to impact individuals and communities in Canada, there was a need to engage in approaches to respond to the mental health and social implications of these forms of inequality. Several theorists have outlined how, by the early twentieth century, social work practice, theory, and philosophy had shifted to liberal paradigms focusing on class-based oppression (Chapman & Withers, 2019; Fortier & Wong, 2019; Healy, 2008). For example, in the 1980s, Maurice Moreau's structural approach ushered in an understanding that the lives of service users are profoundly impacted by social, economic, and political forces, with an emphasis on gender and class (Carniol, 1992; Lundy, 2011; Mullaly, 2007). Therefore, social workers should ask how personal and institutional oppression such as sexism and classism impact clients' presenting issues (Carniol, 1992).

Building upon these ideas, social work focused efforts to further its social justice commitments through the development of anti-oppressive practice (AOP) and culturally competent approaches with all communities and individuals, including those who identify as racialized. AOP recognizes that oppressions exist in society and have harmful impacts on the social and emotional wellbeing of people and communities, thus requiring an examination of how systems of oppression and power imbalance exist between people and institutions (Dominelli, 2002; Healy, 2005; Mullaly, 2007). Culturally competent practice includes strategies to help social workers reflect on their cultural positionality and understand norms and difference through a multicultural lens (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Constance-Huggins, 2019; Sakamoto & Pitner, 2005). The social work profession now prioritizes training through both approaches while working with racialized populations (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022; Pon et al., 2016). Although these approaches may be effective in some cases, several scholars assert that they do not explicitly explore the effects and impact of racism, white supremacy, and coloniality upon racialized populations (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Constance-Huggins, 2019; Pon et al., 2016).

In recent years critical race, antiracist, anti/postcolonial and feminist social work scholars in Canada have been actively theorizing on and challenging these approaches within the field. Several of these theorists criticize these approaches for ignoring racial difference and for reinforcing colour-blind theorizing, practice, and service delivery (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Constance-Huggins, 2019; Pon et al., 2016; Stephens & Rock-Vanloo, 2020). Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman (2022) assert that such interventions with racialized communities will instead further "a system of 'othering' and [ignore] the systemic nature of these systems of power and oppression, doing very little to unseat white supremacy, racism, and coloniality within the

profession of social work" (p. 632). Indeed, in examining the profession's more recent approaches when working with racialized populations there is still an ambivalence towards examining racism, whiteness, and coloniality.

Examining the Impact of Racism and Social Inequity

Within the last two decades there has been an increase in social work scholars documenting the experiences of a diversity of racialized communities (Adjekum & Joseph, 2021; El-Lahib & Wehbi, 2012; Duhaney et al., 2022; Giwa et al., 2020, 2021; Maiter & Joseph, 2016; Mullings et al., 2016; Khan, 2021; Shaikh, 2013). For example, Giwa and colleagues (2020) have examined social work's silence on anti-Black racism and police racial profiling. In another study, Giwa and colleagues (2021) focused on the settlement experiences of racialized LGBTQ newcomers in Newfoundland and Labrador, specifically on oppression at the intersections of racism, homophobia, and immigration status. Other social work scholars have studied the realities of systemic racism in child welfare and social service organizations (Maiter & Joseph, 2016; Shaikh, 2013), anti-Black racism in social work and broader society (Duhaney et al., 2022; Mullings et al., 2016), Islamophobia and homophobia (Khan, 2021), and xenophobia and ableism (Adjekum & Joseph, 2021; El-Lahib & Wehbi, 2012). These approaches interrogate social work processes with racialized populations and offer critical theorizing about racism, whiteness/white supremacy and coloniality, explore experiences across intersectional social locations, and call upon the profession to address these issues.

Several racialized and Indigenous scholars are also examining how racism, white supremacy, and coloniality impact communities of colour, particularly within social work services (Adjei & Minka, 2018; Badwall, 2014; Clarke, 2015). Adjei and Minka (2018) examine the experiences Black parents' knowledge and perceptions of child protection services in

Toronto, Ontario. Badwall (2014) examined how racialized social workers negotiate whiteness in social work values and practice. Clarke (2015) conducted an exploratory study of Afro-Caribbean service users and workers in child welfare services in Toronto, Ontario. Overall, these studies revealed racialized communities' experiences with racism, white supremacy, and coloniality within the broader community, and in service delivery systems as both clients and workers. Studies such as these are important in social work as they demonstrate how racism and white supremacy still underwrite institutional practices and the impact these have on racialized communities.

The preceding literature describes the harmful legacy of social work and its work with racialized populations. Although there are scholars examining the impact of racism, white supremacy, and coloniality on racialized communities, there is very few that explicitly examine the impact of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism on Muslim communities. This next section will examine the social work literature on youth, which is crucial for this study and will help to further build an understanding of Muslim youth experiences as a both a racialized and youth community.

Social Work with Youth Populations

Several studies in the literature have considered the relationship between youth and academic achievement (Kim et al., 2020), mental health (Baiden et al., 2019; Kourgiantakis et al., 2022), experiences of homelessness (Bender et al., 2018; Henriques et al., 2022), involvement in the justice system (Bender et al., 2018; Henriques et al., 2022), and marginalization among sexual and gender minorities (Austin et al., 2018; Craig et al., 2022; Craig & Furman, 2018). Within many of these studies, there are youth participants from a diversity of racial backgrounds. However, much of this literature does not *explicitly* examine the

relationship between racism, white supremacy, and coloniality and experiences of youth within the topics at hand.

When working with racialized youth, it is important to know if there is any correlation between their current struggles to address any perpetuating factors in their lives. There are several studies in the literature that examine youth experiences on issues such as school violence, bullying, and unmet mental health needs of participants who are racialized. For example, Kim and colleagues (2020) examine the impact of school violence, bullying, and academic achievement on youth across gender. Although their research reveals incidents of discrimination, they did not specifically take up racism, white supremacy, and coloniality as variables. In another study, Baiden and colleagues examine the association between suicidal ideation and mental health needs among young adults aged 20–29. They found those who experienced suicidal ideation are more likely to have unmet mental health needs. Although they did identify youth who experienced discrimination in services, racism was not explicitly considered a predisposing factor and variable to unmet mental health needs.

Similar examples can be found in literature surrounding youth homelessness, structural oppression, and wellness (Bender et al., 2018; Henriques et al., 2022). Bender and colleagues (2018) examined youth homelessness through photovoice and participatory action research in which youth shared their stories with homelessness and social inequity. In this research, four youth participants identified as racialized. Although there was discussion of experiences of discrimination as an obstacle in their lives, there was no explicit examination of race and racism as a variable that impacted their experiences of homelessness.

In another qualitative study, Henriques and colleagues (2022) examined homeless youths' personal narratives on their reproductive and sexual health. This study identified the experiences

of some of the youth across race; however, it did not explicitly examine if race and racism were correlating factors in youth experiences of stigma with health professionals and service providers.

Although many of the preceding studies examining the experiences of youth involve participants from a variety of racial backgrounds, much of the existing literature often fails to explicitly examine race, racism, and white supremacy as variables. Nevertheless, several racialized, Indigenous, antiracist, anti/postcolonial, and feminist social work scholars are indeed actively examining and documenting the experiences of racialized and Indigenous youth, including the impacts of racism, whiteness/supremacy, coloniality, xenophobia, homophobia, sexism, and anti-immigration policies across their intersectional social locations and the associated impact of systemic racism and oppression on their identity, wellbeing, and overall health. Some of this work includes examining the experiences of immigrant and refugee children and youth in Canada (Este & Ngo, 2011; Moosa-Mitha & Wallace, 2020); Black youth (Giwa & Baggs, 2022), Indigenous youth (Carriere & Richardson, 2013; Freeman, 2017, 2018a, 2018b, 2019), and racialized LGBTQ youth (Lozano-Verduzco et al., 2022).

A number of scholars explicitly explore the impact of racism, white supremacy, and coloniality on racialized youth in Canadian society. Moosa-Mitha and Wallace (2020) use social activism and community work to engage with Muslim refugee youth living with trauma. In discovering that as a significant factor in their lives, the authors also examined how this community faces intersecting forms of oppression such as racism, xenophobia, and, for females, gendered Islamophobia. Giwa and Baggs (2022) examined risk factors for gang involvement amongst Black youth, particularly how race, racism, whiteness, and white supremacy informed gang participation. They argue that Black youths' involvement in gangs cannot be examined

without examining the impacts of systemic racism. These two studies bolster this study's assertion that in examining Muslim youth experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, analyzing personal and systemic forms of Islamophobia, racism, white supremacy, and coloniality is vital.

The preceding review of social work literature on youth demonstrates a breadth of topics covered by scholars within the field. Although some of the study participants were racialized and themes emerged related to discrimination, many of these studies did not explicitly explore how race, racism, white supremacy, and coloniality influence youth experiences. There are critical social work scholars who are currently doing this work, though, and those studies capture the importance of examining racialized youths' experiences through a critical lens.

Muslim Communities

A review of the literature on social work and Muslim populations inside and outside of Canada revealed a heavy focus on topics related to culturally competent approaches and integrating religious beliefs and spirituality in practice (Ahmed & Amer, 2012; Ahmed et al., 2017; Al-Krenawi & Graham, 2000; Canda & Furman 2010; Schmid & Sheikhzadegan, 2022). Although many topics identify discrimination as a factor in Muslims' lives, there is very little explicit theorizing of how race, racism, white supremacy, and coloniality impact Muslim communities and/or the psychological implications of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

As demonstrated above, culturally competent approaches in social work are common in working with racialized populations. There are several scholars who adopt these approaches in their work with Muslim communities (Ahmed & Amer, 2012; Ahmed et al., 2017; Al-Krenawi & Graham, 2000); however, while these approaches may serve to address culturally inappropriate barriers to services and offer modifications to practice interventions that increase

cultural sensitivity, they often do not interrogate issues surrounding personal and institutional Islamophobia. For example, Al-Krenawi & Grahman (2000) call for a culturally sensitive social work practice approach while working with Arab (Muslim) clients in a mental health setting, including considering gender dynamics, family relations, and cultural practice in interventions with clients. However, this article does not explicitly explore race, racism, Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism as barriers or considerations in issues surrounding mental health.

Although these approaches provide very important insight into the lives of Muslim communities, cultural competency approaches rooted in attempts to "understand" Islam and the culture and "difference" of Muslims may be inadequate. This approach does not explicitly interrogate how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism may influence either Muslim experiences or inform institutional practices with these communities. As outlined in previous sections, Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism are prevalent in Western societies and have a variety of social and psychological impacts on Muslim communities. Therefore the impact of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism on clients lives are very important factors to include in work with Muslim clients in mental health settings.

A few scholars have more recently examined the social implications of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism on Muslim communities in the field of social work in Canada (Beck et al., 2017; Khan, 2021 Moosa-Mitha, 2022; Smith, 2020). For example, Khan (2018) examines the experiences of Muslim LGBTQ women in Canada; Smith (2020) discusses how non-Muslim social workers can be allies in disrupting Islamophobia; and Beck and colleagues (2017) discuss the importance of awareness of orientalism and Islamophobia in the profession. Although there is still very little literature on the topic of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in social work

these studies point to the need to understand how these forms of oppression impact Muslim communities living in Canada.

In examining scholarly work on the topic of Muslim youth, Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism, the majority of the social work literature available focuses on the United States (Abo-Zena & Saif, 2021; Ahmed et al., 2015; Hodge et al., 2015, 2016, 2017; Husain et al., 2022), Australia (Abdel-Fattah, 2020; Al-deen, 2019; Ozalp & Ćufurović, 2021), and Europe (Carr & Haynes, 2015). Like the social science and educational theorists examining Muslim youth in Canada covered above, social work scholars examine how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism has had a negative impact on youth sense of self and overall wellness. In a systematic review, Ozalp & Ćufurović (2021) described themes discussed in Australia's literature on Muslim youth, including how everyday Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist discourse and discrimination has been found to negatively impact the youths' identity and wellbeing across their social locations.

Several scholars emphasize the importance of examining the impact of experiences of personal and systemic Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism among youth. For these youth, navigating pervasive Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism amid the current sociopolitical climate is integral to Muslim youth development and may contribute to issues surrounding their identity, mental health, and substance misuse (Abo-Zena & Saif, 2021; Elkassem & Csiernik, 2018; Hodge et al., 2015, 2016, 2017). For example, Ahmed and colleagues (2015) examine the state of American Muslim youth, revealing multiple issues including addictions, mental health issues, in the context of experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. These scholars emphasize the importance of examining the impact of experiences of personal and systemic Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism among youth.

Several scholars highlight concerns for social work as a profession, as Muslim youth seek services to support them in the context of Islamophobia (Abo-Zena & Saif, 2021; Jamal et al., 2023). Muslim American youth are increasingly seeking mental health services and supports (Ahmed et al, 2015; Ahmed & Amer, 2012). Yet according to Abo-Zena & Saif (2021), social work clinicians so far are inadequately equipped to deal with issues related to Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism (Abu-Ras et al., 2018). More recently, Jamal and colleagues (2023) conducted a scoping review of the literature on Canadian Muslim youth and highlighted the need for a broader range of critical theoretical perspectives on their social location and identity construction. These scholars propose collective action to examine and reduce these and other structural oppressions to promote justice in the field. This is an example of how social work must include understanding the mental health consequences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the lives of Muslim communities and youth.

In the field of social work in Canada, modern approaches rooted in civility and moral conjecture to "understand" Islam, culture, and "difference" continue hegemonic positions and do not respond to Muslims' ongoing experiences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. By ignoring the realities of Muslim populations in Canada, the social work profession will continue to oppress this community and demonstrate its lack of commitment to eradicating Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. However, there have been a handful of works focused on Muslim communities and youth in the context of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, and this research has begun to inform social work practice, community work, and policy aimed at supporting Muslim communities and youth.

Chapter Conclusion

The literature review yielded many insights and learnings that are relevant to this study. There is a legacy of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism that continues to have impacts across the globe, particularly in places where Muslims are a minority population. In Canada there has been an increase in Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism against communities and individuals. Terrorist attacks, increasing violence in society, and discourse across media have left Muslim youth vulnerable to everyday oppression in the spaces they occupy, including in school and the broader community. This has a negative impact on their identity, sense of self, and security and speaks to the need for the social work to examine Muslim youth experiences in Canada. Historical and contemporary literature in social work with racialized and youth communities has yielded insights into the harms committed and gaps that need to be filled in the profession. Although more recent research examines youth experiences of social inequities, many of these works do not explicitly explore the impact of racism, anti-black racism, white supremacy, and coloniality on racialized communities and youth. More recent works from critical social workers have emerged to examine these issues. The literature about Muslim communities and youth in the field of social work outside of Canada often discusses the use of cultural competency and religious adaption approaches when working with this population, and more recent work calls for social work to examine the implications of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim has on Muslim communities and youth moving forward. As this review suggests, critical examination is needed on how systems of oppression and power impact communities of colour.

Critical approaches are particularly relevant for this study, especially those that examine how racism, whiteness/white supremacy, and coloniality work to construct and maintain Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Social work's response, or lack thereof, to injustices in racialized communities across time highlights the ongoing historical challenges of including

anticolonial and antiracist theories. The discourse of cultural competency and incorporation of religion and spirituality in social work practice with Muslims may have brought about many positive reflections for both client and practitioner, but is this enough? By avoiding discussion on race and racism, critical analysis cannot be achieved, which raises questions as to why the profession continues to circumvent discourse these issues in practice. Therefore, this research will use an integrative theoretical orientation grounded in both critical race theory (CRT) (Bell, 2018; Crenshaw, 1995); and anticolonial emancipatory paradigms (Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001; Fanon, 1967a; Memmi, 1969; Said, 1978; Spivak, 1988). This inquiry paradigm will provide a critical lens for evaluating the lived experience of Muslim youth by foregrounding race, racism, white supremacy, and colonial links to contemporary Islamophobia, while evaluating the difficulties faced by Muslim people in Canada. The next chapter will outline frameworks and critical tenets that will be used to examine Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through a Muslim youth lens.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

If we have been gagged and disempowered by theories, we can also be loosened and

empowered by theories. (Anzaldúa, 1990, p. xxvi)

In this chapter I outline the theoretical framework and concepts that were used to inform the examination of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through the lens of Muslim youth. As outlined in the previous chapter, Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim racism is a significant problem in Canada, particularly among youth. Responding to this societal issue requires a theoretical approach that examines the nuanced forms of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism impacting Muslim youth across social locations, in addition to the discursive, social, and material implications of this form of discrimination.

I begin by conceptualizing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, then locate the origins of my choice of theorizing through my social location and philosophical orientation. I discuss how critical race (CR) and anticolonial (AC) theories guide this research and provide a critical lens for reviewing the literature and my methods and analysis. CR and AC theories are well suited to theorize systems of power and oppression, specifically to examine how personal and systemic Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism manifest in society. I examined whiteness, white supremacy, racial realism, racialization, coloniality, and orientalism through CR-AC frameworks, and in doing so, I aimed to bring more complex and nuanced readings on how Muslim youth understand and experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Conceptualizing Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Racism

The section below illustrates how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism are conceptualized among academics across social sciences fields, revealing the nuance and complexity related to discrimination against Muslims and Islam. Conceptualizations of

Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism have been theorized among scholars from critical feminist, postcolonial, and critical race studies (Allen, 2010; Hafez, 2017; Meer & Modood, 2009, 2010; Razack, 2022; Zine, 2022a), and there are two distinct areas that theorize Muslim experiences with oppression based on religious affiliation: Islamophobia studies and anti-Muslim racism studies (Hafez, 2017; Meer & Modood, 2009, 2010; Runnymede Trust, 1997, 2017). Islamophobia studies theorists draw upon post- and anticolonial theories in advancing their understanding of this phenomenon (Bridge Initiative, 2021; Hafez, 2017; Runnymede Trust, 1997, 2017), while anti-Muslim racism theorists pull from critical race and materialist theories (Meer & Modood, 2009, 2010; Opratko & Müller-Uri, 2016). Conceptualizing and clarifying both Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism as an entry point to this study is vital in understanding the nuanced forms of discrimination experienced by Muslims.

Islamophobia Studies

Islamophobia studies describes discursive, functionalist, and instrumentalist conceptions of this form of oppression (Hafez, 2017), interrogating the ways in which Islamophobia functions as an instrument of coloniality, orientalism, and "cultural racism" that places Muslim and Islam in positions of inferiority and as the Other (Allen, 2010; Bridge Initiative, 2021; Runnymede Trust, 1997, 2017). Theorists draw upon the term *orientalism* to conceptualize contemporary and historical formulations of Islamophobia, which are and have been likewise used to justify Eurocentric colonial Othering of Muslims and Islam. Coined by Edward Said (1978), *orientalism* is "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between the 'Orient' and [most of the time,] 'the Occident'" (p. 2). It positions Muslims and Islam as inferior, violent, and barbaric. Ahmed (1999) further asserts that colonial and imperialist projects used orientalism to essentialize Muslims and Islam as "a civilization

doomed to barbarism and backwardness forever" (p. 60). Similarly, Said's later work, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), elaborates on how these orientalist practices have endured through postcolonial eras—although "direct colonialism" has ended, "imperialism lingers" within "political, ideological, economic, and social practices" of white Western cultural spheres (p. 9). Kumar (2012) proposes that enduring orientalist myths in Western societies include the notion of Islam and Muslims as monolithically religious, incapable of reason or democracy, and inherently violent and backwards.

Drawing on orientalist theorizing, scholars use *Islamophobia* in contemporary discussions to describe this form of oppression (Hafez, 2017). *Islamophobia* is defined as the "dread" or "hatred of Islam" and an overall "fear" and "dislike" of Muslims (Runnymede Trust, 1997, 2017). This can affect not only Muslims, but also anyone affiliated with Islam or perceived to be Muslim, or those ascribed with Muslimness through the process of racialization (Garner & Selod, 2015). For example, Islamophobia has fuelled hate crimes against Sikh communities across the United States and Canada because they are assumed to be Muslim due to their race, colour of their skin, and religious attire (Sian, 2014, 2017). Islamophobia is the mobilization of discursive orientalism that can occur in both public and private spaces, and it is perpetuated by media voices, think tanks, and organizations (Allen, 2010; Zine, 2022b). Some theorists have moved beyond discourse to include Islamophobia as "practice" or "prejudice" against Islam and Muslims, through "demonization and dehumanization" as well as "negative attitudes, discrimination, physical harassment and vilification in the media" (Mohideen & Mohideen, 2008, p. 73).

Anti-Muslim Racism Studies

Anti-Muslim racism studies emerged through critical analysis of Islamophobia (Hafez, 2017; Opratko & Müller-Uri, 2016), and its scholars suggest that we must move beyond discursive and instrumentalist conceptualization to include examining anti-Muslim racism through critical theories of race and racism (Opratko & Müller-Uri, 2016). Theorists express concern that Islamophobia studies focus heavily on orientalist discourse, individual or societal fear, and phobia against Muslims and Islam in general (Beydoun, 2016, 2018; Hafez, 2017; Meer & Modood, 2019; Opratko & Müller-Uri, 2016). Cesari (2011) proposes that the term "Islamophobia" may be vaguely used to describe a "diverse phenomenon" ranging from fear, phobia, hatred, xenophobia, and cultural racism, suggesting they all "emanate from an identical ideological core" (p. 21). Müller-Uri (2014) argues that Islamophobia is not only an issue of cultural racism but about "an essentialist conception of culture, which appears as the functional equivalent of the biological racial concept" (p. 91).

Anti-Muslim racism theorists also have concerns around discrepancies in conceptualizing Islamophobia within the temporal components that link racist discrimination and violence against Muslims across place, space, and time (Allen, 2010; Kumar, 2012). Several scholars show how hatred and fear of Islam and Muslims were present well before biological "race" was established and the term *orientalism* was coined (Ahmed, 1999; Allen, 2010; Weller et al., 2001). Current constructions of Islam as "evil" and "dangerous" have a history that goes back as early as the seventh century and during the Crusades (eleventh to thirteenth centuries), when Islam and Muslims were described as dangerous, barbaric, and Other (Allen, 2010). Weller (2001) describes how "Islamophobia is undeniably rooted in the historical inheritance of a

conflictual relationship that has developed over many centuries involving the overlap of religion, politics and warfare" (p. 8).

Anti-Muslim racism theorists draw upon critical, antiracist, and anti/postcolonial theorizing in advancing their understanding of this phenomenon (Hafez, 2017; Meer & Modood, 2009, 2010; Opratko & Müller-Uri, 2016; Razack, 2022; Tamdgidi, 2012). Numerous scholars propose that Muslims are racialized across markers of gender, culture, ethnicity, religious attire, name, accent, and immigration status. This is consistent with racial formation theory, developed by Omi & Winant (2014), which suggests that race does not rely solely on biological characteristics but instead uses identifiers to mark certain bodies as *Other* determined by social, political, and economic forces. This is perpetuated through racist and colonial discourse in society that ascribes "race" to people and communities who are or "look" Muslim in Canada (NCCM, 2014; Perry, 2015; Rahmath et al., 2016). Anti-Muslim racism studies scholars suggest that theorizing religious discrimination against Muslims must include interrogation of how race, dominance, and hegemony work to construct Muslims and oppress them in social and material ways (Meer & Modood, 2009, 2010; Opratko & Müller-Uri, 2016).

Through the demarcation of Muslim as a racialized Other, "race" is then essentialized through notions of cultural and religious difference. In comparing this phenomenon, Müller-Uri (2014, p. 97) discusses how Jewish communities and people, through anti-Semitic ideology, were raced upon presumed cultural and religious difference. Muller-Uri points out that anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic processes of racialized Othering work the same way. Muslims and Jews, through anti-Muslim racist and anti-Semitic ideologies, are racialized based on their presumed cultural and religious difference in societies where dominance and hegemony exist. For anti-Muslim racism theorists, these are examples of the contemporary essentialization of difference

and the Other that are central to the ideological core of all racisms and modern-day racial concepts informing discrimination against Muslims and Islam.

As reflected above, although scholars debate the theorizing of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism (Allen, 2010; Beydoun, 2018), Islamophobia refers to the discursive and ideological instruments that perpetuate orientalist and culturally racist discourse that serves to essentialize Muslims and Islam as barbaric, inferior, and the Other. While anti-Muslim racism is a form of racism against Muslims or those perceived to be Muslim that works to essentialize subjectivities of "Muslimness" through processes of race making and racialization (Meer, 2013; Meer & Modood, 2010). I am among scholars and activists who affirm the limitations of the term *Islamophobia* as it does not include theorizing race, racism, processes of racialization, and intersectional theorizing; as such, I prefer the theorizing of anti-Muslim racism. There is growing understanding that we must approach anti-Muslim racism through lenses of intersectional racism and processes of racialization. Muslims are racialized based on (assigned, imagined, or actual) phenotypic characteristics such as skin colour, ethnicity, religious dress, and name. However, because the term *Islamophobia* is the term most used across society and academic discourse this study will use both terms interchangeably to reference global public discourses and to highlight its functions to consolidate racist oppression. In the next section I locate the origins of my choice of theorizing through my positionality and philosophical orientation.

Positionality and Philosophical Orientation

My social location as a visible Muslim woman, Amazigh-Algerian,[16] and Palestinian[17] from both the United States and Canada has influenced the way I see the world and the

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[16] The Amazigh are the non-Arab Indigenous people of what is now called Algeria.
[17] Palestinians are the Indigenous people of what is now called Israel who have either been displaced across the globe or continue to live in oppressive occupation across Palestine.

theoretical orientation of this study. As an Amazigh and Palestinian woman, I affirm my settlement on the land of Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island. I affirm that the same system of colonization that displaced my own people through Arab occupation in Algeria and Israeli occupation in Palestine also displaced, and continues to displace, Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island. Through my family legacy, youth, and adulthood I have come to know the reality of endemic and pervasive forms of racism, sexism, white supremacy, coloniality, Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism. This has naturally evolved into a commitment to uncover how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism move through the lived realities of Muslim youth across intersectional social locations.

In exploring philosophical and theoretical orientations, I recognized that critical paradigms are best suited to my views of reality, truth, knowledge, ethics, and values. Critical theory aligns both with positivist beliefs that "reality" can be measured and with post-positivist beliefs that this can only be known approximately. Interpreted based on values and ideological position, critical theory is distinct in its belief that truth and reality are contingent on context and history (Brown & Strega, 2005; Carroll, 2004; Guba & Lincoln, 2004). Critical theory diverges from positivist beliefs in its assertions that knowledge is gained solely through rational thought, observation, and scientific investigation. It aligns with post-positivist beliefs that knowledge can be acquired through subjectivities and experiences. Critical theory is distinct as it is guided by people's worldviews and aims to interrogate how regimes of knowledge and power are embedded in society, discourse, and systems.

Although critical theory is aligned with my theoretical and philosophical orientation, I have come to know that not all critical approaches explicitly interrogate race, white supremacy, coloniality, and intersectional social location. For example, Marxist theories engage in class-

based analysis while subordinating categories such as race, gender, and sexuality, focusing on class struggle and material conditions as common desires for individuals in society. Whitestream feminist approaches, on the other hand, centre gender without critical analysis of race. African, Black, Third World, anti-racism, and anti/postcolonial feminist theorists have questioned the white Eurocentricity and paternalism inherent in Western Marxist and feminist theory (Ahmed, 2009; Chilisa, 2011; Grande, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 2000). In examining the inadequacy of these theories, I have found myself feeling empowered through the ontology and epistemology of both critical race and anticolonial theories.

Critical Race and Anticolonial Theories

This section provides a brief overview of CR and AC theories history, ontology, and epistemology, followed by a discussion of the CR-AC theoretical framework that was used to understand Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism as it occurs through the lived experiences of Muslim youth. A CR-AC framework was used to examine how coloniality, orientalism, race, racism, racialization, and whiteness inform and maintain contemporary contexts of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, as well as how this is experienced by Muslim youth across intersecting identities. Combining CR and AC theories allows for a multidimensional examination of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

CR theory is philosophically rooted in abolitionist and civil rights movements led by activists such as Sojourner Truth (1851), Frederick Douglass (1881), W. E. B. Du Bois (1903), and the Black Power and Chicano movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Contemporary formulations of CR theory were established by racialized American legal scholars, who identified the limitations of achieving justice using dominant conceptions of race, racism, and social equality (Bell, 2018; Crenshaw, 1995). CR theory calls for an exploration of how race,

racism, racialization, and centred whiteness oppress racialized individuals and communities across intersecting identities. Theorizing within this framework includes analyzing how these dominant systems of power are entrenched in practices, discourses, and social structures in society that have a negative impact on people of colour (Bell, 2018; Crenshaw, 1995; Delgado & Stefanic, 2017). Theorists use CR to inform research, pedagogy, curriculum, and policy while borrowing from multidisciplinary traditions to analyze racialized people within both historical and contemporary contexts. CR theorists from various communities draw on its tenets to address discrimination against their own groups and elsewhere, including scholars from Black, South Asian, Middle Eastern, and Latinx communities (Beydoun, 2016), education (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Yosso et al., 2009), and social work (Adjei, 2021; Badwall, 2016; Elkassem & Murray Lichtman, 2021; Giwa & Baggs, 2021; Shaikh et al., 2022).

Anticolonial theory is founded upon postcolonial studies, a discipline that explores the historical, political, economic, and social impact of colonialism and imperialism (Bhabha, 1990; Fanon, 1952, 1967a; Memmi, 1969; Said, 1978; Spivak, 1988). However, postcolonial approaches differ from anticolonial theory in the former's use of "post" to understand colonialism as something occurring in the past. Anti-colonial theorist argues that Colonizing and coloniality have not disappeared, though; rather, they resurface, newly organized in contemporary contexts and they continue to shape social and political structures (Dei & Asgharzadeh 2001; Maldonado-Torres, 2007).

Anticolonial theory is well suited to this study's inquiry, as it uncovers and affirms contemporary racist, orientalist, and colonial discourses that privilege white Western knowledge production while subjugating racialized and Indigenous knowledge through group-based oppression (Chilisa, 2011; Kovach, 2009; Tuhiwai-Smith, 2013). Anticolonialism is a movement

centred around social and political liberation for all colonized peoples and serves to challenge the contemporary persistence of colonial impositions (Dei & Kempf, 2006; Maldonado-Torres, 2007). It is guided by the knowledge of the oppressed and the belief that marginalization can be overcome through local mobilization, and it analyzes contemporary colonial relations for understanding current issues of oppression, racism, and marginalization across intersections of identity (Dei & Asgharzadeh 2001; Maldonado-Torres, 2007). Different communities of anticolonial theorists focus on how contemporary forms of racism, Eurocentrism, and colonization operate within their own groups and others. This includes Indigenous scholars (Kovach, 2010; Tuhiwai-Smith, 2013) as well as those from Africa (Chilisa, 2011), South America (Anzaldúa, 2003), South Asia (Spivak, 1988), and social work (Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022; Hart, 2009; Ilmi, 2012; Macias, 2022; Murray-Lichtman & Elkassem, 2021).

CR-AC Framework

The following section illustrates how an CR-AC framework was combined to examine Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in this study. CR and AC theories are well suited to theorizing systems of power and oppression, specifically to examine how personal and systemic Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism manifest in society. A CR-AC framework examines how individuals are situated differently across intersections of identity.

CR-AC frameworks aim to theorize systems of power and oppression (here, Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism) and determine their impact (discursive, social, and material) upon racialized and Indigenous people. Combining the two theories provides a powerful tool to examine the racist, colonial, and white supremacist systems that perpetuate and maintain Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Critical race theories examine how raced constructions within societal systems of power and hegemony influence truth, reality, and

knowledge (Bell, 2018), particularly in how these regulate racialized and Indigenous people across intersecting social locations (Crenshaw, 1995). Anticolonial theory likewise examines how orientalist and Eurocentric white colonial ideologies and power structures work to regulate and oppress racialized and Indigenous populations (Dei & Ashgharzadeh, 2001; Said, 1978, 1994).

CR-AC provides a framework for understanding Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism holistically, which is not simply limited to hate crimes, bullying, and instances of racialized violence. These theories interrogate how regimes of knowledge, power, and difference are embedded in society and discourse. For example, CR-AC can be used to examine how personal and systemic Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism manifest in social practices, policies, and political and media discourses. The CR-AC framework provides theorizing on how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism occurs in both subtle and explicit ways. Systems of power and oppression such as whiteness, white supremacy, race, racism, racialization, coloniality and orientalism can be articulated in society subtly and continue unimpeded. Examining the impact of these on the experiences of youth will expose the harmful ways these inform and maintain Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

CR-AC frameworks are guided by racialized and Indigenous people's worldviews and knowledge (Bell, 2018; Crenshaw, 1995; Fanon, 1967a, Said, 1978, 1994). CR and AC offer a realist and materialist understanding of the disparate social and corporeal impacts of racism and coloniality on people of colour (Bell, 2018; Dei & Ashgharzadeh, 2001). Both theories align in their assertions of the saliency of "race, racism, white supremacy, and coloniality in social reality. They examine how racial hierarchies, systems of hegemony, and power vary contextually, based on changing systems of discourse, images, social teachings, and attitudes.

Although these are contingent, they must be a starting point to unpacking regimes of truth and reality" (Bell, 2018; Crenshaw, 1995; Dei & Ashgharzadeh, 2001; Said, 1978, 1994).

CR-AC is used to understand how individuals are situated differently across intersections of identity within the structures of power that govern them and how they navigate, cope with, and resist these forms of oppression. These systems of oppression interconnect through positions such as gender identity, sexuality, race, religion, and culture, aligning with critical materialist paradigms that examine how systems of power (e.g., racism, coloniality) are historically, contextually, socially, and materially situated. By examining social and structural oppression through people's lived experiences, this knowledge production can be used to critique the status quo and lead to change, activism, and liberation.

Critical race and anticolonial theories and related tenets will be amalgamated for this study to examine how whiteness, white supremacy, race, racism, racialization, coloniality, orientalism, and Othering inform and maintain contemporary contexts of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, and how this is understood and experienced by Muslim youth across intersecting identities.

CR-AC Tenets

This section presents the tenets that were used to examine Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through the lenses of Muslim youth. I first introduce the concepts of *lived experience* and *intersectionality* to centre the narratives of Muslim youth across social locations and specifically to examine how social location informs discursive, social, and material experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Then, I explore how racist ideology, race, racism, and racialization work through the hegemonic systems of *whiteness* and *white supremacy* to produce raced constructions of Muslims and Islam, along with the ways in which *coloniality and*

orientalism position white Eurocentric ways of knowing as superior and Muslims and Islam as inferior.

These concepts help in examining how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism operates in, regulates, and impacts the lived experiences of Muslim youth.

Lived Experience and Intersectionality

The CR concepts of *lived experience* and *intersectionality* were used to centre the narratives of Muslim youth across a variety of social locations. Lived experience is an approach used to illuminate the realities of the oppressed whose voices are silenced. This tenet calls for centring people's experiences and local knowledge in analyzing oppression for emancipatory action (Crenshaw, 1995; Bell, 2018; Delgado & Stefanic, 2017). Intersectionality[18] is an analytical tool used to understand how an individual's social location in society can determine multiple factors of advantage or disadvantage through intersecting categories of race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, class, and ability (Crenshaw, 1995).

While lived experience and intersectionality are CR concepts, AC theory aids us in understanding these concepts as well. Both theories examine the importance of resisting the violence of racism, white supremacy, and coloniality by centring the lived experiences of racialized and Indigenous people (Bell, 2018; Chilisa, 2011; Kovach, 2009; Tuhiwai-Smith, 2013). Both theories specifically examine how the discursive, social, and material implications of racism, white supremacy, and coloniality reproduce and constitute bodies as subjects and agents (Bell, 2018; Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001). Through counternarratives, lived experience is elevated in research, scholarship, and activism to challenge racial and colonial violence and

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[18] Introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), the term illustrates how the experiences of women of colour, particularly Black women, with racism and sexism were being obscured by treating race and sex discrimination as separate issues.

expose white dominance (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001). Although AC theories call for an examination of how systems of power, privilege, and oppression operate to produce inferior/superior status shaped by social location, CR theory includes a tool (intersectionality) to explicitly examine these layers of identity.

Lived experience and intersectionality were used to examine the discursive, social, and material formulations of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the lives of Muslim youth.

The *discursive implications* were examined through youths' reflections on the impact these forms of discrimination have had on their lives—specifically, how their essentialized intersectional identities inform their social realities and the corresponding material outcomes, in which Muslims and Islam are inferior subjectivities. The *social formulations* were used to examine this form of discrimination in schools, community spaces, among peers, and while consuming social and popular media such as film, television, and news.

The *material implications* were examined to provide evidence that Islamophobia and anti-Muslim exist in their lives and manifest in multiple forms and across social locations and identities like race, ethnicity, gender identity, and religious dress. As Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism permeate dominant society, centring Muslim youth lived experience, narratives, and stories allows this study to examine how these persistent forms of discrimination may pose barriers in their lives.

Whiteness/White Supremacy

Whiteness and white supremacy are hegemonic systems that were focused on to examine Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in this study. Whiteness is a dominant social location within society, while *white supremacy* is a racist ideology and worldview that positions whiteness as superior. It normalizes the idea that white people, beliefs, culture, and knowledge

are inherently superior to other racial groups (Bell, 2018; Crenshaw, 1995; Omi & Winant, 1994), and this is supported by racism and coloniality. Each of these are endemic, invisibly entrenched within systems of power in society.

CR and AC theories both offer nuanced examinations of whiteness and white supremacy. CR theory analyzes how whiteness is an endemic, normalized, and entrenched system of power in society (Bell, 2018; Delgado & Stefanic, 2017), while AC theory explores how white Eurocentric supremacy asserts *positional superiority* to mobilize its worldview and dominance through colonial and imperialist exploitation of communities of colour (Dei, 2010; Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001; Fanon, 1952; Maldonado-Torres, 2007, Memmi, 1969; Spivak, 1988). Both theories propose that whiteness, white supremacy, and Eurocentrism are not just ways of thinking, but they extend to how systems and institutions are structured to uphold and institutionalize this racism and white dominance through historic and modern legislation and societal conditioning (Bell, 2018; Delgado & Stefanic, 2017; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Said, 1981, 1993). In fact, Grosfoguel (2016) asserts that positional superiority remains a constant feature in contemporary Euro-Western societies, where white, male, heterosexual, able-bodied, and Christian identities are privileged over those who do not hold these social locations. This points to the importance examining how these systems of hegemony inform and maintain Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Whiteness and white supremacist ideology were examined in the lives of Muslim youth in this study, specifically how these hegemonic systems operationalize and maintain Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism and situate and position Muslims and Islam in society. Muslim youth were asked if and how whiteness and white supremacy inform and shape Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism and how this plays out through their own experiences.

These narratives were used to determine how white supremacist rhetoric and ideology construct ideas, stereotypes, and harmful essentializations surrounding Muslims and Islam. Through exploring the harmful effects of these systems of oppression and experiences in their lives, the Muslim youths' narratives can be a pedagogical tool to examine how whiteness and white supremacy inform and maintain Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Racial Realism and Racialization

I will analyze *racial realism* and *racialization* through a CR framework to understand how raced constructions inform Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in this study. Racial realism recognizes although race is socially constructed, it is used ideologically to operationalize racism. Racism is an ideological belief that places one race over another; is firmly situated in social structures and institutions and lives beyond personal hatred (Bell, 2018; Crenshaw, 1995; Delgado & Stefanic, 2017; Omi & Winant, 2014). Racialization is a process where people and/or groups are essentialized based on phenotypic characteristics such as ethnicity, religion, or culture. Hegemonic systems of power can racialize people differently based on their intersections of race, gender, sexuality, class, and ability (Crenshaw, 1995; Omi & Winant, 2014).

While racial realism and racialization are CR concepts, AC theorists aid us in understanding these as well. Racial realism recognizes that although *race* is a socially and ideologically situated construct, it is maintained in society by systems of white-over-colour dominance and racial superiority (Bell, 2018; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Razack, 2008). CR and AC theories recognize racism as personal, systemic, and institutionalized through acts of power over marginalized racial groups through mechanisms such as whiteness and coloniality (Bell, 2018 Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Razack, 2008). CR and AC also assert that racism lives beyond personal hatred for persons of colour and is enacted through common and ordinary

occurrences in society, making it difficult to address or irradicate because it is not acknowledged (Bell, 2018; Crenshaw, 1995; Maldonado-Torres, 2007).

Although AC discusses race, race thinking, and race making (Dei, 2001; Razack, 2008), CR provides an explicit concept, *racialization*, to examine how this occurs across difference and social location (Bell, 2018 Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). For example, several anti/postcolonial theorists describe how race thinking as an ideology produces racist, sexist, and colonial subjugation and criminalization (Dei, 2001; Razack, 2008). CR explicitly takes up the term *racialization*[19] to discuss how people are perceived differently not only based upon race, but also gender, sexuality, class, ability, dress, religion, and immigration status (Bell, 2016; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

As stated previously, *anti-Muslim racism* is a form of racism against Muslims or those perceived to be Muslim that works to essentialize subjectivities of "Muslimness" through processes of race, racism, and racialization so as to differentiate and subjugate Muslims and Islam (Meer, 2013; Meer & Modood, 2010). As critical scholars of anti-Muslim racism assert, we must understand the processes of racialization and raced constructions of Muslims and Islam to more fully grasp how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism are enacted. In what follows, I will integrate notions of race, racism, racial realism, and processes of racialization as systems of classification and difference with Muslim youths' understandings of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

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[19] Robert Miles (1989) defined the social production of race through the term *racialization*, "a representational process whereby social significance is attached to certain biological (usually phenotypical) human features, on the basis of which those people possessing those characteristics are designated as a distinct collectivity" (p. 74).

In this study youths were asked if and how race and racism inform what they know about Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism and how this may affect their own experiences—specifically, to examine how Muslim youth are racialized across bodily markers of identity. As noted previously, other communities of colour, like Sikhs, face anti-Muslim racism, as they are often identified as Muslims based on their religious dress. This study examined how religious dress, head coverings, and other markers of Muslimness influenced youths' experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Coloniality and Orientalism

I will employ notions of coloniality and orientalism in examining contemporary patterns of positioning white Eurocentric ways of knowing as superior while situating racialized populations as inferior, barbaric, and Other, in addition to how these systems characterize and inform Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in this study. *Coloniality* refers to the enduring patterns of Eurocentric power and practices of colonialism that are embedded in contemporary society, defining culture and knowledge production beyond the colonialism of the past (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). *Orientalism*, a concept introduced by Edward Said (1979), is a style of thought and academic discipline based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction between the east and the west. As a tool for Eurocentric domination, white male scholars distinguished civilizations of the enlightened west (the Occident) from the barbaric non-Western Other (the Orient). Other/Othering occurs through the process of positioning individuals, groups, and civilizations as atheoretical and subordinate. This process is a tool of historical and contemporary coloniality and orientalism whereby the colonial subject is constructed as the Other (Spivak, 1988).

Although coloniality and orientalism are AC terms used to describe hegemonic systems that regulate and subordinate Muslims and Islam both historically and contemporarily, CR theory also examines how colonial and racist ideologies are produced in society. CR and AC theories recognize that through racism and presuppositions of conflict, racialized and Indigenous populations' cultural and ideological traditions are positioned against white European thought. Although CR does examine colonialism and its practices rooted in racism and white Eurocentrism, AC theories explicitly describe how these are enacted against Muslims and Islam. For example, coloniality and orientalism in philosophy have contributed to the evolution of Islamophobic discourse (Allen, 2010; Beydoun, 2018, Said, 1978), including essentialized notions of Islam as an inherently violent religion and a militant cult (Allen, 2010). According to Said (1979), this mindset is believed to have laid the foundations for orientalism, which has now taken up a new form within academic spaces, society, and media. Muslims are depicted as a monolithic group and Islam is assumed to be ideologically incompatible with democratic values (Kumar, 2012).

As stated previously, Islamophobia refers to the discursive and ideological instruments that perpetuate colonial, orientalist, and culturally racist discourse that essentializes Muslims and Islam as barbaric, inferior and the Other. Therefore, I examined Muslim youth narratives to explore how these forms of oppression manifest in their understandings and experiences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. As critical scholars of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism suggest, we must understand the processes of coloniality, orientalism, and Othering in the construction of Muslims and Islam to more fully grasp how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism are enacted and how coloniality, orientalism and Othering contribute to stereotypes, tropes, and harmful assumptions about Muslims and Islam in discourse and society. In addition

to Muslim youth sharing their own personal experiences of being Othered through orientalist and colonial notions about their religion and Muslim social location, their narratives can be used as a pedagogical tool to determine how contemporary coloniality and orientalism shape Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

The above concepts may illuminate how lived experiences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism among Muslim youth across intersections of social locations have been characterized and perpetuated by whiteness/white supremacy, race, racism, racialization, orientalism, and coloniality. This highlights the importance of incorporating CR and AC concepts to analyze cultural meanings, discourse, and structural outcomes that oppress and subjugate Muslims and Islam and inform and maintain Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Muslim youth must be given the opportunity to engage in theorizing and examining how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism impacts their lives in their own words and experiences. As stated previously, Muslims in Canada, including youth, are experiencing increasing levels of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Youth knowledge on the topic and their everyday experiences can help us to understand this form of oppression from their vantage point.

Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter I outlined the theoretical framework and concepts that were used to inform my examination of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through the lenses of Muslim youth. I conceptualized Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism and then located the origins of my choice of theorizing through my social location and philosophical orientation. Critical race (CR) and anticolonial (AC) theories were introduced to provide a critical lens for theorizing systems of power and oppression that characterize personal and systemic Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Employing the CR-AC concepts of *whiteness, white supremacy, racial realism,*

racialization, coloniality, and *orientalism* allows a more complex and nuanced reading into how Muslim youth understand and experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. *Lived experience* and *intersectionality* are used to centre the narratives of Muslim youth across social locations, *whiteness* and *white supremacy* are used to explore racist ideologies, *race, racism*, and *racialization* are to examine raced constructions of Muslims and Islam, and *coloniality and orientalism* positions white Eurocentric ways of knowing as superior and Muslims and Islam as inferior. These concepts affirm the importance of examining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism critically, through Muslim youths' vantage point, and to the importance of using a methodology that incorporates critical theory and centres youths' lived experience. The next chapter will outline the choice of critical ethnography as the methodology best suited for this research.

Chapter 4: Methodology and Research Design

In this chapter I present critical ethnography (CE), the interpretive methodological approach that will be used to examine Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through the lens of Muslim youth in London, Ontario (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2011; Thomas, 1993). I begin by reflecting upon my personal motivations for this study, location as a Muslim community member and youth advocate, my theoretical approach, and ethical commitments in research. Next, I discuss how this research is anchored by a CE approach conceptualized through critical race (CR) and anticolonial (AC) frameworks to examine race, racism, whiteness, and coloniality. Finally, I will then provide an overview of the research design, including the sampling selection, recruitment process, data collection, and analysis procedures. Finally, I will discuss ethical procedures and plans for knowledge mobilization.

Researcher Positionality

In this section I discuss my motivations for this study, location as a Muslim community member and youth advocate, theoretical approach, and ethical commitments in research. As a critical researcher, reflexivity on and during this process is vital in emancipatory and social justice inquiry.

As a Muslim community member, mother of three children, and a woman who wears a hijab, I have been alarmed by the increase of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canada and the impact this has had generally on the youth in my community. My inquiry does not begin in a space of neutrality void of theoretical assumptions. I have had ongoing experiences with racism, white supremacy, coloniality, Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism throughout my life. As a social worker, mentor, advocate, and clinical practitioner within the Muslim community in London, I witness the impact these forms of discrimination have had on the lives of Muslim

youth. In my private practice and my professional and volunteer activities, I have come to know and support many Muslim youth across the city of London. Their experiences, in addition to my own, have motivated me to ask further questions about Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, particularly in the lives of these youth.

Although I locate myself as a member of the broader Muslim community in London with strong connections to youth, I cannot identify as an insider or an outsider. Muslim community and youth come from a diverse array of racial, ethnic, and cultural subgroups within London. As I negotiate my own belonging (or lack thereof) within each of these spaces, I learn from racialized and Indigenous researchers who negotiate similar positionalities as insider and outsider (Badwall, 2016; Chavez, 2008; Macias, 2016). I declare that Muslim communities are a part of me, and I am a part of these communities. I use the term *communities* to reference the collective consciousness among Muslims within the context of endemic Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism locally, nationally, and globally. Working as a researcher within spaces of sameness and difference, there is always the risk of perpetuating essentialized notions of oppression without illuminating the complexities of these across subjectivities and social locations. This has left me to think deeply throughout the research process about how I speak, write, and represent Muslim youth experiences as a collective social phenomenon while honouring the dignity and distinctiveness of their lives.

As an academic, mentor, and leader within the Muslim community I affirm the reality of the power differentials that were active during this research, especially with Muslim youth across a variety of social locations. I recognize my connection to and involvement with London's Muslim community and the relationships that I have with many of the participants may affect the analysis and outcomes of this study. I draw upon constant critical reflexivity throughout this

research to ethically negotiate power relations and my positionality (Murillo, 2004; Noblit et al., 2004). Antiracist, decolonial, and critical researchers stress that constant reflexivity is necessary when working with communities that have been impacted by oppression (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Tuhiwai-Smith, 2013). I take on the responsibility for using the knowledge generated by this study to further truth, justice, and academic activism for Muslim communities. I am situated and implicated in the social, political, and historical context of my potential research, while simultaneously working within/against racist colonial academic discourse and technologies (Murray-Lichtman & Elkassem, 2021).

I affirm that my theoretical and philosophical orientation intersects with my methodological approach (see Chapter 3). I draw upon CR and AC theories to inform my orientation to emancipatory and activist research, as these theories assert the endemic nature of race, racism, whiteness, and coloniality. I furthermore propose that these systems of hegemony work to construct and characterize Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, and I adopt these critical approaches to examine systems of oppression and centre the lived experiences and local knowledge of racialized communities (Bell, 2018; Crenshaw, 1995; Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2000). In affirming Spivak's (1988) notion of declaring my bias and motivation at the onset of this research, as I am already being "seen" as a person who is impartial.

I adopt and integrate CR and AC theories in my research methodology as they challenge notions of the "neutral" or "objective" researcher and affirm the epistemologies of people of colour (Bell, 2018; Crenshaw, 1995; Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2000), entering research through social justice motivations and taking an "activism stance" (Fine, 1994, p. 7) to "resist domestication in research" (Madison, 2011, p. 503). This "activism stance" entails the

researcher taking a clear position to disrupt and interrogate unequal social and institutional ideological structures.

Critical Ethnography

Critical ethnography (CE) (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2011; Thomas, 1993), with its interpretive approach, is the methodology that will be used in this study. Critical ethnography is a subtype of ethnography and often used in the fields of anthropology and sociology. First developed in the early twentieth century, ethnography examines the mental activities, patterns of social organizing, and worldviews of group members (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2011). The literature highlights two main subtypes used by academics: realist and critical ethnography (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2011, Thomas, 1993). Realist ethnography is a traditional approach stating that a researcher must take an objective and neutral stance when studying individuals (Atkinson, 2015; Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2011). Traditional ethnographic research relied on observation and inquiry through claims of neutrality, as well as uncontaminated judgment in data collection and analysis (Atkinson, 2015). Such ethnographic approaches aimed to extract knowledge and describe the patterns of a group's culture through white patriarchal Eurocentric subjectivities (Kovach, 2009; Tuhiwai-Smith, 2013). Critical ethnography emerged in response to the harms committed against racialized and Indigenous communities through seemingly "objective" research endeavours (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2011; Thomas, 1993). CE theorists distinguish traditional from critical approaches by suggesting that "conventional ethnography describes what is; critical ethnography asks what could be" (Thomas, 1993, p. 4).

There are several reasons why CE is an appropriate approach for this research. CE allows the researcher to integrate themselves in the research as an insider and take up a critical approach that can reveal truths around racism, coloniality, and white supremacy (Jamal, 2005; Villenas &

Deyhle 2015). Critical researchers believe there is an explicit relationship between a researcher's assumptions, choice of theory, and the methodology chosen for research (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Madison, 2011). A major feature of CE is the centring of lived experience. CE takes seriously the aims of critical researchers to study the worldviews, behaviours, opinions, and experiences of oppression within a culture-sharing group (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2011; Thomas, 1993), and it affirms the existence of these lived experiences and seeks to understand how these are discursively, socially, and materially constituted, resisted, and understood from the ideological positions of research participants (Madison, 2011). CE is founded upon critical theories that prioritize personal agency, challenging oppression, power, and the status quo, and integrating activism in research (Madison, 2011; Murillo, 2004; Noblit et al., 2004).

The value of CE in conducting research with Muslim populations has been demonstrated in the literature. Similar studies using ethnographic methods situated in critical theory have been used with Muslim populations in sociology, education, and social work (Keshwani, 2021; Khan, 2018; Mac an Ghaill & Haywood, 2015). Mac an Ghaill and Haywood (2015) conducted research on British-born Pakistani and Bangladeshi men to explore their experiences with being Muslim, the racialization of religion, and Islamophobia. They began their study by using materialist and postcolonial frameworks to explain changing cultural conditions. Khan (2018) examined the resistance strategies of LBTQ Muslim women using an interpretive qualitative ethnographic approach situated upon an anticolonial framework. Keshwani (2021) examined the experiences of veiled Muslim women in Australia as they negotiated their identities within the context of increased Islamophobia. These examinations drew upon participants' experiences with Islamophobia with an aim to demystify and disrupt misrepresented identities and the impact that this discrimination has had in their lives.

CE is likewise well suited to my examination of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the lived experiences of Muslim youth in London, Ontario. In this study, I will critically engage with contextually based local meanings of anti-Muslim racism and the complexity of intersectional Muslim youth subjectivities to understand the diverse impacts of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in their lives.

Critical Race and Anticolonial Theories

This research is anchored by a CE approach conceptualized through critical race (CR) and anticolonial (AC) frameworks (Crenshaw, 1995; Dei & Johal, 2005; Fanon, 1952; Memmi, 1969; Said, 1979; Tuhiwai-Smith, 2013). As a critical race and anticolonial researcher, I aim to examine how race, racism, whiteness, and coloniality in theorizing the impacts of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism and using an emancipatory and activist research methodology (Carroll, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Tuhiwai-Smith, 2013). CE, CR, and AC aligned for me, as each approach critically analyzes power structures, systems of oppression, promotes emancipation and resistance, and centres the lived experience of research members (Dei & Johal, 2005; Madison, 2011; Mignolo, 2009; Murillo, 2004). CE, CR, and AC all propose the centering of the voice of those who are oppressed, so that their narratives can serve as a form of resistance to forms of oppression that they or their communities face. Additionally, they each explore how systems of power and oppression impact people across intersectional social locations, through discourses and social and material structures (Bell, 2018; Crenshaw, 1995; Delgado & Stefanic, 2017). CE scholars such as Madison (2011) suggest that these theories should guide the purpose and direction of the study, the questions asked, and the overall methodological process. In other words, methods are not activities performed at random; rather, they are influenced by the theories that inform the research.

Although theory plays a vital role in guiding CE methodology and locating patterns of power and oppression within this culture-sharing group (Jamal, 2005; Mac an Ghaill & Haywood, 2015; Madison, 2011; Miled, 2019), according to Kovach (2009), "critical research can be emancipatory or not depending on where you want to take it" (p. 45). For example, critical researchers who examine class distinctions may not explicitly examine the raced and gendered realms of economic oppression of the working class (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000; Moosa-Mitha, 2005). Similarly, feminist researchers who examine gender issues may not interrogate race, sexuality, and other social locations in their approaches to critical research (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000; Moosa-Mitha, 2005). Critical race, anticolonial, and antiracist feminist theorist argue this type of critical research ignores differences across social locations and overlooks intersecting oppressions (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Shaikh, 2013; Tuhiwai-Smith, 2013). Although the language of racism and colonialism has changed, academia is still entrenched in Euro-Western, colour-blind research methodologies that fail to capture the experience of racialized and colonized communities (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Tuhiwai-Smith, 2013).

As mentioned, CR and AC theories informed the sampling approach, research questions, methods, and analysis in this research. These will be discussed in greater detail in subsequent sections. My research questions theorized how race, racism, coloniality, and white supremacy inform Muslim youths' understandings and experiences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. The sampling approach captured intersectional social locations of Muslim youth and examined how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism are understood and experienced collectively and individually. According to Hill-Collins and Bilge (2020), intersectionality recognizes subjectivity as integral to knowledge production, reconsidering what counts as

knowledge and claims to truth. Muslim youth are living in an age where they are experiencing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism and have the wisdom and capacity to define these terms in their own ways. By centring local knowledge, this research takes up Anzaldúa's (1990) call for people of colour to "transform" the process of theorizing by using the views of racialized participants as valuable sources of knowledge. The analysis of this study will be founded upon their understandings and experiences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism to allow their voices to be part of the discourse on the topic.

Research Design

This section outlines the overall research design, specifically the methods of collection and analysis in this study. I present the research objectives, then detail sample selection and recruitment methods. I will then outline data collection processes, including one-on-one interviews and field note completion, as well as data analysis steps and strategies. Finally, I will present the ethical procedures taken up while conducting this research.

Research Objectives

The overarching aim of this study is to examine *how* Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism are understood, witnessed, and experienced by Muslim youth ages 18 to 25 years across intersectional social locations. I investigate this through four research objectives:

1) Examine how Muslim youth define and understand Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

2) Identify how Muslim youth witness Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across popular discourse.

3) Investigate how Muslim youth experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in their everyday lives.

4) Uncover the impact and coping strategies of Muslim youth as they navigate

Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

The research questions were designed under three general themes—opinions, experiences, and feedback—aimed at fulfilling the above objectives and modelled after the general recommendations of CE theorists Madison (2011) and Patton (1990). Demographic questions were asked, as the goal of the research design was to collect data across categories such as race, gender, ethnicity, and religious dress. Opinion questions were used to elicit participants' convictions, beliefs, and judgments about issues surrounding Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. I asked experience questions to capture how Muslim youth may have encountered Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Feedback questions evoked rich, meaningful, and culturally salient responses, often unanticipated by the research (Madison, 2011; Patton, 1990). All approaches to questioning in this study were used to garner opinions, experiences, and feedback surrounding Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Muslim youths' lives (see Appendix A: Research Instrument).

Sampling

Sampling for this research was conducted via a two-stage approach integrating quota sampling followed by snowball sampling until the desired quota had been reached. Quota sampling occurs when the researcher approaches potential participants based upon their specific characteristics, their location within the population under study, and their ability to answer the research questions. In snowball sampling, potential participants are identified through referral from others in the field (Csiernik & Birnbaum, 2017; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The CR tenet of intersectionality informed the inclusion and exclusion criteria for quota and snowball sampling based upon the desired social locations among the Muslim youth I wished to examine in order to

address the research questions. This meant that characteristics from the population were chosen

on a non-random basis and members of the Muslim youth population did not have an equal

chance of being selected to be a part of the sample. Muslim youth between the ages of 18 and 25,

across gender, race, ethnicity, and religious dress and specifically from Black, South Asian, or

Arab backgrounds living in London, Ontario, were invited to participate in this research. I

excluded anyone outside of the selected age range and those who did not identify as Muslim, a

youth, and from Black, South Asian, or Arab communities. At the outset of the study, my aim

was to recruit a minimum of 18 and up to 30 Muslim youth. Table 4.1 illustrates the initial quota

sampling matrix.

Table 4.1. Initial Quota Sampling Matrix

	Age Range	Male	Female—Hijab	Female—No Hijab
Black Youth	18–25	2	2	2
South Asian Youth	18–25	2	2	2
Arab Youth	18–25	2	2	2

Interview a minimum of 2 in each category for a n=18 up to a maximum of 30.

The above sampling criteria offer a glimpse into the nuanced perspectives of Muslim

youth across social locations. Although there are studies in education, sociology, and other social

sciences that examine intersectional Muslim youth experiences (Bakali, 2016; Miled, 2019;

Watt, 2016; Zine, 2022a), there are very few that exist in social work research (Khan, 2018).

Male youth from different cultural and racial backgrounds were selected to explore the process

of racialization across these social locations. Female youth with and without hijabs were likewise

selected to explore how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism manifested for them across

gender, sex, and intersectional locations of racialization, through cultural and racial backgrounds,

and with religious attire. Although Muslim youth coming from categories of Black, Arab, and South Asian communities are in fact heterogenous, processes of racialization work to essentialize these groups into homogenous categories across race, sex, gender, culture, ethnicity, and religious dress. My study's age range was selected based on the American Psychological Association's (APA's) and Statistics Canada's conceptualizations of youth (APA, 2002; Statistics Canada, 2022c) to acquire insights from participants who are at various intervals of youth development[20] and stages of life.

Recruitment Process

According to CE study approaches, researchers entering the field must think about how to gain access to the culture-sharing group from which they wish to recruit participants. This includes engaging ethically and effectively with community networks and institutions connected with this population (De la Garza, 2013; Madison, 2011). CE theorists use the term "hanging out" to describe situating oneself within these networks to gain access to possible research participants (Madison, 2011). As an active Muslim community member, I locate myself within the community networks and institutions that serve a segment of the Muslim youth population in London, Ontario. I have engaged extensively within Muslim youth circles as a social worker, community educator, and child and youth advocate. I have come to meet and know many Muslim youth across a variety of social locations through youth conferences and workshops held at Muslim institutions and university spaces, events aimed at supporting the mental health and wellness of young people. Therefore, I locate myself as a person who has engaged in deep "hanging out" and immersion within the Muslim community for close to twenty-five years.

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[20] These intervals include youth who recently graduated high school, were completing post-secondary education, and/or entering the workforce.

As part of my entry into the field and conducting research in my own community, I elicited support from several Muslim organizations across the city of London who serve Muslim youth, as I have done in two previous research studies (Elkassem et al., 2018; Elkassem & Csiernik, 2018). The Community Organization Request for Letter of Support (see Appendix G) was sent to the London Muslim Mosque (LMM), the Islamic Centre of Southwest Ontario (ICSO), and the Muslim Resource Centre for Social Support and Integration (MRC). This request outlined the aims of the research, the timeframe for data collection, the data analysis procedures, and the benefits of the overall project. I received letters of support from all three organizations (see Appendices H, I, J); these were attached to the formal ethics application package. These organizations distributed a general email invitation through their broad membership email lists so as to avoid targeting a particular demographic and/or individuals. This email included an email invitation (see Appendix B) and recruitment poster (see Appendix D) for this study. The email invitation and e-poster outlined what participants would be asked to do, the time commitment, how interviews were to be conducted, the overall process of the study, and who to contact if they were interested in participating. A declaration that participating in the study was NOT a requirement of the organizational membership was clearly stated within the email. Youth who heard about the study through these organizations and were interested in participating in the research contacted me via email and text message. Additional participants were recruited through word-of-mouth recommendations from youth who agreed to be in this study.

Prospective participants were emailed research packages that included an information letter and consent form (see Appendix E). This document outlined the objectives and significance of the study, what participants would be required to do, time commitment, and

potential risks and benefits. The invitation clearly indicated that participation in this study was

strictly voluntary and that individuals could withdraw from the research up until one month after

data collection was completed. The invitation also stated that after data analysis began, their

feedback would be integrated in an aggregate form, and it would be difficult for the information

that they provided to be disaggregated from the final analysis. If participants decided to

withdraw during the time allotted, all their interview transcription electronic data (recordings,

transcripts, participant codes, and field notes) associated with their involvement would be deleted

and all hard copy material would be shredded and disposed of.[21] In addition to a list of

counselling supports (see Appendix C), a note that youth could reach out for emotional or

psychological support if needed was included. Youth consent was documented and recorded

through a signed, scanned, and emailed electronic copy. Participants were asked to retain one

copy for themselves and provide the researcher with a second copy. In addition, participants

were asked to verbally declare consent before the beginning of each teleconference interview.

Free and informed consent is one of the founding principles of CE research ethics (Carspecken;

1996; Madison, 2011). Thus, I took special care before they entered the research process to

ensure participants engaged freely and voluntarily with full information about what it meant for

them to take part.

A total of 23 participants were recruited between January 2022 and the end of March

2022. Table 4.2 illustrates the actual number of Muslim youth study participants across race,

gender, ethnicity, culture, and religious dress (hijab). Although I attempted multiple avenues for

snowball sampling to fill all quotas, I was unsuccessful in recruiting Black females who do not

wear the hijab. Although I was able to interview Black female youth and youth who wear a hijab,

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[21] No participant ended up withdrawing from the study.

the unique experiences of Black female youth who don't wear the hijab are not captured in this study, and I hope that future research will address this.

The following table illustrates the final sample of participants recruited for this study.

Table 4.2 Final Quota Sample

	Black Youth	South Asian Youth	Arab Youth
Male	2	1	3
Trans Male[22]	0	1	0
Female—Hijab	6	1	5
Female—No Hijab	0	1	2

Participants (N=23)

Data Collection

One-on-One Interviews

One-on-one interviews were conducted with 23 Muslim youth across intersectional social locations. Interviewing is used in qualitative research to collect experiences, opinions, and meanings of a particular topic from research participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Madison, 2011; Patton, 1990). I chose to conduct one-on-one interviews as opposed to focus groups due to sensitivities and the need for privacy when discussing personal experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Interviews were semi-structured, employing demographic, experience-based, opinion, and open-ended questioning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Madison, 2011; Patton, 1990). Participants were offered two options for the one-on-one interviews and data collection process: in person at my private practice office or online through Zoom video conferencing.[23] All

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[22] This participant self-identified as a transgender male.
[23] Zoom is a collaborative, cloud-based video conferencing service offering secure recording of sessions. It complies with Canadian data protection regulations, including the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) and, locally, the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA).

the youth chose to be interviewed via Zoom for this research. I recorded the individual

interviews, which ranged from 36 to 125 minutes, lasting an average of 70 minutes (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3. Participant Pseudonym and Interview Length

(A–Arab, B–Black, SA–South Asian, F–Female, M–Male, TRANSM–Trans Male, HIJ–Hijab,

NHIJ–No Hijab, Number–Age)

Participant (Pseudonym)	Social Location Code	Interview Length (Minutes)	Participant (Pseudonym)	Social Location Code	Interview Length (Minutes)
Aisha	AFNHIJ18	56	Kenza	BFHIJ20	55
Alia	AFHIJ22	56	Khadijah	BFHIJ20	49
Amira	AFHIJ22	102	Layla	AFNJIJ19	32
Asma	SAHIJ18	111	Malika	AFHIJ18	57
Adam	AM22	47	Mohammed	BM21	36
Dalal	BFHIJ20	45	Nada	BFHIJ22	42
Dania	BFHIJ19	110	Rema	SAFNHIJ23	125
Fatima	AFHIJ20	44	Sami	BM23	109
Ibraheem	AM21	44	Talia	SAFNHIJ24	130
Idrees	AM22	135	Zaineb	SAFHIJ18	41
Iman	BFHIJ25	105	Zayd	SATRANSM23	44
Issa	SAM21	46			

Mean Interview Length: 70 minutes

Muslim youth each received a unique Zoom meeting ID that was password protected to

allow them to join the Zoom interview session. A Canadian dial-in number was provided to

minimize accidental costs to participants. Youth were told that they could choose to stop

recording at any time, answer any questions the researcher asked and/or abstain from answering

any question. Youth were also given the option to turn their camera off during interviews if they

chose. Zoom has the ability to securely record and store sessions without recourse to third-party

software. This feature is particularly important in research where the protection of highly

sensitive data is required. Upon completion, interviews were uploaded to a secure encrypted file

on the researcher's external password-protected hard drive. Pseudonyms and coding were used in

saving transcripts, coding, and analysis to protect participant identities (Csiernik & Birnbaum, 2017). After recording and transcription was complete, each participant received a Word document file of their interview transcription to review to ensure content was accurate and to request the removal of any content they decided they did not wish to share.

Journaling and Reflecting

During the interviews I kept a field journal for personal reflection, reflexivity, theoretical thinking, and the development of new knowledge. I also used it to inform directions for analysis (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2011). Pseudonyms and coding were used in this journal when referring to Muslim youth so as to protect identities. The field journal gave me space to develop deeper reflections on my personal learning and interpersonal dimensions of the research. I reflected on the personal impact of the content, my relationships, and power dynamics that existed with Muslim youth in this inquiry. In my previous experiences working with Muslim children in my community, I found that journaling helped me to understand these dynamics and the emotional impacts of listening to young people discuss their experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. My reflexivity, theoretical thinking, and the development of new knowledge were captured in four categories. "What I know" included general themes presented in the literature review and Muslim youths' reporting on particular topics. "What is new" encompassed comparison of the literature review content and interview content that was new knowledge for me. "Theoretical memos" were created to link critical race and anticolonial principles and themes to what emerged in this research. Finally, "checking in" captured any conversations that I engaged in to affirm that what I was documenting represented participants' expressions and opinions on each topic. This field journal was collected in paper form and was kept in a locked cabinet in my private practice office.

Data Analysis

A thematic analysis of the data was conducted, consistent with CE techniques of categorizing data using systematic division into domains, clusters, and themes and then articulating the connections between these categories (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2011). In this process I drew upon Madison's (2011) categories of coding: 1) compile general domains such as prevalent issues or topics; 2) conduct high-level data analysis to capture abstract ideas related to these general domains into thematic clusters; and 3) collect low-level data that captures more concrete ideas within these thematic clusters. Two main types of data were used in the analysis to develop accounts of participants' understandings of and experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism: transcripts of participant interviews and researcher field notes. Coding and categorizing were influenced by Muslim youth word choices, explanations, and narratives that correlated with tenets of critical race and anticolonial theoretical frameworks. I critically engaged with contextually based local meanings and discursive, social, and material experiences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism to discern the complexity of Muslim youth subjectivities across intersectional identities. I presented and explained the findings considering participants' own interpretations, using their own words as exemplars in the analysis. Six steps were employed in this analytical method:

Step 1: Ensuring accuracy. Step one of analysis began with ensuring transcription accuracy through simultaneously viewing and listening to original recordings from these interviews to capture Muslim youths' vernacular. Muslim youth often used language from Islamic faith perspectives and local meanings that were not accurately transcribed by the Zoom recording technology used for transcription of the interviews. For example, youth who wear the hijab or wanted to refer to someone who wore a hijab would use the term "hijabi." The interview

was then played back a second time while the transcription was read to check for accuracy of the voice-to-text software.

Step 2: Reading and rereading. The next step included immersing myself in the data through reading, rereading, and initial noting upon the transcripts. Through reading and rereading I was able to establish an intimate familiarity with the data. The initial noting of the content included understanding the context of each conversation along with recurring emergent domains youth shared. This practice helped me to gain a taste for the general themes, prevalent understandings, and topics that emerged. During this time, I also noted that their response categories were influenced by the order and topic of each interview question. This helped me to determine how to categorize the emerging domains and next steps in the analysis.

Step 3: Emerging domains. Step three consisted of compiling general categories relevant to the word choices, explanations, and narratives correlated with the research questions and tenets of CR and AC theoretical frameworks (Madison, 2011). Based on interview questions and youth responses, five general domains emerged: "Definitions," "Discourse," "Experience," "Impact," and "Feedback." Each of these general themes was coded in a table containing youth exemplars and dedicated to extrapolating larger themes. Words and phrases related to these themes were categorized and labelled as emergent themes. For example, when a participant was asked to explain their understanding of Islamophobia, anti-Muslim racism, and correlations to race, racism, and white supremacy, the "definitions" theme emerged.

Step 4: Capturing high-level ideas. The next step consisted of capturing and coding high-level, abstract ideas found within each of the general themes (Madison, 2011). These abstract ideas were coded into clusters based on the patterns and higher-order themes within each general theme. I closely examined frequently used word phrases because the more that youth

said something, the greater its potential relevance and impact on the topic. For example, when youth discussed experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, they cited occurrences in school, the wider community, and the workplace as well as how their social locations influenced these experiences. Although each cluster contained some variation based on youths' subjectivities, these phrases offered more information about how oppressions are experienced across social location. For example, Muslim female youth wearing the hijab in this study had different experiences compared to males and to females who do not wear the hijab.

Step 5: Capturing concrete ideas. Step five consisted of collecting low-level data that captures more concrete ideas within clusters found in each of the general domains (Madison, 2011). Interpretation of each required in-depth extrapolating of meanings and experiences of the overarching general domains and high-level ideas. For example, youth discussed how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism impacted (general domain) their "sense of safety," and "sense of belonging" (high-level idea), and because of this, youth feel "all eyes on me" and a "lack of belonging" (concrete idea) in any space they are in. This level of analysis resulted in coding the concrete understanding and experiences of youth, generating ideas and making assertions related to Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Step 6: Search for connections across emergent themes. The above emergent domains, clusters, and categories were coded within a table for analysis. Connections were made within each domain, whereby themes could be related to one another and integrated in a way that linked certain ideas. For example, in the definitions theme, youth defined Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism as distinct and interrelated. Youth defined Islamophobia as an instrument for discourse used to support active anti-Muslim racism in society.

When analysis was complete, separate chapters for each of the four domains emerged. Chapter 5 presents youth knowledge of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Chapter 6 illustrates youths' exposure to Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across media and discourse. Chapter 7 describes insidious and explicit experiences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Finally, in Chapter 8, youth discuss the impact this has had in their lives.

Ethical Procedures

As mentioned, Muslim youth participating in this study received a research package that outlined free and informed consent, the process for participant withdrawal, the benefits and risks of the study, an explanation of anonymity and confidentiality with associated limits, and finally, information on the use, access, retention and storage of research data. I took great care to follow the required steps and precautions to avoid any ethical violations during the research process. However, within the realm of academic spaces, where racism and coloniality exist, I cannot claim that harm did not occur during this study. Indeed, the extraction of lived experience among populations that have experienced oppression comes with difficulty and pain (Razack, 2007; Tuhiwai-Smith, 2013). I did, however, work hard to ensure the least amount of harm was inflicted upon participants and myself during this process. I did not interview anyone with whom I have a professional relationship, specifically, those who were currently accessing therapeutic services through my practices or within the last two years, nor any Muslim youth who was a student enrolled in the School of Social Work at King's University College, where I am an instructor. Before the commencement of this study, I completed the online course for the Canadian Institute for Health Research (CSP-2, 2014) certificate. This research was reviewed and approved by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to follow Memorial University's ethics policy. Before and during the interviews, participants were

directed to contact the chairperson of the ICEHR (at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861) if they had ethical concerns about the research, such as the way they had been treated or on their rights as a participant (see Appendix E: Information Letter and Consent Form).

Benefits and Risks

Benefits and risks were outlined in the research package (see Appendix E: Information Letter and Consent Form) that participants received before commencement of the interviews. Youth were informed that they could benefit emotionally and psychologically by sharing their lived experience and opinions in this study. In my previous experience interviewing children, I have witnessed the cathartic benefit associated with speaking about their experiences through sharing their narratives and reflections within a safe space. In addition, youth were given the opportunity to reflect upon and share what could be done about this issue, specifically to think about advocacy and community-based initiatives to address Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in London, Ontario. Youth were told that an additional secondary benefit of this research is that the information gained has the potential to inform social work practice with Muslim youth, as well as community-based programming and policy surrounding Muslim populations.

Risks were discussed with participants before and after interviews were conducted. Although there were no significant anticipated physical risks associated with participating in this study, there were potential psychological and emotional risks that could arise during and after interviews. Youth were reminded that discussions on this topic may elicit strong feelings, anxiety, and discomfort following the interview, thus requiring ongoing supports. I drew upon my skills in mental health to direct participants towards reflection during interviews and provided additional mental health supports as needed afterwards. Before the commencement of

the interviews, youth were also reminded about the list of counselling supports (Appendix C) they received in their research packages.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

I outlined confidentiality and anonymity measures and limitations (see Appendix E) for participant review and consent before commencing the interviews. The ethical duty of confidentiality meant that all information supplied during the research interview was safeguarded from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure, including participants' identities, personal information, and data. Their names or other identifying information do not appear in any research report or publication. However, this study does include demographic information: social location, gender, age, and ethnic/cultural background. All documents collected for the purpose of research have been anonymized. The interviews were audio recorded (in person or through Zoom) and handwritten notes were taken. Zoom participants needed to turn off their camera if they did not wish to be video recorded. All the data collected from each youth will be safely stored in a locked cabinet and in electronic format on a password-protected computer in my office for a period of 10 years after the completion of the study. After 10 years, the handwritten notes, electronic transcript, and files will be destroyed. During the study, only my supervisor had access to the transcriptions of the interview, but they did not have access to any identifying participant information. Youth were told that although confidentiality would be upheld, their participation in the research would not be anonymous. While collecting and collating the data, each participant's identity was known to the researcher only. Each participant's gender, ethnicity, racialized status, age, and religious dress was identified in this study. Youth were told that although the Muslim community in London is not very small, there is a possibility that participants may tell others within the Muslim community about their role within the study. In

these cases, we will engage in conversations with research participants to mitigate these possible

limits to participant anonymity.

Limits to Confidentiality

Limits to confidentiality were discussed with the youth. Specifically, given my status as a

member of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers, although it is

unlikely that the interviews will elicit such information, I am under legal and ethical obligation to

disclose to third-party authorities if information shared by a participant raises concerns of

significant imminent harm to the participant or harm to others. This may include if someone

discloses a clear risk to an identifiable person or group of persons; if there a risk of serious

bodily harm and/or death; and any overall suspicion of imminent danger. This can also include a

serious disclosure such as talk of suicide, self-harm, harm to others, criminal activity, and

disclosure of imminent harm or legal violations committed against another. In addition to this,

participants were told that Zoom conferencing privacy and security policies[24] outline limits to

confidentiality where data may not be guaranteed in the rare instance, for example, that

government agencies obtain a court order compelling the provider to grant access to specific data

stored on their servers. During the interviews there were no required breaches of confidentiality

arising from my membership in the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service

Workers.

Use, Access, Retention, and Storage of Data

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[24] The privacy and security policy of the third-party hosting data collection and/or storing data can be found at: https://explore.zoom.us/en/privacy/?zcid=1231. Research should strive to comply with the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans (TCPS), as such "in exceptional and compelling circumstances, researchers may be subject to obligations to report information to authorities to protect the health, life or safety of a participant or a third party, a community, or the general population" (*TCPS 2* [2018], 5.1).

Use, access, retention, and storage of data was outlined for research participants. I have full access to the data, and hard copy and electronic materials from interviews were collated, compiled, and transcribed by me alone. During the study, only my PhD supervisor, Dr. Sobia Shaikh, at the School of Social Work, Memorial University, had access to the interview transcriptions; however, Dr. Shaikh did not have access to any participant's identifying information. Most interviews with youth were both audio and video recorded through Zoom and handwritten notes were also taken. However, seven participants chose to turn off their video. The interviews were conducted and stored electronically through Zoom videoconferencing,[25] which is compliant with Canadian data protection regulations. Upon completion, Zoom interviews were uploaded to a shared password-protected external hard drive. After completing the interviews and transcriptions, all personal identifiers of the participants were removed and saved in a separate, password-protected file only accessible to me. A study ID number and pseudonym were assigned to each participant. ID numbers included participants' age, gender, and racialized status. For example, if a participant identifies as an 18-year-old Black female, they were coded as 1BF17 along with associated pseudonyms. During data collection and analysis, all hard copy data, including my field journal, was stored in my office in a locked cabinet. All electronic data was password protected and stored on a hard drive and on my computer. Consent forms were stored separately from data. A single master list containing the code names and the actual names of participants exists on an encrypted and password-protected storage device. As per Memorial University's policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research, all primary data resulting from scholarly

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[25] Zoom videoconferencing is complaint with the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) and, locally, the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA). Further details about this can be located here:
https://explore.zoom.us/docs/doc/PIPEDA_PHIPA%20Canadian%20Public%20Information%20Complia nce%20Guide.pdf.

activity must be retained for a minimum of five years. Data from this study will be retained for up to 10 years as it could be used for future research purposes (e.g., to answer a new research question). All hard copy materials will be digitalized, shredded, and discarded five years after the project is complete. The electronic data will remain on a password-protected hard drive for 10 years after the project is complete. At the end of 10 years, all data will be erased, and the hard drive will be reformatted (if still usable). At this point, Zoom recordings will be securely destroyed and external hard drive files will be permanently deleted.

Knowledge Sharing and Mobilization Plan

After this dissertation is completed, the data will be used for scholarly dissemination, community education, and activism. Capturing the narratives of Muslim youth from my community in concrete form comes with great responsibility. Although this type of project requires an academic writing style, my hope is to draw on sections of the dissertation and present the findings in a style that is thoughtful and accessible to Muslim youth and the surrounding community. The results of this study have been compiled into this final PhD dissertation, in which I have detailed the data collection and analysis processes, the demographic and intersectional nuances among participants, and schematically represented emerging themes. The Findings section elaborates the research and presents exemplary quotes from the participants. The data will also be used to produce journal articles, professional presentations, poster presentations, and other activities related to academic sharing. Before wider sharing and mobilization of the research, I will provide each participant with the final report of the study. The

results of this study along with the final dissertation will be deposited in the Memorial University Research Repository Social Work Thesis Collection.[26]

In keeping with critical and collaborative approaches to research, after the completion of data collection, I will invite Muslim community organizations and research members who wish to participate to join with me in co-constructing a knowledge-sharing and mobilization plan (Maiter et al., 2013; Maiter & Joseph, 2016). I will discuss with collaborators[27] the ways in which the key findings would be used in developing activities to foster intellectual sharing with Muslim organizations and the broader community. This will be an opportunity to apply the findings toward community capacity building, services development, and social work practice. Community-wide workshops, publications, and reports may be developed to share the research findings with the broader community as well as institutions working with Muslim populations. These outcomes may be used to support the Muslim community with their own capacity-building projects, program development, and fundraising endeavours.

Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter I provided an overview of the methodology and research design used in this inquiry. I discussed the rationale for selecting CE as the qualitative methodology for examining anti-Muslim racism in the lived experiences of Muslim youth in Canada. I've outlined the ways in which my methodology integrated the processes of CR and AC theorizing throughout, along with detailing the overall research design, sampling selection, recruitment,

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[26] See https://research.library.mun.ca/view/theses_dept/SchoolSocialWork.html. The archived data on this repository will remain anonymized. Any other publications that emerge from this dissertation will be available and accessible on my academia.edu page: https://mun.academia.edu/SihamElkassem and Research Gate: https://www.researchgate.net/.

[27] The London Muslim Mosque; The Islamic Centre of South Western Ontario; Naseeha Mental Health; the Muslim Resource Centre for Social Support and Integration.

data collection, and steps for analysis. This chapter concluded with a discussion of the ethical

procedures and plans for knowledge mobilization after this project's completion and publication.

CE methodologies, through a critical race and anticolonial lens, are well suited to this research in

examining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through the lens of Muslim youth.

The following chapters will present the findings from this study, specifically how youth

conceptualize Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, witness this in discourse (e.g., media, film),

and experience and cope with this form of discrimination.

Chapter 5: Centring Muslim Youth Knowledge

This chapter centres Muslim youth knowledge by critically engaging with their local understandings of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. The Muslim youth in this study shared similar social patterns, worldviews, and collective experiences, and they are actively engaged in knowledge production about and theorizing of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. As outlined in Chapter 3, this research is guided by CR and AC theory and frameworks, and it aims to examine how systems of power, race, racism, racialization, whiteness, white supremacy, and coloniality inform and characterize Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. This also includes centring youths' lived experiences across intersectional social locations. The findings in this chapter present youth knowledge on this topic at the onset of this study in order to gain a deeper, more nuanced appreciation of these issues from their point of view.

The youth that I spoke with were very knowledgeable and articulate in their comprehension of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, including making direct and indirect connections to systems of oppression such as race, racism, racialization, whiteness and white supremacy, coloniality, and orientalism. They base their analyses upon community conversation, discussion with peers, and lived experiences. Many of the youth have developed a deep sense of awareness of the increase of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the United States and Canada from both the reverberations of the events of September 11, 2001, and, most recently, the local terrorist attack in London, Ontario. Muslim youth across Canada have named and countered Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism as an ongoing reality (Bakali, 2016; NCCM, 2018; Zine, 2022a).

Youth were asked how they understand and define the terms *Islamophobia* and *anti-Muslim racism* and if they believed that whiteness, white supremacy, race, racialization, and

social location influence their understandings of these terms. In the interviews and subsequent analysis, it was clear that youth were most familiar with the term *Islamophobia*. Interestingly, some youth indicated this was the first time they had heard the term *anti-Muslim racism*. Youth also believed that both the social construction of whiteness and white supremacy ideology categorize Muslims and Islam as inferior and are ideological forces that fuel Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Youth clearly identified how constructs of race and processes of racialization were central to their understandings of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Their responses are presented in the following four sections: 1) Youth Understandings: Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Racism; 2) Whiteness and White Supremacist Ideology; 3) Race and the Process of Racialization; and 4) Differential Racialization and Intersectionality. Finally, this chapter ends with a discussion of the overall findings and implications for social work practice, research, and education.

Youth Understandings: Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Racism

This section describes how youth define Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through an exploration of their local meanings, opinions, experiences, and reflection upon events of violence committed against other Muslims. While most of the youth were most familiar with the term *Islamophobia*, reflections on the term *anti-Muslim racism* garnered important conversation on the conceptualizations of both.

Defining Islamophobia: "It's People Being Afraid of, Like, Muslims"

Youth conceptualized Islamophobia as negative narratives, irrational fear, and hatred of Islam and Muslims. For example, in defining and breaking down the term, Asma (SAHIJ18[28])

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[28] (A–Arab, B–Black, SA–South Asian, F–Female, M–Male, TRANSM–Trans Male, HIJ–Hijab, NHIJ–No Hijab, Number–Age).

specifically focused on how "phobia" literally describes fear of Muslims and Islam. Nada (BFHIJ22) believed Islamophobia is a "negative narrative" of Muslims and Islam based on preconceived biases. Zayd (SATRANSM23) added that this can happen to even those who are perceived to be Muslim. This suggests that even those who are perceived as "Muslim" are vulnerable to Islamophobia. Asma, Nada, and Zayd described this by saying:

"It's based off of any other phobia, it's people being afraid of, like, Muslims." (Asma)

"Islamophobia is individual bias that someone might have about Islam, a negative narrative that they have about Islam." (Nada)

"It could also be, like, discrimination against anyone perceived as Muslim as well." (Zayd)

Kenza (BFHIJ20) drew upon her own personal experiences and the violent acts committed against Muslim communities she has heard about across the news to conceptualize Islamophobia. According to her, Islamophobia is enacted through negative behaviours, attitudes, and extreme forms of violence. This violence occurs across a spectrum, from uncomfortable questions, physical aggression, and invading one's personal space to acts of terrorism like the New Zealand and London terrorist attacks. Kenza described this by saying:

"Forms of like physical aggression and, like, actually, you know, invading your personal space, or even worse, you know, situations like the New Zealand mosque shooting or the London attack that happened last year. So, it's, like, a spectrum."

Youth definitions of Islamophobia range across a broad spectrum, from discourse to acts of violence. There were not observable differences between how some youth defined this term and any correlations to their social location, aside from the fact that three of the youth were females who wear a hijab. Some describe it as negative discourse, views, or narratives of Muslims and Islam based on biases and characterizations against this population. Many of them also used the

terms '*active aggression*,' '*discrimination*,' '*prejudice*,' and '*violence*' against Muslims. Others

locate Islamophobia as a psychological state in the form of an irrational fear or hatred of Islam,

and Muslims. This is notable, as their explanations are consistent with Runnymede Trust's

(1997, 2017) and the Bridge Initiative's (2021) definitions, which describe Islamophobia as fear

and hatred of and discrimination against Muslims and Islam. Many youths described how this is

experienced by Muslims or those perceived to be Muslim. This is significant in CR theorizing,

which defines how race is produced socially based on phenotypic characteristics such as dress,

skin colour, ethnicity, and name—thus, racialized populations who are not Muslim are often

perceived as such. This is also consistent with previous research with Sikh populations across

North America having been the victims of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence (Sian,

2014, 2017). Although youth did not use the term *orientalism*, their descriptions collectively and

directly reinforce how Islamophobic discourse in society fuels negative views and attitudes,

which drives feelings of fear and hate. This is also in line with Islamophobia studies theorists

who describe how Islamophobia functions as a discursive instrument of coloniality, orientalism,

and "cultural racism" that places Muslim and Islam in positions of inferiority (Hafez, 2017).

Distinguishing Terms: "When It Comes to Actions … Thoughts and Feelings"

When youth were asked to share their understandings of the term *anti-Muslim racism*, at

least half of the participants indicated this was the first time they had heard the term. This is

significant and may be because *Islamophobia* is the most common term used to describe

discrimination against Muslim and Islam in popular discourse (Hafez, 2017; Razack, 2022).

While half of the youth were most familiar with the term *Islamophobia* and had never really

heard of *anti-Muslim racism*, many resonated with the term and after further reflection they

determined that in fact there is a difference between them. Mohammed (BM21) and Talia

(SAFNHIJ24) indicated that when referring to negative thoughts, feelings, prejudice, and hostility towards Muslims and Islam, they would use the term *Islamophobia*. When describing acts of racism and discrimination towards Muslims because of who they are, they would use *anti-Muslim racism*. They described this in the following way:

> "When it comes to, like, actions, I'll use the first term [*anti-Muslim racism*] and when it comes to more of, you know, just thoughts and feelings, I'll use *Islamophobia*." (Mohammed)

> "*Islamophobia*, sort of, like, describes, like, sort of like prejudice or hostility to, like, Islam, and then kind of perhaps, like, the adherence [to] Islam. Whereas, like, *anti-Muslim racism* could be defined as, like, any act of racism, like, that's directly [toward] the Muslim because they're Muslim." (Talia)

Layla (AFNHIJ19) believed the term *Islamophobia* does not fully capture the active racism and hate that is experienced by people who are victims of racist discrimination and violence just because they are Muslim. She described this by saying: "I feel like *Islamophobia* is not as severe as the other term. Because with Islamophobia, it sounds more like a phobia than, like, actual racism itself."

Rema (SAFNHIJ23) furthered this discussion by noting a distinction between someone who has a fear of Muslims and Islam and those who wish to express racism and hate. She preferred to use the term *anti-Muslim racism* to describe the racist motivations of people who may not necessarily *fear* Muslims and Islam—rather, they may see Muslims as less than and inferior, which may support the justification for dehumanization and violence. She stated: "People who may, like, be racist, not necessarily might, like, have fear or hatred towards religion."

The discussions demonstrated Muslim youths' nuanced understanding of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, and this supports the need to centre their lived experience. When asked how they understand these terms, youth naturally discussed how, for some of them, their conceptualizations are based upon personal experience, what they have seen happening in their community, across Canada and abroad. Their narratives are supported by evidence in the literature demonstrating the pervasiveness and nuanced forms of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across the globe and in Canada (Allen, 2016; Bridge Initiative, 2021; Human Rights Watch, 2022). The discussion above illustrates how youth engaged in critical analysis of the terms *Islamophobia* and *anti-Muslim racism* while exploring how and when each term was most suitable. In comparing the similarities and differences between the terms, youth said that *Islamophobia* is based upon a "fear," "prejudice," and hostility towards Islam as a faith, while *anti-Muslim racism* is racism and discrimination against a person who is Muslim.

Some youth determined that when referring to negative feelings and views towards Muslims in Islam, they would use the term *Islamophobia*, and when describing acts of racism, discrimination and active violence towards Muslims because of who they are, they would use *anti-Muslim racism*. Additionally, some youth took this critical analysis further, believing that the term *Islamophobia* does not capture the "severity" of "what's really going on"—that is, active racism, discrimination, and violence against someone just because they are Muslim. Although the youth did not use the term *orientalism*, their comments and word choices such as 'hostility,' 'fear,' and 'phobia' hint at the anti/postcolonial discursive and ideological conversations in the literature about orientalism and Islamophobia. Whereas the comments and word choices used by the youth, that describe anti-Muslim racism, such as 'active racism,' 'hate,' and 'violence' are more consistent with critical race perspectives.

The illuminating discussion above demonstrates that the word *Islamophobia*, for some, is insufficient to deal with the array of racism, hatred, violence, discrimination, and prejudice experienced by Muslims and directed at Islam. This demonstrates the significant need for a word that moves beyond a feeling, ideology, or attitude and includes a conceptualization of racism and violence. This is consistent with anti-Muslim racism studies scholars who suggest we must move beyond discursive and instrumentalist conceptualization to include critiquing anti-Muslim racism through critical theories of race and racism (Opratko & Müller-Uri, 2016). As outlined in the theory chapter, these theorists express concern that Islamophobia studies focuses heavily on orientalist discourse, individual or societal fear, and phobia against Muslims and Islam in general (Beydoun, 2016, 2018; Hafez, 2017; Meer & Modood, 2019; Opratko & Müller-Uri, 2016). There were some significant differences and similarities in youths' descriptions across social location. Three the youth under the age of 20 believed both terms were interchangeable, those who made a distinction between the two were 20 and above. For example, Asma had never heard the term *anti-Muslim racism*, and she felt that she would use both terms "interchangeably." Similarly, Kenza shared that she would "not make a distinction" between them, while Malika shared that if she came across the topic in discourse, she would also register them as the same. Among the youth who discussed the need for the term *anti-Muslim racism*, no significant pattern across demographics was present, aside from the majority were females who wear a hijab.

Whiteness and White Supremacist Ideology

As youth explored the complexities of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, they were asked if they believed that systems of whiteness and white supremacy ideology serve to maintain these structures of oppression. Youth discussions reflected how they believed Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism are supported by whiteness and white supremacy ideology.

Whiteness and Christianity: "I Can't Help But See the Connection"

Amira (AFHIJ22) believed there is a strong correlation between whiteness, Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism. Amira believed that whiteness is seen as a superior racial social location through logics of white supremacy, "which is better," the "default," and everyone else is deemed inferior (including Muslims). She implies that systems of oppression [racism] cannot function without systems of hegemony [whiteness] in constructing people of colour as racially inferior. She goes on to say:

"I can't help but see the connection between them both … you can't have racism without having some sort of hate towards minorities, because of the idea that the default is white and everyone else [is] just kind of lesser in a way."

Sami (BM23) likewise believed that whiteness and white supremacy have roots in Christianity, and these are what you need to "succeed" in a predominantly white space. He suggests that white Christianity is considered superior by others, and as such Muslims and Islam are seen as inferior and backwards. Sami shared:

"White supremacy does have a lot of roots in Christianity … I feel like all of those are what you need to succeed in, like, a white supremacist space. And anything deviating from that, including religion or especially religion, in a lot of cases, can definitely contribute to that. Because unlike white supremacist–dominated spaces, Islam is going to be seen as kind of, like, an opposite, regardless of the actual similarities between them, just the fact that it is not Christianity."

Dalal (BFHIJ20) described how associations of whiteness with Christianity are harmful to Muslims whose religious beliefs are seen as inferior, as well as racialized populations who are often seen as Muslim even while they are Christian. Their racialized status overshadows their

religious location because their physical characteristics do not place them in a category of whiteness. What is implicit in this message is that in society whiteness is associated with Christianity and vice versa. Dalal believed:

> "It's just kind of promoting the mindset of, like, only white people … only Christians … then it would obviously negatively affect Muslims and, like, South Asians, Arabs, they don't take up the category of whiteness in Christianity."

Youth discussions affirmed the belief that when examining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, one must look for the influence of white and Christian superiority. For them, whiteness as default and normal in society creates white supremacist spaces that will automatically categorize Muslims as Other. Youth furthered this discussion by stating that whiteness is often correlated with Christianity as a default superior religious social location in Western societies, and this places Muslims (across non-white ethnicities) and Islam (as a minority religion) in an inferior social location. Youth discussions described how they believe hegemonic forms of whiteness potentially operationalize and maintain Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

White Supremacy Ideology: "It Almost Goes Hand in Hand"

A critical issue for youth was the influence of white supremacy ideologies and movements in perpetuating and maintaining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. For example, Idrees (AM22) believed that white supremacy ideology goes "hand in hand" with acts of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racism rhetoric and violence. Idrees asserted: "It almost goes hand in hand when I see, like, white supremacy and anti-Muslim racism."

Similarly, Khadijah (BFHIJ20) shared her understanding of white supremacy and how this impacts Muslim populations. For her, white supremacy ideology perpetuates the idea that

white supremacists believe they are "better than everyone else," thus placing Muslim and Islam in categories of inferiority. This translates into acts of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism by those who support these ideas. Khadijah said,

"I think people who are white supremacists just think that they're better than everyone else. And that includes Muslims. So yeah, I think white supremacists just have so much hatred, and it spills into Islamophobia as well. So, I think it's all tied together."

Zaineb (SAFHIJ18) believed that as white supremacy has become more ideologically mainstream and normalized, people and groups in society have become more likely to commit extreme forms of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence. She highlighted how the perpetrators of the terrorist attacks in Quebec and London have both been white males connected to white supremacist groups:

"Well, especially with what happened back in June with N.V.[29] I believe he did, he did commit basically murder of three whole generations. And that was purely out of Islamophobia. That was like a big form of white supremacy."

In the discussion above, youth linked local meanings of whiteness, Christianity, and white supremacy in society to their understandings of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Through exploring their personal experiences, what they've seen within institutions, and in society, they determined that whiteness and white supremacy characterizes and maintains Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. There were not observable differences across youth demographics and narratives, aside from the fact that many of them were females who wear the hijab.

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[29] The name of the person who perpetrated this crime will not be named and has been removed from this document.

Youth described how whiteness, white supremacy, and Christianity are depicted as normal, superior, and default, which situates Muslims and Islam as an inferior racial and faith group. This is significant and supports the examination of youth narratives through CR and AC theorizing of whiteness and white supremacy as outlined in Chapter 3. Both theories discuss how this positional superiority remains a constant feature in contemporary Euro-Western societies, where white, male, heterosexual, able-bodied, and Christian identities are privileged over those who do not hold these social locations. Additionally, their local understandings and experiences have led youth to believe that whiteness and white supremacy ideology and movements help to fuel and maintain Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism within institutions and among politicians and ordinary people. This is consistent with scholars such as Razack (2022) and Zine (2022a), who describe how systems of whiteness underwrite Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. In their view, whiteness and white supremacy has only emboldened people to commit acts of violence.

Race and the Process of Racialization

In exploring definitions of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism throughout the interviews, youth clearly identified through their word choices how constructs of race and processes of racialization were central to their understandings of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Raced Constructions of Muslimness: "It's More Like a Physical, Visible Thing"

Based on their local understandings, lived experiences, and social locations, youth discussed the explicit and implicit assumptions through which Muslims are racialized. Youth word choices such as 'facial features,' 'accent,' and 'skin color,' highlight how these characteristics are used to race Muslims. This informed their comprehension of and experiences

with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism and was evident in the examples they gave and the language they used. Their narratives described how ascriptions of race occur for Muslims, or those perceived as such, based on phenotypic characteristics (e.g., name, dress, facial features, accent). For example, Issa (SAM21), a South Asian male, believed:

"It's more like a physical, visible thing, right? That's the first thing people will see is the colour of your skin, how you talk, if you have different facial features, if you have an accent or not."

Dalal (BFHIJ20) and Alia's (AFHIJ22) discussion—and specifically the language they used to describe these systems of oppression—contributes to understanding raced constructions of Muslimness. They illustrated how raced constructions of Muslimness occur alongside society's endemic racism and normalized white supremacy and Christian centricity. As Dalal and Alia explained:

"You could say that Muslim isn't a race or something, but I definitely think it is because racism and, like, white supremacy obviously kind of favours a certain race, certain religion." (Dalal)

"Islam is a faith. It's almost conflated with race that way, right? Any white person could be Muslim. But you'll never see that. Right? They'll see like a very specific caricature of what a Muslim looks [like]." (Alia)

Nada's (BFHIJ22) comment described how the racialization of Muslimness occurs within a white Christian-dominated society that sees Muslim "difference"—the way one looks or dresses and the colour of one's skin—as inferior. She went on to say that

"Muslims are seen as different because of what they wear and how they look. So, I think, like, people are just, like, categorizing all Muslims into one race. So, you're racialized into a category [by], say, his long beard, maybe the way you dress, the colour of your skin."

Here youth described, based on their experiences, how constructs of race and the racialization of Muslimness occur in society. The most observable demographic similarity among youth in their responses was that most of them were over the age of 20 and were females who wear the hijab. For them, the racialization of Muslimness occurs when subjectivities of Muslimness (e.g., dress, name, accent, skin colour) are ascribed to bodies of those who are and who are not Muslim based on physical and assumed characteristics.

Muslim youth were unanimous in their belief that Muslims are in fact considered a race of people. Through racial constructs of Muslimness, society produces Muslims as a race based on the way one looks and dresses, their skin colour, and even one's name. This is also consistent with anti-Muslim racism studies scholars who propose that Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism work to essentialize subjectivities of "Muslimness" through processes of race, racism, and racialization (Meer, 2013; Meer & Modood; 2010). Although youth did not explicitly name orientalism, it was implicit in their word choices above and narratives that orientalist ideology and discourse positions Muslims and Islam as inferior, Other, and different in society. Youth were consistent in their belief that the racialization of Muslimness occurs within the context of endemic racism towards Muslims and Islam and within whiteness/white supremacy and Christian centricity. This is significant, as CR and AC theorizing calls for an examination of raced and colonial constructions that construct racialized populations as Other (see Chapter 3).

Differential Racialization and Intersectionality

In the following subsections, youth describe how their social locations and physical characteristics, such as racial status, gender identity, dress, and ethnicity, racialize them differently—and in turn, how this influences their experience with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Youth identify how racialization is produced differently based on one's intersectional social location.

Black Females with Hijabs: "A Hated Person in Society"

Black female youth face multiple and overlapping forms of racist discrimination based on their social location, which includes their Black racial status, hijab, and gender. Youth explored how experiences with anti-Black racism, gendered Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism demonstrate their being racialized differently. In a society where white supremacy, anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, anti-Muslim racism, and gender inequity thrive, Black female youth are left most vulnerable to violence, or, as Nada (BFHIJ22) described, become "a hated person in society." As she explained:

"I guess if someone's, like, really racist towards Black people, and they also hate Islam, like, I'm like the perfect target for them. Like, no identity works out. Like, even being a female, like, all three of them together just like makes me, like, a hated person in society."

While discussing differential racialization based on their social location, Khadijah (BFHIJ20), a Black female who wears a hijab, discussed how she was not always sure where the discrimination she was facing was coming from. During this reflection she asked: was it because I am Black or was it because I wear a hijab? After further reflection, she determined that the hijab intensified or strongly contributed to the discrimination she experienced. As she explained:

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"The focus of any discrimination I face is mainly because of my hijab and because I'm

Muslim. But before I wore hijab, like, in elementary school, it was had nothing to do with the

fact that I was Muslim. I'd get more racism because of being Black. So, the texture of my hair

and my skin colour was the main point. And now it's because of my hijab."

Dania (BFHIJ19) understood that her racial and religious status make her vulnerable to

anti-Black racism, gendered Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism. She discussed how being

female makes you vulnerable no matter which other minority group you are from. Being visibly

Muslim, Black, and female makes you an even easier target for anti-Black racism, gendered

Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism. Dania described this by saying:

"Being Black and being Muslim, I think it's, like, easy to expect stuff. If someone looks at me

weird or, like, someone just stares at me a little too long, or I walk into a store … It's not

anything that I don't expect. Before I was visibly Muslim, I was just, like, a Black girl. I know

people don't like Muslims, either. To me, like, it doesn't even matter … you're saying it

about one like you're saying about the other, because it stems from the same thing. It's a form

of racism either way."

In this subsection's discussion, Black females who wear a hijab and their male

counterparts described how differential racialization across race, gender, and religious status

leaves them more vulnerable to anti-Black racism, gendered Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim

racism. The most observable difference in this study is that Black male youth and Black female

youth who wear the hijab identified anti-Black racism as a significant intensifier to their

experience with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Black females who wear a hijab

experienced some of the most intense forms of discrimination among the group, and this is

consistent with wider evidence that Black female hijabis are disproportionately targeted in anti-

Black racist, Islamophobic, and anti-Muslim racist attacks while walking, shopping, and going to school (see Chapter 2: Literature Review). Accordingly, in CR and AC theorizing of the race logics of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, these forms of discrimination work to racialize Black Muslim females who wear a hijab differently, specifically across their gender, skin colour, and religious dress (hijab). Their Muslimness is intensified by their race and gender.

South Asian and Arab Females with Hijab: "You're Just So Visible"

In this section South Asian and Arab females who wear the hijab have been grouped together as there were very similar experiences based upon their ethnic or cultural backgrounds. This was different and distinct from the unique experiences that Black female youth, discussed above, have with race and gender in a society where anti-Black racism is an endemic feature. South Asian and Arab females discussed how their hijab, ethnicity, and cultural dress influenced how they are racialized in society and how this affected their experiences with gender inequity, anti-Arab racism, anti-South Asian racism, gendered Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism. For example, Alia discussed how the hijab is the largest contributing factor to being racialized as Muslim. Nada described how being identifiably Muslim has made her more vulnerable to Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence. The bulk of their experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism were perceived to be because they are female and wear a hijab. Alia and Nada described this by saying:

"I mean, being a hijabi is, like, the first thing that comes to mind, I think, obviously, when we talk about Islamophobia, because, like, you're just so visible, it's like, every single day, we open the door, we leave the house, like, we're basically choosing to be identified as Muslim." (Alia, AFHIJ22)

In addition to ethnicity and aside from the hijab, Asma described how cultural dress like traditional Pakistani clothing contributes to further racialization as Muslim and Other. Asma discussed how this was particularly salient in her consciousness after the violent events in London, Ontario, on June 6. She believed that this family was targeted because female family members were wearing hijabs and traditional Pakistani clothing. Alia (AFHIJ22) described this by saying:

"I think it didn't [matter] very much until again, June 6, because they were Pakistani. But now it was like, well, even if somebody is wearing like, like, brown clothes, like traditional clothing, which is what they were wearing, it's even more obvious, I guess that they're Muslim."

In the discussion, youth shared their local comprehension of differential racialization among South Asian and Arab females who wear a hijab. In this study, a total of nine youth identified as South Asian and Arab females, and many of them wear a hijab. In exploring how they are racialized differently, they demonstrated their awareness of gender inequity, anti-Arab racism, anti-South Asian racism, gendered Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism. Youth discussed how wearing a hijab racializes them automatically as Muslim, making them more vulnerable to Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence, as compared to, for example, Muslim men, or females who are white passing and are not identifiably Muslim. Their ethnicity and cultural dress racializes them further, leaving them vulnerable to anti-South Asian racism, anti-Arab racism, gendered Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism. This is also significant in CR and AC theorizing of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, as these forms of discrimination racialize South Asian and Arab Muslim females who wear a hijab and those who do not, across gender, skin colour, and ethnicity. Sadly, youth recognized how differential racialization

intensifies their experiences of oppression, and this has contributed to anticipation of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in society.

Black Males: "People Always See My Blackness First"

Black Muslim males likewise experience multiple and overlapping forms of racist discrimination based on how their race and religious status. Black youth often experienced anti-Black racism before experiencing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. This is because they are not often racialized as Muslim unless they disclose their religious affiliation.

Sami (BM23) and Mohammed (BM21), who identify as Black males, discussed how they are always racialized as Black and not often ascribed Muslimness. Although this does not shield them from experiencing anti-Black racism, they are not usually vulnerable to Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism unless they share their religious status. Their religious status is often superseded by their racial status. Sami and Mohammed described this by saying:

"I wouldn't say I am "visibly" Muslim. People always see my Blackness first, right? Any sort of issues with racism or discrimination I've had is because I am Black." (Sami, BM23)

I think, because mostly, like, Caucasian people can't tell where I am from. People said, "Oh, are you from the Caribbean? Are you from Africa? Are you Black Canadian? For, like, our Black female sisters who choose to wear the headscarf, you can really tell their personal colour and [that they're] Muslim as well. For me, I kind of have just, you know, camouflage where the white-dominant society people don't know I'm Muslim unless I really tell them." (Mohammed, BM21)

Although he is not always identified as Muslim, Sami recognized how Black Muslim youth, particularly females who wear a hijab, are "more vulnerable in society." Sami discussed

the crucial role a white-dominant society plays in this process, specifically through systems of racial positioning. Sami (BM23) shared:

"Some people have that double impact, for example, being, you know, Black and Muslim, and it makes them more vulnerable in society. You're kind of facing, you know, two levels of different discrimination and a dominant white society, kind of plays, yeah, plays a crucial role, and how your life is right."

Through exploring their experiences versus those of their hijabi friends, sisters, and mothers' Black male youth demonstrated their understanding of how they are racialized differently. Although not often racialized as Muslim, their Blackness contributes intensely to their experiences with racism. For these youth, they experienced being racialized as Black in society because of their skin colour; interestingly, they did not share that their names have racialized them as Muslim. In fact, one Black youth described how people often assume he is Caribbean or African, which is interesting because there are many people who are Muslim, Canadian, Caribbean, and African. This highlights the rigid construction of Muslimness in our society, and it seems that this does not include the intersectionality and diversity of Muslims that exist globally. These youth narratives are significant in CR and AC theorizing of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. It seems that Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism works to racialize Black Muslim males differently. In comparing the experiences of Black females who wear a hijab above, it seems that phenotypic characteristics of Muslimness (among Black males) such as name, and skin colour are superseded by raced constructions of Blackness and anti-Black racism in society. Indeed, anti-Black racism, either for male or females, is an intensifier in both cases. This is consistent with the literature that demonstrates that Black Muslims in Canada face discrimination at the intersections of race, ethnicity, culture, sex, gender, and religion (Abdela,

2015; Abdurraqib, 2009; Jackson-Best, 2019; Mohamed, 2017; Mugabo, 2016); anti-Black racism in Canada is the most significant form of discrimination by race in society (Statistics Canada, 2022b).

Arab and South Asian Males: "If I Had the Skullcap … I'm More Visibly Muslim"

Arab and South Asian males discussed how their ethnicity and sometimes religious dress influenced how they are racialized in society, often experiencing anti-Arab racism and/or anti-South Asian racism before facing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Idrees, who is Arab, and Issa, who is Pakistani, discussed how they are often not racialized as Muslim but have more so experienced being racialized based on their skin colour and ethnic backgrounds. This has led to experiences with anti-Arab racism and anti-South Asian racism—and, specifically for Idrees, anti-Palestinian racism. However, they noted that they would be racialized differently if they wore a skullcap (Islamic cultural hat) or grew a long beard, as these are markers of Muslimness. Idrees and Issa described this by saying:

"Um, it does tie together, kind of, hand in hand. People just tend to think of Palestinians as the aggressors, and terrorists, right, and then it also helps to inform being a Muslim … it would only intensify that thought, it's just a multiplier." (Idrees, AM22)

"If I was able to grow my beard out longer [or] if I had the skullcap and I'm more visibly Muslim, that would get, you know, more experience of it all." (Issa, SAM21)

Although Adam had experienced anti-Palestinian aggression, he had not experienced Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Like Sami and Mohammed, he recognized the differential intensity of racialization that occurs for Muslim females who wear a hijab. Adam shared that because of this he is thankful that his mother does not wear a hijab because he knows she would experience gendered Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. As Adam (AM22) described this:

"I don't like to say but, like, I feel lucky that my mom's not wearing hijab, which sucks to say, it sucks to say in my eyes, because, like, she shouldn't be [a target of racism] if she wants to wear hijab, she shouldn't be hated on because she wears a hijab."

Similar to their Black male peers, Arab and South Asian male youth explored differential racialization through their experiences and compared these to the experiences of their hijabi friends, sisters, and mothers. They discussed how their Arab and South Asian ethnicity and religious status influenced how they are racialized in society. Although they had not had experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, they believed if they took on markers of Muslimness, such as wearing a skullcap and growing a long beard, this would leave them vulnerable to these forms of oppression. This is consistent with more general Muslim male experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, which include being raced as Muslim based cultural garments, beards, and name (see Literature Review chapter). However, these youth did not discuss their skin colour; rather, they mentioned the racist impact from others after disclosing their ethnic background. Although they did not explicitly name orientalism, their narratives relate to CR and AC theorizing on racist and colonial logics in society that work to racialize non-white populations as Other based on phenotypic characteristics of ethnicity and possibly religious dress. Adam discussed how the hijab served as a marker for racialization of Muslimness. Although he is thankful that his mother doesn't wear a hijab because of the Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism she would experience, he asserted that things shouldn't be that way. Implicit in his message is that we should not be living in a society where females who wear a hijab are scared to express their religious practice—but the reality is that if they do, it leaves them vulnerable to Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racism discrimination and violence.

South Asian and Arab Females Who are Non-Hijabi: "Being Brown in a White Society"

South Asian and Arab females who do not wear the hijab discussed how their ethnicity and religious status (when disclosed) influenced how they are differentially racialized in society. They shared that they experience anti-Arab racism and/or anti-South Asian racism before experiencing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Talia described how she has been implicitly Othered for being Brown and a religious person in a predominantly white secular society. Zaineb described her experiences with anti-Brown and anti-Pakistani racism. Her skin colour and ethnicity mark her as Other, leaving her vulnerable to derogatory statements and racist violence. Talia and Zaineb shared the following:

"When it comes to discrimination or feeling like an outsider, there's kind of been two accesses of that—for me, one is, like, being brown in a white society, and then the other is being a religious person in a secular society." (Talia, SAFNHIJ24)

"I've had a lot of like comments made about my skin colour and how my skin colour looks dirty. And then I am Pakistani. So, the term "Paki," it's a very derogatory term. I've seen comments made towards other people, where racist people will call them Paki, even though they're not Pakistani—like, they'll be Indian." (Zaineb, SAFHIJ18)

Layla, who identifies as Arab, shared how although she has an Arab name, she is not often racialized as Arab or Muslim. Like the Black, South Asian, and Arab male youth, she affirmed the automatic ascription of Muslimness to the female hijabi body and the intensity of their experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism compared to hers. Layla (AFNHIJ19) said:

"I think I'm definitely lucky. Because although I have an Arab name, I don't think I [have] experienced nearly as much Islamophobia as people that are visibly Muslim. And I think that

that's helped me a lot to get through, like, [and] not experience things throughout my life so far."

Alia reflected upon how whiteness as a superior social location influences how Muslims (female and male) who are white passing are impacted by Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Alia, a female who wears a hijab, discussed how, compared to her, her fiancé, who is white passing, does not experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism because society classifies him as white. Alia (AFHIJ22) believed:

"If you're a woman who has like blue eyes and you're not wearing a hijab, you actually get to pass as a white person and you don't usually face racism. My fiancé, he has, like, green eyes, he's, like, white looking. And then, like, I wear hijab, and it's like, we have completely different experiences, just because people don't look at him and, like, classify him as, like, Muslim. Because people assume that, like, if you're Muslim, then you're a different race."

As the youths' narratives show, although Arab and South Asian female youth did not have experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, South Asian females discussed how markers of ethnicity, skin colour, Brownness, and Pakistani social location have left them vulnerable to racism and aggression. In terms of CR and AC theorizing, it demonstrates how racist colonial orientalist logics have shaped these Muslim youth experiences with racialization differently. Being racialized as Muslim for a female is more likely to occur when you wear a hijab. What is significant among these female youth is that they were not racialized as Muslim until they disclosed that they were from this faith. Sometimes just being an Arab automatically racializes you as Muslim; this may be an example of how entrenched orientalism situates Arabness and Muslimness as synonymous, although many Arabs are in fact not Muslim. For example, an Arab female described how disclosing her Arab social location has led to her being

automatically racialized as Muslim, while another Arab female shared how, even though she has an Arab name, she is not racialized as Muslim because she doesn't wear a hijab.

These youths' narratives also reveal a different reward system, as one, Alia, does not wear a hijab and lives in closer proximity of whiteness. What is most interesting is that two females have a lighter skin colour compared to the South Asian females in this study, leaving them less vulnerable to racial discrimination. Another female youth who wears a hijab discussed how Muslims who are white passing (male and female) and do not wear the hijab have fewer experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism unless they disclose their faith; yet those who are white, female, and wear a hijab do not escape Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Such discriminatory shifts indicate to the youth that religious status or Muslimness overshadows whiteness. It also highlights how skin colour as a marker of social location racializes the female body even when one is not wearing a hijab. This reinforces the youths' characterizations of differential racialization, with varied experiences of privilege and oppression in society across intersectional social location. Overall, it is apparent that these Muslim female youths' daily choices on how much of themselves they may want to reveal in public influence their experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. However, Muslim females who wear a hijab cannot afford to do the same.

Discussion

In the context of the present study, the findings of this chapter illustrated Muslim youth understandings of Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism through examining the hegemonic systems of whiteness and white supremacy, race, racism, and racialization, and coloniality and orientalism. Significantly, youth spoke about the distinct difference between the two terms and correlations with whiteness/white supremacy, race, racialization, and social location. The

findings here support the claims set out in this study—that local meanings and worldviews of Muslim youth help to expand our definitions of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism and often reflect scholarly theorizing through critical race and anticolonial paradigms and tenets. Muslim youth conceptualizations were consistent with academic literature, revealed new insights and should be included in discussions on Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. This is a distinct feature of this study, as literature examining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism with Muslim youth does not explicitly focus upon how youth define these terms, in their own words, based on their local knowledge and lived experiences.

Youth defined Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism by exploring their local meanings, opinions, experiences, as well as exposure to violence committed against other Muslims in their community and across the globe. Youth were most familiar with the term *Islamophobia,* as it is most commonly used in discourse to describe discrimination against Muslims and Islam (Hafez, 2017; Razack, 2022). *Islamophobia* was broadly defined—from being an irrational fear, hatred, and negative attitudes fuelled by discourse to discrimination and violence against Muslims and Islam. This is notable, since these definitions are consistent with current scholarly conceptualizations of the term (Bridge Initiative, 2021; Runnymede Trust, 1997) and demonstrates why some authors who critique the term point to its wide range and often its conceptual ambiguity (Meer & Modood, 2019; Razack, 2022). Many of their narratives describe how Islamophobia functions as an instrument of colonialism, orientalism, imperialism, and cultural racism that seeks to place Muslim and Islam in positions of inferiority. This aligns with theorists who describe Islamophobia as an instrument delivered through racist, orientalist discourse, messages, and ideologies (Hafez, 2017).

In examining and defining *anti-Muslim racism*, a large portion of the youth indicated this was the first time they had heard the term. Some determined that Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism meant the same thing, while others reflected upon the distinctiveness of each term. This varied slightly by demographic; the majority of youth who did not believe there was a difference between them were under the age of 20. Through a critical analysis, youth describe anti-Muslim racism as active racism, discrimination, and violence against people who are Muslim or those who are perceived to be Muslim. In examining this term, youth argued, *Islamophobia* does not adequately capture the active racism and hate that is experienced by people who are victims of racist discrimination and violence just because they are Muslim. It appears from the findings that youth aligned with anti-Muslim racism theorists who believe conceptualizations must move beyond characterizations of Islamophobia through its instrumentalist and discursive functions to include the social implications and examination of race, racism, and discrimination against Muslims and Islam (Allen, 2010; Meer, 2013; Opratko & Müller-Uri, 2016). The youths' discussions demonstrate that youth are engaged in conceptualizing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Their lived experience and lens include thoughtful reflections on what is going on and how discourse is used to describe nuanced forms of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Based upon their experiences at school, in community, and amongst peers, as well as their societal observations, youth firmly believed that Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism are characterized and fuelled by whiteness and white supremacy ideology. Notions of whiteness as the superior, default, and normalized social location were discussed by all the youth. Their views are consistent with scholars who describe the ways that whiteness-as-superior informs Islamophobic ideology and anti-Muslim racist violence (Beydoun, 2018, Meer, 2013; Razack,

2022; Zine, 2022a). Youth believed that white supremacy ideology is linked to and associated with Christianity as a superior religious location, which sends the message that Muslims' beliefs and Islam are religiously inferior. As demonstrated in the literature review, these findings link to Christian centricity across historical and contemporary trajectories of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, from the tenth century forward. Youth are firm in their belief that these ideologies fuel white supremacist movements linked to pervasive Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence. Indeed, in Canada, right-wing ideologies and white supremacist groups are heavily linked to Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism rhetoric, rallies, and protests (Razack, 2022; Zine, 2022b).

Youth clearly identified how constructs of race and processes of racialization were central to their understandings of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Over half of the Muslim youth believed that Muslims are raced in society. Many of these youth were females who wear a hijab. Youth reflections were consistent with academic discussion surrounding race making as a social construct with historical, legal, material, psychological, and temporal advantages and disadvantages for certain groups and usually designated by phenotypes (Bell, 2018; Omi & Winant, 2014). Race making occurs through the marking of Muslim as Other, based on skin colour, racial status, ethnicity, culture, and religious dress, manifested through racism. In describing Muslims as a "race," "different," and "Other," compared to white people in dominant society, Muslim youth point to how race making and racial Othering is an ordinary part of their experiences. Their narratives are consistent theorists who assert that most people of colour in society are exposed to race making through racism, which permeates every system and is often associated with constructions of whiteness as superior (Bell, 2018; Omi & Winant, 2014; Razack, 2022).

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Youth discussions also included how raced constructions of Muslimness occur alongside society's endemic racism, normalized white supremacy, and Christian centricity. Through difference, Muslims are then positioned as an inferior faith. Prior literature confirms their belief; for example, Breen & Meer (2019) use CR theory to examine the racialization of Muslims in Europe. They describe how through the process of racialization whiteness and white supremacy ideology constructs and positions Muslims as other in society. Essentializing subjectivities of "Muslimness" occur by marking the body as Muslim through the colour of one's skin, name, religious dress, or physical characteristics that are associated with Muslims and Islam (Meer & Modood, 2019; Meer, 2013). Youth also shared how these subjectivities of Muslimness are ascribed to those who are not Muslim but presumed to be based on how they look. This is consistent with research that finds Sikh populations across North America have been the victims of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence based on physical characteristics such as their turban (Sian, 2014, 2017). Youth discussions are consistent with critical race and anticolonial theorizing that examines the production of race, plurality of racism, and racialization, recognizing how these phenomena are used to construct Muslimness (Bell, 2018; Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001; Omi & Winant, 2014).

Youth narratives described how processes of racialization unfolded differently across social location and influenced their experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Their discussion is consistent with critical race theorizing that illustrates differential racialization at the intersections of racial status, skin colour, gender, dress, culture and ethnicity. These differences can determine multiple factors of privilege and oppression (Bell, 2018; Crenshaw, 1995). For example, the study findings reveal that Black female youth who wear a hijab are racialized based on their skin colour, hijab, and gender. These youth were unanimous in their

belief that they are the most targeted in society, which is consistent with evidence showing that in Canada, Black female hijabis are disproportionately targeted in anti-Black racist, gendered Islamophobic, and anti-Muslim attacks while walking, shopping, and going to school (Abdurraqib, 2009; Ali, 2021; Huncar, 2022). South Asian and Arab females also discussed how they are racialized based on their hijab, ethnicity, and cultural dress. Those who wear a hijab shared how it is the largest contributing factor to being racialized as Muslim. Significantly, hijabi females are also the most targeted in Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence (Statistics Canada, 2022b). South Asian females who do not wear a hijab described how their skin colour, culture, and ethnicity racialize them as Other in a predominately white society, leaving them also vulnerable to anti-South Asian and anti-Pakistani racism. The Arab females who do not wear a hijab discussed how they do not often experience racism, or Islamophobia, unless they disclose their ethnic and religious locations. Presumably this is because they are fair skinned and white passing. What emerges in their descriptions is that visible markers of Muslimness leave females vulnerable to anti-Muslim racism, this can serve to intensify the experiences of those females already exposed to anti-Black and anti-South Asian racism.

Black male youth described how they are racialized as Black before identified as Muslim. They describe how people do not often associate them with being Muslim or Islam unless they disclose their religion, which reflects Zine's (2022) research involving Black Muslim youth. Although they may not experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism as often as hijabi females, Black males in Canada experience some of the most intense forms of racially motivated discrimination and violence (Statistics Canada, 2022b). Arab and South Asian males describe how they often experience anti-Arab racism and anti-South Asian racism before experiencing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. They believed that if they took on markers of

Muslimness, such as disclosing their religion, wearing cultural dress, and growing a long beard, this would leave them vulnerable to these forms of oppression. Zine (2022a) and Razack (2008, 2022) describe how society constructs the Muslim male as having dark skin, a beard, cultural dress, or Muslim-sounding name. In similar studies, male youth illustrated how differential racialization and social location inform and characterize the intensity of their experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism (Bakali, 2016; Zine, 2022a).

Youths discussed how Muslims who are racialized as white and white passing experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism less often. For example, Arab females who are racially ambiguous or white passing describe how they do not often experience Othering, Islamophobia, or anti-Muslim racism unless they disclose their faith affiliation. One female hijabi discussed how her fiancée, who passes as white, does not experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism to the same degree as her, because most people do not believe he "looks" Muslim. She then shared how sometimes being racialized as white is overshadowed by markers of Muslimness like the hijab. She offers an example of a white friend who converted to Islam began to experience increased forms of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism after wearing the hijab. Her views are consistent with earlier investigations by Galonnier (2015), Love (2021), and Casey (2021), who explored how white converts to Islam who wear a hijab are exposed to similar patterns of racialization and lose their racial identity, as they then are seen to embody Muslimness.

Shifts in racialization discussed among youth indicate that religious status or markers of Muslimness overshadow whiteness or racial social location in some cases. This highlights the rigid representation of Muslimness in our society and how the social location of perceived whiteness influences how youth are racialized. This demonstrates that the closer you are to whiteness or racial ambiguity, the less likely you are racialized as Other or, in this case, Muslim.

Muslim youth spoke to how they understand and use the terms *Islamophobia* and *anti-Muslim racism*, in addition to examining how systems of hegemony, whiteness, white supremacy, race, and racism, coloniality, and orientalism characterize these forms of oppression that are consistently present in their lives. As they discussed racialization and social location, their narratives highlighted "an awareness of intersectionality," "how we can better acknowledge and ground the differences among" Muslim youth, to "negotiate the means by which these differences will find expression in constructing group politics," in this case, how they experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in society differently (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1299).

Implications for Social Work

Examining and theorizing discrimination against Muslims in Islam in the field of social work should include both the terms *Islamophobia* and *anti-Muslim racism*. The empirical findings synthesized above corroborate the suitability of critical race and anticolonial theories in understanding Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism and as an important starting point for developing approaches in social work theorizing, practice, education, and research, and the youths' reflections demonstrate the need for theorizing whiteness, white supremacy, race, racism, coloniality, and orientalism across intersectional social location in examining their experiences with these forms of discrimination. For example, the youths' nuanced correlations of whiteness and white supremacy with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism directly challenge social work's cultural competency and AOP approaches with Muslim populations (discussed in Chapter 2). Indeed, these colour-blind approaches in social work (Murray-Lichtman & Elkassem, 2021; Pon et al., 2016), will ultimately leave issues related to Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism unexamined.

The findings from this chapter help to advance social work definitions and conceptualizations of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through the lens of Muslim youth. Although these youth were most familiar with the term *Islamophobia* and this was the first time they had heard the term *anti-Muslim racism*, they made a clear distinction between both. Similarly, the term *Islamophobia* is the most used in referring to discrimination against Muslims and Islam within the social work field in Canada (Beck et al., 2017; Khan, 2018; Smith, 2020). The social work profession needs to continually examine racism, white supremacy, and coloniality in its work with racialized and Muslim communities. Youth pointedly spoke about how whiteness and white supremacy ideology and movements are hegemonic forces that characterize and fuel Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. In addition to centralizing race, racism, and processes of racialization in our current understandings of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, examining and theorizing discrimination against Muslims in Islam in the field of social work should come with the understanding that Muslims are raced through white Eurocentric constructions of racial difference. This is often based on skin colour, racial status, ethnicity, culture, and religious dress. Being racialized as Muslim occurs across intersections of identity; for example, Black Muslim females wearing a hijab are raced as Black and Muslim. Therefore, the profession of social work must know Muslim youth will experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism differently.

The study's implications for social work practice can help inform work with Muslim communities and youth. Among these implications is the need to move past anti-oppressive practice and approaches that support a colour-blind perspective and towards examining the foundations of racism, coloniality, and white supremacy within Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. In fact, Pon, Giwa, and Razack (2016) suggest that anti-oppression emerged in Canada in

part to offer white social work professors and practitioners' relief from difficult conversations about racism. In practice there is a disjuncture between social work theorizing of racism, coloniality, and white supremacy, leaving practitioners and service providers unable to support racialized communities adequately (Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022). This study encourages social work professionals and service providers to consider the impact that interpersonal and systemic Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism has on the health and wellbeing of the Muslim clients with whom they work.

Similarly, there is a need for social work research and education to include critical analysis of racism, white supremacy, coloniality—in this case, in examining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. In examining oppression, social work education should include critical race and anticolonial theorizing within its literature and curriculums. Indeed, critical social work theorists have asserted that the profession has not effectively integrated antiracist and anticolonial theories within its education programs (Badwall, 2016; Healy, 2005; Razack & Jeffery, 2002). When conducting research with racialized and Muslim communities, theorizing should centre their lived experience and include critical analysis of racism, whiteness, and coloniality (Murray-Lichtman & Elkassem, 2021). The findings above illustrate how differential social location influences youth experiences with racial oppression in society, and social work research should also examine this. Indeed, unless the social work profession begins to adopt critical race and anticolonial theorizing with racialized communities, the implications and impact of racism, white supremacy, and coloniality will remain un-interrogated.

Chapter 6: Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Racism across Media/Discourse

This chapter presents local Muslim youths' understandings of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across discourse. As outlined in Chapter 3, this research is guided by CR and AC theory and frameworks—which aim to examine how racist colonial and orientalist logics in society work to essentialize Muslims in Islam, particularly across discourse. Youth are consumers of different discursive media, and these are a part of their cultural landscape. In formulating such understandings, youth drew upon their own knowledge, personal experiences, and what they have witnessed across popular discourse. Listening to the youth, it became evident that the repeated pervasive and essentialized images of Muslims, Islam, and majority-Muslim countries have depicted them as inferior, inherently violent, and barbaric, and this was part of the everyday racist and Islamophobic discourse youth were exposed to. Youth highlighted that these images were gendered and that Muslim men are often seen as scary, violent, radicalized terrorists. Muslim female characters are depicted as people who are either victims of oppression and/or perpetrators of terrorism in film and television series.

This chapter illustrates how youth witness Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across discourse. Youth were asked specifically if they've witnessed Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in popular discourse, such as film, television, social media, news coverage, political rhetoric, and policy, and if so, how. Their responses are presented in the following sections: 1) Film and Television Series; 2) Social Media; and 3) News Coverage. Finally, this chapter ends with a discussion of the overall findings and implications for social work practice, research, and education.

Film and Television Series

Muslim youth discussed how forms of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism discourse pervade Western media. Depictions of Muslims and Islam have often reinforced narratives such as "the dangerous Muslim man," and "oppressed Muslim woman," pointing to orientalist and essentialist notions of Muslims being inferior and barbaric. When asked whether they have witnessed Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in film and television series, one youth, Alia, summed up the general sentiment among the participants when she said: **"**Yeah, I mean, again, this is one of those situations where, like**,** where do you start, right?" The overwhelming majority of youth discussed how these discourses plays a huge role in shaping the ideas and beliefs of a society, particularly about Muslims and Islam.

Western Film and Television: "It Doesn't Really Show What a Muslim Is"

Youth narratives outlined the negative stereotypes and assumptions of Muslims and Islam across Western film and television, including Muslims wearing cultural clothing or brandishing a weapon in ways that were often associated with terrorism, violence, and barbarity. As the discussion below illustrates, the youth felt it wasn't really demonstrated or shown (for them) what a Muslim really is.

Idrees (AM22),[30] described how negative stereotypes and essentializing portrayals of Muslims and Islam across film and television include depictions of Muslims and Islam in rigid binaries: either as devout, unyielding, and oppressed or as completely assimilating to white, Western culture in search of elevation and freedom. For Idrees, these rigid characterizations did not represent what they have come to know as Muslim youth:

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[30] (A–Arab, B–Black, SA–South Asian, F–Female, M–Male, TRANSM–Trans Male, HIJ–Hijab, NHIJ–No Hijab, Number–Age)

"There's never any sort of complexity, right? Like, Muslims are not always just religious, devout people who follow everything to a tee. So, people have like a very singular idea of what it means to be Muslim because of the media."

Iman (BFHIJ25) discussed how Muslim females in movies are always characterized in a very singular, extreme way. They either deal with challenges surrounding their oppressive faith and family or are saved by Western culture and reject their faith. Iman described this by saying:

"Most Muslim representation in terms of, like, females, it's always the stereotype that we are trying to run away from being oppressed. Not getting, we're not being free, like being forced to wear the hijab. Can't get educated, have to be in some sort of forced arranged marriage. Then now like it's gone, like, 180, it's just, like, people drinking, and they just take off their hijab, they just, like, run off with the main character, and I'm like, what's going on? So, it's, like, it went from, like, one end to the other and they're all bad."

Dania (BFHIJ19) likewise described her frustration with Western media depictions that present a false binary. For her, she can be religious, wear her hijab, pray five times a day, *and* be a person who has choices and freedom. What is implicit in these media depictions is that Western ways of knowing and being are inherently liberating and free while Muslim and Islamic values and cultural practices, like wearing the hijab or adhering to Islamic principles, are restrictive and limiting—and thus oppressive. Dania captured this in the following description:

"If I were to wear it (hijab) and I were to follow my religion, why can't you show it that way? Why do you have to show it the opposite way that follows Western ideals and Western society, when in reality, I can still live in Western society and still be a Muslim woman wearing a hijab and still continue to do my day-to-day life. Living in that society, like, why

did the show [reflect] a way that isn't? That doesn't follow my religion. I never understood that."

Youth reflect on how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism are perpetuated through North American film and television. Across demographics, Muslim male youth often describe how orientalist stereotypes shape Muslim men and Islam in general. Female youth, many of whom wear a hijab, often discussed how the same racist, orientalist stereotypes shape views of Muslim females. CR and AC theorizing reflects on how racist, orientalist logics cross intersectional social locations, and their narratives demonstrate how this plays out across gender in the media. While youth witness negative stereotypes and essentializations of Muslims and Islam, for them this does not represent what Islam *is* or who Muslims really are. They assert, through their counternarratives, that Muslims are in fact quite the opposite—from their local knowledge and lived experiences, this runs counter to what they know to be. For youth, the binary depictions in Western film and television do not reflect the diversity of identities, beliefs, and practices among Muslim populations globally, particularly portrayals of Muslim women, where they are either being oppressed by religion and family or liberated by white, Western values. What was most interesting was Dania's assertion that she can both practise her Muslim faith and adhere to Western values of freedom of choice and autonomy; these two things are not mutually exclusive.

Muslim Male Character Portrayal: "I've Never Seen a 'Good Guy Muslim'"

Youth's narratives aligned with critical analysis of popular Western media, which have been noted to perpetuate orientalist and racist essentializations of racialized men, particularly Muslim and Arabs, in English-language film and television (see, for example, Jiwani & Dessner, 2016; Kanji, 2018). Several youths illustrated how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in film

and television almost never portray Muslim men as "the good guy"; rather, they are almost always characterized as the villain, as violent, and/or as an oppressor of women. Youth also mentioned other implicit, dangerous stereotypes, including that Muslim men are misogynist, hypersexual, and/or prudes.

Ibraheem, Aisha, and Talia described the Islamophobic and anti-Muslim characterizations of Muslim men they witness in film and television. According to the youth, this exists across some of the most popular North American television series and movies. As they said:

"I've never seen, like, a good guy Muslim in a show. The way they talk about the Muslim characters is always kind of dehumanized." (Ibraheem, AM21)

"I was actually watching a movie, it was this girl who was working for the FBI, and she was attempting to catch an ISIS member. He was saying, like, all the stuff about women, and, like, how he has to, like, kill people for the religion. My parents were sitting there watching with me, and they were like, turn this off. Like, this is actually frustrating that people think of us like this." (Aisha, AFNHIJ18)

"This is a terrible show. It was like created by Chuck Lorre. Like, there's an episode where this, like, Muslim man who comes from Iraq, who's a translator, he's with his white friend, he needs to get his license and then he can't get his license because the woman's, like, wearing shorts and he's just so distracted because apparently, he's, like, never seen a woman's legs before and I was like, this is not a relatable immigrant experience. Like, please, you're making Muslim men to be these weird creeps who are, like, hypersexual, but also, like, very prude." (Talia, SAFNHIJ24)

These youth narratives reinforced the power of film and television to reflect and reproduce Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Although they did not mention the terms *orientalism* or *coloniality*, their narratives highlight how these manifest in film and television. Across demographics, Muslim male youth often described how orientalist stereotypes shape Muslim men and Islam in general. Female youth, many of whom wear a hijab, often discussed how the same racist orientalism depicts Muslim females. Youth reported how such media entrenches characterizations of Muslim men, women, and Islam as Other. These characterizations usually take on notions of Muslim men as the bad guy, ISIS member, violent, and sexually perverted. A society that already has preconceived notions of Muslims and Islam may use these portrayals to confirm their prior stereotypes, which made many of the interviewed youth feel frustrated and hopeless. This will be discussed further in Chapter 8, where youth described how these portrayals have negatively impacted their identity, sense of self, and overall wellbeing.

Muslim Female Character Portrayal: "She Needs a Saviour"

Youth also discussed how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism is perpetuated through standard representations of Muslim female characters. Like Muslim male characters, the Muslim female is often presented as the victim of oppression or the perpetrator of terrorism, without any complexity and nuance.

Alia and Ibraheem highlighted how these characterizations include women being obedient to their family, particularly men, and often in need of a saviour. For the study participants, these representations did not align with what they know to be true, based on what they see in themselves and other females in their community. Ibraheem discussed his frustration with shows that represent Muslim women, particularly those wearing a hijab, who are either

timid and afraid or despicable enough to commit a terrorist attack on innocent people. Alia and Ibraheem described this by saying:

"So, there's definitely the trope that's repeated where it's like, if you do see a Muslim woman, almost always she needs a saviour." (Alia, AFHIJ22)

"They're always timid, afraid, the most obedient to the men … they'll do a suicide bombing if a person tells them. I've never seen a strong Muslim woman in American film, or none that I can recall." (Ibraheem, AM21)

According to many of the participants, this theme was exemplified in a particular Netflix series called *Bodyguard*. This British crime series extorts extremely harmful stereotypes about Muslims, particularly women. The show has been heavily criticized for its blatant Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.[31] The episode most of them discussed presented the Muslim female character as both oppressed victim and perpetrator of terrorism. Many of the youth shared how difficult it was to watch this show. Amira (AFHIJ22) described the show in the following way:

"I remember being even more frustrated watching this show, because the main plot is [about a] military worker who stops a bomb. There was some South Asian hijabi, a woman who was strapped to the bomb, and it was about to take off. And it was her husband who was, I guess, forcing her to do that. And he [the military worker] convinced her to not do it. And then the whole show is about how he saved this woman from, like … taking her life and bombing the whole train. The fact that they were both Muslims made them automatically terrorists."

The youths' narratives demonstrated a common understanding of standard portrayals of Muslim females as timid, afraid, and obedient damsels in distress with no agency—alongside depictions that are quite the opposite, with women as potential terrorist, often at the behest of

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[31] https://www.digitalspy.com/tv/a866932/bodyguard-episode-6-controversy-islamophobia/

their oppressive male partner. This is consistent with the literature that describes similar depictions of female Muslims in the imagination of white Western society and how this plays out in film and television (see Chapter 2). Youth narratives add to our understanding of how orientalism and racialization of Muslimness are presented intersectionally in film and television. Muslim females, particularly those who wear a hijab, are positioned as vulnerable, oppressed people without autonomy and in need of saving.

Plot Lines with Muslim Female Characters: "There is Still … Underlying Islamophobia"

In examining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in film and TV, youth described how they believe Muslim characters, particularly women, are only really humanized when plot lines position their characters' lifestyle choices in proximity to "Western culture" and "whiteness." Youth define Western culture by activities such as drinking, doing drugs, and, for females who wear a hijab, taking their hijabs off. Whiteness in this context is understood by youth as film and TV plots in which the main character, hero/heroine, or love interest is white. Throughout the plot, the Muslim character is either saved by them or begins to emulate their culture to become "normal." Youth discussed how this does not mean that Muslim youth do not engage in the aforementioned activities, but for them this is the only representation of the Muslim character that exists in film and television that presents them in a "normal" and "positive" light. Dalal (BFHIJ20) described this in the following way:

"There was a hijabi, she took off her hijab, because, like, a patient was bleeding out. When I first saw that, I didn't think anything of it. And then later on online, I saw that someone was saying that there's like *this obsession with having hijabis take off their hijab*, even if it's for no reason. So even if it was, like, kind of shown in a positive way, there was still some underlying Islamophobia."

This theme was reinforced by participants in their descriptions of another series on Netflix called *Elite.* This show has also been heavily criticized for its Islamophobic tropes, specifically the one where the happy ending is when the Muslim girl is being saved by the white guy.[32] Alia (AFHIJ22) described one scene from the show in the following way:

"The main character was hijabi. And she's Palestinian. And when she went to school, she had to take off her hijab at school. She fell in love with the white guy, and, like, he took her to bars and nightclubs. She took off her hijab and, like, that was her discovering herself, like that was her no longer being oppressed. And it was just interesting because like watching that I'm like, but she's literally forced to take it off in school, but that's seen as, like, freedom. But then when she wears it outside of school for personal reasons, that's seen as oppression."

Many of the youth, particularly females who wear a hijab, were angered or frustrated when talking about this show. They firmly rejected what Iman called "the syllabus" of Muslim women in this series: that Muslim female characters become elevated or liberated through Western and white culture, thus situating this way of knowing and being as superior to others. Iman (BFHIJ25) described how this is "not a good representation" of a "modern Muslim girl," sharing this belief in her description:

"It's not a good representation of, like, modern Muslim girls because it basically, it goes back to the idea that they're oppressed. In the show, they're freed when they get rid of their hijab, and they're basically living the life that the other characters are living and that's not necessarily what we want. We just want to live our daily, day-to-day lives. But we don't want to necessarily conform to what other people are doing. So, just the syllabus, reinforcing of

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[32] https://muslim.co/this-is-what-netflixs-elite-got-wrong-about-muslims/

Muslims having to conform to Western society to be elevated … to be accepted, to be happy. But we just want to live our day-to-day lives. We're happy the way we are, as long as nobody makes judgments on us or ignorant comments."

These youth narratives reinforce the idea that the Muslim way of life, being religious, or wearing a hijab is seen as backwards and oppressive, while conformity to white, Western society, in the form of stripping away one's hijab and other religious practices, is portrayed as freedom. All of the youth who described these characterizations of Muslimness in film and television were females who wear a hijab; it is not surprising that they examine how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in film and TV humanize the Muslim female character when her lifestyle choices are in proximity to "Western culture" and "whiteness." While youth do not deny that some people (even Muslims) engage in activities such as drinking and doing drugs, and they also know that many females do not wear a hijab, or make the decisions to take theirs off, they question why films and television programs perpetually use plot lines that do not include these nuances. For them there are Muslim youths who adhere to Islamic faith requirements who enjoy their lives just as much as other youth do. It became clear in these discussions that Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism is perpetuated by colonial, orientalist, and white supremacist discourses that position the Muslim female living in the West at odds with her Islamic faith and identity, and that relief only comes when she adopts Western values that implicitly "liberate" her from the grips of Islamic culture and beliefs that are seen as abnormal or barbaric.

Social Media

Muslim youth reported witnessing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across social media platforms, ranging from misinformation about Muslims and Islam, particularly about the

prophet, to blatant Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism against Muslim women and men. The following youth narratives described how social media has become a platform for Islamophobic and anti-Muslim rhetoric and violence. Many of the participants also talked about the inevitability of facing some form of Islamophobia or anti-Muslim racism across Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, or Twitter.

Islamophobic Hate Speech: "It's Just, Like, It'll Pop Up In My Face"

Youth described how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism on social media, in the form of standard hate speech targeting Muslims and Islam, is a common occurrence. Hateful comments range from misinformation about Muslims or Islam to disparaging remarks about the prophet (PBUH),[33] to stereotypes that Muslim woman are oppressed, brainwashed, without autonomy or freedom, and are abused by Muslim men. Aisha described how this is so prevalent across social media that it will just "pop up" in her algorithm. Aisha, Dalal, and Rema shared the following:

"It's all over the media, honestly, like, whether it's, like, hidden or not, it's still there. I honestly don't, like, go out and, like, search for these types of things. It's just, like, it'll pop up in my face." (Aisha, AFNHIJ18)

"And for men, I think just also portraying them as the oppressors against Muslim women, evil, or misogynistic." (Dalal, BFHIJ20)

"Muslim women are oppressed, Muslim women don't have rights. Muslim women are abused by Muslim men." (Rema, SAFNHIJ23)

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[33] "Peace and blessings be upon him" is a phrase used to honor any prophets of the creator after any mention in speech or print.

Aisha discussed how remarks about Muslim men, women, and the prophet Muhammed (PBUH) across social media fortify a common trope seen in film and TV. Aside from Aisha, many others highlighted the rampant disparaging remarks about the prophet Muhammed (PBUH). Aisha (AFNHIJ18) shared her frustration with this by stating:

"It was saying how, like, he would, like, use women and stuff like that. I was just in utter disgust, like how are you going to say that about someone that is seen as … like a big thing in the religion, like a big person that everyone looks up to, like, how are you just going to put your input on that when you don't even know what you're talking about?"

Youth narratives above demonstrate how most often Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racism across social media is centred on Muslim women, particularly those who wear the hijab. Most of the youth who discussed this were themselves Muslim females who wear a hijab. They described how much of social media discourse centres on misinformation about women's status in Islam and general Islamophobic rhetoric by those who post on the web. Returning to CR and AC theorizing on how harmful racist and colonial logics are contemporarily spread through discourse across the internet, although youth did not explicitly identify orientalism and coloniality, many of the remarks reinforce how these stereotypes construct Muslim women as oppressed, brainwashed, without autonomy and freedom, and abused by Muslim men. Such rhetoric also analogously maintains that Muslim men are oppressors, misogynistic, and abusive towards Muslim women, and it negatively positions the Prophet (PBUH), a central figure in the faith.

Targeting Muslim Female Hijabis: "No Matter What the Video is About"

While the youth discussed witnessing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism on social media through commentary proposing that all Muslim females are oppressed by their faith and

community, some of them also pointed out how common it is to see people target Muslim female

hijabi online content creators, regardless of the content they are presenting.

Alia, Malika, and Iman discussed how this occurs across social media platforms such as

TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram in the form of trolling[34] or debate in the comments about their

hijabs, even when their content has nothing to do with being Muslim or Islam. They described

this by saying:

"I see, like, hijabis, posting on TikTok, for example, and I'm like, oh, look, I love her outfit.

And then, like, you open the comments, and the replies are just like, you know, like bomb

emojis or like, you know, oh, it just every, every possible ignorant thing you can think of."

(Alia, AFHIJ22)

"No matter what the video is about, there will be people telling her to, like, take it off. Even if

she's just, like, making a regular TikTok and it has nothing to do with being Muslim or

Islam." (Malika, AFHIJ18)

"I see, like, a lot of discourse and fighting about how … the same thing going back to women

being oppressed. So, she's free, she's allowed to do whatever she wants." (Iman, BFHIJ25)

Youth discussion demonstrate how online comments are focused heavily on regulating

Muslim women's bodies, particularly their hijabs, no matter what they are posting or talking

about. All of the youth who described these occurrences are Muslim females who wear a hijab. It

can be assumed that witnessing this may leave them feeling unsafe and unwelcome in these

spaces. This is significant in CR and AC theorizing of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism

across social media. Their word choice demonstrates the importance of understanding how

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[34] When a person intentionally antagonizes others online by posting inflammatory, irrelevant, or offensive
comments or other disruptive content.

racism and colonial and orientalist beliefs influence statements and assumptions that position feminist ideology as antithetical to Islamic dress and religious practice. For example, the above comment shared by Malika described the belief that a female Muslim women who wears a hijab needs to be told that she can take her hijab off if she wants. What is implicit in this message is that she must be forced to wear this garment and needs to be told that she is "allowed" to remove it if she wants. In this context, both those who force women to cover and wear the hijab and those who claim liberation by requesting women to remove their head coverings are sides of the same coin—both work towards regulating and controlling the Muslim female body. These narratives illustrate the type of gendered Islamophobia rooted in orientalist, Islamophobic and colonial ideologies in the form of directives that perpetuate the understanding that Muslim women need to be told how to dress by others because she does not have any agency of her own. Ultimately, these narratives illustrate how Muslim female youth who wear a hijab and are content creators face danger for their Muslimness and it doesn't matter who they are and what they are discussing.

News Coverage

Youth reported that news coverage about Muslims, Islam, and Muslim-majority countries often comes with Islamophobic and anti-Muslim undertones, reinforcing the idea that Muslims and Islam are a problem in the West. Many youths described commentary from news anchors that perpetuates negative stereotypes and misinformation about Muslims and Islam. These include conversations, debates, and commentary that uphold orientalist essentializations, double standards, and Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist narratives.

Discussions on Muslims and Islam: "Aren't You Supposed to Be, Like, Just Telling the News?"

Youth narratives outlined the ways in which news coverage, often while discussing Muslim cultures and/or Islamic values, practices, and jurisprudence, perpetuates a common stereotype that Muslims and Islam are at odds with or oppressive compared to Western, liberal values and ways of life.

Iman, Kenza, and Amira gave examples of times where news topics and discussions about Muslims and Islam gave a general vibe that their practices and culture are potentially problematic in Western contexts. Many of the youth talked about witnessing rhetoric in the news that perpetuated Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiments through fears about Muslim immigration. They described these experiences in the following statements:

"I was watching the news, and it was literally a debate between a random person and the news anchor and they're debating whether, basically, Muslims are normal people. And I was like, how is this appropriate? Aren't you supposed to be, like, just telling the news?" (Iman, BFHIJ25)

"They [news anchors] immediately need to analyze whether this [the hijab] is oppressive or not. That is in itself Islamophobic to me." (Kenza, BFHIJ20)

"I've seen comments. People being very hateful towards Muslim people stating opinions. Being scared about what will happen if Muslims continue to populate North America, the US, and Canada mostly, and having worries about Sharia law. I started to notice there was a pattern on similar news channels: Islam is … ruining the US, Muslims are taking over." (Amira, AFHIJ22)

Youth narratives described how coverage of Muslims and Islam is supported through negative essentializations that their culture and beliefs are ultimately at odds with Western liberal

society. Many of these youth were Muslim females who wear a hijab; however, the majority of youth touched on this point. This is consistent with literature that examines how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism is perpetuated through news media (see Chapter 2). This is significant in CR and AC theorizing on how racist and colonial logics are embedded in the language and word choices used by news pundits in describing Muslims and Islam. Ultimately youth described how this language perpetuates the notion that Muslims and Islam are a danger to Canadian ways of life. These examples of news coverage demonstrate how such coverage is used to produce contemporary Islamophobic and anti-Muslim discourse.

Double Standards: "When a Muslim Does Something ..."

Youth described the double standard in news coverage that occurs when a Muslim commits a crime versus when a non-Muslim does so. For them, when a Muslim commits a crime, their religion and racialized status takes centre stage, regardless of whether that had anything to do with the crime itself. Those who are non-Muslim, particularly white perpetrators, are typically humanized in coverage—their family history, professional status, hobbies, and childhood experiences are almost always discussed.

Adam, Ibraheem, and Alia detailed examples of this coverage double standard. Adam cited that when white school shooters commit acts of violence, coverage typically includes a narrative describing their hard life and troubled past. Ibraheem compares how mental illness is often noted in the trajectory of white school shooters while with Muslim perpetrators, their racial and religious status takes precedence. Alia discussed how similar crimes committed by Muslims illicit news coverage that almost always points out the fact that they are "Muslim" and does not further humanize them. They described this by sharing:

"Right, kid in America shoots up a school, it's just, like, everyone's like, "Oh, it's a white kid with trouble and he had a hard life type thing." I'm like, where's the understanding?" (Adam, AM22)

"When a Muslim does something in a country and it's violent, the response is much different. I always find it interesting the way the headlines of, like, the school shooters … it's like the guy must be mentally ill, there must be something else going on. With a Muslim, it has to be just because they're Muslim. It can't be because they're ill. If they're brown, and they might not even be Muslim, but they have to find a way to put it just because the person looks brown." (Ibraheem, AM21)

"If it's a Muslim person, especially, like, who committed a crime, it will be, like, the first thing in the headline, like, you know, "Muslim man." (Alia, AFHIJ22)

Youth narratives about this double standard captured the Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism that occurs in news coverage, complete with more humanizing language for non-Muslims. Many of the youth in this study, across all demographics, discussed this extensively when reflecting upon Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across discourse. For them, Muslims are almost always depicted as perpetrators who are influenced by their culture and/or religious beliefs, while for non-Muslims, their religious affiliation is almost never mentioned. Implicit in this message is that their race and religion must be the motivation for committing acts of violence. This is consistent with CR and AC theorizing that situates whiteness as a superior social location—in this case, where white perpetrators receive personalization, with no mention of their culture and religion, whereas Muslim perpetrators, through racist and orientalist logics, must be influenced by their culture and religion. These are inherently Islamophobic and anti-

Muslim sentiments that perpetuate the stereotype that Muslims and Islam adhere to violence as a central value.

News Coverage of Muslim-Majority Countries: "Always has Some Islamophobic Undertones"

Youth also discussed how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism is perpetuated in news coverage about Muslim-majority countries (MMCs), ooccurring in the form of dehumanizing statements and apathy from correspondents who cover conflict in MMCs. For countries like Afghanistan, Libya, and Palestine, news coverage is often infused with Islamophobic and anti-Muslim undertones. Conversely, when European, white, and non-Muslim populations are victims of imperialism, war, and occupation, there is a much different rhetoric. Kenza and Adam described this by saying:

"In general, in politics … how they talk about Muslim-majority countries is always, always has some Islamophobic undertones as well." (Kenza, BFHIJ20)

"Oh, this is happening like in Libya … all the, like, a lot of comments were just like, "Oh, they bring it on their selves, their religion does this to them, stuff like that" … "if it wasn't, like, a Muslim-run state, then, like, things would be better." (Adam, AM22)

Islamophobic and anti-Muslim sentiments also pervaded news coverage of a local pro-Palestinian protest that occurred in London (Bicknell, 2021). Aside from Talia, other youth reported seeing anti-Palestinian content coupled with Islamophobic comments in online coverage of the protest. Youth explained that this was because the protestors were visibly Muslim, and often people associate Palestine with Muslims and Islam. Talia (SAFNHIJ24) goes on to say:

"I found that there was a lot of negative comments towards both Jews and Muslims but, like, especially towards like Palestinian Muslims. There was, like, a lot of anti-Muslim, Islamophobic rhetoric online … maybe the Palestinians deserved it because of like, going

back and tracing, like, different conflicts. So, like, yeah, that's been one example sort of Islamophobia."

Amid the Russian occupation and invasion of Ukraine, youth have noticed much different language being used in news coverage. For youth, this indicated that when European, white, non-Muslim populations are victims of imperialism, war, and occupation, the response contrasts sharply with when violence is committed against MMCs. Youth talked about the hypocrisy in the global response to the occupation of Ukraine versus that of Afghanistan by the United States. Zayd (SATRANSM23) demonstrated this difference by stating:

"Well, we know how Russia is invading Ukraine. And something that a lot of news reporters like to point out is, this is Europe, not the Middle East. You know, this isn't happening in Afghanistan. So, I think it's amazing when the war in Afghanistan lasted for 20 years, you know, and people didn't show this much outrage with like, the way they are with Ukraine. I really like people. I feel like they don't care much when there's violence in the Middle East as opposed to in Europe and other countries."

The youth in this research are first-, second-, and third-generation Canadians who also identify as transnational. Being transnational means that they are often connected, through news coverage and social media, to what is happening economically, socially, and politically in their countries of origin and other MMCs. Many of these youth had connections with their families overseas, and therefore watch the news because of their concerns with the social and political climate in these countries. Implicit in much of this media messaging is the notion that the civil disruptions, wars, and atrocities in MMCs reflect their racialized status and religious beliefs. Similar to the preceding findings, CR and AC theorizing is significant in understanding Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in all discourse, including the discussion of MMCs in the

news. Youths described how racist, Eurocentric, white colonial logics depict these countries as places where violence and barbarity is normalized and rampant. Victims of war and imperialistic aggression are not victims, but rather deserving of their current situation. Many of the youth recognize the stark contrast in response to the Ukrainian conflict, where a European majority-white population is being victimized through war and occupation.

Discussion

The findings of this chapter present how youth witness Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in popular discourse, such as film, television, social media, and news coverage. By setting the agenda for social discourse, media plays a central role in influencing how individuals understand and interpret the world. Thus, Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism can thrive in the hearts and minds of the most seemingly intelligent and ordinary people. Across film and television, youth described negative stereotypes and essentializations of Muslims and Islam with terrorism, violence, and barbarity. Across social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, and Twitter, youth shared about the pervasiveness of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. According to the youths, news coverage reinforces Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist attitudes and views and emboldens those who are intent on committing acts of violence against Muslims living in Canada. Their narratives demonstrate the pervasiveness of negative essentializations and stereotypes, collectively and individually, of Muslims and Islam.

The findings here support the importance of examining youths' experiences with negative essentializations that pervade popular media in the context of CR and AC theorizing on racism, coloniality, orientalism, and racialization of Muslimness. Their narratives described how racist and colonialist constructs are used to characterize Muslims and Islam, particularly across gender and religious dress. Indeed, as Stuart Hall (2004) states, "the media construct for us a definition

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of what *race* is, what meaning the imagery of race carries, and what the 'problem of race' is understood to be" (p. 161). Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist beliefs in society thus produce negative essentializations of Muslimness across film, television, social media and news, and such discrimination is embedded in the ethos of the media. Through this we can understand how different forms of harmful discourse are perpetuated. This is a distinct feature of this study, as there is very little literature examining Muslim youth experiences with discursive Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canada. Muslim youths' local meanings will help to expand our understandings of discursive Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Youth were unanimous in their thoughts and frustrations that the Western film and television series they and their peers access do not represent what or who Muslims and Islam really are. In a similar study, Bakali (2016) found that Muslim youth participants in Canada were also very frustrated with the essentialized figures and "inescapable characterizations of Muslims" represented across media (p.104). Youth in this study described these as often, rigid depictions of Muslim men as misogynist, hypersexual, and violent terrorists. Muslim women are either oppressed, obedient, in need of a saviour, or completely assimilating to white, Western culture in search of liberation and freedom. The youths' critiques here are consistent with academic literature on orientalist and sexist tropes that are perpetuated against Muslim women across media portrayals (Abu-Lughod, 2015; Qutub, 2013).

Youth went on to describe how Muslim women are only really humanized when plot lines position their characters' lifestyle choices near "Western culture" and "whiteness." For them, Western culture and whiteness in plot lines include characters engaging in heavy partying, excessive drinking, doing drugs, and sexual activity. A common occurrence in film and TV is when female Muslim characters remove their hijabs, stop practising their faith, leave their

families, and fall in love with the white male protagonist. It appears from the findings that a common representation of the Muslim female in film and television includes a story line that supports her journey from being oppressed, which entails wearing a hijab and practising Islam, to no longer being oppressed by taking off her hijab and rejecting her faith. Youth descriptions and prior writings confirm that proximity to whiteness, specifically the practice of unveiling, is rooted in orientalist, Islamophobic, and colonial ideologies that construct the female Muslim woman as someone who is oppressed by her faith and in need of a Western culture to liberate and unveil them (Jiwani, 2005, 2011; Razack, 2004, 2022; Zine, 2022a). Many female hijabi youths were explicit in their message that their faith and culture was not restrictive, limiting, and counter to Western values for them. They can be Muslim, practice Islam, have fun, and be liberated at the same time.

In a similar fashion, Muslim youth described how online hate, Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism are common across social media platforms, ranging from misinformation about Muslims and Islam, particularly about the prophet (PBUH), to Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist comments against Muslim women and men. Prior research has confirmed that in fact Canadians report seeing hate speech across social media, and in Quebec it is far more likely to be targeting Muslims (Scott, 2019). Youth emphasized how this plays out in spaces where Muslim women are talked about and victimized through Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist assumptions and beliefs. For example, youth described how statements across social media often focus on the Muslim female body, particularly females who wear a hijab and their need to be saved, often through white feminist ideological rhetoric. What emerges in their descriptions is that Muslim women wearing a hijab are the most vulnerable in online hate crimes and attacks on their religious practice, particularly their hijab, and this is confirmed in recent discussion by

Farokhi and Jiwani (2022) and Sharma (2022). It appears from the findings that standard hate speech targeting Muslims and Islam aligns with the same negative tropes seen across film and television.

Muslim youth described how news coverage about Muslims, Islam, and MMCs often comes with Islamophobic and anti-Muslim undertones. A common stereotype is that Muslims living in the West, Islam, and MMCs are at odds with Western, liberal values and ways of life. In Canadian media, Syrian Muslim newcomers have been depicted through similar Islamophobic, racist, and colonial stereotypes (Tyyska et al., 2017). According to the youth, in the news Muslim women are described as passive and lacking agency while Muslim men are seen as oppressive and potential security risks in Canada. Youth also described double standards in news coverage that occur when a Muslim commits a crime versus when a non-Muslim does. Previous research by Kanji (2018) reflected similar conclusions—when it is a Muslim who commit a crime, their religion and racialized status take centre stage, regardless of whether these had anything to do with the crime itself. Similarly, media discussions of MMCs (e.g., Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq) are often infused with Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist undertones. Indeed, an investigation by Terman (2017) found that US news media propagates Islamophobic perceptions of Muslims and MMCs as places that are distinctly violent and sexist, based upon how they choose to present news coverage in particular regions. Muslim men are never seen as the good guy, and female characters are never depicted as strong women; they are either oppressed by their faith or saved by Western culture through rejecting their religion.

Findings from this study suggest although youth were explicit that this is not who Muslims are, they understood the power of film and television to manufacture them, their fathers, brothers, mothers, sisters, and friends as dehumanizing caricatures. Muslim youth, like

other adolescents, spend a considerable portion of their daily life consuming and interacting through online discourse. This certainly has an impact on their mental health and overall wellbeing (Abi-Jaoude et al., 2020). If we want to examine Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through the lens of Muslim youth, we must examine this important facet of their life.

Implications for Social Work

This study adds to the growing body of knowledge that furthers our understanding of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across popular Western media and discourse in the social work profession. Youth witness pervasive gendered Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in popular Western discourse, such as film, television, social media, and news coverage. Examining Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racism in the field of social work should include CR and AC theorizing on such discourse. As the findings above have illustrated, negative stereotypes are produced through racism, racialization, whiteness, orientalism, and coloniality. This demonstrates the importance of critical race and anticolonial theories as the starting point for examining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across popular media and discourse and determining how this informs social work practice, research and education.

Muslim men and women are depicted through racist, orientalist, and colonial essentializations in film and television. These include Muslim men as misogynist, hypersexual, and violent terrorists, and Muslim women are either oppressed, obedient, or in need of a saviour. Whiteness as a superior social location presents itself across these media as a saviour ideology, a liberator, the ultimate lifestyle, and an ideal love interest. Across social media Muslim women hijabis are particularly vulnerable to hate, harassment, and trolling specifically focused on their bodies and their need to be saved, often through white feminist ideological rhetoric. News coverage about Muslims, Islam, and MMCs often comes with similar Islamophobic and anti-

Muslim racist, orientalist, and colonial undertones. The empirical findings synthesized above demonstrate that critical race and anticolonial theories are helpful in understanding Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism and in developing approaches in social work practice, education, and research.

Social workers can use this information to inform their direct practice approaches with Muslim youth and communities. There is the need to investigate the social and emotional impacts that discursive Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism online has on Muslim communities. This includes how raced constructions of Muslimness show up on social media and how these impact Muslims' wellness and sense of self. The assumption should always be that Muslim youth are exposed to pervasive Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism online and this negatively impacts their sense of self, identity, and confidence. This is also supported by ample evidence discussed previously in the literature review section of this dissertation.

The findings of this study encourage social workers and other service providers to consider the implications of long-term exposure to discursive Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism upon Muslim youth. Messaging in discourse, social media, and film powerfully shapes what we know of people and how we see others. The above findings illustrate the type of negative messaging Muslim youth must inevitably face about their culture, ethnicity, and faith. Indeed, the developmental and psychological consequences are harmful and should be examined (Rousseau et al. 2015; Tahseen et al., 2019). Social work should capture, especially in the initial assessment and treatment planning phases, an evaluation of a client's social media health and exposure to harmful racist rhetoric online.

Social work should consider taking on an antiracist and anti-Islamophobic approach in advocacy and community-based practice with Muslim populations, particularly youth. Through

advocacy, social work can lead the charge in addressing personal and systemic Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism that may be embedded in discourse and its curricula. For example, a recent survey examining student experiences and opinions on the racial climate at King's and Brescia University College at Western University revealed that racism is a significant issue on campus (Natarajan et al., 2021). One student reported: "I have … experienced racist and prejudiced comments towards Muslims and Arabs during lectures and discussions as well" (p. 35). Although this student did not identify as being in the School of Social Work at King's, this report should concern this whole institution and others. Schools of social work across Canada should include substantive equity planning that explicitly takes on antiracist and anti-Islamophobic approaches. As Murray-Lichtman & Elkassem (2021) assert, social work still struggles with racism and colonial white supremacy and has not adapted itself or reached the pinnacle of the code of ethics, grand challenges, or values that it asserts (p. 184).

Outside of schools of social work, organizations such as the Ontario Association of Social Workers (OASW) and Canadian Association of Social Workers should engage in media campaigns and programming to counter Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in discourse, moving beyond performative statements of solidarity, such as the one put out after the terrorist attack in London (Canadian Association of Social Workers, 2020) towards substantive action (Murray-Lichtman & Elkassem 2021). For example, the Peel District School Board (2022) is currently engaged in a campaign and four-year strategic plan to address Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in their schools. Through community consultation, regular meetings, and curriculum and policy assessment, this group aims to address discursive, personal, and systemic Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in their school system. Similarly, social work should

examine its curricula to see if, for example, negative essentializations of Muslims and Islam exist in its discourse, policies, and education programs.

Similarly, there is a need for social work research to include critical analysis on the implications of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across discourse. The rationale for this study is to fill the gap in social work research on anti-Muslim racism and Islamophobia across media and discourse through the lens of Muslim youth in Canada. Muslim youth must navigate these forms of oppression and negative representations of who they are and what they believe across online spaces. While conducting research with racialized individuals and communities, the social work profession must engage in critical analysis of racism, white supremacism and colonialism in online discourse and the impact this has on youth. In examining this, social work education should include critical analysis of its own literature and curricula to see if and how these may also perpetuate negative essentializations of Muslim and Islam. This should include critical discourse analysis of case study examples, literature related to Muslim communities, and Islamic faith perspectives. Indeed, much of the social work literature is heavily focused on culturally competent approaches that serve to "help" professionals to "understand" people's cultures and faiths (Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022). In the attempt to do this, literature may in fact reify bias, stereotypes, and negative essentializations about Muslim and Islam.

Chapter 7: Examining Insidious and Explicit Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Racism

Youth were asked if they have ever experienced *acts* of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, and their responses illustrated how this discrimination comes in both *insidious* and *explicit* forms. Insidious events occurred when they reported feeling initially unsure about the intent of specific looks, comments, questions; they believed these actions were motivated by Islamophobia and anti-Muslim beliefs. Explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, however, occurred in the form of clear and fully revealed forms of violence towards Muslim youth, leaving no question as to the motivation or intent behind the action.

Youth shared their experiences of physical and verbal assaults, harassment, and other aggressive behaviours while driving, walking, shopping, and busing. Their responses are presented in the following two overarching sections. The first section illustrates insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in form of stares and surveillance; intrusive comments and questions; questions and comments about citizenship status; and backhanded compliments. The second section illustrates explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in form of verbal assaults; violence and physical assaults; harassment and intimidation; and rude and aggressive behaviour. Finally, this chapter ends with a discussion of the overall findings and implications for social work practice, research, and education.

Insidious Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Racism

Listening to the Muslim youth it became evident that insidious forms of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism pervade their lives at work, school, and in the community. This occurred through stares, surveillance, intrusive questions and comments, inquiries surrounding their citizenship status, and backhanded compliments. Although these incidents are not explicit, youth see them as greatly impacting in their lives.

Stares and Surveillance: "They, Like … Were Staring at Us the Entire Time"

Muslim youth in this study reported experiencing insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism while out in public. Female youth wearing hijabs described how they were stared at while bowling with friends and busing. Black and Arab Muslim males described how they were followed in stores while shopping. The following youth narratives illustrate how their racial status and Muslimness are regulated through white people's surveillance and stares.

Nada (BFHIJ22[35]), a Black female, and Fatima (AFHIJ20), an Arab female, shared their experiences of how white people's staring and hypervigilance in public spaces inflicts Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist harm. In these situations, youth reported feeling unsafe, and this has been particularly salient since the Islamophobic and anti-Muslim terrorist attack that took place on June 6, 2021. Nada and Fatima described this in the following ways:

"We're all out, like, in public and big groups of just, like, hijabis, and I feel like we get stared at a lot, bowling a couple of weeks ago. And it was just all of us were hijabis. And there was an older couple sitting behind us and the entire time they, like, were staring at us … would watch everything we were doing, and it was just uncomfortable." (Nada)

"And, like, the weird stares that I get on the bus every single time. And I take the bus every single day. I always sit by the door because I like easy access, if I need to run, I can run. If I can't sit by the door, I sit by the biggest window that I can take down, so I can actually make a run for it. I have pepper spray on me at all times. And sometimes I put a small pocketknife in my shoes … I've never done this except after the June 6 attack, so before life was easy."

(Fatima)

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[35] (A–Arab, B–Black, SA–South Asian, F–Female, M–Male, TRANSM–Trans Male, HIJ–Hijab, NHIJ–No Hijab, Number–Age)

Sami (BM23), a Black male, described how he was followed in the store while shopping with his hijabi mom—a clear example of how whiteness inflicts insidious anti-Black and anti-Muslim aggression as well as gendered Islamophobia through surveilling Black Muslim bodies. Sami illustrated this by saying:

> "I have been in scenarios, though, where I have been with my mom, right? My mom, she wears a hijab. We'll go somewhere, like a public space, like a mall or whatnot. And maybe we'll get followed around a little bit or will constantly be asked, you know, are we okay?"

Youth experiences in this section outline a variety of forms of insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism that have occurred in their lives. Youth described how these stares and forms of surveillance evoked feelings of discomfort, fear, and hypervigilance to potential violence. Although there are not observable differences across their age, what is notable is that the two female youth who wear a hijab were with others who wear one, and Sami, a Black male, experienced surveillance in the company of his mother, a Black female wearing a hijab. Ultimately, CR and AC theorizing demonstrates that different markers of Muslimness and racial status within the context of endemic racism, white supremacy, and coloniality in society make Muslims vulnerable to violence in the form of stares and other methods of surveillance.

Inquiries about Citizenship Status: "Like, Where Are You From?"

Insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism also manifested via interrogations of one's citizenship status. Youths shared that they frequently got asked where they were born, where they were from, or how long they had been in Canada. This implies that they're somehow "foreign" because they look racialized and Muslim, although they were born and raised in this country. This section outlines instances when the youth were made to feel like perpetual foreigners in their own country through comments and assumptions.

Iman (BFHIJ25), a health care provider who is Black and hijabi, described how this was

an everyday experience with the mostly white patients she would encounter at work. What

seemed like a curious question was embedded in the notion that she, as a Black Muslim hijabi,

cannot possibly be Canadian, because her racialized status doesn't equate with dominant

conceptions of citizenship in this country. In her interview, she explained how because this

happened so often, she felt there wasn't much she could do except for, as she stated, to just get

"used to it." Iman goes on to say:

> "Patients would ask me every day, "Where are you from? Where's your family from?" So,
>
> then every day, it would be like … and then I realized, I was like, oh, this is gonna be an
>
> everyday thing. And then it was funny, because then … I eventually start getting used to it."

Alia (AFHIJ22), an Arab female who wears a hijab, also described how while

volunteering at the hospital, she experienced insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism

through questions about where she was from or comments about her proficiency in the English

language. Implicit in these questions and compliments was that she could not possibly be from

Canada and her first language could not possibly be English. She also highlighted the persistence

in the questioning, even after being asked "where are you from" and disclosing that she was

Canadian, she was met with the follow-up statement/question "No, where are you really from?"

This evokes the white supremacist sentiment that if you are Arab and Muslim, even if you are

born and raised in Canada, you will never be fully Canadian. Alia shared the following incident:

> "I volunteered at the hospital. Like, that was me being part of the community. And I did have
>
> some people who would just kind of be like, you know, like, "Where are you from? Like,
>
> where are you really from? Like, your English is so good for somebody who's not from the

country or whatever." Like, I would be faced with that, like, all the time, definitely, like, at least on a weekly basis."

Dania (BFHIJ19), a Black female hijabi, worked at a grocery store and described how people would often approach and ask how her first winter in Canada has been. These seemingly kind questions actually reinforce the assumption that, because of her Muslimness and her racial status, she is a newcomer and immigrant to Canada and cannot possibly be born and raised here. This again evokes the white supremacist notion that the standard for citizenship in this country is white and non-Muslim. Dania shared:

> "I work at Superstore, so I have, like, a bunch of people who come through. And, for example, something that … people love to ask me [is] how my first winter went, and I'll be like, "Oh, what do you mean by how was my first winter? I'm, like, this isn't my first winter experience. I'm 19, I've experienced 19 winters, like, I don't know, like what you mean by that?" And then they'll be like, "Oh, look, I'm so sorry. Like, I didn't mean to be offensive. There's so many immigrants at Tim Hortons. So, I like to, I love to ask them how their first winter went." I'm like, to [ask] just completely based off of assumption that you literally just look at me and were, like, oh, how many winters have you experienced?"

Youth experiences in this section described a variety of forms of insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through inquiries about their citizenship status and how different markers of Muslimness within the context of endemic societal racism, white supremacy, and coloniality left them more susceptible to violence and reinforced that they are perpetual foreigners. Across demographics, this commonly occurred with female youth who wear a hijab in their places of employment. They believed that their racialized status, particularly their hijab, gender, ethnicity, as well as associated orientalist stereotypes of Muslims and Islam, make them

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more vulnerable to such questions and comments. Although Dania and Iman did not point specifically to their Black racial status having anything to do with these questions, we can assume that additional anti-Black racist logics also fuel these insidious remarks. For Sami and Talia, their citizenship status was questioned within the context of internalized white supremacy. CR and AC theorizing demonstrates how their race and ethnicity positioned them as Other and perpetually foreign. These presumptions underline the sentiment that because they are not white but instead look Muslim and racialized, they must be an immigrant or a newcomer to Canada. Many of these youth were born and/or raised in Canada, and it is the only home they have ever known. Unfortunately, they will no doubt continue to be made to feel as though they are a perpetual foreigner due to insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Intrusive Questions and Comments: "They Were Just So Shocked"

Insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism likewise manifests in the form of other intrusive comments and questions, most often asked by white and non-Muslim people at work, in school, and in public spaces. Youth described questions and comments that reinforced the notion that their faith, lifestyle, and religious practices are different, unfathomable, and not normal, often garnering shocked responses from people who harbour Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racism stereotypes and sentiments. This section outlines the ways in which youth were painfully aware that these questions and comments were influenced by Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist beliefs.

Ibraheem (AM21) and Alia (AFHIJ22) detailed their experiences with forms of insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through being made to feel like their adherence to religious practices and lifestyles was different, Other, and closed minded. Ibraheem described working at a retail store, where co-workers would often exclude him because of his choice to

avoid substances. Alia, a Muslim female who wears a hijab, recalled an incident during her

undergraduate studies when a co-worker was asking her about her preferences for dating and

marriage. What stood out most for Alia was that whenever she has said she doesn't do something

because she is Muslim, she is met with a distinct response. For example, her practice of

abstinence has been deemed "close minded" even though when non-Muslim friends have made

similar decisions they have been met with admiration and respect. Ibraheem and Alia illustrate

their experiences by saying:

> "I used to work at a retail store. And this co-worker … it was like they could just never
>
> understand me or Islam. They were just so shocked. Like, we couldn't drink, or they were so
>
> shocked that, I don't know, we don't smoke, for example, that they just couldn't believe it.
>
> And it was as if, whenever I would try to explain it to them, it was unfathomable." (Ibraheem)
>
> "I just mentioned like, I know, I go by Islamic law, like, I would rather just wait until
>
> marriage, and I don't really date for fun and that kind of stuff. And I remember her, like, just
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> telling me things like, "Oh, that's so close minded. Like, that's so ignorant. Like, you never
>
> know until you tried it, you don't really get to experience life." But then I noticed that for my
>
> non-Muslim friends who made the exact same decision, people respected it, they would tell
>
> them like, "Oh, wow, you don't drink, like, good for you." I definitely feel like I was met with
>
> different attitudes towards, like, anytime I said, like, I don't do something because I'm
>
> Muslim." (Alia)

Khadijah (BFHIJ20), a Black female who wears a hijab, described how insidious

Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism has manifested in the form intrusive questions about her

showering habits and relationship with her partner. She shared how co-workers were surprised to

learn that she does not shower with her hijab on and that her husband can see her hair. She felt

these well-meaning, curious questions were really in fact embedded in Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racism. Khadijah explained:

"I've had colleagues, like, ask questions I think are just unnecessary. I've been asked legitimately the question of showering before ("Do you shower with your hijab?") or I've gotten asked if my husband can see my hair. I find the questions are just not coming from a right place, to be honest."

The above narratives demonstrate how various markers and/or disclosure of Muslimness within the context of endemic racism, white supremacy, and coloniality in society has made many of the youth vulnerable to racist Islamophobic violence in the form of harmful comments and questions. Most of the youth who come up against questions like these are females who wear hijab. CR and AC theorizing demonstrates how Islamophobia often comes in the form of questions and comments that are supported by racist and orientalist notions of Muslims and Islam. Although youth did not necessarily use these exact phrases, their descriptions imply this. These questions and comments reinforce that their faith, lifestyle, and religious practices are foreign, not normal, and even barbaric, leaving the youth feeling Othered and ostracized.

Backhanded Compliments and Unsolicited Advice: "It's Just Seemingly So Awkward"

Insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism often also manifested for youth in the form of backhanded compliments from white people about their beauty, educational aspirations, and ability to articulate themselves. For many youths, they were not initially sure where these "awkward" compliments were coming from. The narratives below illustrate the ways in which particularly Muslim females who wear a hijab face insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through backhanded compliments.

Fatima (AFHIJ20), an Arab female who wears a hijab, described meeting a girl who was taken aback by the fact that she was pretty. Fatima felt that she could not accept this compliment without feeling doubt that it was coming from a sincere place. This backhanded compliment reinforced the belief that her beauty was surprising because people from her racialized or religious background are neither appealing nor beautiful. Fatima described:

"I once met this girl, like, on the bus, she told me, "You're really pretty for a Muslim girl." I was like, thank you. Like, what a backhanded comment that you just got, like, I felt that was pretty Islamophobic to me. I was like, what else am I supposed to say? It's just seemingly so awkward."

Khadijah (BFHIJ20), a Black female who wears the hijab, described how she was once told that she would be "so beautiful without the hijab." As she recounted this incident, she also talked about how much of the racism she experiences comes from elderly white people. The message that was clearly delivered in this situation was that her hijab made her unattractive. White saviourism[36] and the superiority of Eurocentric beauty standards are likewise implicit in this message, which sought to liberate, rescue, or help Khadijah to achieve the ultimate form of beauty—one that does not include the hijab and is closest to whiteness. Khadijah went on to say:

"There's definitely a lot of instances at work, I work at a pharmacy. That's in an area of where a lot of older people live. And I find that a lot of the racism comes from older people, for me at least. So, at work, I always get "Oh, you'd be so beautiful without the hijab.""

Iman (BFHIJ25), a Black female who wears a hijab, described how she has received compliments for completing her education and even just speaking English. Such compliments

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[36] Refers to a pattern of viewing white people as those who need to 'save' or 'rescue' marginalized people and/or people of color.

uphold internalized Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist stereotypes that Muslim women are oppressed and not allowed to complete their education. In addition, these comments also perpetuated the assumption that she should not have been able to speak English and was a newcomer to Canada. This was yet another example of the way internalized whiteness fuels insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism that situates Black female Muslim youth in the category of uneducated and foreign. Iman described this by saying:

"And then, like, there's likely another category of things where I just assume, like when people are just like, oh, like, they're surprised that you're educated, or, wow, you can speak English. Oh, my God, good job of finishing school. Stuff like that. I just … I don't know where that falls in. I assume it's just in. I just throw that under the Islamophobia box. But I honestly don't know."

These narratives illustrated the youths' experiences of insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through backhanded compliments from white people about their beauty, education, and ability to articulate themselves. Unsurprisingly, all these backhanded compliments were experienced by females who wear the hijab, and they were heavily focused on how the females looked and talked, as well as their level of education and language proficiency. Taken together, what is unspoken but also loud and clear is that their appearance and abilities counter white internalized Islamophobic and anti-Muslim stereotypes, including believing that in general, Muslim females who wear the hijab are neither appealing nor beautiful and that they are uneducated, unable to express themselves, unable to speak English proficiently, foreign, and Other. White saviourism and standards of beauty are likewise implicit in these messages, which seek to validate, liberate, impart beauty advice, and/or compliment from a place of superiority. CR and AC analyses demonstrate how there are power differentials across gender that should be

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examined, especially when the compliment giver is from a white social location. These comments demonstrate how white female saviourism plays a part in Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Explicit Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Racism

Listening to the youth, it became evident that explicit forms of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism were also prevalent in their lives. Youth described systemic oppression occurring in school, in their workplace, in the broader community, and in policymaking. The following narratives describe incidents of explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism experienced by youth living in London, Ontario, including rude and aggressive behaviour, verbal assaults, intimidation and threats of violence, and harassment.

Rude and Aggressive Behaviour: "I Hate Grocery Shopping"

Muslim youth also recounted facing explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the form of rude and aggressive behaviour while shopping. The youth who reported these incidents were either Muslim female hijabis who had first-hand experience or male and non-hijabi female youth who were in the company of their hijabi mothers.

Kenza (BFHIJ20), a Black female who wears a hijab, talked about the multiple forms of rude behaviour she had experienced at the hands of white customers and employees when she was out shopping. She attributed this to her visible Muslim status and the prevalence of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in society. She expressed her frustration by saying, "you just don't want to deal with it." Kenza shared:

"I hate grocery shopping, Because I always, without fail, like, come across, like, a rude cashier, or I need help and someone's ignoring me. And they just don't want to talk to me, or they talk to me very rudely. And it's just, you just don't want to deal with it."

Mohammed (BM21), a Black Muslim male, described an incident where his mother was purchasing a bike from a white man through Kijiji. According to Mohammed, he became annoyed when his mother began to bargain over the price. He described how racism and gendered Islamophobia played together to allow the white man to express his anger and subject his mother to his thinly veiled white supremacist and nationalist views. Mohammed went on to say:

"And the man's response was: "This is not how you do things in this country," right? I guess obviously, it was, you know, the words I use were a little bit played to racism and my mom was wearing the hijab, you know, the scarf, at the time, and she's a person of colour."

Layla (AFNHIJ19), an Arab female who does not wear a hijab, described a time at the grocery store when pandemic rules required distancing in line. Her mother was accosted by a white woman who believed she wasn't standing far enough away while waiting to be cashed out. She described the shift in her behaviour when she realized that her mom speaks English and began to defend herself. Layla believed her mother's hijab and Muslimness influenced this woman in her initial negative actions toward her mother. In this case, it is likely that this white woman assumed Layla's mother was a Muslim immigrant who didn't speak English, someone who would be passive to her aggression. Like the prior example, here white supremacist nationalist views bolster rude and aggressive behaviour. Layla went on to say:

"The second my mom opened her mouth … the lady realized that she could speak English. She didn't really say much after that. I feel like she thought by seeing someone that was, like, visibly like a minority, she could use, like, her white privilege. She could basically have power over her."

Youth narratives in this section detailed explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism occurring through rude and aggressive behaviour towards Muslims while they were shopping. All the recipients of this explicit violence were women wearing hijabs. CR and AC theorizing of explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism would posit that because of one's visible Muslim status within a white supremacist space, perpetrators may inflict gendered Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism upon female Muslim hijabis based on assumptions about their inability to speak English and their foreignness and assumed passivity. Although there is no specific study that examines this phenomenon, across the literature review and findings of this dissertation there is evidence demonstrating that Muslim hijabi women experience Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence when they are out (e.g., shopping, driving, walking) and often at the hands of white people (see the literature review).

Verbal Assaults: "These People … They Just Want Violence. Right?"

The participant youth shared their experiences with Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racism in the form of verbal assaults. These school and workplace incidents generally involved racist discourse and assumptions that Islam is an inherently violent faith and Muslims are perpetrators of violence, particularly against women. All of the perpetrators identified by the youth in these situations were white individuals they did not know.

Issa (SAM21), a South Asian male from Pakistan, recounted a time at work where an elderly white patient inquired about his ethnic background. After hearing he was from Pakistan, she verbally assaulted him with Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist accusations of being from a place that perpetuates violence. Explicit in her statement was that he was from a country where perpetual violence occurs. Issa described this by saying:

"I've been working in this long-term care home. I had one resident, after she asked me where

I'm from, I said, Pakistan, she's like, "Oh, you know, sometimes I think that these people,

they just, they just want violence. Right?""

Kenza (BFHIJ20), a Black female who wears a hijab, shared an instance in which she

overheard an explicit Islamophobic and anti-Muslim remark among some white peers at school.

Although Kenza wasn't sure if she was meant to hear this, she felt the assault of these words

regardless. What was clear in the comment was that hijabi girls, because of their Muslimness,

were at risk for committing acts of terrorism. Kenza described this incident in the following way:

"In high school, this one girl came in, and she was talking to her sister, but she was standing

right next to me. And she was like, "I saw a couple of hijab B's downtown, and they looked

like they were gonna blow up the place.""

Aisha (AFNHIJ18) described how she experienced explicit Islamophobia and anti-

Muslim racism via verbal assaults supported by white and Christian supremacist rhetoric. As an

Arab female who does not wear a hijab, Aisha shared how a white peer, who knew she was

Muslim, "would say really wrong things" about her faith front of others. After confronting this

person about their Islamophobic rhetoric, this white peer proclaimed that Christianity was the

"true religion." Unspoken in this verbal assault was that Aisha's faith tradition was inferior and

false. Aisha recalled:

"I remember once I got in an argument with this girl, because she was trying to tell me that,

like, Christianity was, like, the true religion, she would just say a bunch of, like, really wrong

things about my religion in front of everybody."

Similarly, Ibraheem (AM21), an Arab male, recounted an incident in which a white male

perpetrated an evangelical verbal assault against his hijabi mother through insisting that Muslims

do not love Jesus. In questioning whether Muslims believe that "Jesus is the son of God," he insinuated that they ascribe to abhorrent beliefs and asserted Christianity as the ultimate, one true religion. Ibraheem recounts:

"So, this guy stops my mom out of nowhere [in the mall]. He's like, "Why don't you love Jesus?" And my mom was like, "Well, I do, you know, he's a prophet to me, and I do love Jesus." And he just, he's gonna start, like, debating my mom on why Jesus is the Son of God."

This section illustrates how explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism occurs in the form of verbal assaults through statements that accuse Muslim youth of being from a violent people and faith. Like the prior examples of insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, most of the perpetrators were white and relied on white Christian supremacist rhetoric to accuse Muslims of being violent non-believers and supporting violence. In the above examples, most of the recipients of this violence were females wearing the hijab. In examining the difference between the incidents, we can note that it was only when Issa and Aisha disclosed their faith or country of origin that they were assaulted. Conversely, Ibraheem's mother and Kenza were assaulted directly and without any lead-up because of their hijabs. Using CR and AC theorizing, their narratives illustrate how racist orientalist beliefs manifest in a particular type of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism among white Christian supremacists—specifically, verbal assaults and violence rooted in the belief that Muslims and Islam are abhorrent and violent, and they are the true believers.

Physical Assaults: "You're Just So Lucky That You're in Canada"

The youth narratives in this section capture the most egregious forms of explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism: threats of violence and physical assaults. One youth detailed an incident in which she was threatened with assault during an academic conference at

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the hands of a white peer, leaving her confused and afraid. Another youth shared a time where she was threatened with physical harm by police officers. Although none of the participants experienced physical assault, two youth discussed incidents of such assault happening to hijabi friends and family members, where they were physically attacked in public by people trying to tug at and remove their hijabs.

Alia (AFHIJ22), an Arab female who wears a hijab, experienced explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism during an academic school conference conversation with a white female sitting next to her. She described how this person began to ask her a series of questions, including regarding where she was from. When Alia told her about her background, the woman began to make negative comments about Middle Eastern food and culture, along with a quip about how surprised she was that Alia speaks English so well, although she was born in Canada. The white woman then asserts how "lucky" Alia is to be in Canada and that she doesn't live in France, saying that if she did, she would be "beat up on the bus" and have her hijab ripped off. Most egregious about her statements was the implicit threat of physical assault. Alia disclosed that she didn't have words at the time to respond because of her shock, yet her internal dialogue reflected her anger over this threatening statement. Alia described the incident:

"And then, like, the cherry on top was, she told me, "You're just so lucky that you're in Canada, because if you were in France, somebody would have pushed you off the subway tracks." And she's like, "No, no, like, they would beat you up on the bus, like, rip off your hijab if you were in France, so you're lucky you're in Canada." Like, okay, like, that is, uh, I just, I honestly just blanked out, like, I just stared at her. And I'm like, I don't even know how to respond here right now. Like, what do you expect as a response? Like, do you want me to thank you that you can't like hate crime me?"

Amira (AFHIJ22), an Arab female who wears a hijab, recounted an incident that occurred when she was 16 and driving alone in a Mississauga parking lot. She got into a fender bender with two white off-duty police officers. Amira reported feeling intimidated and threatened with physical violence by these officers after her arrival at the police reporting centre, where she was interrogated. Amira recounts this incident in the following statement:

"They started asking me what I want to do for living and what I want to do for school, I told them at that time, I was wanting to go to dental school. And immediately after, they started saying that … we'll make sure that this becomes a criminal record, and we'll make sure that you never ever go to dental school in your life. And they started threatening me and saying, if you ever do that, again, we're gonna take off your hijab, rip it off, and put you in prison in a cell naked. I honestly tried to, until this day, block all of it out."

This illustrates how white men in positions of power can inflict gendered Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist harassment and intimidation upon a young female hijabi who is alone and vulnerable. Moreover, this occurred within an institution that is responsible for public safety and security. Sadly, police violence against racialized communities is not an uncommon occurrence in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2022b).

Aisha (AFNHIJ18) described hijabi female friends and family members facing physical assault when people attempted to pull their hijabs off. Aisha, an Arab female who does not wear a hijab, recounted a time where she had to support a friend who had recently witnessed her mother being assaulted while shopping. She described how her friend felt helpless and traumatized at the time. In both incidents, the perpetrators of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence were white males, while their targets were both Muslim females wearing hijabs. Aisha described this by saying:

"My friend and her mom [were] at a grocery store before and someone literally tried to tug off her hijab. And it was just she couldn't do anything. And she's crying and, like, that was really traumatic for her."

In these narratives, youth described incidents of explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism occurring in the form of physical assault and threats of violence. What was similar in these incidents was that perpetrators were white and their targets were visible Muslim women wearing their hijabs and engaging in everyday activities like shopping, watching a movie with friends, and going to school. CR and AC theorizing discusses how endemic racism, white supremacy, and coloniality in society make racialized people—in this case, Muslim women— vulnerable to gendered Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Embedded in these situations is the threat or actual presence of white supremacist violence against Muslim female bodies in ordinary places and spaces.

Harassment and Intimidation: "I Know it's Because of the Hijab"

Muslim youth also faced explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the form of harassment and intimidation, with most of this threatening behaviour being experienced by hijabi Muslim women. They described how drivers, mostly white men, would use aggressive driving tactics, offensive statements, and hand gestures to intimidate them on the road while they were walking or driving. These examples demonstrate the intensity of gendered Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism that occurs for Muslim women while out in public.

Khadijah (BFHIJ20) a Black female who wears the hijab, shared an incident of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism while driving. Khadijah quipped that every time she is driving and gets the middle finger, she knows its "because of the hijab" and not necessarily because of her driving. These are obviously not typical incidents of road rage, but further

examples of male white supremacist harassment and intimidation against the Muslim female body. Khadijah described this by sharing:

"I always get the middle finger [while driving] even though I've done absolutely nothing wrong. So, I know it's because of the hijab."

Similarly, Nada (BFHIJ22), a Black female who wears the hijab, described how she had experienced harassment and intimidation while walking with friends and family. When asked who perpetrated these incidents, she described them as young white men. These female youth are aware that their visible Muslim status while walking makes them vulnerable to explicit Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist harassment and intimidation. Although they enjoy walking, youth have become afraid of doing so for fear of violence. Nada recalls:

"Me and my friend were walking, like, down the street. And we both wear hijab, and a car drove past us and just like, yelled at us saying, "Take it off.""

Iman (BFHIJ25), a Black female who wears a hijab, described an incident where she was walking with her sister and was stopped by a white male who abruptly stopped her to "talk" to her about her religion. As both females declined and began to walk on, this gentleman began to accost them by accusing them of thinking they were "better" than "us." Inherent in this harassing and aggressive behaviour is the message that Muslims must believe their religion is "better" than others; in this case, "us" may refer to the dominant white Christian segment of society. Iman described this incident:

"One time I was walking down the road with me and my sister, and somebody literally stopped us. And they were like, "Can you talk about your religion?" And I was like, "No, I have to go somewhere." And … then they started screaming at us, having a meltdown. I said, "You think you're better than us.""

Dania (BFHIJ19), a Black female who wears a hijab, discussed her experience walking over to a local grocery store to buy milk for her family one evening. She recounts how she was followed by two Black men while walking home. They began to mock her by saying, "Allah doesn't care about you." For Dania, she could not reconcile how two Black men, who "experience the same thing"—that is, anti-Black racist violence and harassment—would inflict the same violence upon her, a Black Muslim female. We can see here that even people from equity-seeking groups who experience overt forms of racialization and racism can harbour Islamophobic and anti-Muslim beliefs and inflict violence. Dania recounts what happened to her:

"I was going into the store; it was actually two Black men … And I was scared, but not for any other reason. But for the fact that I saw them, and they were drunk, and I was scared. I could hear them, like, walking behind me … yelling, like … terrorists and Allahu Akbar … "Allah doesn't care about you." I sprinted home, and I literally never walked to FreshCo again, I don't think, for a year after that. Honestly, now I just think that's insane. Because it's like you could literally experience that exact same thing. Maybe it's not the exact same words you're hearing but you could literally have that exact same experience. I mean, being a Black man … I would not be surprised if you had said that you had racial experiences, like, in your lifetime."

This section's narratives reflect how youth, particularly Muslim females who wear a hijab, have experienced explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the form of harassment, intimidation, and threatening behaviour. CR and AC theorizing demonstrate how racism, coloniality, whiteness, and sexism are endemic in society. When youth were asked who perpetrated these incidents, most indicated these acts were done by white men. Although there was one example where the perpetrators were Black males, the Black female youth in the latter

situation was really appalled that two men from the same racial background would inflict this type of gendered Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism upon her, knowing what it felt like to be racially targeted. This example signals that discrimination must be examined across gender and religious social location, as even racialized people can engage in Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Discussion and Implications

The findings of this chapter illustrate Muslim youth experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. As the previous chapter demonstrated, pervasive essentializations of Muslims and Islam in discourse helps to influence and define societal beliefs and may ultimately be a central antecedent to Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist actions. Significantly, youth described *insidious* and *explicit* forms of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist experiences. Youth narratives illustrate insidious[37] Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the form of stares and surveillance, intrusive comments and questions, particularly about citizenship status, and backhanded compliments. Explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism was demonstrated through verbal assaults, violence and physical assault, harassment, intimidation, and rude and aggressive behaviour. What emerges in their descriptions is that Muslim youth in Canada are experiencing Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence, and this aligns with research that reports similar experiences amongst youth in the United States, Canada, Australia, and across Europe (see Literature Review). CR and AC theorizing was demonstrated through youth narratives that highlighted how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism manifested through whiteness, white supremacy, racism and coloniality in all levels in society. This ultimately led to

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[37] I illustrate these experiences as insidious because youth reported initially feeling unsure about the intent of these action, then later concluding that these were motivated by Islamophobia and anti-Muslim beliefs.

ongoing harm, violence, and psychological stress related to youths' identity, faith, and social location. This is a distinct feature of this study, as literature in the field of Canadian social work has rarely examined Muslim youth experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Although hatred and fear of Islam and Muslims has persisted since well before the Crusades, through these Muslim youth experiences we can gain an understanding about the ways in which these forms of discrimination manifest in Canadian society today.

Youth detailed multiple examples of how they experience insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through white people's stares and surveillance while in public, often in the most innocuous settings, such as bowling and shopping. It is important to note that most of the youth who reported being stared at and surveilled were Black females wearing hijabs and Black males, either alone or with their hijabi mothers. In examining these situations, these are clear examples of how whiteness inflicts insidious anti-Black Islamophobia through aggressive staring and suspicion of Muslim bodies. Prior research has confirmed that Muslim youth in Canada experience violence across a spectrum of systems, and they are often under heightened securitization, surveillance, and racial profiling in schools, across institutions, and in public (Bakali, 2016; Sensoy & Stonebanks, 2009; Sirin & Fine, 2008; Thobani, 2007; Zine, 2012, 2022a). It appears from the findings that insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism against Muslim youth exemplifies how white people and dominant society inflict raced, gendered, and religious forms of violence to oppress and, in this case, monitor Muslim youth bodies.

Muslim females wearing a hijab described how they are often confronted with inquiries surrounding their citizenship status. These include abrupt questions about where they were born, where they are from, or how long they've been living in Canada. Most of the youth who reported these experiences were Black females wearing a hijab, at work, and the questions came from

white patrons. One youth who is a health care provider described how this was an everyday occurrence with the mostly white patients she would encounter at work. This is consistent with research conducted with Muslim health care providers in Canada, who report being negatively impacted by gendered Islamophobia, discrimination, and burnout (Khan et al., 2022). What emerges in these descriptions is that Black Muslim subjects—in this case, females who wear a hijab—are understood to be non-Western and/or not possessing Western nationality, through a combination of their Muslimness (hijab) and Black racial status. Prior discussion on white nationalist Canadian subjectivities suggests that state structures and institutional policies naturalize and elevate white subjects as representative of national identity (Thobani, 2007). Insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism then operate through everyday questions that send the message that Black Muslims are not to be considered "from" Canada. In other words, their hijab and the colour of their skin places them outside of Canadian citizenship.

Common amongst youth were experiences with intrusive questions and patronizing comments from often white and non-Muslims at work, in school, and in public spaces. Youth described how questions and comments reinforced the notion that their faith, lifestyle, and religious practices are different and not normal. What was very common amongst female youth who wear a hijab were surprised statements from others that they had completed their education, were attending university, and were well spoken. These reinforce a belief that intellect, education, and confidence in speaking are surprising attributes because people from their racialized or religious background do not possess intelligence or agency in their lives. This is consistent with discussions on gendered Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism centring heavily on orientalist tropes and stereotypes that position Muslim women as timid, oppressed, unable to attain higher education, and backwards (Razack, 2022; Zine, 2022a). What emerges in these

findings is that Muslim females who wear a hijab experience insidious Islamophobia in the form of comments and statements that reinforce their educational and verbal abilities are surprising and counter to the internalized racist and sexist Islamophobic and anti-Muslim stereotypes and beliefs that these people hold.

Similarly, female hijabi youth described how they've received backhanded compliments directed at their beauty. One youth described how she was told she was pretty for a hijabi girl, while the other was told she'd be prettier without the hijab. In both cases the comments came from white women. What emerges from these examples is that there are specific ways that Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism registers gender through comments and, in this case, compliments that dictate how Muslim women need Western feminist approval and rehabilitated beautification. Indeed, a recent investigation with Muslim female youth by Zine (2022a) has found similar results. Findings from this study suggest that despite their attempts to just live their lives like their peers, Muslim youth are faced with ongoing insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through daily slights, indignities, put-downs, and insults that can be verbal or nonverbal and that portray hostility or bias toward them because they are Black, South Asian, Arab, Muslim, female, and hijabi.

Muslim female hijabis or male and non-hijabi female youth who were in the company of their hijabi mothers described incidents of aggressive behaviour particularly while shopping. In one example, a female youth described her absolute hatred of grocery shopping, because as a hijabi she anticipates rude behaviour from other shoppers or the cashier. A male youth likewise recounted a time where, in grade five, he was at the grocery store with his mother and he was able to notice for the first time what it means for his mother to buy groceries while Muslim. These youth were adamant that these incidents are fuelled by explicit Islamophobia and anti-

Muslim racism. Women wearing hijabs experienced this most intensely because of their visible Muslim status. It appears from these findings that explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism often presents as rude and aggressive behaviour, especially towards hijabi women, while shopping, and these actions were typically committed by white shoppers and employees.

Youth described verbal assaults in the form of attributions of violence, terrorism, and attacks because of their religious beliefs. These involved accusations that Muslims will commit acts of violence, Muslim-majority countries are places of perpetual violence, and that Islam was an abhorrent faith. One youth described how a patient in his workplace, after discovering he was from Pakistan, accused him of being from a country where perpetual violence occurs. The motivation behind these verbal assaults aligns with dominant discourse stipulating that Muslims have a propensity for violence, and this is often conflated with acts of terrorism and violence against women (Farokhi & Jiwani, 2021; Razack, 2022). Muslim youth described how these verbal assaults included accusations that they don't love Jesus and that Christianity was the one true religion. These examples demonstrate how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism are weaponized by religious extremists in society through verbal assaults and accusations that youths' beliefs are wrong, abhorrent, and inferior to Christianity. This is consistent with prior research confirming that a significant portion of non-Muslim Canadians believe that Islamic beliefs and values are problematic (Angus Reid Institute, 2017; Environics Institute 2016; Noor Cultural Centre, 2018).

The most egregious forms of explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism occurred through intimidation and threats of violence. Muslim female youth wearing hijabs described facing insults about their faith, choice of dress (hijab), culture, and threats of physical violence. Additionally, youth described how their aunts and friends' mothers have experienced people

pulling their hijabs and physically assaulting them in public spaces. This is consistent with recent Islamophobic crimes committed against Muslim women wearing a hijab in London in the last few years (see, for example, Rodriguez, 2020). One youth shared a time where she was interrogated and threatened with physical harm by police officers. This is an important finding considering that the most recent statistics indicate that Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, particularly against females wearing hijabs, continues to be the most common religiously motivated hate crime in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Muslim female youth who wear a hijab, many of whom are Black, reported experiencing explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the form of harassment and intimidation while driving and walking. In every instance they described how drivers, mostly white men, used aggressive driving tactics, offensive statements, and hand gestures to intimidate them on the road. This demonstrates the intensity of white males' gendered Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism against Muslim women who wear a hijab while out in public. Indeed, reports that examine crimes committed against Muslims in London and across Canada have found that all the perpetrators were white males (Bilfesky, 2018; Cowan, 2022; McDonald, 2020; Yun, 2022).

What emerges in their descriptions is that while driving and walking, Muslim females who are hijabi and Black, South Asian, or Arab are singled out by white male perpetrators who wish to inflict explicit Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence upon them. It is important to note again that Black female youth who wear the hijab experience the compounding effects of anti-Black/anti-South Asian/anti-Arab racism, gendered Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism. This is consistent with Halabi's (2021) study examining the experiences of Black Muslim youth in schools. Reflecting on the findings of this study, we can conclude it is vital that we recognize intersectionality in addressing discrimination and various forms of Islamophobia.

Implications for Social Work

The findings from this chapter help to advance the profession of social work's understanding of Muslim youth experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. The tenets of critical race and anticolonial theories illustrate the complexity of the experiences of Muslim youth. The findings above demonstrate how race, racism, white supremacy, and coloniality characterize their experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in varying intensities across social location. This also demonstrates the importance of critical race and anticolonial theories as the starting point for examining how their tenets support theorizing in social work practice, research and education.

Examining how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism occur in the life of Muslim youth is vital in the field of social work. In the aforementioned Muslim youth experiences of *insidious* and *explicit* forms of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racism, many of these acts were informed by race, racialization, racism, whiteness, white supremacy, orientalism, and coloniality. The empirical findings synthesized above corroborate the suitability of critical race and anticolonial theories in understanding how racism, white supremacy, coloniality, Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism impact the mental health and wellness of Muslim youth.

Social work must examine how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism not only impact youth generally, but also how this occurs across social location. During the interviews a few youths commented upon how social workers and other helping professionals could support them in their struggles. For example, one youth discussed the importance of helping professionals examining intersectional social locations by stating: "They have to see the intersectionality of Black Muslim problems, like, the unique problems that come from being visibly both of those at the same time." This is important as the findings above illustrate how Muslim females wearing

the hijab are most often targeted, with Black females being the most vulnerable to intense and intersectional forms of harm.

Social work assessments and interventions should thus highlight racialized clients' experiences with historical and ongoing racism, white supremacy, and coloniality (Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022) across social location. Amongst Muslims, this should include the psychological implications of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism on their lives. Indeed, this would require the profession to "move beyond colour-blind approaches and non-performative statements in practice and centre the dismantling of systemic racism and Whiteness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of practice" (Murray-Lichtman & Elkassem 2021, p. 20). The findings above illustrate how Muslim youth are experiencing patronizing comments, rude and aggressive behaviour, and verbal and physical assaults at work, in school, and while busing, walking, and in public. Social work must include analyzing how these experiences negatively impact their health and wellbeing. The importance of capturing these experiences cannot be understated. Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism has implications for both increased mental health and increased substance use issues amongst Muslims living in non-Muslim majority countries (Elkassem & El-Saadi, 2022). Ultimately, this research can encourage social work professionals and service providers to consider the central role that an anti-Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racism approach could play in addressing the mental health of youth facing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

The rationale for this study is to fill the gap in social work research that examines Muslim youth experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through critical race and anticolonial theorizing. Social work research should also examine how systems of oppression—specifically racism, white supremacy, and coloniality—impact racialized communities and

youth, and the related social and emotional implications. Social work research with racialized, Muslim communities and youth should also be guided by their lived experience and local knowledge to overcome oppression. Social work education should also include advancing theorizing within the field from critical race and anticolonial paradigms in examining racialized communities and youth experiences.

Chapter 8: Impact and Coping Strategies

In this chapter, Muslim youth describe the impacts of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in their lives. Muslim youth are exposed to multiple forms of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across media, and they experience insidious and explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism at school, work, and in the community. As youth recalled these experiences during this study, they described how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism have left an indelible mark upon them. As outlined in Chapter 3, this research is guided by CR and AC theory and frameworks with aims to examine how whiteness, white supremacy, racism, coloniality, and orientalism inform the impact Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism has had in their lives.

Research demonstrates that Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism negatively impact their sense of identity, mental health and overall wellbeing (Bakali, 2016; Tahseen et al., 2019; Zine, 2022a), and this was made abundantly clear by the Muslim youths' stories outlined here.

Youth were asked specifically if and how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism impacted their sense of self, identity, and sense of safety. They were also asked how they cope and deal with this issue. Knowing that they live in a world where pervasive Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism exist, youth have found ways to cope. Connections to and support from family and friends has been an important way to navigate Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Talking with and being supported by those who have experienced the similar incidents makes them feel validated. In addition, youth discussed how their faith practices, connection to God, and pride and confidence in their identity are important strengths and resources for managing within the context of societal Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Their responses are presented in the following two sections: 1) the impact of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism,

specifically the responsibility of representation, anticipating a lack of belonging, workplace

discrimination, being prepared for imminent violence, and fear after June 6; and 2) coping with

Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, specifically having friends and family, faith, and

connection to God. Finally, the chapter ends with a discussion of the overall findings and

implications for social work practice, research, and education.

Impact of Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Racism

Representation and Responsibility: "How Will They See Me?"

In the following narratives, youth wonder how others will view them, especially in spaces

where they are the only person of colour and/or hijabi. Youth were hyperaware of negative

essentializations of Black, Arab, and South Asian male and female Muslim identities. Not only

did they anticipate this stereotyping and Othering but they also felt they had a responsibility to

represent racialized communities, Muslims, and Islam in the "best possible way" wherever they

go because if they do anything "wrong" this will be used to further judge people from their race,

culture, and/or religious background.

Sami (BM23[38]) described how being the only Black male, especially one who is often not

assumed to be Muslim, in predominantly white spaces evoked feelings of worry. In previous

chapters, Sami has described how for him his racial identity often supersedes his religious status

in terms of discrimination he receives. He shared that he doesn't have to "worry" about his

Muslim identity; rather, he has to worry how (white) people "see" him as a Black man. This

description reinforces the way that many Black males anticipate that white supremacist

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[38] (A–Arab, B–Black, SA–South Asian, F–Female, M–Male, TRANSM–Trans Male, HIJ–Hijab, NHIJ–No Hijab, Number–Age)

ideologies in predominantly white spaces will be used to essentialize them due to their race before their religion. Sami described:

"I don't have to worry about my, my Muslim identity, because it's not what people will see. Right? I have to worry about, how will they see me as a Black man, right? But the fact [is] that I still feel like all eyes are on me as a Black guy."

Iman (BFHIJ25), a Black female who wears a hijab, shared that when in white-majority spaces where racist, white supremacist assumptions may be prevalent, she feels "more self-conscious" and "more aware" of her actions. As a Black female and visible Muslim, she anticipated that whatever she says or does will be ascribed to her Black and Muslim social location. As anti-Black racism, gendered Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism work to reinforce essentializations of Blackness and Muslimness, she said that anything she does "wrong" will be used to further negative societal stereotypes and tropes. Iman explained:

"I think it made me more self-conscious, more aware of my actions. People are gonna remember what you said. But for me, it was specifically related to how I looked, or how I represented—like, me wearing hijab or me being Black. I just thought, if I do something wrong, oh, oh my God, this is a whole other thing."

Similarly, Khadijah (BFHIJ20), a Black female who wears a hijab, described feeling hypervigilant in majority-white spaces, where she knows anything she does will be used to essentialize Muslims and Islam. She has experienced explicit and insidious forms of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, where negative notions of Muslims and Islam have been wielded against her. She is now afraid that anything that she does that is perceived as negative will be associated with Muslims and Islam. Khadijah explained:

"Yeah, um, I find for sure, I do think, like, oh, if I do this, they're gonna think, oh, it's just because I'm Muslim. So, anything we do, we're like, oh, they're going to start thinking, it's because I'm Muslim."

Kenza (BFHIJ20), a Black female who wears a hijab, described how she felt the responsibility to represent Islam and Muslims in a positive light, especially in majority-white spaces. Similar to the Iman and Khadijah, Kenza has also experienced insidious and explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism fuelled by negative essentializations of Muslims and Islam. Knowing this judgment occurs in such spaces has left her fearing that if she does not constantly represent Muslims and Islam positively, anything negative that she does will be seen as a reflection of what all Muslims are. Kenza described this by saying:

"Um, but as Muslims, you feel so bad, you feel like you have to show up always. And you have to represent other Muslims in the best way possible. Having to constantly show up as the best version of myself, because I want people to think that, you know, I want to be a good reflection of what Muslims were. It's just, it's so hard. "

These youth narratives demonstrate what it feels like to be the only person of colour, Muslim, and hijabi in predominantly white spaces. CR and AC theorizing of youth narratives demonstrate they are aware of the racist, colonial, and orientalist essentializations attached to Black, Arab, South Asian, male and female Muslim identities, and they worry that what they say and do will be used to further judge their race, culture, and religion. Due to this they feel the responsibility to represent these aspects of their lives in the "best possible way" wherever they go. This feeling is particularly intense for Black Muslim female hijabis in white-majority spaces. Conversely, Black male youth, who are often not assumed to be Muslim, are concerned that, in being the "only Black" male in the room, they will be judged and what they say will used to

ascribe further essentializations of Blackness. What is interesting is how youth navigate and respond to how people will see, judge, and essentialize them. One youth discussed how representing Muslims in a positive light may actually help others in workspaces, where she hopes that her being a "good worker" will fuel more positive views of Muslims and Islam. Sadly, while youth understand that their actions should not represent an entire group of people, they are aware that such essentializations are pervasive, particularly in predominantly white spaces. Ultimately, showing up and always demonstrating a positive example of who Black, Arab, and South Asian hijabis and Muslims "actually are" is often overwhelming.

Anticipating a Lack of Belonging "In Whatever Space You're In"

As previous chapters have shown, youth have faced Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across online discourse and in their school, work, and communities. Taken together, these experiences have made them anticipate that they will be made to feel different and judged by white people who have internalized racist, orientalist beliefs about people of colour, Muslims, and Islam. Unsurprisingly, youth reported a "lack of belonging in whatever" spaces they find themselves, especially in those that are predominantly white.

Dalal (BFHIJ20), a Black female who wears a hijab, described feeling this way. Implicit in her comment was that most "spaces" are white-centric and assumedly ascribe racist essentializations of Muslims and Islam. Due to this she anticipates feeling difference, like she doesn't belong at school, work, "or just in Canada in general," and this evokes feelings of hypervigilance and sadness. Dalal described this by saying:

"Um, it definitely, like, hurts … it makes me feel sad … like there's lack of belonging in whatever space you're in, like school … work, or just in Canada in general."

Mohammed (BM21), a Black male, expressed how difficult it was to feel belonging and pride in his identity while living in a society where interpersonal and systemic Islamophobia, anti-Muslim racism, and anti-Black racism exist and make him feel different. He feels living as a Black Muslim male within this context "does nothing to your confidence and your identity." Implicit in his statement below is that living in the context of White Christian supremacist spaces, where "people have these stereotypes about you, this image about you," makes it difficult to feel confident in his identity. Mohammed explained:

"When you see a lot of Muslims being discriminated against, when you're seeing a lot of people of colour being discriminated against, especially with, you know, police brutality, a lot of challenges that Black people are facing, it does nothing to your confidence and your identity. Right, you want to be proud of who you are and when people have these stereotypes about you, this image about you…?"

Ibraheem (AM21), an Arab male, discussed how experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism have made him feel like he doesn't belong anywhere. He was born in the United States, lived most of his life in Canada, and his familial country of origin is Palestine. He implicitly understands that he lives in a country that ascribes to a white Eurocentric nationalist ideology, and this has made him feel different and that he does not belong or have a national identity because he does not do certain activities. For transnational people—those who come from multiple places and often have different traditions and hobbies—living within the context of white Canadian nationalism, they are often made to feel like they can never be a true Canadian because of their racialized and cultural difference. Ibraheem described this by saying:

"I don't do anything that other Canadians do. I don't play hockey. I don't fucking skate. I still call myself Palestinian. I don't really have a national identity. You know, people say, I don't

have a country. In this land, I have to act a certain way to be Canadian. Or to be labelled as Canadian. That sense of not knowing what you should be able to call yourself is very stressful. You know? It's … it's strange to be in."

Amira (AFHIJ22), an Arab female who wears a hijab, described how it's "always a struggle" when she meets "someone new," especially when they are white. Based on her previous experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, she knew that in meeting unfamiliar people she is entering a new exchange that may include racist or orientalist essentializations of her Muslimness and Arabness. Anticipating these possible scenarios evoked feelings of "anxiety" because, as she indicated, the fear of being made to feel different is always in the "back of your mind." Amira shared:

"It's, it's always a struggle … I can't help but deal with [it as] an anxiety. Any, anytime I meet someone new, is all they're gonna think of me that way, or me being different, is it gonna affect the way I have [been] perceived. So, it's always been, I would say, constant anxiety in the back of your mind, what if this is going to happen [or if] this is going to happen."

This discussion with youth revealed that because of pervasive Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in society, they feel like they do not belong in "whatever space" they are in, especially in predominantly white spaces. CR and AC theorizing of youth narratives demonstrates that collectively, youth anticipate being made to feel different due to societal white supremacist, racist, and orientalist essentializations of Black, Arab, and South Asian Muslimness. Moreover, they now anticipate white supremacist–fuelled Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist experiences that will continue to make them feel different, Othered, and inferior, especially when they are the only person of colour and/or hijabi in the room. Black Muslim

youth and females who wear the hijab must face being made to feel different in white-dominant spaces at the intersection of their Black and Muslim identities. For Black females who wear the hijab, Blackness and Muslimness are visibly marked on their body; therefore, they will experience being seen and made to feel differently at the intersections of race, gender, and religious status. Conversely, because Black Muslim males are not often assumed to be Muslim, they must deal with being made to feel different across intersections of race and gender. Arab male are likewise made to feel different based on this ethnicity and nationality. What is different for them is that unless they disclose their faith or are assumed to be Muslim based on their name, they may not feel difference in white-majority spaces based on their Muslimness. This points towards the importance of examining the impact of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through critical race and anticolonial formulations. For these youth, such endemic discrimination intensifies their feeling of disconnection and lack of societal belonging. Ironically, in a country that claims to celebrate multiculturalism and pluralism, it seems its citizens do not internalize this value as a central ethic.

Workplace Discrimination: "It's in the Back of Your Mind"

Youth also described feeling worried about discrimination in the job market and their (potential) workplaces. They understood that they live in a society where endemic racism, coloniality, and white supremacy exists, and these maintain Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism within all spaces and places they encounter, including the workplace. In previous chapters and sections, youth shared their experiences with insidious and explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism and how they now anticipate being made to feel Othered, excluded, judged, and essentialized in white-majority spaces. Here they shared that based on those experiences, the fear of such discrimination in the workplace is always "in the back" their minds and that they imagine

the possibility of it occurring in the future, particularly when applying for or after acquiring a job.

Iman (BFHIJ25), a female who wears a hijab, anticipated that her hijab and embodied Muslimness would impact whether she will get hired for a job and she feared that she won't get hired because of these aspects of herself. In addition to this, she reported feeling like she has to represent Muslims in the workplace in positive light by being a "good worker," so as to contribute to positive essentializations of Muslimness, Muslims and Islam. Iman described this fear by saying:

"If you they see you, they're like, oh … it's in the back of your mind, maybe they're not going to hire you based on how you look. So then, in the future, you're like, I have to show them, like, I am a good worker. And then it opens up more doors for people who look like you in the future."

Aisha (AFNHIJ18), an Arab female who doesn't wear a hijab, feared she will be discriminated against if she decides to put the hijab on in the future. Aisha knows the hijab will ascribe Muslimness to her body, and so in a society with endemic Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, sadly, she also knows she will "experience more prejudice" in the workplace, "because of her religion." Aisha explained:

"I feel like when I'm older … I'm going to experience more prejudice and all of that just because of, like, my religion, especially if I start wearing, like, the headscarf or anything like that, then I feel like it will be harder, even to get a job."

Mohammed (BM21), a Black male, likewise expressed his ongoing fear of and hypervigilance for Islamophobia, anti-Muslim racism, and anti-Black racism in the workplace; it was always "lingering" in his head. He also shared a discussion he had with his parents where he

expressed his fear of how he would be treated after starting a new job. Mohammed described this fear by saying:

"It's definitely all still lingering in the back of my head. I remember even having a conversation was with my parents, and I'm, like, I'm never scared of, you know, getting a job and you know, having a new start, but it's more of how I'm going to be treated, you know, in, in that workplace, in that environment. Right, just being a person of colour. And being a Muslim as well."

These narratives affirmed youths' anticipation and fear of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist discrimination before and after acquiring a job. As youth already had experiences of insidious and explicit discrimination based on their race, gender, culture, and religious status in the past, they imagined the possibility of the same sorts of acts occurring in their workplace. CR and AC theorizing of youth narratives demonstrate how for females who wear a hijab, they anticipate that their embodied and gendered Muslimness will impact their prospects for getting hired for a job. Implicit in their narratives is that they know societal sexism, racism, white supremacy, and coloniality exist and fuel Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist sentiments and action, particularly in predominantly white workplaces. The youths' fears are not unfounded: research has shown that Islamophobia in the workplace is especially prevalent for Muslims in Canada (Canadian Labour Congress, 2019).

Being Prepared for Imminent Violence: "On Guard and Kind of Prepared"

This section's narratives illustrate how youth felt "on guard" and "prepared" for imminent Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence, against themselves and those they love. As previous sections presented, youth have had personal experiences with varying degrees of insidious and explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, and they were very much aware

that violence against Muslims has increased across Canada. Their fear of imminent violence is also fuelled by the knowledge that Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence has occurred in the city in which they live.

Dalal (BFHIJ20) and Khadijah (BFHIJ20), both Black female hijabis, described their hyperawareness of their surroundings and feeling "prepared" for imminent Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence, especially while busing and walking. This fear has caused them to take extra precautions on the bus (sitting at the back) and while walking (avoiding the sidewalk), for their safety. Dalal and Khadijah explain:

"Yeah, I'd say that's when I feel like on guard and kind of prepared and almost, like, hyperaware of the people on the bus and everything. And then just sitting, I usually sit at the back so I can have a good view of the whole bus." (Dalal)

"I just don't feel confident walking alone anywhere. I honestly feel super uncomfortable taking the bus; I just don't like walking on the sidewalk because I definitely get stares. I actually fear for my safety, specifically." (Khadijah)

For Dania (BFHIJ19), another Black female hijabi, fear of imminent violence is fuelled by her intersectional vulnerability to anti-Black racism, gendered Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism. As she explained, she knows that she is vulnerable to someone approaching her not only because of her hijab but also because she is Black. Dania described this by saying:

"I would say that that adds to my feeling unsafe because like, okay, that could happen to me. But also, because I'm a woman, someone could approach me, but then they see I'm a Black woman, and they have more to say to me."

Ibraheem (AM21), an Arab male who previously recounted incidents where his mother was accosted while driving and shopping, said he knew that, just based on the "way she looks,"

his mother's hijab places her at risk of racist white supremacist violence fuelled by Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism even when just getting groceries. Ibraheem shared his worries by saying:

"Like, it's always worrying when she goes out. Even just to get groceries. Um, like, should she go out? Like you just get a little nervous, you know? What if someone doesn't like the way she looks? I should go grocery shopping with her even though I might have an assignment due … like, I might just want to go, just to be beside her."

The youths' responses demonstrate their fear of imminent societal Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence even while simply walking, busing, shopping, and living in their community. Within the context of pervasive explicit and insidious Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racist violence committed against themselves and others, it is not surprising that they feel this way. The most prevalent theme in youth interviews was the fear of gendered Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism against females who wear a hijab, including males' reported fear for the safety of loved ones who are visibly Muslim. CR and AC theorizing of youth narratives demonstrates that this fear occurred across intersections of race, gender, culture, and embodied Muslimness. Black female youth who wear a hijab were afraid they will be targeted based on their race, gender, and religious status, while Arab males and females who don't wear a hijab knew they may not be targeted because they are not visibly Muslim. However, they did express fear for their family members and friends who do wear the hijab.

Fear after June 6: "What if Someone Today Decides that I Don't Deserve to Live?"

The youth described how their fears of imminent violence increased dramatically after the Islamophobic and anti-Muslim terrorist attack that took the lives of the Afzal family in London, Ontario. In the previous section, youth described their fear of imminent Islamophobic and anti-Muslim violence. There is no doubt that the events of June 6 confirmed their worst fears

and left the entire Muslim community in London and across Canada feeling anxious, unsafe, and hyperaware.

Kenza (BFHIJ20), a Black hijabi female, described the precautions she takes while going out for a walk or going to the gym. These included wearing a hood or a baseball cap to conceal her hijab; walking towards traffic so she can see the cars coming towards her; and making ongoing *duaa* (supplications) to Allah (SWT[39]) for her safety. Her narrative illustrated how the events of June 6 have become etched in her mind and have left her wondering "what if someone today decides that I don't deserve to live?" Kenza shared:

"I always make sure to have, like, a hood up. Or I'll wear, like, a baseball cap and then a hood. So, I don't really look like I'm wearing a hijab. I walk in the opposite direction of traffic so that I see the cars coming towards me and they're not behind me. And even as I'm walking to the gym, I'm like, you know making that *duaa* for Allah [to] protect me today. Because I'm like, what if someone today decides that I don't deserve to live?"

A common theme for many of the female hijabis in this study was the added fear of walking on their own after the events of June 6. Alia described how she and her friends "were actually scared to go out walking" on their own. Many of these youth described their hypervigilance and fear for their safety while out increasing dramatically after the London terrorist attack. Alia shared: "I remember it wasn't just me, me and a lot of my friends for a while, we were actually scared to go out walking on our own."

Zaineb (SAFHIJ18), a South Asian female who wears a hijab, expressed additional fear for her own personal safety, particularly in white-majority spaces, because she loves wearing her

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[39] Subhanahu wa ta'ala, Arabic for "The most glorified, the most high," evocation of the creator when mentioning God's name.

"Pakistani clothing outdoors" but she knew that the Afzal female family members were targeted for wearing theirs. She knew that her traditional Pakistani clothing intensified her already racialized hijabi body. Zaineb described this by saying:

"Um, mentally, it was more fear. I think it was also the fact that the family was Pakistani, and they were wearing Pakistani clothing. I believe that was also something that made me really nervous because I love wearing my Pakistani clothing outdoors. But then, after seeing that, that made me really nervous, just kind of being around white people in that sense."

Sami (BM23), a Black male, asked during the interview: if the terrorist attack affirms that "this kind of stuff happens in this city," then what does it mean for his mother, a visible Black female Muslim woman living in London, Ontario? He feared that if his mother went out alone, her visible Black and Muslim status would result in her being a victim of anti-Black racist, gendered Islamophobic, and anti-Muslim racist violence. Sami explained:

"I was thinking, like, okay, this kind of stuff happens in this city, right? This just insane. And when my mom goes out by herself, it's like, is that going to manifest [to make her] a victim … If she's by herself, is someone going to do something crazy?"

Youth responses reflected an increased fear of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim terrorism and homicide after the June 6 attack. After this incident, youth felt a drastic increase in their fears, hypervigilance, and awareness. There was a general sentiment of shock and sadness in the community—that London is a place where Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist terror and homicide can occur. Youth narratives raised the question: if this terrorist attack affirms that "this kind of stuff happens in this city," then what does this mean for them, their family, and friends?

Coping with Islamophobia and Anti-Muslim Racism

Racial and ethnic discrimination poses a significant threat to the development and wellbeing of racialized youth, particularly amongst Muslims (Turcatti, 2018). Given that the participant youth have had ongoing exposure to Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, they discussed how they coped with these issues, including seeking and accepting support from family and friends, practising their faith, having pride in their identity, and keeping a sense of humour. Research affirms that some of these protective factors can help Muslim youth navigate/respond to ongoing oppression in society (Turcatti, 2018).

Having Friends and Family: "I Know I'm Not the Only Person"

Youth shared how they rely on connections with family and friends to help them to cope with their experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Youth asserted that although Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism are difficult, having friends and family who have similar experiences comes with the benefit of knowing it isn't only them experiencing these things. They leaned on family and friends to make sense of and to discuss their experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

Many of the youth described how they relied on their friends and family because, according to them, they can relate to what they are going through. Fatima (AFHIJ20) described how it is helpful to talk to those who have the "same experiences" while processing and coping with her own experiences. What is implied here is that it is important for females who wear a hijab to share their fears and concerns surrounding what it means to be as a visible Muslim woman living in the context of pervasive Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

> "It's always nice to be around people that are experiencing the same experiences as you; it makes you feel less alone, which is always great. My family always helps, like, they're your support system. They're always there for you."

Khadijah (BFHIJ20) similarly stated that having family and friends who have experienced Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism is "something that strengthens" her, knowing she isn't "the only person." She relied on friends for "tips and tricks" to learn how to "deal" with this ongoing oppression in her life. Zaineb (SAFHIJ18) described how, in exchanging experiences with family and friends, she also feels like she's "not alone." Their views reinforce the importance of peer support and connecting with family who have similar experiences for advice. Khadijah and Zaineb explain:

"Speaking to other people who have experienced things that I've experienced is definitely something that strengthens me, I'd say, because I know I'm not the only person and I hear tips and tricks that they kind of use to deal with it." (Khadijah)

"Yeah, um, definitely, family is one of them, just talking it over with my family, talking it over with my friends, and just kind of exchanging our experiences, and just making each other feel like we're not alone." (Zaineb)

For Sami (BM23), he relied heavily on his father's lived experience as a way to cope. He talked about the benefit of having a father who understands what it feels like to be a Black man in a predominately white society and how it was comforting to have his father as a support person because he has also experienced anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism. His example affirms the importance of such support from parents.

"I think, honestly, my dad is a big one, right? Just because he is, like, I can honestly ask him pretty much anything in terms of racist experiences and how to confront them. Like, my dad is very, very aware of, and he's always been aware, since he was much younger, maybe around my age, about being Black in, like, North America, in, like, a predominantly White country."

These youth narratives captured the significance of connections with and support from family, friends, and community to cope with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. CR and AC theorizing of youth narratives demonstrates how talking with and being supported by those (e.g., who are racialized, Muslim) who have experienced the same things (e.g., racism, white supremacy, coloniality) makes them feel validated, strengthens them, and makes them feel like they are "not alone" in their struggles. Collectively, these descriptions reinforce the central value of relatability, validation, and affirmation in coping and making sense of these forms of discrimination.

Faith and Connection to God: "It's Wonderful to Have the Gift of Islam"

Muslim youth affirmed that their faith in and connections to God have been major sources of strength in coping with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. They use their faith to address the anxiousness and fear that comes from their experiences, and this has led to increased pride in their identity and religion.

Kenza (BFHIJ20) drew on her faith in God and love of her religion in dealing with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, and she reported feeling more rooted in and proud of her belief that Islam is a part of her identity. Her narrative demonstrated increased connection with God and religion even though society continues to speak "negatively about Islam." She explained:

> "My Islam has been just, like, the best thing … that I have. When you do experience Islamophobia or you see, you know, people talking negatively about Islam, you're just like, you guys are missing out, like, this is, it's wonderful to be here. It's, it's wonderful to have the gift of Islam."

Issa (SAM21) rejected the notion that "Islam," "his identity," or where he comes for are the reasons he is "less safe in society." His narrative illustrates his firmness in his faith and identity, something he "can't change." His firm belief that this is "what Allah (SWT) wanted" for him is where he draws his strength from. His narrative highlights his resistance and reaffirmation of his religious and cultural identity even though he knows he lives in society where Arabs, Muslims, and Islam are seen as oppressive, barbaric, and/or inferior. Issa shared:

"I would never, like, blame Islam and, like, my identity, or where I come from for being like, less safe in society. Like, that's just, it's who I am. I can't change that. Right? It's what Allah wanted for me, I guess. I mean, that's, that's kind of, that's where my strength comes from."

Similarly, Dalal (BFHIJ20), and Nada (BFHIJ22) expressed increased pride in their hijab, racialized status, and religious beliefs, despite knowing society is not always welcoming to Muslims and Islam. Dalal described how "all this"—Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism—has only made her feel more "solidified" in her identity as a Muslim, which, for her, is a "good thing." While Nada knows that if she decides to remove her hijab it would make her less vulnerable to Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, she also feels affirmed in her identity as a Black Muslim hijabi woman and "would never take off" her head covering. Dalal and Nada share:

"I feel like all this almost, like, makes me feel more solidified in my identity as a Muslim, which is definitely a good thing." (Dalal)

"I feel like I put, like, me being a Muslim first and then everything else second, like me being very true and me being Black. I would never take off my hijab … I like that part of my identity. So, I feel like I'm more confident in who I am. And, like, I wouldn't change it." (Nada)

These youth narratives detailed how their faith practices, connection to God, and increased pride and confidence in their identity even when they are in white-majority spaces serve as strengths in the context of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Even though society and the people around them speak "negatively about Islam" and make them feel like they are different and do not belong, they resist and draw strength through affirming their belief in Islam and their Muslim identity.

Discussion and Implications

In the context of this study, this chapter described how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism have negatively impacted youths' sense of self, identity, and personal safety. They anticipate a lack of belonging, being Othered, and facing discrimination and possible violence in many of the spaces they find themselves, especially when they are the only Muslim, Black, South Asian, and Arab, and/or hijabi female within white-majority places. It is no surprise, based on the experiences they outlined in the previous chapters, that youth have a fear of imminent Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence in nearly every facet of their lives: when they walk, take public transit, are in school, and at work. Muslim youth experiences, responses and coping are consistent with scholarly research on the topic (Rousseau et al., 2015; Tahseen et al., 2019). Connecting with family, friends, and other members of the community were all cited as ways youth cope with these experiences and feelings. Despite the fact they are surrounded by messages and actions that demean their faith and choice of dress (hijab), there were quite a few youths who talked about drawing upon Islam and reaffirming their Muslim identity as a protective factor and way to cope. The findings of this chapter support the central claims of this research, including the importance of critical race and anticolonial theorizing of the social and material impact of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism upon Muslim youth. This approach

centres Muslim youths' lived experience and highlights how systems of oppression constrict Muslim youth in Canada, specifically within the context of whiteness, white supremacy, racism, and coloniality and ultimately how youth respond to the ongoing harm and violence. This study reveals new insights on the impact of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism upon Muslim youth. This is a distinct feature of this study, as there is very little literature examining the impact of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism on Muslim youth within the field of social work.

Muslim youth in the study anticipated that they will experience being "seen" and judged in predominately white spaces, where they often find themselves the only person of colour and/or hijabi. What emerges in their descriptions is that youth were hyperaware that attitudes and discursive forms of gendered Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, as well as anti-Black, anti-Arab, and anti-South Asian racism, will influence how they are judged by others. It appears from the findings that, because of this, they feel the weightiness of representing Muslims and Islam in the best possible way to counter normalized Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in society. They fear and worry their actions will be judged and used to further essentialize their race, culture, and religion. This is experienced for youth across all social locations. For example, Black female youth are conscious that their actions will be used to further essentialize who and what Black, Muslim, and hijabi people are or do. Prior research has confirmed these findings; for example, Zine (2022a) described how youth feel the overwhelming responsibility to represent Muslims and Islam in school, at work, and in the broader community. Youth in this study described how this has an impact on their wellness, sense of self, and identity. Studies by Ahmed (2016), Rousseau and colleagues (2015), and Tahseen and colleagues (2019) reached similar conclusions. Reflecting on the mental health implications of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, youth participants reported being hyperaware of their social location and anxious that

they would say and do something wrong. Sadly, while youth understand that their actions should not represent an entire group of people, Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism has created a hypervigilance surrounding their social location, particularly in predominantly white spaces.

Muslim youth anticipated feeling alienated and a lack of belonging in most places in which they find themselves, particularly in white-dominant spaces. This is consistent with research conducted in smaller towns just outside of London, in which immigrants, racialized, and Indigenous people report discrimination and feeling unwelcome and a lack of belonging (Vaswani & Esses, 2021). A possible explanation for this feeling amongst youth is that they experience and are exposed to Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism across the media, in school, at work, and in the broader community. Youth fear and anticipate that they will be judged through negative essentializations of Muslimness wherever they go, especially in predominately white spaces. This is also consistent with previous studies that examined sense of self and identity implications of Muslim youth in the context of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism (Bakali, 2016; Rousseau et al. 2015; Tahseen et al., 2019). In school, the community, and the workplace, they are on the receiving end of constant comments, questions, and acts of violence that send the message that they are Other and less than. It is no surprise that they anticipate feeling alienated and that they do not belong in these spaces. What emerges from their concerns is that because of what they see online, in their experiences and those of others, Muslim youth anticipate that they *will* be made to feel like they do not belong amongst white people who, they believe, have more than likely internalized racist orientalist beliefs about people of colour, Muslims, and Islam.

For many of the youth, the anticipation of judgment and lack of belonging translates into fear of being discriminated against in the workplace. According to the Canadian Labour

Congress (2019), Islamophobia in the workforce must be addressed. Female youth who wear a hijab are especially fearful that their religious dress will only intensify these experiences. A recent study conducted in Canada, which explored Muslim female hijabi health care provider experiences in the workplace and facing ongoing Islamophobia and burnout, certainly affirms these fears (Khan et al., 2022). The findings in Khan et al.'s study illustrate that youth live in a society where endemic racism, coloniality, and white supremacy exist, and these maintain Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism within all spaces and places they encounter, including at work. In previous chapters, youth shared their experiences with insidious and explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism and how they now anticipate being made to feel Othered, excluded, judged, and essentialized in white-majority spaces. What emerges from these findings is that youth are overcome with the possibility that they will encounter discrimination at work in the future, particularly when applying for or after acquiring a job.

Findings from this research suggest that Muslim youth feel "on guard" and "prepared" for imminent Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence, against both themselves and those they love. Female youth who wear the hijab feel on guard, hyperaware, hypervigilant, and fearful for their safety when out walking, taking the bus, in the store, and in school spaces. Arab males and female youth who do not wear the hijab shared their concern for imminent violence against their hijabi friends, sisters, aunts, and mothers. There is no doubt that visible hijabi women are targeted most often in violent hate crimes in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2022a). Many of the youth described how their social location influenced these feelings. For example, Black female youth understood that they are vulnerable to anti-Black racism, gendered Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism in society. Muslim youths' fear of imminent violence has also translated into the fear that someone will kill them because of their religious affiliation, especially females who

wear a hijab. The events of June 6 marked their worst fears coming true, leaving them to wonder if this could happen to them or their family and friends. One youth described her constant fear and practice of prayer for her safety by asking "what if someone today decides that I don't deserve to live?" Female youth described how they do not walk alone anymore, or if they do, they try to conceal their hijabs by wearing a hat or a hoodie. Muslim male youth described how they accompany their hijabi mothers for fear they will be harmed. A recent research study conducted with Muslim youth wearing hijabs presented similar findings (Alizai, 2017). What emerges in these accounts is that Muslim youth, especially females who wear a hijab, fear they will be killed because they are Muslim, and because they wear a hijab.

Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism pose a significant threat to the identity, sense of self, sense of safety, and overall wellbeing of Muslim youth (Ahmed, 2016; Rousseau et al., 2015; Tahseen et al., 2019). Given that the participant youth have had ongoing exposure to Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, it was important to examine how they cope with these issues. Youth rely upon family and friends for support. For them, having friends and family who have similar experiences comes with the benefit of knowing they are not alone in experiencing these things. Studies by Abo-Zena and Saif (2021) and Al-deen (2019) reached similar conclusions, reflecting the importance of familial support in coping with the psychological impacts of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. It was especially important for youth across social locations to connect with people who experience compounding forms of oppression based upon their intersectionality. For example, one Black male youth described how he has relied heavily on his father's lived experience to cope. Having a father who understands what it feels like to experience anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism in a predominantly white society was vital for him.

Muslim youth described how their faith and pride in their racial, cultural, and religious identities have been major protective factors in coping with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. They use their faith, prayer, and belief in God to address the anxiousness and fear they have surrounding their safety and that of others. Youth described how pride in their identity and culture has been an important coping factor. For example, one Arab male youth described how he works to reaffirm his religious and cultural identity even though he knows he lives in society where Arabs, Muslims, and Islam are seen as oppressive, barbaric, and/or inferior. Studies by Alizai (2017) and Turcatti (2018) amongst Muslim youth similarly reflected the increase in positive religious and cultural identity in the context of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Female hijabi youth described how, although they realize if they took their hijabs off this would certainly reduce their experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, they refuse to do this. In making the decision to maintain their hijab, youths' declarations beautifully illustrate the words of James Baldwin (1989), who proclaims, "You have to decide who you are and force the world to deal with you, not with its idea of you" (p. 6).

Implications for Social Work

The findings from this chapter help to advance the field of social work's understanding of the impact of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism on Muslim youth. Preceding chapters examined of how youth witness and experience Islamophobia in their everyday lives and the serious implications on youths' sense of self, identity, and sense of security. Critical race and anticolonial theories extrapolate the complexity of these implications across youths' intersectional identities and are a key starting point for examining how youth are impacted differently across social location in the field of social work and for developing approaches in social work practice, education, and research.

This research can encourage social work professionals to consider the impact that interpersonal and systemic Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism has on the health and wellbeing of the Muslim clients with whom they work, and there are several practice implications for service providers who work with Muslim youth. Among them is the need to examine and incorporate these impacts in social work assessments and treatment planning. In doing so, it may also be helpful to examine the implications of racial trauma, which refers to the psychological impacts of racism on the lives of racialized people (Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022). Although youth did not specifically use the term "trauma," one can safely say their experiences have left an indelible mark on their lives. Youth reported feeling anxious, hypervigilant, sad, and overcome by the ongoing fear that they will be targeted. Indeed, examining the psychological and mental health implications in the context of ongoing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism should be a priority in social work research and practice with Muslim communities and youth, though this is not a new call to action (Rousseau et al. 2015; Tahseen et al., 2019).

This study will serve as a resource for social work education and practice in informing work with Muslim youth in support spaces. A few youths in this study also explored the ways that social workers, counsellors, and therapists can support them through understanding how Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism impacts them. One barrier for them is their apprehension in working with a non-Muslim and white helping professional for fear they have internalized Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist beliefs based on misinformation and personal bias. For example, Khadijah stated: "I'm not disregarding, like, white therapists, but I do think that sometimes they might not fully understand, like, they might not be there to support me." She

emphasized the importance of helping professionals reflecting on their own Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism and engaging in their own reading, research, and education.

Youth narratives also included recommendations for more racialized helping professionals, specifically Black and Muslim therapists. Youth believed that although white/non-Muslim therapists may have good intentions, there are certain things that they may not understand unless they have lived experience. Basically, youth were looking for helping professionals who looked like them, had similar backgrounds, and who they believed could, based on their own lived experience, validate the impact of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism on their lives. Tools that support social work practitioners to reflect upon their practice, personal, ideological, and professional positionality can be helpful in examining Muslim youth experiences. However, it is also crucial to integrate critical race and anticolonial approaches, which aim to explicitly explore how endemic racism, whiteness, and coloniality influence and characterize youth experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. For example, Béres and Fook's (2019) model for Critical Reflection on Practice (CrOP) invites practitioners to integrate a theoretical lens while reflecting upon systemic issues and personal and ideological positionalities in practice.

Similarly, there is a need for social work education and advocacy to include critical analysis of Islamophobia, anti-Muslim racism, and Muslim youth. Currently there are few research studies and advocacy campaigns in the field of social work that look at these phenomena. Among the rationales for this study was to fill a gap in social work research and examine the impact of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism on Muslim youths' sense of self, identity, and sense of security. In addition to encouraging social workers to get involved actively with advocating and organizing Muslim communities, another great step could be to implement

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recommendations for combatting Islamophobia that emerged from several events that occurred after the London terrorist attack—such as the first-ever virtual summit on Islamophobia (Government of Canada, 2021a). During the summit, attendees and government officials committed to several initiatives and changes, including engaging Muslim communities across Canada in the government's next Anti-Racism Action Program. This was followed by a push from advocacy groups and Muslims across Canada calling for the National Day of Remembrance of Islamophobia. Shortly thereafter, there was a call for passing the Our London Family Act (Government of Canada, 2021b). In London, Ontario, the local Anti-Racism Directorate conducted community consultations to address Islamophobia in the city (City of London, 2021). Feedback included the need for community education with a focus on integrating an anti-racism and anti-Islamophobia lens into education systems.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

This study was undertaken to examine Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through the lived experience of Muslim youth ages 18 to 25 years across intersectional social locations, living in London Ontario. Despite the growing body of empirical and theoretical literature on Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, experiences of Muslim youth in Canada are still underexamined in the field of social work. The present study sought to learn how Muslim youth define and perceive Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism; to identify how youth witness these across popular discourse; to investigate how youth experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in their everyday lives; and to examine the impacts of these on youths' lives. Findings highlighted the multiple social contexts in which Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism are enacted and experienced by Muslim youth. Youth defined and explored definitions of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, and these were correlated with critical race and anticolonial theories. They shared how they witnessed Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in popular discourse and described their experiences in school, at work, and in public, as well as the impacts of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism on their lives. In this chapter, I present a synthesis of the findings in this study. Next, I discuss the limitations of the study. Then I present suggestions for research and future directions.

Overview and Synthesis of the Findings

Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism are embedded within and across various locations and sites that Muslim youth occupy. Individuals participating in the study were able to clearly define and conceptualize Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism as they come to know and experience these on a regular basis. I came into this research believing that critical race and anticolonial tenets were well suited to examining the interconnected nature of Islamophobia,

anti-Muslim racism, racism, whiteness, and coloniality. These assumptions shaped the direction of this study, particularly surrounding the design of the questions. Youths' feedback likewise indicated that these hegemonic systems exist in society and inform and characterize manifestations of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism for the participants. As this study unfolded, the interconnected nature of the narratives within these chapters became clear.

Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism were defined by the youth as distinct yet interconnected. The youth shared how Islamophobia serves as a racist instrument and orientalist ideological tool to ascribe racialized difference upon Muslims and Islam. Specifically, youth narratives illustrated how whiteness, white supremacy, race, racism, coloniality, and orientalism shape and characterize Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Through raced constructions of Muslims, active discrimination is supported and enacted through racialization and racism. Not only did the youth expand our definitions of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, but their narratives also highlighted how Islamophobia informs anti-Muslim racism. Youth described how whiteness and white supremacy position Muslims and Islam as an inferior race and religion. The racialization of Muslimness occurs through ascribing race upon people who are or "look" Muslim, because they wear a hijab, have darker skin, have a beard and/or turban, or wear a cultural garment. The distinction between both Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, connections to race, racism, orientalism, and coloniality have been discussed quite extensively by scholars in the field. Yet having Muslim youth define these in their own words, based on their own experience, was extremely powerful. This speaks to the importance of centring youth knowledge in emancipatory research that aims to shed light on systems of oppression that impact their lives.

It was not a surprise at all that youth had a very long list of examples of discursive Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. As they shared negative characterizations of Muslims and Islam across film, television, social media, and news coverage, there was a direct connection with their conceptualizations of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Youth described how use of Islamophobia as a racist instrument, orientalist ideologies, and negative raced constructions of Muslimness play out in plot lines, social media commentary, online hate, and news headlines time and time again. These racist representations included Muslim men as terrorists, oppressors, and misogynists, and Muslim women as timid, oppressed, and in need of a saviour. What was most interesting was their descriptions of how whiteness and white supremacy ideology plays out through Muslim female characterizations in film and television. For them, Muslim female characters are only seen as normal, liberated, and appealing when they practice white Western ways of living—for example, taking their hijab off. This is another example of how their initial conceptualizations of each term, connections to whiteness, and white supremacy are demonstrated through their identifications of gendered Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in discourse. Indeed, just as Muslim youth are keenly aware of these negative essentializations across popular media, they are also aware of how these ideas manufacture hate, racism, and in some cases violence.

As youth detailed the variety of their experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, many of them pointed to beliefs, attitudes, rhetoric, and white supremacy ideology as the foundation of many of the perpetrators' motivations. Youth also reported that most of these acts of violence were committed by white men and women. As they began to describe the different occurrences, I became aware of a category of very similar events that youth, especially female hijabis, depicted in the interviews. These included stares and surveillance while out in public,

comments, questions, and awkward compliments they would receive from peers, customers, strangers, and co-workers. The youth recounted how at first, they were not sure what the intention of these actions were, but quickly realized they were insidiously Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist in nature. What was sad, yet not surprising, was the amount of explicit Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racist violence youth experienced in their lives. These included verbal assaults, physical assault, harassment, intimidation, and rude and aggressive behaviour. The most intense forms of violence were experienced by youth who wear the hijab and Black females experiencing oppression at the intersection of anti-Black racism, gendered Islamophobia, and anti-Muslim racism. I noticed as they shared these events, many of them did so with a sentiment of defeat, surrender, and hopelessness.

The cumulative impact of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism upon Muslim youth was made apparent throughout the interviews. As they described their exposure to orientalist, racist essentializations of Muslim and Islam across media and experiences with aggression, rude behaviour and violence, many of them were overcome with sadness, frustration, and disgust. As detailed in the findings chapters, youth narratives illustrated the compounding social and emotional effects of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism on their sense of self, identity and personal safety. They anticipated a lack of belonging, Othering, discrimination, and violence in many spaces. Living within their consciousness was the assumption that when they are the only Muslim, Black, South Asian, and Arab, and/or hijabi female within a white-majority place, they will feel Othered and different. Walking, busing, shopping, and just being a Muslim youth comes with the constant fear that they may be a victim of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racist violence. Despite the fact they are surrounded by messages and actions that demean their faith, though,

youth find ways to cope through going to family and friends for support and drawing upon Islam and their Muslim identity.

The overview and synthesis of the findings chapters demonstrates the interconnected nature of Muslim youth experiences of discursive and active discrimination and These findings support the central claims of this research, which include the importance of centring youth knowledge in research as well as integrating critical race and anticolonial theorizing in examining Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. This study has underscored the importance of examining how youth witness and experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim online and in public. The findings demonstrate these spaces are not always safe. In examining their experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in these spaces, we can contribute significant information to the growing body of knowledge on this topic. These are all distinct features of this study, as literature examining Muslim youth experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism is limited in the field of social work.

Limitations

As with any interpretive qualitative research, this study has a variety of limitations. The findings have limited generalizability to Muslim youth across age, geographical and social locations, as it explored the lived experiences of 23 youth specifically living in London, Ontario. Although I attempted to recruit youth across social location, this methodology does not allow for each subgroup member to necessarily be representative of their larger racial and ethnic populations. For example, I was only able to recruit one South Asian female, therefore I cannot claim that her experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism can be applied to the larger South Asian community. Similarly, while youth age range in this study represents a broad

spectrum of youth development, generalizations about youth opinions and experiences cannot be made about Muslim youth ages 18–25 across Canada.

Another limitation, which I anticipated, is researcher bias and changing cultural Muslim youth landscapes. Regardless of my stated positionality that included my bias and personal and community motivations at the onset of this project, reflexivity about my personal experiences with Islamophobia and interpretation through this project was ongoing. Researchers must always contend with their own biases and interpretations and be cautious that their own assumptions do not become institutionalized, regardless of their affiliation with the group being interviewed (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2011; Thomas, 1993). Although Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism have been enduring features in Western society, formulations change both contextually and historically. Constant change in cultural spaces is cited by CE scholars as a possible limitation in research. For example, in utilizing a CE methodology, there are possible limitations if the researcher does not have a deep understanding of the changes and shifts in social-cultural systems and social anthropology (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2006; Thomas, 1993). Therefore, the experiences of Muslim youth within their local cultural context is not necessarily representative of other communities in which similar populations find themselves.

Suggestions for Research and Knowledge Sharing

Although this study was extensive, there are additional questions that merit further exploration and research. The first would be to examine Islamophobia within each subgroup to interrogate intersecting experiences with myriad oppressions more closely. For example, there were common themes amongst Black female Muslim youth who experienced compounding forms of oppression across social location. It would be beneficial to specifically examine Black Muslim female youth experience with anti-Black racism, gendered Islamophobia, and anti-

Muslim racism. Similarly, youth discussed the benefits and privilege that come with Muslim youth who are white passing, as they do not experience Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism unless they disclose their faith or their names are Muslim sounding. Yet some youth offered examples of white female friends who began experiencing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism after wearing the hijab. This points to the importance of further examination into how markers of Muslimness vary in their intensity—in this case, the hijab dislodged white racial privilege amongst white female converts. Further exploration of the experiences of white-passing Muslims and white female and male Muslim converts would be beneficial.

During the interviews there were youth who shared experiences of facing oppression such as anti-Black racism, homophobia, and transphobia, across multiple spaces, including within Muslim-majority environments. Two Black female youth described how they've experienced anti-Black racism at the hands of other Muslims, in the masjid and community spaces. One youth who identifies as a trans male described how they do not feel accepted within their Muslim community due to transphobia, and sometimes within LGBTQ spaces due to Islamophobia. Similarly, a youth who identifies as bisexual described how although she has the full support of her parents and a few friends, she feels like she cannot be her full self in any space. For example, in white-majority spaces she cannot be fully Muslim, and in Muslim-majority spaces she cannot be bisexual. These examples illustrate that although Muslims are the recipients of religious oppression, some can also perpetuate anti-Black racism, homophobia, and transphobia. This merits further exploration to examines the experiences of Muslims from LGBTQ2S+ and Black communities who face oppression within Muslim communities.

During the interviews, youth suggested ways to share the findings, raise awareness, resist and offer education and support to Muslim youth and their parents, particularly through social

media, Muslim community events, and broader community education. The youth believed that using social media, infographics, and video could be incredibly useful and accessible in disseminating the information collected this study to raise awareness. The general sentiment among youth was that the study findings may resonate with other Muslim youth who have had similar experiences and make non-Muslims aware of the issues of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in their community. Muslim youth thought the study findings should also be used to develop education, support programs and events for the Muslim community, with a special focus on youth. Their belief was that these initiatives would help create spaces where community members, particularly youth, could collectively speak about their experiences and help others feel like they are not alone. One youth discussed the need for Muslim community leaders to affirm the importance of looking after youth living in these contexts and the impact this has had on their sense of self, safety, and identity. As well, youth mentioned the importance of providing targeted presentations and workshops for parents who are looking to understand and support their second-generation Muslim youth. As outlined previously, Muslim communities across the country have begun to mobilize against Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through community organizing and advocacy. The content from this study can offer the unique perspectives of youth as these communities continue to resist against these forms of discrimination across Canada.

It is vital to continue to incorporate youth voices in conceptualizing and theorizing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, including in examining hegemonic systems of whiteness and white supremacy to explore how racist ideology is endemic, how race, racism, and racialization contributes to constructions of Muslims and Islam, and how coloniality and orientalism position white Eurocentric ways of knowing as superior and Muslims and Islam as

inferior. Theses hegemonic systems of oppression are foremost in fuelling of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in public and online. Ultimately, suggestions for further exploration of the experiences of Muslim communities, individuals, youth and children with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism would be beneficial in contributing to this burgeoning area of research, particularly in Canada and in the social work profession.

Closing

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
اَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ
إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ
اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ
صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

In the name of the Creator,
All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the worlds
The All-compassionate, the All-merciful.
Master of Day of Judgement
You [alone] do we worship, and You [alone] do we ask for help
Guide us to the straight path
The path of those whom You have favored
Not of those who earned your anger nor those who have gone astray.
(Surah Al Fatiha, 1:1)

بسم الله الرحمان الرحيم
اللِّهُم انفَعنِي بِمَا عَلَّمتَنِي وَ عَلِّمنِي مَا يَنفَعنِي

In the name of Creator, most Gracious, most Compassionate.
O, Creator! Make useful for me what You taught me and
teach me knowledge that will be useful to me

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Appendix A: Research Instrument

Proposed Opinion Questions

- *How would you define anti-Muslim racism?*
- *How would you define Islamophobia?*
- *Have you witnessed Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in discourse? (social media, schooling, community, news, movies, shows etc.)*
- *How have you witnessed acts of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism?*
- *Do you think racism and white supremacy contributes to anti-Muslim racism and Islamophobia? If yes, how?*

Proposed Experience questions

- *Have you ever experienced Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through comments? (social media, schooling, community, news, movies, shows etc.)*
- *How have ever experienced acts of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism?*
- *How does being [social location i.e. Black, South Asian] shape your experiences with anti-Muslim racism?*
- *How has this impacted your life? Identity? Sense of self?*
- *How have you dealt with this? How did you cope with this?*
- *What are the protective factors that have helped you deal with these issues?*

Proposed Feedback Questions

- *How should this information be shared with others? (Muslim youth, wider community?)*
- *How can we mobilize this knowledge, community sharing? Advocacy? Change?*
- *What suggestions do you have around initiatives that could be taken up to address anti-Muslim racism and Islamophobia?*
- *Is there anything else relating to the issues of anti-Muslim racism and islamophobia that you would like to discuss that I have not asked about?*

Appendix B: Email Script for Recruitment

Subject Line: Invitation to participate in study that aims to Examine Anti-Muslim Racism Through the Lived Experience of Muslim Youth

My name is Siham Elkassem, I am a local Muslim community member, social worker, researcher and PhD candidate at the School of Social Work at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador. I am currently completing my Doctoral research on the topic of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism under the supervision of Dr. Sobia Shaheen Shakih. This project has been funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Canada Graduate Scholarship - Doctoral, the Joseph Bombardier Doctoral Fellowship

If you live in London Ontario, identify as Muslim and a youth between the ages of 18–25, from Black, South-Asian, and Arab backgrounds you are invited to participate in a study titled: *Examining Anti-Muslim Racism Through the Lived Experience of Muslim Youth.* With your help, we hope to learn more—and more deeply—about your experiences with and perceptions of anti-Muslim racism and Islamophobia, and your thoughts on how we can address this issue in our community. The objective of this study is to gather much needed information about this issue from the perspectives of Muslim youth in the London community. You will be asked to participate in a 1-1.5 hour long interview that will be audio recorded. Participation in the study is not anonymous because the researcher will know your identity. Demographic information (gender, gender identity, racial and ethnic category, age) will be collected and identified in this study. Interviews will be conducted online through zoom until the MUN COVID-19 research restrictions are lifted, at this point you will be given the option to participate in person if you choose.

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

If you have received this email through a Muslim organization, you are a member of, your participation in this study is not a requirement of your membership, your participation is voluntary. If you are interested in participating or have any questions, please contact Siham Elkassem by email or phone.

I appreciate your time and consideration!

Thank you,

Siham Elkassem MSW, PhD (c)
selkassem@mun.ca
(519) 670 – 9115

Appendix C: Counselling Supports

After-Hours Support
- CMHA Virtual Crisis Counselling: 5 to 9 pm, email: studentcrisisappointment@cmhamiddlesex.ca. Support line 519-601-8055 (available 24/7)
- Good2Talk Post-secondary Student Helpline: call 1-866-925-5454 (available 24/7)

Non-crisis supports
- Black Youth Helpline: 1-833-294-8650; 9:00 am to 10:00 pm everyday, www.blackyouth.ca
- Tandem (formerly CIT/Crisis & Intake): (519)433-0334 for 24/7 crisis calls + scheduled phone or video appointments for children/youth/families
- Reach Out Crisis Support: (519)433-2023 or 1-866-933-2023, www.reachout247.ca for web chat access
- Hope For Wellness (24/7 Indigenous Helpline): 1-855-242-3310, www.hopeforwellness.ca for web chat access (offers immediate mental health counselling and crisis intervention to all Indigenous peoples across Canada, services available in English, French, Cree, Ojibway, and Inuktitut)
- Naseeha: 1-866-627-3342, www.naseeha.org (provides a confidential helpline for young Muslims to receive immediate, anonymous, and confidential support over the phone from 12pm – 12am, 7 days a week)
- Youth Line: 1-800-268-9688 (phone), 647-694-4275 (text), www.youthline.ca (live chat) - (offers confidential and non-judgemental peer support for 2SLGBTTQQI youth through telephone, text and chat services. Get in touch with a peer support volunteer from Sunday to Friday, 4:00PM to 9:30 PM.)

Online resources
- Yellow Couch Collective (small monthly subscription)
- BIPOC Mental Health (Yahoo page)
- Crisis Text Line by texting TALK to 686868.
- The National Association of Friendship Centres (support to Indigenous communities across Canada).
- The Trevor Project offers mental health resources for Black LGBTQIA youth through phone, chat and text crisis services.
- Biigajiiskaan: Co-delivered by St. Joseph's Health Care London (St. Joseph's) in partnership with Atlohsa Family Healing Services, Biigajiiskaan, a referral-based mental wellness program offers culturally-safe, specialized care for Indigenous people with serious mental illness.

VOLUNTEER RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

ARE YOU FROM LONDON ONTARIO, AGES 18 – 25, FROM BLACK, SOUTH-ASIAN AND/OR ARAB BACKGROUNDS?

WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES AND/OR THOUGHTS ABOUT ISLAMOPHOBIA AND ANTI-MUSLIM RACISM?

WE ARE ASKING YOUTH TO PARTICIPATE IN A 1-1.5 HOUR IN-PERSON OR ZOOM INTERVIEW THAT WILL BE AUDIO RECORED.

MY NAME IS SIHAM ELKASSEM I AM A LOCAL MUSLIM COMMUNITY MEMBER AND SOCIAL WORKER AND THIS STUDY IS PART OF MY DOCTORAL THESIS.

IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS WILL BE AN OPTION ONCE MUN COVID-19 RESEARCH RESTRICTIONS ARE LIFTED. PARTICIPANTS WILL BE PROVIDED WITH AND REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THE COVID-19 DAILY ASSESSMENT TOOL BEFORE IN PERSON INTERVIEWS.

THE PROPOSAL FOR THIS RESEARCH HAS BEEN REVIEWED BY THE INTERDISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE ON ETHICS IN HUMAN RESEARCH AND FOUND TO BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY'S ETHICS POLICY. IF YOU HAVE ETHICAL CONCERNS ABOUT THE RESEARCH, SUCH AS THE WAY YOU HAVE BEEN TREATED OR YOUR RIGHTS AS A PARTICIPANT, YOU MAY CONTACT THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE ICEHR AT ICEHR@MUN.CA OR BY TELEPHONE AT 709-864-2861.

AFTER RECEIVING THIS RECRUITMENT POSTER PLEASE CONTACT SIHAM ELKASSEM IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING OR HAVE ANY QUESTIONS SELKASSEM@MUN.CA 519-670-9115

Appendix E: Information Letter and Consent Form

Information Letter

Title: Examining Anti-Muslim Racism Through the Lived Experience of Muslim Youth

Researcher:
Siham Elkassem MSW, PhD (c)
Doctoral Student: School of Social work
St. John's College, Memorial University of
Newfoundland
Email: selkassem@mun.ca
Phone: 519-670-9115

Supervisor:
Dr. Sobia Shaheen Shaikh
Assistant Professor: School of Social Work
St. John's College, Memorial University of
Newfoundland
Email: sshaikh@mun.ca

Dear Participant,

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled: *Examining Anti-Muslim Racism Through the Lived Experience of Muslim Youth.* My name is Siham Elkassem, I am a social worker, Muslim community member, researcher, and PhD candidate at the School of Social Work at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am currently completing my Doctoral research on the topic of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism under the supervision of Dr. Sobia Shaheen Shakih. This project has been funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Canada Graduate Scholarship - Doctoral, the Joseph Bombardier Doctoral Fellowship

This information letter is part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. It is entirely up to you to decide whether to take part in this research. If you choose not to take part in this research or if you decide to withdraw from the research once it has started, there will be no negative consequences for you, now or in the future. It also describes your right to withdraw from the study. In order to decide whether you wish to participate in this research study, you should understand enough about its risks and benefits to be able to make an informed decision. This is the informed consent process. Take time to read this carefully and to understand the information given to you. Please contact the researcher, Siham Elkassem if you have any questions about the study or would like more information before you consent.

Purpose of Study: The aim of this research is to examine Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism through the lens of Muslim youth ages 18 – 25 across gender from Black, South Asian, and Arab communities. Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism should be understood through the lived experience of Muslim youth, to fully capture its social implications. You will be asked to share your experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism.

What You Will Do in this Study: You will be asked to participate in a one-and-a-half-hour interview and will be offered two interview options: 1) in-person, 2) or online through Zoom video conferencing. Zoom participants will need to turn off their camera if they do not wish to be video recorded. In-person interviews will be an option once MUN COVID-19 research restrictions are lifted. At which point participants will be provided with and required to complete a COVID-19 daily assessment tool prior to arriving for in-person interviews. In person interviews will be conducted by the researcher in their private practice office. Interview will be recorded, transcribed and handwritten notes will be taken. The goal of the interview will be to gain insight into your experiences with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. During the interview you may choose to answer any questions the researcher asks and/or abstain from answering others. A transcription and link to the zoom recording (if you choose this option) of this interview will be provided to only you, for your verification and approval. You may choose to alter or discard any of your responses to the interview questions upon review of your transcript. You will have 1 month to let the research team know of any final changes and/or to withdraw from the study.

Withdrawal from the Study: Your participation in this study is voluntary and you can withdraw from the study if you choose for any reason, you may do so at by emailing the researcher. If you choose to do so during the interview you may ask the interviewer to stop the audio recording at any point. If you decide to withdraw after the collection of data and within one month of the receipt of your interview transcription all data (recordings, transcripts, participant codes, and field notes) associated with your involvement will be deleted electronically, and all hardcopy material will be shredded and disposed of. The cut-off date for removal of data will be one month after the receipt of your interview transcript. After this point it will be difficult to remove your data from the final analysis. You will be provided with the final research report and will have the right to request changes in any of the quotes or material they feel that might identify or compromise them in any way.

Possible Benefits: By participating in this study, you will be contributing valuable knowledge to assist the researcher in exploring Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. This research will help to inform social work practice with Muslim youth; the development of community-based programming and assist in informing policy surrounding Muslim populations. You may benefit personally by sharing your opinions and experiences around the topic. You will be given the opportunity to reflect upon and share what could be done about this issue, specifically to think about advocacy and community-based initiatives to address Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in London, Ontario.

Possible Risks: Although there are no significant anticipated physical risks associated with participating in this study, there are potential psychological and emotional implications. You may experience discomfort, anxiousness and upset following the interview. You will have been provided with a list of mental health and crisis resources in a separate document as part of your general recruitment package, which includes the information and consent form. If you have not received this please contact Siham Elkassem to provide you with a copy.

Confidentiality: All information you supply during the research will be confidential. The ethical duty of confidentiality includes safeguarding participants' identities, personal information, and data from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure. Your name or other identifying information will not appear in any report or publication of the research. However, this study will include demographic information: i.e. social location, gender, age, and ethnic/cultural background. All documents collected for the purpose of research will be anonymized. The interview will be audio–recorded (in person or through zoom) and

handwritten notes will also be taken. Zoom participants will need to turn off their camera if they do not wish to be video-recorded. All the data collected from you will be safely stored in a locked cabinet, and in electronic format on a password protected computer in the office of the researcher Siham Elkassem for a period of ten years after the completion of the study. Following ten years after the completion of the study, the handwritten notes, electronic transcript and files will be destroyed. During the study only the supervisor will have access to the transcriptions of the interview but will not have access to any identifying information of the participants.

Limits to confidentiality: As a social worker and member of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers I am aware of the legal obligations of my duty to report and if there are any indications of this I will do so. If there are reasonable grounds to suspect a person is at risk for harm the researcher has the duty to report this information. This may include if: someone discloses a clear risk to an identifiable person or group of persons; if there a risk of serious bodily harm and/or death; and any overall suspicion of imminent danger. This can also include a *serious disclosure* such as**:** talk of suicide, self-harm, harm to others, criminal activity and overall situations that would be considered a disclosure of imminent harm or legal violations committed against other. Research should strive to comply with Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans (TCPS), as such "in exceptional and compelling circumstances, researchers may be subject to obligations to report information to authorities to protect the health, life or safety of a participant or a third party, a community, or the general population" (*TCPS 2* [2018], 5.1).

Anonymity: Participation in the research will not be anonymous. Anonymity refers to refers to collecting data without obtaining any personal, identifying information. While collecting and collating the data the participants identity will be known to the researcher only. Because participants' gender, racialized status and age will be identified in this study, there is a very small possibility that participants could be identified by people known to them. Although the Muslim community in London is not very small, this is a real possibility. The researcher will follow ethical best practices in this regard: assign pseudonyms, take out all identifying information, provide transcripts to participants to review, and report aggregated data where possible during dissemination to mitigate this risk. The research data – including interview and field note data – will be coded (removing direct identifiers from the relevant data and replaced with a code). The code key with be stored in a password-protected file (only accessible to the researcher) and kept for ten years after the research is completed. Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure your anonymity. You will not be identified in publications without your explicit permission.

Recording of Data*:* Depending on the interview option you choose; data will be collected through audio and/or video recording. In person interview will be audio recorded, while Zoom interviews will be both audio and video recorded. Zoom participants will need to turn off their camera if they do not wish to be video-recorded.

Use, Access, Ownership, and Storage of Data: The researcher on this project will have full access of the data. In addition, the researchers PhD supervisor, Dr. Sobia Shaikh, School of Social Work, Memorial University will have access to the transcript to support the completion of this PhD study. Once the study is completed, all hardcopy data including field journal, will be stored in the researcher's office in a locked cabinet. All electronic data will be password protected and stored on a hard drive, and on the researcher's computer. Consent form will be stored separately from data. As per Memorial University's policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research, all primary data resulting from scholarly activity must be retained for a

MINIMUM of 5 years. All hardcopy materials will be digitalized, shredded and discarded, five years after the project is complete. The electronic data will remain on a password protected hard drive for ten years after the project is completed. At the end of 10 years, all data will be erased, and the hard drive will be reformatted (if still usable, to be reused).

Third-Party Data Collection and/or Storage: Data collected from you as part of your participation in this project will be hosted and/or stored electronically by Zoom Videoconferencing and is subject to their privacy policy, and to any relevant laws of the country in which their servers are located. Zoom is compliant with PIPEDA/PHIPA: Canadian Data Protection regulations, including the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) and, locally, the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA).Further details about this can be located here: https://explore.zoom.us/docs/doc/PIPEDA_PHIPA%20Canadian%20Public%20Information%20Compliance%20Guide.pdf. Therefore, anonymity and confidentiality of data may not be guaranteed in the rare instance, for example, that government agencies obtain a court order compelling the provider to grant access to specific data stored on their servers. If you have questions or concerns about how your data will be collected or stored, please contact the researcher and/or visit the provider's website for more information before participating. The privacy and security policy of the third-party hosting data collection and/or storing data can be found at: https://explore.zoom.us/en/privacy/?zcid=1231

Reporting of Results: Each participant will receive the final report of the study from the researcher. The results of this study along with the final dissertation will be deposited at the Memorial University Research Repository Social Work Thesis Collection: https://research.library.mun.ca/view/theses_dept/SchoolSocialWork.html. The archived data on this repository will remain anonymized. Any other publications that emerge from this dissertation will be available and accessible on my academia edu page: https://mun.academia.edu/SihamElkassem and researchgate: https://www.researchgate.net/

Questions:
You are welcome to ask questions before, during, or after your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact the reseracher: Siham Elkassem, email: selkassem@mun.ca, or her supervisor Dr. Sobia Shaheen Shaikh
Assistant Professor: School of Social Work, email: sshaikh@mun.ca

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Thank you,

Siham Elkassem MSW, PhD (c)
selkassem@mun.ca
(519) 670 – 9115

Consent Form

Your signature on this form means that:

- You have read the information about the research.
- You have been able to ask questions about this study.
- You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
- You understand that you are free to withdraw participation in the study without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.
- You understand that if you choose to end participation **during** data collection, any data collected from you up to that **point will be destroyed**.
- You understand that if you choose to withdraw **after** your data collection has ended, your data can be removed from the study up to one month after receiving your interview transcript.

I agree to be video-recorded   ☐ Yes ☐ No
I agree to the use of direct quotations   ☐ Yes ☐ No

By signing this form, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

Your Signature Confirms:

☐ I have read what this study is about and understood the risks and benefits. I have had adequate time to think about this and had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.

☐ I agree to participate in the research project understanding the risks and contributions of my participation, that my participation is voluntary, and that I may end my participation.

☐ A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   Date

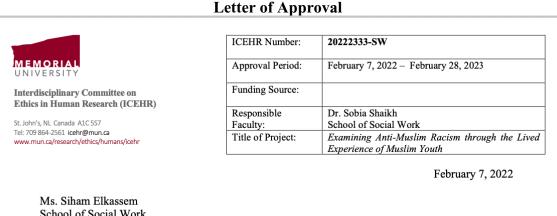**Researcher's Signature: Siham Elkassem**
I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that
the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the study, any potential risks of the study
and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

_____   _____
Signature of Principal Investigator   Date

Letter of Approval

ICEHR Number:	**20222333-SW**
Approval Period:	February 7, 2022 – February 28, 2023
Funding Source:	
Responsible Faculty:	Dr. Sobia Shaikh School of Social Work
Title of Project:	*Examining Anti-Muslim Racism through the Lived Experience of Muslim Youth*

MEMORIAL
UNIVERSITY

Interdisciplinary Committee on
Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR)

St. John's, NL Canada A1C 5S7
Tel: 709 864-2561 icehr@mun.ca
www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans/icehr

February 7, 2022

Ms. Siham Elkassem
School of Social Work
Memorial University

Dear Ms. Elkassem:

Thank you for your correspondence addressing the issues raised by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) for the above-named research project. ICEHR has re-examined the proposal with the clarifications and revisions submitted, and is satisfied that the concerns raised by the Committee have been adequately addressed. In accordance with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2)*, the project has been granted *full ethics clearance* for **one year**. ICEHR approval applies to the ethical acceptability of the research, as per Article 6.3 of the *TCPS2*. Researchers are responsible for adherence to any other relevant University policies and/or funded or non-funded agreements that may be associated with the project. If funding is obtained subsequent to ethics approval, you must submit a Funding and/or Partner Change Request to ICEHR so that this ethics clearance can be linked to your award.

The *TCPS2* **requires** that you **strictly adhere to the protocol and documents as last reviewed** by ICEHR. If you need to make additions and/or modifications, you must submit an Amendment Request with a description of these changes, for the Committee's review of potential ethical concerns, before they may be implemented. Submit a Personnel Change Form to add or remove project team members and/or research staff. Also, to inform ICEHR of any unanticipated occurrences, an Adverse Event Report must be submitted with an indication of how the unexpected event may affect the continuation of the project.

The *TCPS2* **requires** that you submit an Annual Update to ICEHR before **February 28, 2023**. If you plan to continue the project, you need to request renewal of your ethics clearance and include a brief summary on the progress of your research. When the project no longer involves contact with human participants, is completed and/or terminated, you are required to provide an annual update with a brief final summary and your file will be closed. All post-approval ICEHR event forms noted above must be submitted by selecting the *Applications: Post-Review* link on your Researcher Portal homepage. We wish you success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

James R Drover

James Drover, Ph.D.
Vice-Chair, ICEHR

JD/bc

cc: Supervisor – Dr. Sobia Shaikh, School of Social Work

Appendix G: Community Organization Request for Letter of Support

Community Organization Request for Letter of Support

November 4th, 2021

Dear Respected Board Members,

My name is Siham Elkassem, I am a local Muslim community member, clinical social worker and researcher. I am currently completing my PhD studies at Memorial University in Newfoundland. I am also a part-time faculty member at Kings University College School of Social Work. As many of you know I am completing a research study which aims to examine anti-Muslim racism through the lens of Muslim youth ages 16 – 25 across various social locations. Although some data has been collected in Canada in the last ten years; very few studies interrogate anti-Muslim racism from the vantage point of Muslim youth.

My entry into this study comes with the understanding that I have a responsibility and Amanah to fulfill this work with integrity and humility. My intention of collecting data on this topic is to increase evidence in the academic literature on this topic and use this information to support local community endeavours, such as program development, grant applications and overall community capacity building. I hope that you can provide me with a letter of support for this project.

Please find attached a template for you to use. The turnaround time for my ethics application, which requires these letters, is within the next three weeks. If you could provide me with this letter on your respected institutions letter head it would be greatly appreciated.

JAK,

Siham

ISLAMIC CENTRE
OF SOUTHWEST ONTARIO

MEMORIAL
UNIVERSITY

Date: November 5, 2021

Re: Letter of Support for Proposed Study

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express full support of the proposed study that aims to explore the following:

"Examining Anti-Muslim Racism Through the Lived Experience of Muslim Youth"

The goal of this exploratory study is to examine anti-Muslim racism through the lens of Muslim youth ages 16 – 25 across various social locations. Although some data has been collected in Canada in the last ten years; very few studies interrogate anti-Muslim racism from the vantage point of Muslim youth. After the most recent Islamophobic terrorist attack the took the lives of the Afzal family in London, Ontario we are concerned for the safety of our community members. As a Muslim community organization, we are alarmed by the dramatic increase of Islamophobia
over the last two decades. In Ontario anti-Muslim racism has almost doubled (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2012); while London has seen a 46 percent rise in hate motivated crime (Bogdan, 2021).

We have supported the principal investigator, Siham Elkassem, in her previous research with Muslim's in London, as she consistently elicits feedback from respected faith leaders and community members from within our organization. We believe that the findings from this study may offer more insight around this topic and elicit vital information that will greatly benefit our community organization. The data from this research will inform community-wide workshops, publications, and reports that will be presented to Muslim organizations, broader community as well as institutions working with Muslim populations. Overall, this will also provide a means to raise the needed awareness of this issue across communities in London, Ontario.

Sincerely,

Najey Mankal
President
Islamic Cenre of Southwest Ontario

951 Pond Mills Road London Ont Canada N6N 1C3 Tel 519 668 2269

Appendix I: London Muslim Mosque Letter of Support

LONDON Muslim MOSQUE
Serving the Community since 1964

Date: November 17, 2021

Re: Letter of Support for Proposed Study

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express full support of the proposed study that aims to explore the following:

"Examining Anti-Muslim Racism Through the Lived Experience of Muslim Youth"

The goal of this exploratory study is to examine anti-Muslim racism through the lens of Muslim youth ages 16 – 25 across various social locations. Although some data has been collected in Canada in the last ten years; very few studies interrogate anti-Muslim racism from the vantage point of Muslim youth. After the most recent Islamophobic terrorist attack the took the lives of the Afzal family in London, Ontario we are concerned for the safety of our community members. As a Muslim community organization, we are alarmed by the dramatic increase of Islamophobia

over the last two decades. In Ontario anti-Muslim racism has almost doubled (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2012); while London has seen a 46 percent rise in hate motivated crime (Bogdan, 2021).

We have supported the principal investigator, Siham Elkassem, in her previous research with Muslim's in London, as she consistently elicits feedback from respected faith leaders and community members from within our organization. We believe that the findings from this study may offer more insight around this topic and elicit vital information that will greatly benefit our community organization. The data from this research will inform community-wide workshops, publications, and reports that will be presented to Muslim organizations, broader community as well as institutions working with Muslim populations. Overall, this will also provide a means to raise the needed awareness of this issue across communities in London, Ontario.

Sincerely,

Bilal Rahhal

Chair of the Board of Directors

London Muslim Mosque

Appendix J: Muslim Resource Centre for Social Support and Integration Letter of Support

November 18, 2021

To whom it may concern,

Re: Letter of support for the "*"Examining Anti-Muslim Racism through the Lived Experience of Muslim Youth"* project.

As the Executive Director of the Muslim Resource Centre for Social Support and Integration (MRCSSI), and the Lead Researcher at the Centre for Culturally Integrated Responses (CCIR) of MRCSSI, I am writing in support of the proposed study *"Examining Anti-Muslim Racism through the Lived Experience of Muslim Youth"*. The MRCSSI is a not-for-profit, charitable, anti-violence and social support agency that has been promoting family safety and wellbeing within London's diverse immigrant communities with a focus on Muslim communities. MRCSSI was established as the outcome of a framework of collaborative initiatives between ant-violence agencies and the London Muslim community to address and respond to the gaps of services and supports for women and children impacted by family violence. It was established in January 2009 and today, MRCSSI is recognized provincially, nationally, and internationally as a highly responsive and innovative organization in developing culturally-integrative responses for family violence and social issues facing these populations. A core focus of MRCSSI work is addressing and responding to the risk of violence and ensuring the safety of women and children, thus striving to foster families and communities free of violence. Furthermore, our services are grounded in the Culturally Integrative Model as the overarching umbrella. The Culturally Integrative Family Safety Response (CIFSR) recognizes the unique context of these populations, and the diverse factors that interplay and intersect to perpetuate, oppress, and disadvantage women and girls, increasing their vulnerabilities on the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. The model is culturally-informed and based on collaboration through engaging and bringing diverse services to coordinate and support individuals, families, and communities. This model is strength-based within a trauma and violence informed lens, while embedding cultural humility in an intersectional and ecological framework. MRCSSI core values, mission, and vision thrive to foster safe, strong and healthy individuals and families in caring communities through developing individual, families, and communities' capacity in promoting family safety and wellbeing.

The proposed project is an exploratory study that aims to examine anti-Muslim racism through the lens of Muslim youth ages 16 – 25 across various social locations. Although some data has been collected in Canada in the last ten years; very few studies interrogate

111 Waterloo Street, Suite 101, London, Ontario N6B 2M4 Tel: 519-672-6000 Fax: 519-672-6200 www.mrcssi.com

anti-Muslim racism from the vantage point of Muslim youth. After the most recent Islamophobic terrorist attack that took the lives of the Afzal family in London, Ontario, we are concerned for the safety of our community members.

We have supported and collaborated with the principal investigator, Siham Elkassem, in her previous research with Muslim's in London. We believe that the findings from this study will offer more insight around this topic and elicit vital information that will greatly benefit our community. The researcher, Siham Elkassem, aims to disseminate the research findings through community-wide workshops, publications, and reports that will be presented to diverse Muslim organizations, broader community as well as institutions working with Muslim populations. Overall, this will also provide a means to raise the needed awareness of this issue across communities in London, Ontario.

Mohammed Baobaid

Executive Director,

mbaobaid@mrcssi.com ;

Phone: 519-6726000, ext. 301

Appendix K: Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans Course on Research Ethics Certificate of Completion TCPS 2

PANEL ON RESEARCH ETHICS
Navigating the ethics of human research

TCPS 2: CORE

Certificate of Completion

This document certifies that

Siham Elkassem

has completed the Tri-Council Policy Statement:
Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
Course on Research Ethics (TCPS 2: CORE)

Date of Issue: **17 February, 2021**