

Running Head: HOW MUSLIM STUDENTS ENDURE AMBIENT ISLAMOPHOBIA

**HOW MUSLIM STUDENTS ENDURE AMBIENT ISLAMOPHOBIA ON CAMPUS AND
IN THE COMMUNITY: RESISTANCE, COPING AND SURVIVAL STRATEGIES**

Recommendations for University Administrators, Faculty, and Staff on How to Support Muslim
Students' Social Well-Being and Academic Success

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BA (Hons) Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies, KwaZulu Natal University, South Africa, 2001
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A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction

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HOW MUSLIM STUDENTS ENDURE AMBIENT ISLAMOPHOBIA

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

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ABSTRACT

This study critically explores Muslim students' experiences on campus and in the community and identifies the opportunities, barriers, and constraints in students' academic and social relations with peers, university personnel and communities at large. The study provides practical recommendations grounded in evidence for university administrators, faculty, staff and other stakeholders in the areas of service delivery, policy, programs, and educational curriculum development and instruction. The study utilizes a constructivist grounded theory methodology informed by semi-structured interviews of 32 Muslim students in undergraduate and graduate programs as data collection methods. Ambient Islamophobia was uncovered as the central phenomenon. I use a group of theoretical categories, subdivided into properties and dimensions, to illustrate my theory. These theoretical categories are further regrouped into five themes, which illustrate: (1) the ambient and endemic nature of Islamophobia on campus and in the community; (2) the causal conditions of ambient Islamophobia and the processes by which Muslim students become aware and contextualize the complex and multilayered Eurocentric and Orientalist ideologies, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors that entrench Islamophobia; (3) the impacts/ consequences of ambient Islamophobia that affect Muslim students cognitively, affectively and behaviorally; (4) the coping and resistance strategies Muslim students develop to counter ambient Islamophobia and achieve social well-being, academic success; and (5) the longing for belonging, while confronting expectations held about Canada and studying at the university. Understanding the processes and foundations of ambient Islamophobia can be used by stakeholders to develop more inclusive policies, programs and classrooms to support the social and academic success of Muslim students on campus.

Keywords: Islamophobia, racism, Canada, universities, post-secondary

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For a Muslim like me, showing gratitude is a central tenet of my faith, as Allah (SWT) says in the noble Quran: *لِنَفْسِهِ يَشْكُرُ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ وَمَنْ لِلَّهِ اشْكُرْ أَنْ* ... Any who is grateful [unto Him] is but grateful for the good of his own self, Suratul Luqman 31, verse 12.

Therefore, I want to show my infinite gratitude to a group of genuine human beings who walk the talk of truth. These are dedicated friends, family, mentors and leaders who are ethically committed to service. I am grateful to these companions because they have been here for me at a time when others have crushed my dignity and tried to make me quit and doubt myself.

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My journey has not been easy, to say the least. As a black man, an adult, a Francophone with English as an additional language, a parent, a Muslim and visible minority student, I experienced the same kinds of discrimination and prejudice Muslim students have reported in this study. This happened while I worked with a previous dissertation committee, at other times during my grad journey, and even while serving as a human rights officer on campus. Even now, I marvel at the critical mass of the dominant culture professorate I encounter who still think Africa is a monolith, view Islam with ignorance and prejudice, and who view me through a deficient lens, supporting me only for virtue signaling or other instrumental purposes

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In Chapter One, I situate my study in the local and global context of prejudice and discrimination in general, and against Muslims, in particular. In addition, there is also emphasis on the historical and ideological foundations of prejudices and discrimination, especially with reference to the broader “multicultural” context of Canada and the current scholarly discourse on religion and race relations. Further, in this chapter, I discuss the intersections of prejudice and discrimination with race, gender, and religion, particularly on Canadian university campuses and how these factors are impacted by the on-going legacies of colonization, decolonization, globalization, and white privilege and supremacy. Finally, I ask a set of core and secondary sub-questions to guide my study.

1.1. Background: Positions of the Researcher

I usually advise my students to never humiliate the person they intend to educate. However, I seldom disclose that I learned this truth in the aftermath of a harsh beating I endured in a Parisian cafeteria. My aggressor, an older white boy, called me the ‘N’ word. That day, while anger was burning down my usual forgiving self, I intentionally used sarcasm to humiliate my aggressor: “Did you call me ‘N’? ...My friend, do you know that among the 53 countries in Africa, there is no group (ethnic or tribe) called ‘N’”? I remember the white boy walking on me, his face was bloody. Before the lights exploded in my head, I thought I heard people around laughing; or, maybe it was the sirens from the ambulance....

I begin by reflecting on some of my personal experiences of prejudice and discrimination because I believe these provide context to my journey, especially researching Muslim students’ experiences of prejudice and discrimination on the university campus and community. To embark on such a journey, I first reflected on my position as a researcher, discussed the problem under study with reference to some of the experiences of prejudice and discrimination of certain minorities in Canada; and finally, outlined the purpose of my study, my research questions, and the significance of my inquiry.

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As a Black heterosexual male often violated in my dignity and most of the time, physically or psychologically beaten in front of hostile and indifferent white crowds, I conceive of myself as the usual social and historical victim and target of injustice and oppression. Ironically, I have found, in the work of Ashley Crossman (2018), how my experiences of social oppression feeds on the relationships of “dominance and subordination between categories of people in which one benefits from the systematic abuse, exploitation, and injustice directed toward the other” (p. 1). I am also an un-invited guest on the unceded territories of the Lekwungen speaking people, and particularly the Songhees, Esquimalt, and WSANEC, whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. The First Nations people are the original inhabitants of Canada, which numerous white governments have attempted to annihilate (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015).

I am also from the so-called ‘Global South’: one of those ‘Africans’ that Franz Fanon (1952) in his book, *Black Skin, White Mask*, describes as black outside and white inside. Fanon – whom I ethically disagree with – argues that those ‘Africans’ like myself have a ‘colonized mind’, because we may have internalized attitudes of our cultural inferiority derived from the white colonization of our lands and bodies. I am also a Muslim, and as such, an insider-outsider researcher whose many identities and affiliations will certainly influence my PhD research.

As a Black African from the ‘Global South’, born into a blend of African and Muslim cultures, I am also described by some as from ‘collectivist cultural dimensions and worldviews founded on group and family values (Mutua, 1995 & 2008; Okere, 1984; Kiwanuka, 1988; Wiredu, 2001). I believe that such collectivist cultural worldviews also influence my approach to this study. My philosophical paradigm is indeed rooted in the African concept of ‘Ubuntu’, premised on the concept of our common humanity and responsibility towards each other as human beings belonging to groups and social networks. As ‘Ubuntu’, I conceptualize my life as only meaningful because it

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is intricately dependent on my relationships with other beings, and the understanding that the spiritual and physical worlds are interconnected. I am part of a local and global ‘WE’. As human beings, we justify, explicate and validate each other’s realities and places in the world and in the continuous flow of time, humanly conceived of as past, present, and future, or into the questions of who we are, have been, will become, and have become. Ubuntu, as I conceive it, is also about peace, respect of human rights, human dignity, and social justice: the only sustainable undertakings for our survival as human beings, interconnected to everything else.

My first encounter with research on Muslim’s experiences of prejudice and discrimination in North America occurred during my work as a research assistant to Dr. Minelle Mahtani, then an affiliate to the former Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society. As a research assistant to Dr. Mahtani’s study on *Ethno-racial and religious group representations in the Canadian media post-September 11th*, my responsibilities included the recruitment and organization of focus groups with ethnocultural diverse participants in Vancouver. This experience first informed me about the realities of minorities, and especially of Muslim minorities, and their misrepresentation in the post-September 2001 Canadian and North American media (Mahtani, 2001).

Throughout the years, I have continued to learn and engage, intellectually and professionally, with the issues of prejudice and discrimination in society and in academia. I have designed and facilitated numerous educational curricula, trainings, and panels for various community, academic, and federal and provincial government audiences on a wide variety of anti-oppression, anti-racism, and diversity and inclusion topics. As a human rights educator and social justice instructor embedded in academia, my mandate has also included the education of university communities – students, staff, and faculty among others – about prejudice, human rights discrimination and harassment, power, privilege, equity, fairness, intercultural communication and

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conflict, diversity in the workplace and inclusion. This has been an undertaking of mine for the past twelve years at the time of writing.

I believe these experiences have helped me develop an in-depth understanding of Muslim students' experiences with prejudice and discrimination on Canadian university campuses and communities, as described in the *problem section*. As Freire (1970) states, this understanding or conscientization will also help me "to unveil the world of oppression and through the praxis commit [myself] to its transformation" (p. 36). The problem section also highlights the gaps in the current research and forestalls the purpose of the study and the key research questions I will be asking throughout my exploration of Muslim students' experiences of prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community.

However, in engaging in this study, I am also aware of the likely impacts of my positionality as an insider/outsider (Mercer, 2007) on my study, including that of my personal experiences, beliefs, worldviews, values, and my many intersecting identities as a Muslim, a black heterosexual cisgender man, an immigrant to Canada, and a current 'Canadian citizen'. As Dei (2005) rightly says, "our subjective identities and political locations inform how we produce knowledge and come to interpret and understand the world" (p. 5). Research, I concede, is indeed interpretive and can't be immune to the researcher's individual experiences. Therefore, I concur with Denzin & Lincoln (2005) that,

All research is interpretive; it is guided by the researcher's set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied. Some beliefs may be taken for granted, invisible, only assumed, whereas others are highly problematic and controversial (p. 22).

1.2. Problem Under Study

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The problem under study is Muslim students' experiences of prejudice and discrimination on Canadian university campuses and communities. Fiske (1998) argues that prejudice and discrimination, whether in their form of racism, ethnocentrism, religious bigotry, gender-based, xenophobic, homophobic, misogynistic, are prevalent in all human societies. Keeping in mind that religious prejudice and discrimination also intersect with the issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and others, this section first presents a brief overview of the experiences with prejudice and discrimination of different minority groups in Canada (Indigenous people, Asian, Blacks, Jews, Muslims in general) before focusing mainly on the Muslim students' experiences in Canadian university campuses and communities. The section also includes a brief survey of some of the studies and grey literature conducted by some university administrations to grapple with prejudice and discrimination as an institutional phenomenon; some salient gaps in the research; and the significance of the study.

1.2.1. Brief Overview of the Experiences of Different Minority Groups in Canada

Prejudice and Discrimination Against Indigenous People in Canada

Prejudice and discrimination against the Indigenous people in Canada are a well-documented, ongoing, socially exclusive phenomenon (The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). Some writers argue that Indigenous peoples' particular experiences of prejudice and discrimination, especially social, legal, institutional racial and cultural discrimination, deserve a special reference in the formation of the Canadian state and identity because of its rootedness in history, colonization, race and other intersections such as gender (Cooper, 2013; Loppie et al., 2014; Sinha et al., 2011; Timmons, 2013). Brockman (2013) adds that Indigenous peoples' experiences of prejudice and discrimination in Canada is also 'consistent with the conceptualization of old-fashioned prejudice' (p. ii). She found in her study, that some white participants still believe

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that Indigenous people are inherently inferior. Such racist attitudes, she argues, are imputable to those researchers who failed to denounce white Canadians' overall prejudice and discrimination toward Indigenous people and their ongoing colonization of Indigenous bodies and lands. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) rightly describes this treatment as an ongoing physical and cultural genocide of Indigenous people, in *What We Have Learned*:

Principles of Truth and Reconciliation:

For over a century, the central goals of Canada's Indigenous policy were to eliminate Indigenous governments; ignore Indigenous rights; terminate the Treaties; and, through a process of assimilation, cause Indigenous peoples to cease to exist as distinct legal, social, cultural, religious, and racial entities in Canada. The establishment and operation of residential schools were a central element of this policy, which can best be described as "cultural genocide" (p. 6).

Prejudice and Discrimination Against Asian People in Canada

Prejudice and discrimination against Asians people in Canada have their roots in the country's industrial development, especially during and after the construction of the railways (1881-1923), and the Second World War (1939-1945). The Chinese head tax, for example, was part of the procedures of the Chinese Immigration Act of 1885 – an institutional racist policy to control and limit Chinese immigration to Canada and limit family reunification, between 1885 and 1923 (Canadian Encyclopedia, 2013). In addition to their long-suffering of racism and economic discrimination in Canada, Japanese Canadians were apprehended, detained, and dispossessed of their homes and businesses in 1942 by the Canadian government.

In 2010, a MacLean's magazine publication stirred public indignation for its racist views of Asian students. The article, "The Enrollment Controversy", by Stephanie Findlay and Nicholas Köhler's (2010) argued that Asian students' focus on only studying and not socializing with other Canadians compromised Canadian values of acceptance and integration. Among their many

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detractors, Heer et al. (2012) found that these authors represented racist rhetoric like those portrayed in the anti-Muslim racism and anti-Semitic discourses. Asian students, especially East and South Asian international students, many researchers report, experience systemic prejudice in North American and particularly on Canadian university campuses (Houshmand & Spanierman, 2014; Kohatsu et al., 2011). Houshmand & Spanierman (2014) report that the common experiences shared by these students are: feeling excluded and avoided on campus; ridiculed for their accent; rendered invisible because their contribution in the classroom is unwanted or disregarded; their values and needs are disregarded by their white peers; and “their personal characteristics are often ascribed according to racial and cultural stereotypes” (p. 380). They add that these students also experience structural barriers that restrain them from obtaining visas or permits to travel to Canada and other Western countries.

Prejudice and Discrimination against Black and Jewish people in Canada

Prejudice and discrimination against Blacks (Mugabo, 2016) and Jews (Kassis & Schallie, 2013) are also crude realities in Canadian society. The contemporary intersecting issues of racial and religious prejudice and discrimination against Blacks and Jews are rooted in the history of slavery, colonization, and the Holocaust. Mugabo (2016) and Weinfeld (2005) argue that prejudice and discrimination can be sometimes embedded in the institutions and systems. According to the 2017 *Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism*, racism against Black people “is micro (as seen in day-to-day interactions) and it is structural (as seen in laws and policies that govern this city” (City of Toronto, 2017, p. 4) in addition to being “in policies and practices embedded in Canadian institutions that reflect and reinforce beliefs, attitudes, prejudice, stereotyping and/or discrimination that is directed at people of African descent...[This] is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and colonization here in Canada” (p. 14). The Quebec Charter of Values epitomizes

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such systemic issues (Benhadjoudja, 2015) because it legitimizes prejudice and discrimination against Blacks, Jews and especially Muslims in the province. A 2014 international comparative study, *prejudice on campus: an international comparison on social, cultural, and religious intergroup attitudes*, by Kassis & Schallie (2014), corroborates these views, especially in relation to the experiences of prejudice and discrimination of Jewish students on university campuses in Canada and Europe.

According to Kung (1986), the oldest form of prejudice is indeed religious prejudice which is often played out in internecine conflicts within and between groups: the Crusades between Christians and Muslims, the Inquisition within Christian groups, the Western imperialism and colonialism of different societies in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, among others (Batson & Burris, 1994). For example, Allport (1979) concedes that the enslavement of Black Africans to the Americas was justified based on prejudicial biblical references to Noah and his son Ham – whom, according to these biblical scriptures, may have been cursed to be forever the ‘servant of servants’.

Prejudice and Discrimination against Muslims in Canada

Ali et al. (2011) define religious prejudice and discrimination against Muslims as Islamophobia:

An exaggerated fear, hatred, and hostility toward Islam and Muslims that is perpetuated by negative stereotypes resulting in bias, discrimination, and the marginalization and exclusion of Muslims from social, political, and civic life (p. 9).

Islamophobia or prejudice and discrimination against Muslims has been on the rise since the events of September 11, 2001 (Aslan, 2011; Hepple & Choudhry, 2001; Eid & Karim, 2011; Kunst et al, 2012; Macklin 2001; Nagra, 2011). This recrudescence is propagated by political rhetoric, physical attacks against Muslims, mosque vandalism, government profiling, Qur’an burning, Ultra-right movements, and even murder against Muslim people in Canada (Alizai, 2017). For example, the

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January 29, 2017 attack on the Centre Culturel Islamique de Québec in Quebec City – where a gunman killed six and wounded eight innocent worshippers – epitomizes this state of affairs in Canadian society. Kutty (2017) argues that the current rhetoric from Quebec, Canada and the US have indeed conceptualized Islamophobia as the new “socially acceptable form of bigotry... manifested in discrimination and even violence” (p. 1). Paperny (2016) also reports a recrudescence in the number of police-reported hate crimes targeting Muslim-Canadians. These, she noticed, have more than doubled over a three-year period (2012-2014). A 2016 study by the Canadian Race Relations Foundation confirms these trends, as it found that “only 24 percent of French-Canadians and 49 per cent of English-Canadians had a positive view of Muslims” (Kutty, 2017, p. 5). According to Kassis & Schallie (2014), these “biases and hostile attitudes against Muslims are the result of social processes that encourage ethnocentrism and prejudice formation” (p. 144). Many authors think these attitudes towards Muslims are part of a wider conspiracy theory. Saunders (2009, 2012), for example, argues that such a conspiracy is based on a myth of widespread assumptions and suspicions about Islam in both Europe and North America and the widely held beliefs about ‘Islam’ being incompatible with ‘Westerns’ societies and values.

Ashrif (2002) and Mugabo (2016), however, caution against generalizing Muslims. Muslims, like Asians, Jews, and Indigenous people, are not a homogenous group. Mugabo (2016) offers one clear distinction between Muslims, especially with reference to Black Muslims, and points to the disturbing reasons underlying these distinctions:

Muslim Black people have never occupied the same category of humanity as their Arab co-religionists. Since Religion is one key marker of the Human, Arab Muslim subjects, however much they have been reviled in Western culture in the Saidian sense, have remained intelligible as Human. Black subjects, however, could not be read properly as Muslim, because doing so would make them Human and thus unslavable... Black people’s experiences of Islamophobia are thus distinct (Mugabo, 2016, p. 166).

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Islam, as an imagined threat, has often also been misunderstood and demonized by Canadian politicians like former Prime Minister Harper who claimed, “the major threat is still Islamism” (Kilpatrick, 2011, p. 1). Recently, Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard strongly opposed the official adoption of 29 January as an Anti-Islamophobia Day in the province (Radio-Canada, 2018) under the pretext that the province already has other provisions in place to commemorate all forms of racism and hate crimes. Previously, Couillard led his government to pass Bill 62, which Allison Hanes (2017) of the Montreal Gazette decried as “a racist, sexist, disgraceful law”. Among the critics of this law, three bishops¹ in Quebec also denounced the bill and argued that the “Niqab ban could put Quebec Muslims at risks” (Folkins, 2017). Bill 62, according to most critics, targets Muslims and curtails Muslim women’s rights to wear a niqab or burka under the false pretense that their faces need to be seen by public servants, bus drivers or teachers (Steuter-Martin, 2018). Michael Bryant, Executive Director of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA), argues that

In the current socio-political climate, Bill 62 only leads to even greater xenophobia and prejudice against a minority group of Muslim women who are already stigmatized and stereotyped to no end. These guidelines do nothing to change this reality. There is no justification for the state to discriminate against one religion by targeting a small group of women within it under the guise of state religious neutrality (Steuter-Martin, 2018, p. 1).

Another Canadian politician, Kellie Leitch, former candidate for the federal Conservative Party of Canada leadership, argued that all new immigrants and refugees should be screened for their commitment to ‘Canadian values’ (Zimonjic, 2017, p. 2). She also proposed the creation of a ‘tip line’ for reporting those people found with ‘non-Canadian values’. Eid & Karim (2011) argue that this unfortunate association of all Muslims with extremism, especially through constant media usage of the terms ‘Islamic terrorist’, ‘Islamic extremist’, and ‘Islamic radical’, “has consequences

¹<https://www.anglicanjournal.com/articles/niqab-ban-put-quebec-muslims-risk-say-provinces-bishops/>

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in behaviours of officials and others who systematically discriminate against Muslims” (p. 4).

Gardner (2017) argues that the resistance of Canadians to view the Quebec shooting as a terrorist attack was because it was perpetuated by a white person – Alexander Bissonnette, who never been charged with terrorism – and the moniker of terrorist is thought to be primarily held by Muslims. Despite Prime Minister Trudeau’s efforts to describe the attack as a terrorist act, many Canadians continue to uphold prejudiced behaviours and attitudes only towards Muslims as terrorists.

Desmond Cole (2015) makes the point that ‘Islamicism’ – which he likens to Islamophobia – is not the real threat, but subtle racism is:

Our unacknowledged assumptions, and our language about human diversity are better indicators of racism and discrimination than the impolite outbursts we seem so prone to recognizing. The clumsy expressions of hatred on local university campuses this week are like weeds — we can tear out the unsightly offshoots that pop up, but ultimately, we have to address the problem at its root. (p. 3).

Prejudice and Discrimination Against Muslim People Around the World

Religious bigotry, especially in the form of prejudice and discrimination against Muslims is a prevalent phenomenon worldwide. Sukarieh & Tannock (2016) argue that religious bigotry attitudes and behaviors are inscribed in a so-called “de-radicalisation” movement of Muslims and Islam worldwide, which attempt to suppress Muslim identities in order “to create a more ‘orderly’, ‘pure’ or ‘just’ society, of ‘simplified world views’ in which ‘certain groups or social conditions are seen to constitute a threat’, and as ‘a growing readiness to pursue and support far-reaching changes in society that conflict with, or pose a direct threat to, the existing order” (p. 31).

This secularization agenda is the case in many countries in Europe and North America. In France, for example, Riemer (2016) noticed that “Muslim repression is ideologically grounded in three linked keywords: secularism (*laïcité*), republicanism, and feminism” (p. 3) and that the ‘burkini ban’ “was only the latest and most absurd Islamophobic assault endured by Muslims in the

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country” (p. 1). In Norway, the case of Anders Behring Breivik illustrates a visceral prejudicial attitude and behavior towards Muslims and Islam. To justify his massacre of 77 people (and injury of at least 319), Breivik argued that Muslims are taking over Europe and that European leaders “have sold out to "Marxism", which ... is bent on the destruction of western civilisation” (Brown, 2011, p. 3).

In North America, the *New York Times* reports that the current Trump administration has framed Islam as an enemy ideology and predicted a historic clash of civilizations” (Simon & Benjamin, 2017, p.1). Merica (2017) adds that president Trump’s specific anti-Muslim rhetoric and executive orders banning of Muslims originating from certain countries are clear articulations of Islamophobic beliefs and attitudes. Prejudice against Muslims and Islam is indeed rampant among US lawmakers. For example, Barker (2011) reports the scandalous views of a local Councilwoman and a Chair of the Orange County GOP, Deborah Pauly, as saying: “I know quite a few Marines who would be very happy to help these terrorists to an early meeting in paradise” (quoted in Johnson, 2011, p. 50).

1.2.2. Prejudice and Discrimination Against Muslims on Canadian University Campuses

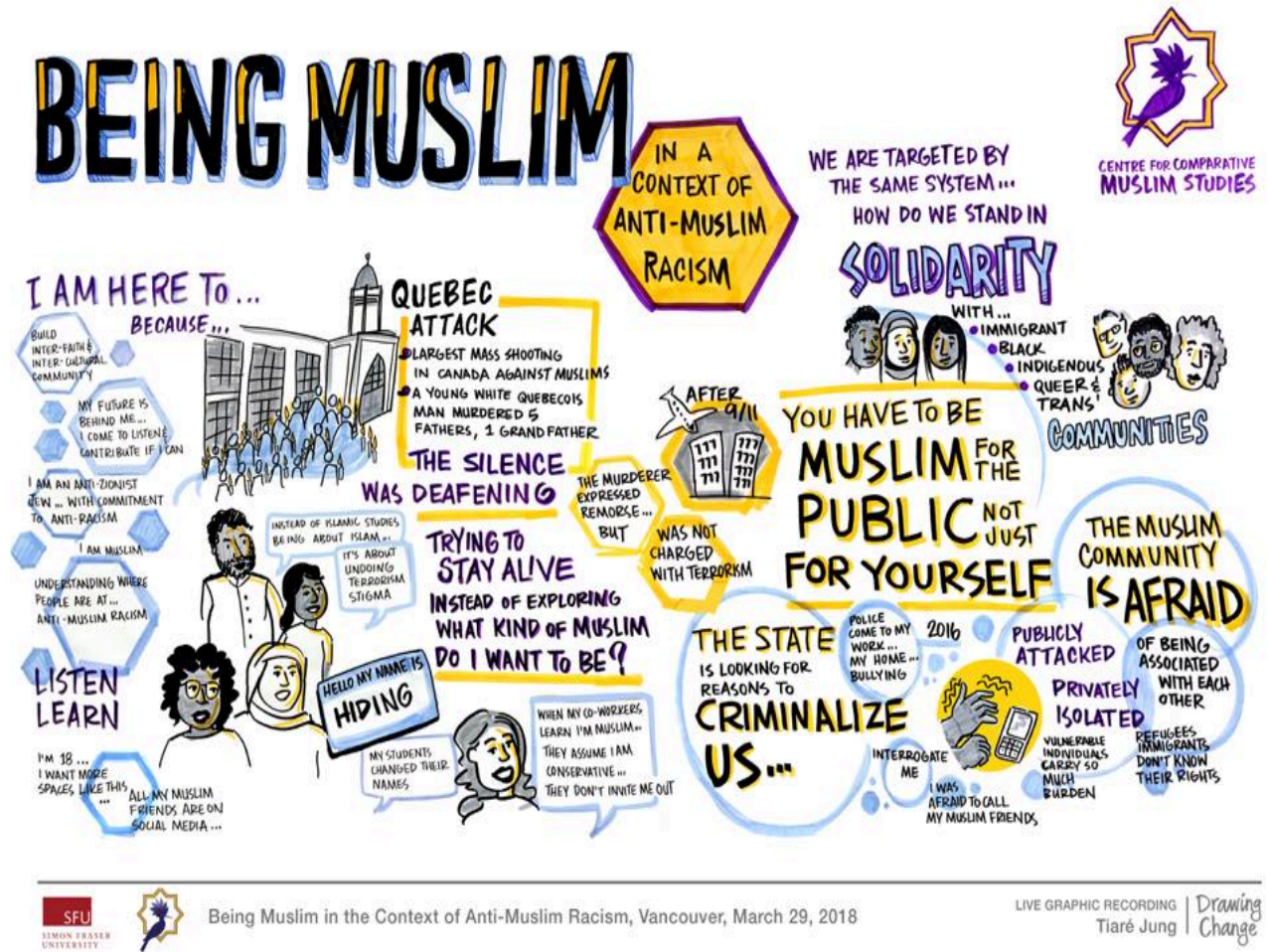
Prejudice and discrimination against Muslims (students, staff, and faculty) as part of the religious student body in North America, and Canada in particular, is prevalent (Aune & Stevenson, 2017). Some writers report that prejudice and discrimination are a pervasive reality on Canadian university campuses (Boyd, 2016; Habtemariam & Hudson, 2016; Henry, 2016; Canadian Federation of Students, 2007). According to the Canadian Federation of Students (2007), “the instances of Islamophobia are not isolated; discrimination toward Muslim students is a systemic feature of Ontario’s post-secondary education system” (p. 27).

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Boyd (2016) adds that prejudice and discrimination on Canadian university campuses also cuts across all demographics. Many students, faculty or staff have, at some point, experienced prejudice, harassment or discrimination that targeted one or many of their personal characteristics (e.g. ethnic, cultural origins, political views, religious affiliations and others). Tator & Henry (2010) also found that in the area of employment, ethnocultural applicants to faculty positions in Canadian universities experience systemic racial prejudice in hiring, tenure and promotion.

Also, in *Race, Racialization and Indigeneity in Canadian Universities*, Henry et al. (2016) denounce the inexplicable under-representation of racialized and Indigenous faculty in most Canadian universities: “racialized and Indigenous faculty and the disciplines or areas of their expertise are, on the whole, low in numbers and even lower in terms of power, prestige, and influence within the University” (p. 1). They argue that the systemic discrimination of racialized faculty applicants stands in sharp contradiction with the number of ethnocultural students’ enrollment and graduation from universities in Canada. Smith (2017) confirms this contradiction, and reports that “[i]n 2016, 40 per cent of students that entered first year in Canada were visible minorities, racialized minorities and of course black students, Chinese students, South Asian students — the numbers vary but this is not reflected in the professorial [appointments] ... or reflected in university leadership” (p. 25). The following graphic recording, *Being Muslim in the Context of Anti-Muslim Racism*, by Tiaré Jung (2018) neatly summarizes the current mindsets and experiences of many Muslim participants to a Simon Fraser University Centre for comparative Muslim studies event’s in Vancouver, March 29, 2018.

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The graphic recording also explicates the current mindsets of Muslim people in Canada: “The Muslim community is afraid”; of “being Muslim in a context of anti-Muslim racism”; being “publicly attacked, privately isolated”; “vulnerable individuals (who) carry so much burden”; while “the state is looking for reasons to criminalize us”. Muslim people in Canada, are really “trying to stay alive instead of exploring what kind of Muslim do I want to be?” The graphic recording also points to the difficulty for Muslim communities in navigating through an environment of suspicion and on-going state surveillance, epitomized in various government anti-terrorist bills such as the Bill C51 from 2015.

Bill C51 was allegedly anti-terror legislation, proposed by the Conservative government of Stephen Harper, which was passed into law in June 2015 (Watters, 2015). Bill C51 is in continuity

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of a long Canadian tradition that portrays diasporic communities of new immigrants and refugees as “breeding grounds” for terrorism (Brynen, 2002, p. 6). Based on this stereotype, Bill C-51 broadens the authority of government security agencies to collect and share covertly information about individuals. Bill C-51 expanded the mandate of Canadian security agencies such as the Security Intelligence Services. (CSIS).

Brent Ellis (2003) later expanded on the idea of breeding grounds and proposed a framework that would help to assess, analyze, and monitor any group that has any religious affiliation other than Canadian Christians. In his MA thesis, *Post-9/11 Anti-Muslim Racism: A Critical Analysis of Canada's Security Policies*, Imran Khan (2013) succinctly describes how Canada's anti-terrorism and security policies are specifically designed as surveillance and control mechanisms of Muslims people, and Muslim students particularly. Khan (2013) argues that “[n]ational security interests of the state have been one of the main drivers of the changes in immigration policy after the 11-September attacks” (p. 7). Quoting Dobrowsky (2007), he also adds that “[t]he anti-terrorism legislations have increased the possibility of discrimination for Muslims in Canada on the basis of race, religion, ethnic and national origin (Dobrowsky, 2007: 655 quoted in Khan, 2013, p. 7).

1.2.3. University Administrations Responses to Prejudice and Discrimination on Campus

Many university administrations in Canada have tried to grapple with the societal phenomenon of prejudice and discrimination on their campuses. Three seminal reports from University of Guelph (1994), University of Victoria (UVic) (1998), and McMaster University (2017) illustrate this trend. In 1994, the final report of the University of Guelph's President Task Force on Anti-Racism and Race Relations reported, “in Canadian society, racial diversity is closely bound to racism” (p. 7). It added, “Racism occurs when the power held by individuals or groups of one race is used to

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individually or systematically oppress members of another race(s) ... and it manifests itself in racial discrimination and racial harassment of individuals, as well as in racially biased societal/institutional practices, policies and procedures. (p. 3-5).

In 1998, the President of the University of Victoria received a similar report, *Voices for Change: Racism, Ethnocentrism, and Cultural Insensitivity at the University of Victoria* (Martin & Warburton, 1998). However, Burley (2006), in her 2006 follow up to the report, lamented the slow implementation of the 1998 recommendations by the university. She argued that students, staff, and faculty at the university still experienced racism, ethnocentrism, and cultural insensitivity in the curricula, the classrooms, and in the attitudes and behaviours of students and faculty. She added that, from her interviews, “most participants felt that the problem of racism is at an institutional level and needs to be deeply, sincerely, and constantly challenged by the University” (p. 3). To challenge racism is to engage in anti-racism education work. Dei (1997), defines anti-racism as an “action-oriented strategy for institutional, systemic change to address racism and the interlocking systems of social oppression” (p. 25). Pon et al. (2011) adds that “anti-racism education is a political practice and theoretical framework that informs critical scholarly work, pedagogical, curricular, and organizational change measures” (p. 395).

The McMaster University’s 2017 report, *Challenging Islamophobia on Campus Initiative*, reiterated the same issues highlighted in the previous two reports from University of Guelph and University of Victoria. The authors, Hirji-Khalfan & Rakie (2017) reported that “the systemic silencing and lack of public voice of acknowledgement surrounding Islamophobic incidents... (and) the statements and actions of political leaders gave license to individuals to spew hate in the public sphere” (Hirji-Khalfan & Rakie, 2017, p. 4). Against this backdrop, they recommended

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“ongoing work to appropriately address the reality and the impact of Islamophobia on our university campus”.

1.2.4. Gaps in Research

Besides the localized 2017 report from McMaster University, there is not much by way of an academic body of research on the experiences of Muslim students with prejudice and discrimination on Canadian university campuses and in communities that also make recommendations to administrators for service delivery, policy, educational programming, and policy at the same time. Most of the dominant research about Muslims in Canada and Muslim students in the post-secondary context, have primarily focused on media representations and stereotyping of Muslims and other racial minorities in Canada after post 9/11 (Nagra, 2010; Nisbet, 2016; Sayyid, 2014). According to Mahtani (2009), negative media representation of racial minorities in Canada is “very real, intense, and local natures of racial marginalization that mainstream media representations can—and often do—generate and effect” (p. 717). However, Sayyid (2014) also argues that, though most of these “studies have been valuable in illustrating the range of expressions of Islamophobia, they have been less successful in understanding the phenomena and mapping its relationship with other forms of discriminatory practices such as racism and anti-Semitism” (p. 11). A gap in current research is, therefore, one of understanding the phenomena of Islamophobia or prejudice and discrimination against Muslim students on Canadian university campuses and its intersections with other forms of discriminatory practices such as racism, gender, immigration status. Henry & Tator (2009) concede that “the pervasiveness of institutional racism in Canadian universities has often been unacknowledged by university administrators, faculty, staff, and students unacquainted with its injurious forces” (2009, p. 211). Ian Law (2017) adds that these university administrators, have

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repeatedly failed to “grasp the significance and power of racism in their own organizations and practices and lack the motivation and creativity necessary to respond to this challenge” (p. 333).

Another gap my study also investigates is how the university community and the community outside campus have contributed to these experiences when taken in combination. For example, Kassis & Schallie (2014), Nisbet (2016), and Sayyid (2014) recommend that research be more focused on the social-psychological foundations of Islamophobia on university campuses and on the overall experiences of Muslim students in all contexts.

My study therefore is one of the first of its kind to explore post-secondary Muslim students’ experiences of prejudice and discrimination, the impacts on students’ academic learning and social well-being, and to provide practical recommendations to the university’s administration for service delivery, policy, programs, and educational curriculum development.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

In keeping these problems and research gaps in mind, the purpose of this study is to explore Muslim students’ experiences of prejudice and discrimination on UVic campus and in the community, and to identify the barriers, constraints and opportunities in students’ social relations with peers, university personnel and communities at large. Another goal of this study is to provide practical recommendations to the university’s administration for service delivery, policy, programs, and educational curriculum development, all of which can contribute to support healthy relations between students and create welcoming and inclusive learning environments at UVic.

1.4. Research Questions

With this purpose in mind, I try to answer a series of core and secondary sub-questions to help better understand how Muslim students from different ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds experience prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community, and what they experience. This core question relates to the processes of how participants contextualize and

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interpret their experiences of prejudice, while the secondary/ additional sub-questions relate to the structural factors that support prejudice in students' social relations and experiences.

Core Questions:

- i. How² do/What are Muslim student(s) – from different ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds – experience(s) in their academic and social life at the University of Victoria?
- ii. What policies, programmatic approaches, and educational curriculum contribute and support healthy relations between Muslim students and faculty, staff and the community?
- iii. What policies, programmatic approaches, and educational curriculum contribute to Muslim students' academic success and social integration³ at the University of Victoria?

Secondary/ Additional Sub-Questions in Support of Answering the Primary Research Questions are:

- iv. Do Muslim students experience obstacles and constraints based on their ethnic, cultural, social, and religious backgrounds?
- v. Are there differences in the degree/extent of the experiences of Muslim students relating to their specific racial, ethnic, linguistic, social and cultural dress?
- vi. Does prejudice and discrimination affect Muslim students' learning and social integration on campus?

1.5. Significance of the Study

I also thought that there should be research focus on this. I don't see published research on this and as I said being a graduate student, when I discuss with one of my supervisors and he told me that...um... you know it's not easy to get funding for a research project that targets [the] Muslim community because seriously Canadian academia...uh... or the policy makers do not think this is a burning issue or this is an issue worthy of their finances. Well I think otherwise I think that this is a budding problem, and this is an area on which the

² According to Yin (1981, 2003a), in explanatory studies like case study (or grounded theory), 'how' (or 'why') questions help to explain process where the research has little control over the events and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within the real-life context of the participants: in our case, Muslim students and their experiences of prejudice and discriminatory on campus and in the wider community.

³ Social Integration can be seen as a dynamic and principled process where all members participate in dialogue to achieve and maintain peaceful social relations. Social integration does not mean coerced assimilation or forced integration. According to Keyes (1998), social integration (def on p. 122) is one of the 5 dimensions of social well-being:

<http://midus.wisc.edu/findings/pdfs/58.pdf> or http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/sib/peacedialogue/soc_integration.htm

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policy makers should sit and think about and they should target it (Belle, a Muslim woman participant to individual interviews).

My study is a significant contribution to the existing discourse because it explores an area of academic research not well-documented in the literature in Canada: Muslim students' experiences of prejudice and discrimination on Canadian university campuses and communities, and the barriers, constraints, and opportunities to support students' social relations with peers, university personnel and communities at large. While Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito (1998) lamented the missing voices of Muslim students in USian research, even less research has been conducted with reference to Muslim students' experiences in higher-education institutions in Canada.

Currently, most academic research only focuses on media representation and stereotypes of Muslims in Canada post 9/11, contributing to a skewed understanding of the wider systemic and institutional issues of Islamophobia and prejudice against Muslim students on Canadian university campuses. As Henry & Tator (2009) argue, "The pervasiveness of institutional racism in Canadian universities has often been unacknowledged by university administrators, faculty, staff, and students unacquainted with its injurious forces." (p. 211).

This study is also relevant because I provide clear recommendations to university administrators, for service delivery, policy, programs, and educational curriculum development that both support healthy relations between students, and welcoming and inclusive learning environments.

This study will also give an opportunity to Muslim students and frontline staff who support them to share their experiences of prejudice and discrimination on campus, and the interpretations and meaning they assign to these incidents. In so doing, my study will contribute to contextualizing these experiences. It will also contextualize how this new knowledge is relevant to future academic

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research in the field of research on prejudice and discrimination against Muslim students and their long-term implications regarding Muslim students' social integration and comfort in attending Canadian universities.

The relevance of my study to future research will also be its contribution to the literature on prejudice and discrimination on Canadian university campuses. It is important to note that the use of grounded theory inquiry as a participatory methodology will contribute to prejudice and discrimination research, especially focused on Muslim students' experiences of Islamophobia on Canadian university campuses. Finally, my study is of an ethical importance because it can highlight the pervasive abuses and violations of Muslim students' human rights as a growing societal issue in Canadian society.

1.6. Summary and Overview of the Chapters

In **Chapter One**, I situate my study in the local and global context of prejudice and discrimination against Muslims or Islamophobia. I also explain some of the historical and ideological underpinnings of these prejudices and discriminations regarding the broader discourse of religion and race relations in Canada. Further, I identify the intersections of prejudice and discrimination with race, gender, and/or religion, particularly on Canadian university campuses and how these intersect with issues of colonization, power, and globalization. Finally, I ask a set of core and secondary sub-questions to guide my study and to demonstrate my abilities to garner the necessary intellectual strength and project planning skills to achieve my research goals.

In **Chapter Two**, I outline the existing epistemological and theoretical approaches in the literature relevant to prejudice and discrimination research as applied to Muslim students' experiences on university campus and communities. I adopted the term Islamophobia as an all-

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encompassing concept to capture the socio-cultural and political ideology, effects, and impacts of prejudice and discrimination experienced by Muslims.

In **Chapter Three**, I emphasise the processes I engaged in to choose an appropriate methodology and research design that are consistent with the problem under study. I also outline the different research methods I used to recruit participants to my study, collect and analyse data, and discuss the reliability, validity, significance, and ethical considerations of the study. **Chapter Four** reports on my research findings and discusses the process of preparing my data for reporting. In **Chapter Five**, I integrate my constructivist grounded theory together using the storyline technique. In **Chapter Six**, I discuss my overall study and stretch its signification for the field of Islamophobia and Critical Race Theory studies. I also provide recommendations grounded in the data for university administrators and faculty about how to improve Muslim students' social well-being and academic success. I conclude with some final thoughts about my overall constructivist grounded theory research and the next steps.

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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Overview of chapter 2

In this chapter, I review the literature pertaining to the experiences of Muslim undergraduate and graduate students on Canadian university campuses and in communities.

The purpose of this chapter is twofold: (1) to situate my study in the general field of prejudice and discrimination research; and (2) to survey literature that focusses on the experiences of Muslim students on Canadian university campuses and in communities, with the seminal goal being, to gain a greater theoretical sensitivity about Muslim students' experiences of prejudice and discrimination. Theoretical sensitivity – which I will discuss in detail in Chapter 3– refers to the initial knowledge and experience researchers use to help inform their interpretations and decision-making during the data analysis phase (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

For this review, I divide the literature into seven sections. In **Section 2.2**, *Use Preliminary Literature Review in Grounded Theory Research: an Unsettled Debate*, I discuss the on-going controversy concerning the use of preliminary literature review in grounded theory research. Here, I explain my reasons for preliminarily reviewing some of the literature as my way to acknowledge that “no potential researcher is an empty vessel, a person with no history or background” (Cutcliff, 2000, p. 1480). **Section 2.3**, *Overview of the Prejudice and Discrimination Research Field*, reviews the history, origins, definitions, evolution, and different forms of the prejudice and discrimination research in various disciplines with the goal of helping to ground my understanding of these concepts and the terminologies. **Section 2.4**, *Impacts of Prejudice and Discrimination on Muslim Students: the Case of Islamophobia*, I present an overview of the history of prejudice and discrimination against Muslims or Islamophobia, its impacts on Muslim students' academic and

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social integration, and its ideological foundations which often fail to acknowledge the diversity of Muslims. **Section 2.5**, *Critical Race Theory (CRT) and its Intersections With Prejudice and Discrimination Discourses*, deepens the debate on the issues of prejudice and discrimination and its intersections with race, ethnicity, country of origins, power, and privilege. This section also discusses in detail the historical and ideological foundations of critical race theory (CRT), and its key principles, processes, and intersections with theories of race and racial prejudice and discrimination against Muslim students. **Section 2.6**, *Canadian Universities' Responses to Prejudice, Discrimination, and Islamophobia*, analyzes the current state of affairs on how Canadian universities have approached the issues of prejudice and discrimination, and their intersections against Muslim students in particular. The section also analyses the history of Equity and Human Rights offices in institutions of higher education in Canada and their mandate in responding to issues of prejudice, discrimination, and intersectionality. Since these prejudices and discriminations also target the specific religious appurtenance and socio-cultural, political and demographic characteristics of Muslim students, it is critical to provide an overview of those precepts which Muslim students (most of whom are Canadian citizen or international students) observe and try to maintain while studying and living in Canada. **Section 2.7**, *Brief Overview of the Muslim Faith*, emphasizes these pertinent aspects of the Muslim faith and how they affect the Muslim students' relationships with others and their academic and social integration. As a conclusion to this literature review chapter, I append the **Section 8**, *Summary*, which stresses some of the key concepts that are developed further in later chapters.

2.2. Use of Preliminary Literature Review in Grounded Theory Research: an Unsettled Debate

The use of preliminary literature in grounded theory research is often justified as contributing to the development of theoretical sensitivity – initial knowledge and experiences of a

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topic that inform a researcher's interpretation and decision-making throughout the data analysis process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). However, throughout the years, sharp disagreements have arisen between two discursive camps. The Glasarian camp, founded on the work of Barney Glaser (1998), argues that reviewing the literature before the end of the study can result in conscious or unconscious theoretical biases. He adds that a preliminary literature review can over-influence inductive analysis and inhibit the emergence or construction of new theories based on the data. Previously, in their 1967 seminal work, Glaser and Strauss (1967) insisted that literature closely linked to the research subject area should only be reviewed after the collection of the primary data. They argue such an approach helps maintain the integrity of the data and ensure that it was not contaminated by pre-existing ideas (Charmaz, 2006; Dunne, 2011; Holton, 2007). They further elaborate on that

an effective strategy is, at first, literally to ignore the literature of theory and fact on the area under study, in order to assure that the emergence of categories will not be contaminated by concepts more suited to different areas. Similarities and convergences with the literature can be established after the analytic core of the categories has emerged (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 37).

Enselm Strauss, Glaser's co-author of the seminal book, *The Discovery of Rounded Theory*, later argued for conducting a preliminary review of the literature at the beginning of the study in order to help develop theoretical sensitivity during analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1994; Heath & Cowley, 2004, p. 143). As well, constructivist grounded theory also advises a rudimentary literature review when it is necessary, followed by a robust literature review after theory emergence to support comparison and analysis (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 163–165). In contrast to Glasarian practices, Charmaz (2006) also believes that most researchers

already have a sound footing in their disciplines before they begin a research project and often have an intimate familiarity with the research topic and the literature about it. All provide vantage points that can intensify looking at certain aspects of the empirical world but may ignore others. (p. 17)

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I concur with Charmaz, Strauss, and Corbin. As Cutcliff (2000) argues, “no potential researcher is an empty vessel, a person with no history or background” (p. 1480). As a researcher, a Muslim student and a human rights advisor to the university, I do have specific understandings and insights into the academic literature about my area of study. As a Muslim student, I have personal experiences of prejudice and discrimination. As the university’s human rights advisor, working to disrupt discrimination, harassment and their intersections on campus, I also have professional experiences of that which is found in the literature, and the processes of investigating and mediating prejudice and discrimination in general, and particularly, against Muslim students. My positionality as such has provided me with intimate familiarity of my research topic and incited my interest to investigate the Muslim students’ experiences of prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community.

Some writers insist that the literature review in grounded theory, like in other research traditions, can also be an effective tool to help improve the researcher’s awareness of the different nuances in his research area (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) as well as serve as a reflexive tool to help him recognize personal biases and assumptions about the topic. Therefore, for the purpose of this chapter, I blended the Straussian grounded theory and the constructivist grounded theory approaches to literature review.

My decision to acknowledge the place of the preliminary literature in my study is congruent with Cutcliff (2000), Dey (2007), Dunne (2011), and Lempert (2007) who all argue that no researcher enters the field without preconceived ideas. Charmaz (2006) argues that the literature is indeed where, as a researcher, “you claim, locate, evaluate, and defend your position” (p. 163). While I kept in mind my familiarity with some of the literature in my research area, I did, however, conduct a thorough literature review for this chapter. This is to help complement my understanding

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of terminology and concepts related to the study of prejudice and discrimination against Muslim students. Therefore, the issue for me at the outset was to be fully aware of my assumptions as a researcher and, to continuously assess their impacts on my data gathering, analysis, and interpretation. It should be noted, however, that all of these authors have also unanimously recognized the importance of completing a full literature review at the end of a grounded theory study (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Stern, 2007). In this chapter, I provide a full literature review based on the unanimous recommendations of these grounded theory authors.

2.3. Overview of the Prejudice and Discrimination Research Field

In 1958, in a study conducted by UNESCO, *The Race Question in Modern Science: The Roots of Prejudice*, Arnold Rose (1958) reported:

Prejudice of one group of people against another group has existed in most parts of the world and at all periods of history. It has not been universal, in the sense that all cultures or all people have displayed it; but it has been prevalent enough to serve as a basis for conflict between nations and between groups within a nation. It practically always involves discrimination, which means mistreatment of people without their having done anything to merit such mistreatment (p. 7).

This section firstly reviews the history, origins and evolution of prejudice and discrimination research. Secondly, it discusses the definitions and different forms of prejudice in the literature. Finally, it puts these different forms of prejudice within the wider context of prejudice and discrimination research, policy development and implementation.

2.3.1. The History of Prejudice and Discrimination Studies

Many authors argue that throughout history, there has been a challenge to understand and overcome prejudicial attitudes and behaviors such as stereotypes and discrimination (Allport, 1979; Dion, 2001; Fiske, 1998; Dovidio, 2001; Dovidio et al, 2010; Dahl et al., 2015). It is said that the roots of these attitudes and behaviors can be intergroup bias (Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002). Dovidio et

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al. (2010) report that “inter-group bias generally refers to the systematic tendency to evaluate one's own membership group (the ingroup) more favorably than a non-membership group (the out-group) or its members” (p. 2). Dovidio et al. (2010) also add that prior to the 1920s, prejudice and discrimination were not conceptualized as ‘social problem’ or ‘scientific construct,’ but assumed to be natural and inevitable in inter-groups relations.

Fiske (1998) believes that prejudice and discrimination – whether in the form of racism, ethnocentrism, religious bigotry, gender-based prejudice, xenophobia, homophobia or misogyny – are prevalent in all human societies. Nelson (2016) concurs that prejudice and discrimination are indeed “pervasive, dangerous, and sometimes fatal” (p. 490), as demonstrated in the ongoing cases of white police officers’ shootings of unarmed black and indigenous people in the USA and Canada (Mesic et al., 2018), mostly on prejudicial and stereotypical racial grounds.

Rose (1958) argues that prejudice and discrimination of the out-group usually benefits the perpetrator, as “the most obvious cause of prejudice is that it creates advantages and material benefits for those who are prejudiced” (p. 7). In the academic literature, the study of prejudice is indebted to Gordon Allport (1954). However, since Allport’s *On the Nature of Prejudice*, the field of prejudice and discrimination study has exponentially “expanded in both quantity and perspective” (Dovidio et al, 2010, p. 2), and beyond the traditional disciplines of anthropology and sociology to include education and others.

2.3.2. Prejudice in the Literature: Different Forms of Prejudice and Their Natures

Allport (1954) defines prejudice as the result of categorized thinking and that social categorization is context based. He argues that prejudice is “an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalization. It may be felt or expressed. It may be directed toward a group as a whole, or toward an individual because he [sic] is a member of that group” (p. 9). According to Allport, prejudice is

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conceptualized as a rigid negative attitude towards members of out-groups. Prejudice is “an aversive or hostile attitude toward a person who belongs to a group, simply because he, or she, belongs to that group, and is therefore presumed to have the objectionable qualities ascribed to the group” (Allport, 1954, p. 7). Prejudicial attitudes, indeed, portray perceptions of social hierarchies of difference. Dovidio et al (2010) argue that prejudice “is an individual-level attitude (whether subjectively positive or negative) toward groups and their members that creates or maintains hierarchical status relations between groups” (p. 5).

In later definitions of prejudice, Dovidio et al. (2010), categorize prejudice in three ways:

“prejudice is typically conceptualized as an attitude that, like other attitudes, has a cognitive component (e.g. beliefs about a target group), an affective component (e.g. dislike), and a conative component (e.g. a behavioral predisposition to behave negatively toward the target group)” (p. 5).

This categorization of prejudice as an attitude, belief, and behavior is part of a large body of attitude research literature in psychology. According to Eagly & Chaiken (2007), an attitude is “a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour” (p. 1). This means that the decision of an individual based on feeling or thought may trigger in them a positive or negative attitude. However, Schwarz & Bohner (2001), propose that “a growing body of literature suggests that attitudes may be much less enduring and stable than has traditionally been assumed” (p. 2). They argue that, in order to strengthen attitude research which doesn’t suffice to describe and measure prejudice and discrimination, researchers should combine attitude research with attitude judgment process, as “[a]ttitudes are a hypothetical construct, invented by researchers to account for a body of phenomena” (p. 4). According to Pratkanis & Turner (1993), the sources of attitude formation include:

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mass media, parental influence, socializing, agents such as schools and religious organizations, important reference groups, total institutions such as prisons and cults, and observation of one's own behavior and direct experience with the attitude object (p. 326).

Eagly & Diekmann (2005) argue that, "prejudice often results from the mismatch between beliefs about the attributes typically possessed by members of a social group (that is, their stereotype) and beliefs about the attributes that facilitate success in valued social roles." (p. 19). According to Dahl et al. (2015), prejudice and stereotypes are biases that work together to create and maintain social inequality. They state that "prejudice refers to the attitudes and feelings—whether positive or negative and whether conscious or non-conscious—that people have about members of other groups...(and) stereotypes are cognitive representations of how members of a group are similar to one another and different from members of other groups" (p. 1). For Young-Bruehl (1996) stereotypes can be conceived as generalized perceptions, beliefs, and expectations a person has about members of an out-group, schemas people can hold about an entire group of people.

However, it should be noted that even when stereotypical characteristics are not based on factual truths, stereotypes are used to distinguish or segregate people in "in-groups" against "out-groups" (Young-Bruehl, 1996). The "in-groups" are usually characterized as mainstream, the ones with the valuable characteristics, as opposed to the "out-groups" which are often perceived as a threat to established preferred social ideals (Young-Bruehl, 1996).

Building on Pratkanis & Turner's (1993) framework, my study looks at prejudicial and discriminatory attitudes, behavior formation and impacts on Muslim students, in the university and the community. For me, the literature point towards the designation of Muslim students as the out-group. Dovidio et al. (2010) argue that stereotypes are "associations and beliefs about the characteristics and attributes of a group and its members that shape how people think about and

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respond to the group” (p. 7). In my study, these stereotypes are mainly associated with the intersectional characteristics of Muslim students such as their sexual orientation, religion, race, gender, language, and country of origin (Akachar, 2015).

2.3.3. Discrimination: Definitions and Different Forms of Discrimination

Discrimination, in the literature, is distinguished from prejudice and stereotyping: prejudice is based on a *negative learned attitude* that is directed towards an individual or group of people; stereotypes are *generalized beliefs* or assumptions, positive or negative, about an individual or group of people that can become prejudicial and lead to discrimination. However, discrimination is defined as a negative “*behavior* that creates, maintains, or reinforces advantage for some groups and their members over other groups and their members” (emphasis mine, Dovidio et al, 2010, p. 8). Some examples of discrimination as a behavior that results from negative prejudicial and stereotypical attitudes and beliefs include racism, sexism, ageism, homophobia, classism, and religious bigotry.

The literature emphasizes three specific forms of discrimination: individual, institutional/systemic, and cultural. Dovidio et al (2010) argue that individual discrimination is not always dependent on institutional discrimination and vice-versa (p. 9). According to the Supreme Court of Canada’s (1989) decision in *Andrews v. Law Society of British Columbia*, there is indeed a sharp distinction between individual, institutional, and cultural discrimination:

Discrimination may be described as a distinction, whether intentional or not but based on grounds relating to personal characteristics of the individual or group, which has the effect of imposing burdens, obligations, or disadvantages on such individual or group not imposed upon others, or which withholds or limits access to opportunities, benefits, and advantages available to other members of society. Distinctions based on personal characteristics attributed to an individual solely on the basis of association with a group will rarely escape the charge of discrimination, while those based on an individual's merits and capacities will rarely be so classed (p. 144-145).

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While institutional discrimination is “associated with formal laws and policies” (p. 10), cultural discrimination is “deeply embedded in the fiber of a culture’s history, standards, and normative ways of behaving. Dovidio et al (2010) report that:

Recent research distinguishing between implicit and explicit cognition has greatly affected how theorists define prejudice and stereotypes. Likewise, concepts of discrimination have gone from a tight focus on individuals engaging in biased treatment to how institutional policies and cultural processes perpetuate disparities between groups (p. 4).

Cultural discrimination occurs when one group exerts the power to define values for a society” (Dovidio et al, 2010, p. 10). Dovidio et al (2010) argue that cultural discrimination is often associated with ethnocentrism, where its traction “resides in its power to shape how members of different groups interpret and react to group disparities, fostering compliance to the status quo without explicit intentions, awareness, or active support for these groups-based disparities” (p. 10).

In cases of discrimination against Muslims, Helly (2004, quoted in Wilkins-Laflamme, 2018) has identified a different kind of discrimination. Direct discrimination is found in cases where Muslims are explicitly denied a right or freedom, either in the labor market, workplace, at school (Watt, 2016), or by government as in the case of Bill 62 on face coverings adopted by the Quebec provincial government; whereas, indirect discrimination can be found in policies which produce an uneven social accessibility effect for Muslim people. Finally, Helly (2004) also identified what she called ‘the usual discrimination’, “which refers to negative attitudes and discriminatory practices toward Muslims among some individuals and private organizations, such as discriminatory media coverage or conflicts surrounding places of worship” (Wilkins-Laflamme, 2018, p. 91). The ‘usual discrimination’ also includes systemic discrimination, which creates inequalities between groups of people.

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The goals of any form of discrimination are to emphasize people's individual and group distinctiveness based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, and others (Turner & Magassa, 2013). The BC Human Rights Code (1996) describes these individual and group distinctiveness as Prohibited Grounds of Discrimination and Harassment: race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex (including gender identity), sexual orientation, age, or conviction for a criminal offence that is unrelated to the employment or intended employment.

The University of Victoria (UVic) adopted these prohibited grounds of Discrimination and Harassment into its 2015 policy on human rights discrimination and harassment. UVic defines discrimination as, an “adverse differential treatment of a person or group of persons on the basis of a Prohibited Ground of Discrimination, as set out in the British Columbia Human Rights Code, that has the effect or purpose of unreasonably interfering with that person's or group's employment or educational status or performance or of creating a hostile or intimidating work or educational environment” (2015, section 2.00). The policy includes all staff, faculty, and students, and by extension, Muslim students and Muslims on campus. The policy recognizes that discrimination “includes adverse effects or systemic discrimination which consists of entrenched and institutionalized practices, systems, and structures that operate to limit a group's or an individual's rights to opportunities or to exclude a group or an individual from participation on the basis of any Prohibited Ground of Discrimination” (section 2.00).

In conclusion, while this overview of the prejudice and discrimination literature has expanded my understanding of the terminology and the conceptual framework of prejudice and discrimination. This overview also emphasized how prejudice and discrimination are embedded in the individual, cultural and institutional attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors often expressed through

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implicit or explicit stereotypes, biases, policies, practices, and ethnocentric worldviews. As prejudice and discrimination are prevalent in all human societies, they also have enduring impacts on Muslim students as part of the wider UVic community, and on their academic integration and social well-being.

2.4. Impacts of Prejudice and Discrimination on Muslim Students: The Case of Islamophobia

Being the target of stigma and any prejudice or discrimination has a “demonstrable, negative impact upon the individual” (Dion, 2001, p. 1). According to Wolford (1993), some of the impacts of prejudice and discrimination on people in general include: “low self-esteem, demoralization, racial self-hatred, helplessness and lack of control, social ostracism, social avoidance, lack of opportunities and political under-representation” (p. 1848). Prejudice and discrimination also exacerbate mental health and social well-being issues among victims (Nelson, 2016). The American Psychology Association (2016) reports that “discrimination can exacerbate stress, and moreover, that discrimination-related stress is linked to mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression” (p. 6). Researchers at Boston University School have also found that prejudice, whether direct or indirect, can increase a risk of developing mental health such as depression and anxiety (Brown, 2016).

The section presents an overview of the history (origins and definitions) of prejudice and discrimination against Muslims or Islamophobia; its impacts on Muslim students’ academic integration and social well-being; and finally, the ideological foundations of Islamophobia and how it often fails to consider Muslim diversity.

2.4.1. History of Prejudice and Discrimination Against Muslims or Islamophobia

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Islamophobia existed since the advent of the Islamic revelation. Roland Laffitte (2017), as earlier as in 1881, described Islamophobia as a policy of exclusion and open discrimination enacted by the French Code of ‘Indigenat’ against French Muslims of Algerian background who were viewed as subjects with inferior civil, political and legal status. Islamophobia, according to Kunst et al. (2012), is “an umbrella term capturing different types of religious stigma towards Muslims” (p. 1) such as prejudice and discrimination against Muslims, anti-Muslim hate, anti-Islam bias, anti-Muslim racism – all of which are growing societal issues worldwide and particularly in Canada. Bazian (2015) defines Islamophobia as both a prejudice (attitude, beliefs, and feeling) and a discrimination (behavior, act, an outcome),

Islamophobia is a contrived fear or prejudice fomented by the existing Eurocentric and Orientalist global power structure. It is directed at a perceived or real Muslim threat through the maintenance and extension of existing disparities in economic, political, social and cultural relations, while rationalizing the necessity to deploy violence as a tool to achieve ‘civilizational rehab’ of the target communities (Muslim or otherwise). Islamophobia reintroduces and reaffirms a global racial structure through which resources distribution disparities are maintained and extended (p. 1064).

However, the ‘watershed moment’ for the term ‘Islamophobia’ (Rana, 2007, p. 148) in some government official language, was marked by a 1996 study commissioned by the British government which looked into the growing social reality of prejudice and discrimination against European Muslims and their experiences (Runnymede Trust, 1997). The Runnymede study defined Islamophobia as “the dread, hatred and hostility towards Islam and Muslims perpetrated by a series of closed views that imply and attribute negative and derogatory stereotypes and beliefs to Muslims” and “...which results in practices of exclusion and discrimination” (p. 4). It also identified eight features of Islamophobia which, Bazian (2015) describes as “prevailing attitudes” (p. 3) of people who hold Islamophobic attitudes.

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The Runnymede Trust (1997) study found indeed that these people hold the entrenched beliefs that (1) Islam is monolithic and cannot adapt to new realities; (2) Islam does not share common values with other major faiths; (3) Islam as a religion is inferior to the West; (4) Islam is archaic, barbaric; (5) Islam is irrational; (6) Islam is a religion of violence and; (7) Islam supports terrorism; (8) Islam is a violent political ideology” (p. 4).

According to Johnson (2011), the perception of the Muslim groups as a monolithic bloc, static and unadaptable to new realities and change,

results in increased endorsement of stereotypes, increased justification of social inequalities, accentuation of perceived differences between groups, and perhaps most importantly, assigning group-based responsibility for actions taken by individual group members. Second, the perception of groups as static and unresponsive to change—an entity implicit theory—results in greater stereotype endorsement, greater perceived out-group homogeneity, and more biased behavior towards out-group members (p. 50).

The Runnymede report (1997) argues that many people in the West – the genealogical inheritors of the western Christendom – condone anti-Muslim discourse as natural and not problematic; “the expression of anti-Muslim ideas and sentiments is becoming increasingly seen as respectable. It is a natural, taken-for-granted ingredient of the commonsense world of millions of people every day” (p. 10). Many writers argue that anti-Muslim discourses are indeed deep-rooted in the Western mind as part of an established tradition of stereotypical, discriminatory and patronizing cultural representations of the Arabs, and the Muslims (Said, 1978; Grosfoguel, 2010; Helly, 2011; Kumar, 2012).

In the case of Canada, Helly (2011) reports that despite blatant incidents of Islamophobia, Canada has committed no comprehensible policy, law or programs through any federal or provincial ministry, to combat Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism and prejudice. Until the recent massacre at the Quebec Muslim Mosque, Canadian Prime Ministers have also done little to

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denounce Islamophobia. Instead, many conservative politicians like Prime Minister Harper in particular, in two national televised interviews in 2011 and 2015, demonized Islam and Muslims, as he claimed, “the major threat [to Canada] is still Islamism” (Kilpatrick, 2011, p. 1). According to Khalid Elgazzar, vice-chairman of the National Council of Canadian Muslims, indeed, “the Canadian Muslim community bore the brunt of sinister political rhetoric surrounding the federal election which painted Muslims as terrorists or terrorist sympathizers as well as being anti-women” (quoted in Harris, 2017, p. 2).

In 2017, Liberal Party MP Iqra Khalid attempts to introduce Motion 103 in Parliament was defeated by the Conservative vote. Bullock (2017) argues that these objectors pretended that the motion was “an attempt to stifle free speech, with some claiming it is the first step to making Canada a ‘sharia compliant’ state” (p. 4). However, Fry (2018) reports that the main objective of M103 was instead to “condemn Islamophobia and all forms of systemic racism and religious discrimination” (Fry, 2018, p. 7). According to Bullock (2017), Erin Mills Liberal MP Iqra Khalid’s December 5, 2016 motion does three things:

- (i) Calls on the government to condemn Islamophobia and all forms of systemic racism and religious discrimination; (ii) Asks the government to recognize the need to quell the increasing public climate of hate and fear; (iii) Requests the Commons heritage committee to study how the government could develop a government-wide approach to reducing or eliminating systemic racism and religious discrimination, including Islamophobia, and collect data to provide context for hate crime reports and to conduct needs assessments for impacted communities (p. 4). Findings are to be presented within eight months (Harris, 2017, quoted in Bullock, 2017, p. 4).

The impacts of these public and political Islamophobic discourses, according to Statistic Canada, have been a sharp rise in hate crime against Muslims since the events of September 2001 and the terrorist attacks in the US. According to a report by the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, *Taking Action Against Systemic Racism and Religious Discrimination Including Islamophobia* (Fry,

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2018), the number of hate crime against Muslims have jumped from 99 cases in 2015 to 159 cases in 2017, an increase of 61% (Fry, 2018, p. 26). The National Council of Canadian Muslims, NCCM (2014), which tracks and reports on hate crimes against Muslims argues that

with the ongoing coverage of violent extremism being perpetrated in the name of Islam and Muslims, we notice a spike in reported hate crimes and incidents; this only tells part of the story, as hate crimes are typically underreported. Further, the current geopolitical climate offers a fertile breeding ground for those few who choose to act out their bigotry by attacking Canadian (Muslims) in their places of worship and businesses (p. 1).

The common sources of Islamophobia include news media, popular media, pundits and politicians, anti-Mosque and anti-Sharia campaigns, and biased literature and websites (Morgan & Poynting, 2012). According to Morgan and Poynting (2012), the underpinning goal of all these sources is to instill a psychosis of moral panic in people about Islam and Muslims. They add that media representation of Islamophobic and Orientalist depictions of Islam and Muslims instill moral panic particularly in non-Muslims.

Moral panic is, according to Altheide (2006), a widespread sense of fear/insecurity in society that results from a public discourse that labels a group of people, or a segment of society as deviant, and an imminent threat to public safety and social fabric (quoted in Maghnaoui, 2018). According to Maghnaoui (2018), moral panic results in outcomes that are detrimental to Muslims and their social integration in Western societies. Moral panic translates into ideological movements which hold unprecedented political power such as: the rise of ethnonationalist rhetoric in Brexit and Trump's 2016 Presidential campaign to 'Make America Great Again'; the rise of right-wing political parties and organizations in countries like Austria, France, and USA; the racial profiling & immigration ban in the USA.; the rise of hate crimes worldwide and particularly in Canada; and the social tension/social divide which leads to the rise of violence and instability (e.g. countered by movements such as Idle No More, Black Lives Matter, Me Too), among others.

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In his acclaimed chapter, “Where is the Moral in Moral Panic? Islam, Evil and Moral Turbulence,” Greg Noble (2012) argues that

a highly moralized rhetoric of good and evil has become increasingly strident in Western political discourse in the last decade or so, not just as a result of the ‘war of terror’ but also in the wake of the resurgence of social and political conservatisms and their critique of the moral relativism of liberalism and multiculturalism (p. 215).

Noble’s (2012) arguments were already echoed in Edward Said’s (1978) influential book, *Orientalism*. Said (1978) laments that the West (its public, media and politicians) and Western scholars have portrayed ‘Eastern’ people as exotic ‘Others’, who are not only different, but primitive, irrational, violent, despotic, fanatic, and inferior to the civilizations of the West. Orientalism has shaped a stereotypical, discriminatory and patronizing view of Muslims and their civilizations that is still prevalent today, and especially in the media and academia. The history of trying to come to terms with this somewhat fictionalized (or at least constructed) Islam in Europe and later in the United States and Canada has always been marked by crisis and conflict, rather than by calm, mutual exchange. There is the added factor now of commercial publishing, ever on the lookout for a quick bestseller by some adept expert that will tell us all we need to know about Islam, its problems, dangers, and prospects. In my book *Orientalism*, I argued that the original reason for European attempts to deal with Islam as if it were one giant entity was polemical—that is, Islam was considered a threat to Christian Europe and had to be fixed ideologically, the way Dante fixes Muhammad in one of the lower circles of hell. Later, as the European empires developed over time, knowledge of Islam was associated with control, with power, with the need to understand the “mind” and ultimate nature of a rebellious and somehow resistant culture as a way of dealing administratively with an alien being at the heart of the expanding empires, especially those of Britain and France”.

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Said (2002) contends that these historical prejudices and stereotypes of Islam and Muslims have coalesced into the current global Islamophobic attitudes and behaviors. For Shahi (2017), the chief example of these academic and cultural misrepresentations of Islam and Muslims, is Samuel Huntington's (1996) *Clash of Civilizations*. Huntington unkindly wrote,

In Eurasia the great historic fault lines between civilizations are once more aflame. This is particularly true along the boundaries of the crescent shaped Islamic block of nations from the bulge of Africa to Central Asia. Violence also occurs between Muslims on the one hand, and orthodox Serbs in the Balkans, Jews in Israel, Hindus in India, Buddhists in Burma and Catholics in the Philippines. Islam has bloody borders (Huntington, 1996, pp. 34-35 quoted in Shahi, 2017, p. 14).

Shahi (2017) believes, Huntington is no less than culturally biased towards Islam and Muslims. Among the many critics of Huntington thesis, Francis Fukuyama (1992), one his former students, also argues that Huntington's theory "had a mischievous impact on the way people around the world thought about these things." (Fukuyama quoted in Achenbach, 2001, p. 6). Fukuyama adds, "I think it's not just wrong, it's also not helpful to world politics. It gives aid and comfort to people who want to reject Western values' (Fukuyama quoted in Achenbach, 2001, p. 6).

According to Bazian (2018), Huntington's thesis was a political maneuver to help maintain US military spending against an imaginary enemy depicted in culturally racist terms. Bazian (2018) argues,

using culture as the basis for the "Clash of Civilizations" thesis is the rebranding of the pre-WWII discredited biological racism and is offered as a signpost for the same sets of racist attitudes and perspectives that were deployed in the earlier biological version. In this context, Islamophobia is less about Islam or even about Muslims themselves, their lives and hopes, but is more about the unsureness of the Western societies as a whole (p. 3).

In deconstructing Huntington's opening quote from Michael Dibdin's (2010) novel, *Dead Lagoon*, Bazian concludes that the "purpose of (Huntington's) thesis is to locate and love ourselves

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by means of locating and hating what we are not, which for Huntington is represented by the Muslims and Chinese” people (p. 4).

Richardson (2009) argues that the popularization of the concept of “Islamophobia” in academia is most indebted to Edward Said (1985). Said (1993) concedes that Islamophobia in present times is neither an aberration nor a new phenomenon. It is the continuation of an attitude that was first manifested and articulated by Christians who saw the emergence of Islam as a threat to Christianity’s growing hegemony. Said (1985) argues that Islamophobia and anti-Semitism are “nourished at the same stream” (p. 9). Saunders (2009), in *The Myth of the Muslim Tide* also recognizes the mythic stereotypical misrepresentation of Islam and the Muslims by the ‘West’. Bleich (2011) concedes that the West has constantly perceived Islam in negative and stereotypical imageries and violent extremism, and this was the case from the Middle Ages throughout the Renaissance era, when Islam was perceived to “be demonic religion of apostasy, blasphemy, and obscurity” (Said, 1997, p. 45). Bleich (2011) views Islamophobia as cognitive where the behavior is “indiscriminate negative attitudes or emotions directed at Islam and Muslims” (p. 1582). Stolz (2012) argues that “Islamophobia is a rejection of Islam, Muslim groups and Muslim individuals on the basis of prejudice and stereotypes. It may have emotional, cognitive, evaluative as well as action-oriented elements (e.g. discrimination, violence)” (p. 5). These definitions are also consistent with Fiske’s (2014) definitions of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination.

Although Islamophobia has become central to many discussions about prejudice and discrimination against Islam and Muslims, some critics have rejected the concept (Allen, 2010; Halliday, 2002; Goldberg, 2015; Gottschalk & Greenberg, 2011; Richardson, 2012; Rushdie et al., 2006; Nugent, 2016). According to Kassis & Schallie (2014), “several scholars have argued that most negative attitudes towards Muslims essentialize cultural and religious differences to the point

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of creating a specific set of racialized attributes which are collectively superimposed onto the out-group” (p. 144). However, I agree with Bevelander & Otterbeck (2012) that these critics’ stances are solely based on their inability to mold Islamophobia to fit their Western worldviews. In my study, I adopt the term Islamophobia as a central concept, because it incorporates all prejudicial or discriminatory attitude, belief, or behavior directed towards an individual Muslim, that may target one or more characteristics of their Muslim identity, such as religious denomination, race, ethnicity, gender appearance, nationality, country of origin, language.

According to Hassina Alizai (2017),

Islamophobia is a hotly contested term, frequently disavowed, because it has been applied to divergent phenomena (Bleich, 2011). The term Islamophobia is problematic due to its linguistic shortcomings, meaning alternative words should be used to describe it (p. 10-11).

In Canada, the federal Liberals tabled and passed the anti-Islamophobia M-103 motion in the House of Commons (Wilkins-Laflamme, 2018; Forrest, 2018). The motion was portrayed by the federal Conservatives and far-right groups as a ‘war against free speech’ and a ‘modern day blasphemy law’ (Qazvini, 2017). Gottschalk et al (2018) argue that these attitudes are based on the fact that “Islamophobia accurately reflects a *social anxiety* toward Islamic traditions and Muslim-majority cultures that is largely unexamined by, yet deeply ingrained in, Americans (even some Muslim Americans)” (p. 4). Social anxiety and moral panic about Islam and Muslims are indeed entrenched in the attitudes and beliefs of many non-Muslim Canadians (Wilkins-Laflamme, 2018; Strabac & Listhaug, 2008). In the next sub-section, I survey the impacts of Islamophobia on Muslims, particularly on Muslim students in post-secondary institutions.

2.4.2. The Impacts of Islamophobia on Muslims and Muslim Students in Post-Secondary Institutions

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The impacts of Islamophobia on Muslims and particularly on Muslim students – often categorized under the label ‘international students’, even though not all Muslim students are international student – is a growing social phenomenon in the world and particularly in North America and Canada (Bazian, 2017; CAIR-CA, 2015; Bleich, 2012; Erkan & Walker, 2016; Gulson & Webb, 2013; Sarwar & Raj, 2016). According to Erkan & Walker (2016), international Muslim students, in particular, are often confronted by a score of problems that contribute to their poor academic performance and social integration: language problems, academic problems, financial problems, cultural problems, loneliness, isolation, lack of communication, homesickness, anxiety, prejudice, and health problems. These problems add to the negative interactions and exchanges between international Muslim students with faculty and other domestic, non-Muslim students.

Erkan & Walker (2016) report that faculty often dismiss Muslims students (domestic and international students) in class and in private in a very “efficient way” (p. 73). Many authors have reported that Muslim students feel disrespected and rendered invisible by faculty and domestic students (Mir, 2014; Zine, 2001). Domestic undergraduate students often resist “undertaking joint academic projects or engaging socially with foreign students – unless specific programs are developed by the university or instructor” (Knight, 2011, p. 14 in Erkan & Walker, 2018, p. 73).

Although Kassis & Schallie (2014) have shied away from using the term “Islamophobia” in their study of Muslim students’ experiences of prejudice at the University of Victoria, they did recognize that social prejudice was used by domestic Canadian students as “an expression of social control mechanisms.” (p. 141) Social control mechanisms are collectively constructed by the established ingroup (Canadian students) “in order to separate between “we-images” and “they-images” and, in doing so, apply pars pro toto stereotypes towards minority groups such as Muslims” (p. 141). Kassis & Schallie (2014) define social prejudice as ethnocentrism and prejudice

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formation as acquired by “essentializ[ing] cultural and religious differences to the point of creating a specific set of racialized attributes which are collectively superimposed onto the out-group” (p. 144). Erkan & Walker (2018) also argue that the attitudes of certain Canadian universities go as far as to show a total “indifference to students’ challenges” (p. 73) with social and academic adjustment and integration on campus and in the communities at large.

The impacts of Islamophobia on Muslims and particularly on Muslim students incur deep scars. In their 2011 study, *Coping With Islamophobia: The Effects of Religious Stigma on Muslim Minorities’ Identity Formation*, Kunst et al (2011) found that due to perceived Islamophobia, Muslim participants “decrease their religious identity in order to achieve national acceptance” (p.528). They add that experiences of negative media depictions have also increased Muslim participants’ awareness of their collective identity and help trigger solidarity among themselves. Brown et al. (2015) add that media stereotypical representations of Islam and Muslim countries as sympathetic to terrorism, economically backward, or conservative has a serious impact on Muslim students’ self-esteem and sense of cultural identity. Kunst et al (2011) also found that, when adversely impacted by negative public opinion climate and experiences of repeated rejection, Muslims increase their “religious identity, indirectly leading to lower degrees of national identification and engagement” (p. 528).

According to the Psychology Benefits Society, the impact of prejudicial and discriminatory behaviors, such as hate crimes and harassment on marginalized groups such as Muslims, can force individual Muslims to internalize the abuse and “stop attending their places of worship” or “discard their religious identifiers” (Ahluwalia et al., 2016, p. 4). For Muslim women, these will be their hijab or headscarf; and for Sikh men who are often confused with Muslims, this will be their turban. Ahluwalia et al. (2016) adds, “Islamophobia reinforces feelings of alienation and separation

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from the rest of society, which could exacerbate feelings of depression and anxiety” (p. 4). In their 2015 report, *Mislabeled: The Impact of Bullying and Discrimination on California Muslim Students*, the California-based Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-CA) found that the impact of persistent bullying and harassment on Muslim students in American colleges and universities also causes depression, anxiety, sleep difficulties, poor school adjustment among others. In a 2017 survey, CAIR-CA (2017) also found that the bullying and harassment of Muslim students has increased compared to previous years, where 57% of Muslim students have seen non-Muslim students putting offensive statements about Muslims on social media and 53% reported witnessing or experiencing being ridiculed, verbally insulted or verbally abused for being Muslim. In 2016, more than 19% also reported being physically harmed or harassed for being Muslim, while the percentage of Muslim students who did not feel “safe, welcome, and respected” in their school almost doubled, from 17% in 2014 to 31% in the same year. The percentage of Muslim students who don’t feel “comfortable in class discussions about Islam and Muslims” also increased by a factor of more than 1.5, from 24% in 2014 to 39% in 2016.

According to a 2017 Pew poll, Muslims are most negatively perceived out of all religious groups, in the U.S. and around the world, with an average rating of 48 on a scale of 0 to 100 (Lipka, 2017). These results are corroborated by a visible growth of anti-Muslim hate groups such as white supremacist groups and increases in hate crimes against mosques and Muslims (Coleman, 2017). According to a CNN report filed by Nancy Coleman (2017), there were 63 hate crimes incidents against mosques in the U.S. in the first half of 2017 where mosques and Muslim prayer spaces were the target of threats, vandalism or arson. Similar hate crimes incidents against mosques were seen in Canada as well, as in the case of the attack on the mosque in Quebec City in 2017. Abdelkader (2016) reports that anti-Muslim violence or threats can escalate to murder, physical assaults, threat

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against persons or institutions, incidents of vandalism or destruction of property, arsons, and shootings or bombings. Modi (2018) argues that most Islamophobic incidents are fuelled by anti-Muslim political rhetoric.

2.4.3. Islamophobia as an Ideology

Islamophobia is analyzed as a “lay ideology” that offers an everyday “common sense” explanatory framework for making sense of mediated crisis events (such as terrorist attacks) in ways that disavow those events’ political meanings (rooted in empire, racism, and resistance) and instead explain them as products of a reified “Muslimness.” Thus, Islamophobia involves an ideological displacement of political antagonisms onto the plane of culture, where they can be explained in terms of the fixed nature of the “Other.” This maneuver is also an act of projection in the psychoanalytic sense: the racist and imperialist violence upon which US-led capitalism depends cannot be acknowledged in liberal society so it is transferred onto the personality of the Muslim and seen as emanating from “outside” the social order (Kundnani, 2016, p. 1).

The anti-Muslims opponents understand Islam as an ideology while the proponents of Islamophobia view it as a structural feature of capitalism embedded in ‘general pattern of racisms’ which serve the imperial ideologies of the New World order. Charkaoui (2015) writing from Montreal, Canada, argues that Islamophobia, in the public discourse, is ‘first and foremost an ideology’ where its proponents’ main goal “is to justify Islamophobic acts” as pure “racist and despicable crimes” (p. 1). Gottschalk & Greenberg (2018) add that “more simply put, Islamophobia is *fear* of a religious ideology and practice, while anti-Muslim sentiment is the rejection of certain types of bodies” (p. 4). Bleich (2012), In *Defining and Researching Islamophobia*, argues that “Islamophobia is an emerging comparative concept in the social sciences” as “researchers have (only) begun using the term to identify the history, presence, dimensions, intensity, causes, and consequences of anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim sentiments” (p. 180). According to Klug (2012), Islamophobia is a concept that has come of age and it now “functions as an organizing principle for scholarship and research” (p. 666), as in my study.

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Bazian (2017) sees an intersectional nature to Islamophobia as it is "...analogous to terms like racism, sexism, or anti-Semitism" (p. 182). Gulson & Webb (2013) add that, though Islamophobia "is not a biological or somatic premise for pernicious action... What is argued to make Islamophobia unique, however, is the combining of nationality, religion and politics, that is 'frequently produced in Orientalist, Islamophobic and racist discourses'" (p. 629). For Miles & Brown (2003), the turn to race is made when a religion, and subsequently a religious group and/or individual, is 'seen as representing a racialized other' (p. 629). Islamophobia, therefore, whether as a sociological, cultural, political, or ideological framework, is engrained in the Eurocentric and orientalist Western mind and contextualizes all Muslims as a uniform group of "Other", constantly perceived as *the* threat to humanity and civilisation (Bakali, 2015; Carr & Haynes, 2015). Sarwar and Raj (2016) depict such intersections in figure 1 below where fear (as in moral panic and social anxiety) is central to the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that sustain Islamophobia, prejudice and discrimination against Islam and Muslims. Around fear, gravitate the hatred, lack of understanding, persecution, and xenophobia towards Islam and Muslims. These attitudes and behaviors are fuelled by beliefs that Islam perpetuates terrorism, religious fundamentalism, and war; that Muslims are victimizing everyone in the West; and that the Arab Spring was just a foiled attempt to modernize Muslim societies.

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Figure 2: Fear

In my study, I understand Islamophobia as an ideology because it is rooted in the Eurocentric and Orientalist ideologies and cultures that construct the Muslims in general and the Arab World in particular, as backward and prone to fundamentalism, terrorism and violence.

The relationship between Islamophobia, intersectionality and diversity is also a well-established field of inquiry (Ashrif, 2002; Aziz, 2012; Considine, 2017; Mugabo, 2016; Perry, 2012; Sarwar & Raj, 2016; Zine, 2006). Diversity is an all-encompassing concept for many (Cooper & Ratele, 2014). Under Canadian multicultural and human rights policies, diversity includes the prohibited grounds of human rights discrimination and harassment (race, colour, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, national or ethnic origin, ancestry or place of birth, age, etc.) and their intersections. However, many writers caution against generalizing Muslims (Ashrif, 2002; Mugabo, 2016).

According to Gurin et al. (2002), diversity (racial/ethnic) on campus can profoundly affect Muslim students' learning outcomes. Considine (2017) argues that often time, "racialization

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processes (for example) interact with Islamophobic discourses and actions” (p. 1). In the case of ‘gendered Islamophobia’, Perry (2014) notices that “the veil, the burqa, the hijab and other forms of covering are taken as the central identifier of the female Muslim body” (p. 82). According to Wing & Smith (2006),

While a male Muslim’s ideology is not necessarily obvious from his dress, a female wearing a headscarf becomes an easy target for those fearing Islamic fundamentalists. Therefore, while individuals who are actually dangerous may remain potentially invisible, their pacifist, veiled sisters may be heavily scrutinized and potentially victimized. (Wing & Smith, 2006, p. 754 quoted in Perry, 2014, p. 82).

What do they mean “individuals who are actually dangerous”? Are they referring to the invisibility of Muslim men? Is this kind of statements not just academically reifying the fear of creeping shariah and terrorism?

Muslim Diversity: Shortcomings of the Literature

According to a 2011 Pew Research study, *The Future of the Global Muslim Population*, there are 1.6 billion Muslims in the world, divided between 85% Sunnis and 15% Shia. However, the current literature is short on discussing the diversity and differences between the Muslim bodies, beyond race, gender, sex, and country of origins. In particular, the literature on Islamophobia is silent on the ideological differences in Islam, such as the Sunni-Shia divide or other sectarian considerations. How do these differences affect Muslim students’ relationships among themselves on campus and in the community? The literature does not contextualize Islamophobia based on these ideological differences of Islam. It also does not explain if Muslim students are targets of Islamophobia based on their sectarian origins or how much the ideological, political, sociological differences in their religion and between them affect their individual and groups relationships on campus.

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A focus on such political, sociological, and ideological differences is however critical since “sectarian conflict is becoming entrenched in a growing number of Muslim countries and threatening to ... reshape the future Middle East” (Council on Foreign Relations, 2014). The Council on Foreign Relations (2014) argues that there is a historical background to these ongoing ideological sectarian conflicts. Hazleton (2009) reports that since the death of the Prophet of the Muslims (pbuh⁴), a civil war has ensued, pitting the camp of his wife Aisha (Sunni) against his son-in-law Ali (Shia), concerning the leadership of the Ummah (global Muslim community as a whole). As the sectarian conflict between these two camps resulted in the assassination of Ali’s son, Husayn, Hazleton (2009) argues that since then, “Shia identity is rooted in victimhood over the killing of Husayn, the Prophet Mohammed’s grandson, in the seventh century, and a long history of marginalization by the Sunni majority... (which), viewed Shia Islam with suspicion, and extremist Sunnis have portrayed Shias as heretics and apostates” (p. 2). Against such a background then, how do diverse Muslim students relate to each other on campus? How do these ideological divides and political conflicts effect their relationships with each other and their responses to Islamophobia? How much of an impact does knowledge of these distinctions “between Sunni and Shi’a, Sufi and Wahhabi” have on the ways Muslims are treated on University campuses in Canada and elsewhere? Is Islamophobic racism focused on the religious specificities of Muslims as a ‘homogenous’ group or on their ideological, political and sociological differences?

Islamophobia in the literature targets all Muslims, regardless of their sectarian affiliations. According to Sarwar and Raj (2016) , “from the critical race theory perspective, Islam is seen as less than a single abstraction and becomes something very symbolic” (p. 3). Bazian (2015) concedes, “Islamophobia is narrowly approached without interconnectedness to existing and

⁴ Peace be upon Him

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historical otherness in race, gender, immigration, and diaspora, transnational, and “postcolonial” studies” (p. 1057)

The section below further investigates the relationship between critical race theory and Islamophobia or the effects of prejudice, discrimination, and their intersections, particularly on Muslim students on campus and the community

2.5. Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Studies of Prejudice and Discrimination

This section discusses the foundations of critical race theory (CRT), its history, key principles, processes, intersections with theories of race and racialization, and particularly its intersections with Islamophobia as a racialized and gendered form of prejudice and discrimination against Muslim bodies (Abdullah, 2013; Bakali, 2016; Sarwar & Raj, 2016). As Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic (2013) discuss, in *Critical Race Theory: The Cutting Edge*,

Our social world, with its rules, practices, and assignments of prestige and power, is not fixed; rather, we construct it with words, stories and silence. But we need not acquiesce in arrangements that are unfair and one-sided. By writing and speaking against them, we may hope to contribute to a better, fairer world (p. 3).

As I state earlier, one goal of my study is to ‘unveil’ the unfair and one-sided stories that demonize and dehumanize Muslims as violent and terrorists.

2.5.1. Foundations of critical race theory (CRT) and the studies of prejudice and discrimination

Critical race theory (CRT) is a protest discourse that originates in the critical legal academic field (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Hill, 2009; Taylor, Gillborn, & Ladson-Billings, 2009; Crenshaw, 1991; Tate, 1997). According to Hill (2009), CRT is a critique of the critical legal field’s “inability to adequately address race and racism in its critique of U.S. jurisprudence” (p. 1). In the education field, “scholars have looked at CRT, as an epistemological and methodological tool, to help analyze the experiences of historically under-represented populations across the K-20 educational pipeline”

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(Ledesma & Calderon, 2015, p. 206). Here, Ledesma & Calderon (2015) credit Ladson-Billings & Tate (1995) and Solorzano (1998) for the development of early CRT scholarship.

According to Delgado & Stefancic (2013), CRT is based on three tenets: racism is engrained in a culture to the extent it become normalized; racism is supported by whiteness and white supremacy ideologies that engender a self-regenerative power that systematically disadvantages and dispossesses minorities of their human rights; and white people are not ready to give up this power which is embedded in unearned privilege, unless the alternative also benefits them. Yanow (2011) argues, “(a) racism, rather than being a result of aberrant behavior is instead a common occurrence; (b) the existence of racism is only fully understood when it is heard through the experiences of the oppressed; (c) and while it appears that positive changes with respect to racial equality are happening, change occurs for Blacks only when it also benefits Whites” (p. 198). According to Dixson & Anderson (2018), regarding the education field, six ‘boundaries’ delimit these basic tenets. Critical race theory (1) argues that racial inequity in education is the logical outcome of a system of achievement built on competition; (2) examines the role of education policy and educational practices in the construction of racial inequity and the perpetuation of normative whiteness; (3) rejects the dominant narrative about the inherent inferiority of people of color and the normative superiority of white people; (4) rejects ahistoricism and examines the historical linkages between contemporary educational inequity and historical patterns of racial oppression; (5) engages in intersectional analyses that recognize the ways that race is mediated by and interacts with other identity markers (i.e., gender, class, sexuality, linguistic background, and citizenship status); and, (6) agitates and advocates for meaningful outcomes that redress racial inequity. Hill (2009) contends that, “CRT places race at the center of analysis. At the same time, CRT recognizes the complex ways that race intersects with ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, and other systems of power” (p. 1). For Ladson-Billings (2013), though “critical race theorists accept the

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scientific understanding of no-race or no genetic difference, we also accept the power of a social reality that allows for significant disparities in the life chances of people based on the categorical understanding of race” (p. 39). According to Winant (2001),

Race has been a constitutive element, an organizational principle, a “praxis” and structure that has constructed and reconstructed world society since the emergence of modernity, the enormous historical shift represented by the rise of Europe, the founding of modern nation-states and empires, the “conquista,” the onset of African slavery, and the subjugation of much of Asia (Winant, 2001, p. 19; quoted in Ladson-Billings, 2013, p. 39).

Race (and racism) indeed has been at the basis of the Eurocentric and Orientalist ideologies toward Islam, Muslims and other non-Western people around the world.

2.5.2. Critical anti-Racism Movement (CART)

In earlier discussions of race and racism, Delgado and Stefancic (2001), argued that CRT scholars also hold the belief that racism “is the usual way society does business, the common, everyday experience of most people of color in this country” (p. 7). Critical race theory, as a movement brings together activists and scholars to reflect on and raise critical consciousness about the intersections between race, racism, racialization and power as affecting individuals and groups. Understanding this intersectionality is crucial, since “given the nature of racial domination, racially based movements deserve their own theorizations and concepts” (Bonilla-Silva, 2015, p. 82). Reasons et al (2016) contend that though race is often associated with criminality and plays a central role in the sentencing of racialized offenders in the Canadian criminal justice system, “not all oppressions, biases or insults are the same... It is acknowledged in both critical race theory and theories pertaining to social exclusion that not all forms or types of racism are equal. And yet such notions of race and racialization as an unequal application are unacknowledged in the literature” (p. 82). Islamophobia as racism is one of those types of racism that are often unacknowledged in the literature, if not dissociated from race.

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Bonilla-Silva (2015) argues that “conceiving racism as an attitude or belief that operates at the individual level” (p. 76) is theoretically limiting because

(a) racism is embedded in the structure of a society, (b) racism has a psychology, but it is fundamentally organized around a material reality (i.e., racism has what I characterized as a “material foundation”), (c) racism changes over time, (d) racism has a “rationality” (actors support or resist a racial order in various ways because they believe doing so is beneficial to them), (e) overt, covert, and normative racialized behaviors (following the racial etiquette of a racial order) are all paths that “racial subjects” (Goldberg 1997) have in any society, and (f) racism has a con-temporary foundation and is not a mere remnant of the past (Bonilla-Silva 2001:25–36).

Because racial prejudice and systemic discrimination hiddenness and pervasive nature, Gillborn (2006) argues that CRT should therefore be positioned at the center of the legal and educational or social policy discourse and practice. Therefore “racialization (should) form... a real structure [to reflect] that racialized groups are hierarchically ordered and “social relations” and “practices” emerge that fit the position of the groups in the racial regime” (Bonilla-Silva, 2015, p. 77). Bonilla-Silva (2015) argues that racism is ideological (prejudice) and material and consequential, and as such it “is intrinsically connected to domination” (p. 78). He defines an ideology as “the broad mental and moral frameworks, or ‘grids,’ that social groups use to make sense of the world, to decide what is right and wrong, true or false, important or unimportant” (62). In the case of Islamophobia, racism as an ideology operates within the framework of Orientalism, ethnocentrism, and other forms of intersections of power and privilege that exclude the different “others”.

2.5.3. Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality

According to Gillborn (2015), intersectionality is a key aspect of CRT, while “racism retains a primacy for critical race scholars in three key ways: namely, *empirical primacy* (as a central axis of oppression in the everyday reality of schools), *personal/autobiographical primacy* (as a vital component in how critical race scholars view themselves and their experience of the world), and *political primacy* (as a point of group coherence and activism)” (p. 277). Cole (2018) adds,

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Intersectionality refers to the simultaneous experience of categorical and hierarchical classifications including but not limited to race, class, gender, sexuality, and nationality. It also refers to the fact that what are often perceived as disparate forms of oppression, like racism, classism, sexism, and xenophobia, are actually mutually dependent and intersecting in nature, and together they compose a unified system of oppression. Thus, the privileges we enjoy and the discrimination we face are a product of our unique positioning in society as determined by these social classifiers (p. 1).

Bonilla-Silva (2015) concedes that most work on intersectionality has been done by women of color, “and many others who have insisted that forms of inequality are not additive but intersecting” (Acker 2011:68 quoted in Bonilla-Silva, 2015, p. 82). Kimberle Crenshaw (1991) popularized intersectionality, in her seminal work on workplace harassment and domestic abuse of black women (Collins, 2012; Harris & Leonardo, 2018; Gillborn, 2015). Crenshaw (2017) defines intersectionality as “a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects. It is not simply that there is a race problem here, a gender problem here, and a class or LGBTQ problem there. Many times, that framework erases what happens to people who are subject to all of these things” (Interview at Columbia Law School, p. 2). In contextualizing these processes, Delgado & Stefancic add that “intersectionality means the examination of race, sex, class, national origin, and sexual orientation and how their combinations play out in various settings” (2001, p. 51). Emphasizing the importance of intersectionality’s focus on the simultaneous experiences of people, Collins (2012) describes the strength and relevance of intersectionality in these terms:

Intersectionality’s ability to draw attention to and account for inter-social relations—including those on the margins—challenges binary thinking, shifting the analytic focus on the fluidity among, interrelationships between, and co-production of various categories and systems of power. As a result, epistemologically, intersectionality highlights the various standpoints that “inter” social locations occupy; these alternative standpoints challenge truth claims advanced by historically powerful social actors. (Collins, 2012, p. 454).

However, critics of the intersectionality framework, as well as its supporters, have often understated cumulative and exponential effects of intersectionality, though they all recognized its limitations

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and challenges.. With reference to these limitations and challenges, Bonilla-Silva (2015) asks: (1) what are the definitions of the categories that intersect?, (2) if social categories are mutually reproduced, how does one study them?, and (3) what should be the level of analysis, macro, mezzo, or micro?" (p. 82). My study adopts a definition of intersectionality that encompasses more than just the intersections of race and gender, but also includes religion, ethnicity, country of origin, physical appearance, language, class, and socioeconomic status but also their cumulative and exponential effects.

Finally, foundational to critical race theory (CRT) are stories. In their foreword to their book *Foundations of Critical Race Theory in Education* (p. ix), Taylor et al. (2009) argue, "the truth about stories... is that they are all we are. Stories convey what we believe; what we imagine and experience, as well as insulate us from what we don't want to think about" (p. 47). Delgado & Stefancic (2013) concur that stories can influence our reality or be used to deconstruct the roots of racism and racial exclusion. This study uses the stories of Muslim students to theorize about their experiences of Islamophobia on campus and in the community.

In my study, I integrate critical race theory as a conceptual framework because it helps position the concept of Islamophobia (prejudice and discrimination against Muslims and Islam) within a broader discourse of religious prejudice and discrimination, racism, ethnicity, and other intersections. According to Garner & Selod (2015) and Sayyid & Vakil (2010), religion is raced and Muslims in general are racialized. CRT also presents a methodology to understand Muslim students' experiences of prejudice and discrimination or Islamophobia through storytelling. The power of stories is certain, as Ladson-Billings (2013) found in this African proverb, "Until lions have their historians, tales of the hunt shall always glorify the hunter" (p. 41). She argues that

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critical race theorists should “use storytelling as a way to illustrate and underscore broad legal principles regarding race and racial/social justice” (p. 42).

The next section offers an in-depth look at some of the limitations and challenges encountered by academics and university administrators in conceptualizing and applying an intersectional critical race theory approach to addressing prejudice and discrimination on campus, and particularly addressing Islamophobia.

2.6. Canadian Universities and Their Responses to Prejudice, Discrimination, and Islamophobia

This section analyzes the current state of affairs in how Canadian universities are responding to issues of prejudice, discrimination, and other intersections, against Muslim students in particular.

However, I elect to first present a history of Equity and Human Rights offices in Canadian institutions of high education and their mandates of responding to issues of prejudice, discrimination, and other intersections.

2.6.1. History of Equity and Human Rights Offices in Canada and Their Mandate to Respond to Issues of Prejudice, Discrimination, and Intersections

Equity and human rights offices abound in most Canadian colleges and university structures. Most Canadian colleges and universities have adopted these offices and the subsequent policies they support from the 1980s onward (Benick et al., 1996; Dua & Bhanji, 2017; Tator & Henry, 2017).

Dua & Bhanji report that in Canada, “almost all universities have at least one policy mechanism to address racism, and in almost a third of Canadian universities there has been a concerted effort to develop and implement equity policies” (p. 171). Benick et al. (1996) reports that “generally, the purpose of college and university anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies is to create welcoming learning and work environments so that all who learn and work at an institution can

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participate fully” (p. 9). These institutional policies on discrimination and harassment usually have a three-fold mandate:

To stop situations of individual discrimination and harassment; to shift attitudes and stereotypical perceptions, notions and myths which underlie most acts of discrimination and harassment; and to change those institutional practices which are symptomatic of systemic discrimination and harassment (p. 9).

In their description of a Ryerson project, Benick et al. (1996) report that, these equity and human rights discrimination and harassment policies often approach institutional change by promoting respectful, welcoming and inclusive learning and working environments focused on student-centred approaches. However, they argue that, “this complaint driven, fault-based process, while valuable, does not remove the systemic barriers and does not begin the process of structural transformation” (p. 1).

2.6.2. The State of Affairs in University Responses to Prejudice, Discrimination, and Islamophobia

Many scholars argue that Canadian universities and administrators have failed to effectively disrupt prejudice and discrimination in general (Warburton & Martin, 1998; Burley, 2006; Henry et al., 2016; Hirji-Khalfan & Rakie, 2017; Tator & Henry, 2010), and Islamophobia in particular (Kassis & Schallie, 2014; Hirji-Khalfan & Rakie, 2017; Erkan & Walker (2018). Delores Mullings (2018) argues in the *CAPDDHE* newsletter, the only professional journal for administrators of equity and human rights offices in Canada, that though most post-secondary institutions in Canada brandish the terms “equity“, “diversity“ and “inclusion“ on their websites, the terms “race“ and “racism“ seem to have been quietly “(e)raced from equity, diversity, and inclusion discussions“ (p.8). Some of the challenges and limitations in the practices of these Canadian universities are rooted in the resistance of the academics and university administrators to intersectionality and their failure to distinguish between the pervasive nature of systemic racism and individual localized racism (Law, 2017; Tate & Bagguley, 2017). Already in their 1996-resource book, *Creating Inclusive Post-*

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Secondary Learning Environments, Benick et al. (1996), were arguing for recognition of the many factors that were limiting the effective implementation of those discrimination and harassment policies by equity and human rights offices. Among these, they listed: the backlash created by the implementation of certain policy recommendations or the lack of due-process; the difficulty of using the policies to bring about systemic change; the lack of support for equity and diversity initiatives; and the institutional resistance and support for the status quo (pp.11-13).

As previously discussed, in the introductory chapter, most minority students, staff, and faculty participants in various on-campus climate studies in Canada, have described the pervasive and continuous impact of prejudice and discrimination. They all argue that the university has failed to address the roots of prejudice and discrimination, and that this is the case at the system and institutional levels (Martin & Warburton, 1998; Burley, 2006; Henry, 2016; Hirji-Khalfan & Rakie, 2017; Smith, 2017; Tator & Henry, 2010). In her 2006 follow up to a 1998 report to the President of the University of Victoria, Burley (2006) complained about the slow implementation of the recommendations by the university. She adds that, from her study interviews, “most participants felt that the problem of racism is at an institutional level and needs to be deeply, sincerely, and constantly challenged by the University” (p. 3). Similarly, in their report to McMaster University’s president, *Challenging Islamophobia on Campus Initiative*, Hirji-Khalfan & Rakie (2017) argue for an urgent implementation of the recommendations, as there exist on-going risks with “the systemic silencing and lack of public acknowledgement surrounding Islamophobic incidents... [noting that] the statements and actions of political leaders gave license to individuals to spew hate in the public sphere” (p. 4). Henry et al. (2017) notice that universities often allocate ineffective processes and resources to addressing racism and other intersections on campus.

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In *Building the Anti-Racist University*, Tate & Bagguley (2017) argue that the issue mainly resides in “the failure of the various equity and anti-racism strategies [rests] on ‘institutional inertia around racism’; ‘the erasure of past anti-racist changes’; the lack of ‘unfettered institutional access’ for equity and human rights officers; the rigidity of the organizational culture in institutions of high learning; and an unimpeded white ‘deniability regimes’”. According to Tate & Bagguley (2017), whiteness and white supremacy do not need to be defended against the charge of racism because of ‘unknowledges’. ‘Sometimes these “unknowledges” are consciously generated, while at other times they are unconsciously generated and supported (but] they work to support white privilege and supremacy’ (Sullivan & Tuana 2007, quoted in Tate & Bagguley, 2017, p. 295). Tate & Bagguley (2017) add that “these deniability regimes are crucial to the continuation of whiteness in universities through its racial affective economies and cultures of disattendability (Tate, 2013), curricula, and interpersonal relationalities which lead to promotion or lack of it, student/staff experiences of racial privilege/dis-privilege, and denial of access to the institution in the first place (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2010, 2016, quoted in Tate & Bagguley, 2017, p. 295). Gillborn (2006) recognizes the associated risks and pitfalls for engaging with whiteness for equity and human rights educators on campus, though the building of the anti-racist university will require an anti-racism framework that should be embedded in all structures of the institution and including all stakeholders, students, staff, faculty and other ally-communities (Law, 2017).

Mullings (2018), in her piece, “Indigenous and Visible Minorities are Encouraged to Apply: But Beware of the Iron Bars, Cages and Glass Ceilings”, concludes that in order for academic administrators of Canadian colleges and universities to re-engage an agenda of race and racism (and consequently Islamophobic racism and Islamophobia) in post-secondary institutions,

Deliberate efforts are necessary to affect meaningful change. Alongside policy, we must invigorate, openly invite and embrace discussion about race and racism. The data detailing

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racial discrimination and the silence of administrators around race-related concerns is clearly evident. In following with concerted efforts to increase women's administrative leadership in post-secondary institutions, similar efforts must be adopted for indigenous and racialized people if Canadian colleges and universities are to reflect a global 21st century environment (p. 9).

2.7 A brief overview of Islam and the Muslims faith

According to a Pew Research Center (2017) report, *The Changing Global Religious Landscape*, Muslims are the world's fastest-growing religious group and will continue to be in the decades ahead. The report builds on a 2015 demographic study, *The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050*, which argues that among the main factors driving the growth of the Muslim population worldwide, is that "Muslims have the highest Total Fertility Rate as of 2010-2015, a global average of 3.1 children per woman. This is one of the main reasons why the Muslim population is expected to grow not only in absolute numbers but also in relative terms – as a percentage of all the people in the world – in the decades to come" (Pew Research Center 2015, p. 25). This fertility rate of the Muslim population worldwide is something some Islamophobe often point out as a threat to their own racial hegemony.

Islam in Canada Today

Statistics Canada (2018) also confirm this fertility rate of the Muslim population. According to Statistics Canada (2018), Muslims and Arabs are also the fastest growing population in Canada today. From the years 2001-2011, these communities grew by 82%, making up approximately 3.2% of the population (Statistics Canada, 2007). Today, the Muslim communities in Canada make approximately 1,053,585 people (Statistics Canada, 2018).

However, the perception and treatment of Islam and Muslims in Canada today has never been so dire. These perceptions and treatments are rooted in a long tradition of stereotypical, discriminatory and patronizing cultural representations of Arabs, in particular and all Muslims, in

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general (Alizai, 2017). According to Moghissi, Rahnema & Goodman (2009), the representation of Islam as backwards and fanatical has led to a new group identity among Muslims in Canada (in Alizai, 2017, pp. 69-70). Moghissi et al. (2009) add:

We are witnessing the rapid formation of an overarching, collective identity or group affiliation that dis-articulates each of these communities from its specific origins, instead uniting them all as a nominally homogenous ‘Muslim’ population. The marked national and ethnic diversity of these groups, along with their distinct political histories, cultures, and languages, suggests that it is neither nostalgia for a homeland, real or imaginary, nor the sudden discovery of Islam’s moral and ethical values that motivates these populations to join together, but rather a commonality in the sense of being deported to the culture of non-belonging, of becoming (p. 13).

For example, journalist Maura Forrest of the National Post argues that the Report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, *Taking Action Against Systemic Racism and Religious Discrimination Including Islamophobia* (Fry, 2018), has language that is hesitant and weak with reference to Islamophobia. Forrest argues that the report described Islamophobia in vague terms as to appease the Conservative caucus who have been very vocal against the very use of the term ‘Islamophobia’ (Forrest, 2018). The report has indeed politicized the issues of Islamophobia by focusing on terminology and by entertaining a controversial debate on whether Islamophobia is the correct term to describe Muslims’ experiences of prejudice and discrimination in Canada. However, the report could have been more effective if I could have reassured Canadian Muslims as per Gova’s (2015) inquiry:

How Muslim communities respond to these fears, threats, and violence upon their humanity is an urgent concern to which we should all attend. Ultimately, how Muslims respond is critical not only for self-empowerment, but also for the nation as a whole, as such racism takes place and is perpetuated at the expense of the rights of every Canadian (Gova, 2015).

2.8. Summary of Chapter 2

In Chapter 2, I outlined the epistemological and theoretical approaches relevant to prejudice and discrimination research in the existing literature, and particularly Islamophobia as in the Muslims

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students' experiences on university campus and in the wider community. I started by first acknowledging the ongoing debate between grounded theory scholars about doing a preliminary literature review and concluded that the issue has more to do with being aware of my assumptions as a researcher and understanding how these might influence and affect my data gathering, analysis, and interpretation. My discussions of prejudice and discrimination emphasized their pervasive and intersectional natures. Here, the literature pointed to the intersections of religious discrimination with other features of diversity such as race, gender, country of origin, sex, social status, etc. In discussing intersectionality, I integrated critical race theory as a conceptual framework that naturally intersects with constructivism throughout the CRT's focus on story-telling and other qualitative data sharing. However, in order to grasp with the specific object of Islamophobia, I realized how beneficial to the reader it would be to have a deeper understanding of the global and national demographics of Muslims, as well as their trends and tendencies towards self-homogenization in the face of systemic stressors.

To conclude this literature review, my study argues for further investigation of Islamophobia, its intersections, and particularly to prioritize Muslim students' experiences on university campus and community and how these affect their academic integration and social well-being. According to Fry (2018), there is a dearth of statistical research in Canada on Muslim students' experiences of Islamophobia. Wilkins-Laframme (2018) concedes that "in-depth empirical research of the prevalence and patterns of prejudice toward Muslims remains scarce, especially in the Canadian context" (p.86). As with anti-racist research (this is also valuable for Islamophobic racism research), Dei (2005) adds, "the belief in the power of ideas to change society requires that the anti-racist researcher explores ways and means of understanding the philosophy behind the social ideals and practices in which people are involved" (p. 2). My study, indeed,

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argues for further systematic exploration of the experiences of Muslim students with Islamophobia, prejudice and discrimination on campus, and the associated barriers and constraints in students' social relations with peers, university personnel and communities at large. This is not a mission impossible, if we put it into the context of what Bleich (2012) had to say, that "in recent years, Islamophobia has begun an evolution from a politicized concept toward one used by scholars to study a form of racism similar to xenophobia or anti-Semitism" (p.1).

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CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

In Chapter 3, I explore the constructivist grounded theory methodology to help answer the research questions I developed in Chapter 1. According to Corbin & Strauss (2008), “the research question should dictate the methodological approach that is used to conduct the research” (p. 12). My research questions are divided into the following core and secondary/sub-questions.

Research Questions

(ii) What policies, programmatic approaches, and educational curriculum and co-curriculum (overt and covert) contribute and support healthy relations between Muslim students and faculty, staff and the community? (iii) What policies, programmatic approaches, and educational curriculum and co-curriculum (overt and covert) contribute to Muslim students’ academic success and social integration at the University of Victoria?

Secondary/sub-questions: (i) Do Muslim students experience obstacles and constraints to their academic and social success at UVic, based on their ethnic, cultural, social, and religious backgrounds? (ii) Are there differences in the degree/extent of the experiences of Muslim students relating to their specific racial, ethnic, linguistic, social and cultural dress? (iii) Does prejudice and discrimination affect Muslim students’ learning and social integration on campus?

In this chapter, I discuss, in the following sections, how I decided on both a research methodology congruent with the kind of data produced by my study, and a research technique/ method effective for analysing, interpreting, and reporting my research data.

3.1. Research Methodology

This section outlines the process I engaged in to select and decide on an appropriate research design and methodology consistent with my research problems, purpose, and epistemological and

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theoretical orientations as discussed in the literature review chapter 2. According to Birks & Mills (2015),

Stemming from a congruent philosophy, a methodology is a set of principles and ideas that inform the design of a research study. Methods, on the other hand, are practical procedures used to generate and analyse data. (p. 4)

Sandra Harding (1987) argues that a research methodology should be connected to the theory of knowledge (epistemology) the study intends to emphasize and to the different techniques (methods) used to gather, analyse, and interpret data. According to Corbin & Strauss (2008), the term methodology, if used in grounded theory, means a “way of thinking about and studying social phenomena” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 1), while the use of the term method is linked to the different techniques used in the data gathering and analysis phases (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

This section also emphasizes the theoretical framework supporting my study and the specific characteristics of my final constructivist grounded theory methodology, which helped answer my research questions.

3.1.1. Selecting a Research Design

A research design, according to Creswell (2009), is a plan or proposal to conduct research. It “involves the intersection of philosophy, strategies of inquiry, and specific methods” (p. 5).

Traditionally, academics have settled for two approaches in research design: quantitative and qualitative (Bryman, 1988; Creswell, 2009; Picciano, 2004). However, in the 1980, mixed methods emerged “as a third methodological movement in the social and behavioral sciences” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 697). According to Fairbrother (2007), the first two approaches have sparked a lively debate (p. 44) whereas:

Quantitative research is criticised for silencing voices, ignoring subjects’ perspectives, excluding meaning, focusing on theories which are irrelevant to research subjects

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themselves, stripping away context from research questions and only generating data which are superficial and inapplicable to individual cases. Detractors of qualitative research criticise it for relying too much on the researcher's interpretations, producing findings which are not generalizable or replicable, generating "soft" data, and even being an assault on truth (Bryman 1988; Denzin and Lincoln 2000).

However, Picciano (2004) believes that these opposing views are reconcilable. He argues, "both approaches are highly respected and, when done well, add equally to the knowledge base" (p. 32). According to Creswell (2009), quantitative research "is a means for testing objective theories by examining the relationships among variables... and those who engage in this form of inquiry have assumptions about testing theories deductively, building in protections against bias, controlling for alternative explanations, and being able to generalize and replicate the findings" (ibid). Mixed methods research combines in a single study, quantitative and qualitative methodologies of data collection and analysis (Creswell et al, 2003). The use of the mixed methods approach allows, among others, a variation in data collection, which leads to greater validity; helps answer the research question from a number of different perspectives; ensures that there are no gaps in the data collected; and minimizes the risk for the researcher's assumptions tempering the data.

Qualitative research, however, is based on natural settings and assumptions that are different from quantitative approaches. According to Denzin & Lincoln (2000),

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. These practices... turn the world into a series of representations including fieldnotes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (p. 3).

The primary goal of qualitative research therefore is to interpret and document an entire phenomenon from an individual's viewpoint or frame of reference (Blumer, 1969; Creswell, 2014; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, many writers argue that

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qualitative research is not the ultimate fix to the shortcomings of the quantitative research and full representation of the voices on the margins and other intersections (Dei, 2014; Lather, 1992; LoBiondo-Wood & Haber (2014). Instead, qualitative research, has its own shortcomings, especially in its mimicry of the quantitative approaches of validation and verification (Lather, 1992). However,

What begins to look possible is to interrupt the naturalization of empirical givenness in a science that seldom puts “the real” in quotation marks, resulting in a “zombie positivism” with its incessant returns of objectivism and “the gold standard” of replication and generalization. What becomes intelligible is a social science adequate to the 21st century (Lather, 2016, p. 129).

Patti Lather (2013), a feminist scholar contends that the current state of qualitative research is part of a ‘neoliberal governmentality’ (p. 634) where “in short, the contest over the science that can provide the evidence for practice and policy pits the recharged positivism of neoliberalism against a qualitative “community” at risk of assimilation and the reduction of qualitative to an instrumentalism that meets the demands of audit culture (p. 636). To break away from this interference, Lather (2016) proposes a paradigm shift or as she terms it, a ‘post-qualitative’ approach to educational research. Post-qualitative research is aimed at disrupting current research practices and challenging representations of being, truth, and absolute knowledge (St. Pierre *et al.*, 2016). According to St. Pierre et al. (2016), “post-qualitative inquiry has developed to consider the possibilities of the ontological (re)turn of inquiry, which envelops the human and material world in co-constitutive relations rather than as a binary opposition” (quoted in Fairchild, 2016, p. 18). These new ways of conceptualizing research have questioned whether existing knowledge practices of methodology and method are found lacking when research is concerned with de-centering humans in the research process (Fairchild, 2016, p. 18). Lather (2013) confirms that “instead of papering over difference, otherness, and disparity, such work reflects/enacts these issues,

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suggesting further direction and broader possibilities of ‘being-acting-feeling together’ through the production of new terms of belonging” (p. 642).

My study approaches qualitative research as a post-qualitative inquiry based on a two-focus process: attitudinal- ‘a distinctive way of thinking about educational phenomena’, and action – a systematic means of investigating them” (Brundrett & Rhodes, 2013, p. 13). In my study, I also incorporated Dowling & Brown’s (2010) approach to move educational research beyond just asking the question of ‘what?’ and ‘how?’ to insist on also reflecting on ‘why?’. In adopting such an attitude and behavior towards qualitative research, I plan to adopt a participatory approach where my research participants are not only co-creators of meaning from their experiences but are also empowered “to be in charge of their own knowledge production, by selecting topics that are most salient to them” (Schallie, 2016, p. 16). Such a post-qualitative conceptual approach is crucial, especially in critical race theory research such as Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racist research with Muslim students in the educational institutional context. According to Dei (2005), the purpose of anti-racist research “is to understand social oppression and how it helps construct and constrain identities (race, gender, class, sexuality), both internally and externally through inclusionary and exclusionary processes” (p. 2). In my study, such an anti-racism approach will also help me to understand the Muslim students’ experiences of Islamophobia and its intersections on campus and in the community.

3.1.2. Choosing an Appropriate Qualitative Research Methodology

This section discusses the constructivist grounded theory method I chose as a research methodology for my research, its history and development, different schools of divergence, and iterations: Glaserian, Straussian, and Constructivist grounded theory.

3.1.2.1. The Grounded Theory Method as a Research Methodology for My Study

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Although my study could use any of the qualitative methodologies discussed in the literature – case study research, discourse analysis, ethnography research, narrative research, phenomenology studies – a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Cobin & Strauss, 1990), and especially a constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000, 2006; Mills et al., 2006) best supports my purpose, because of its:

- Compatibility with post-qualitative inquiry, critical feminist scholarship, critical anti-racism research, and participatory research that honors, amplifies and acknowledges both the voices and the assigned meanings of participants and the researcher. As with anti-racist research, Dei (2005) argues, “the belief in the power of ideas to change society requires that the anti-racist researcher explores ways and means of understanding the philosophy behind the social ideals and practices in which people are involved” (p. 2).
- Compatibility with the models and perspectives embedded in my study, as grounded theory has a capability to help interpret complex social phenomena (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory is also congruent with my kind of study which focuses on socially constructed experiences and perspectives (Charmaz, 2006; Goulding, 1998);
- Congruency with previous research done with minority students (including Muslim students) at the University of Victoria to date, including research done by Martin & Warburton (1998), Burley (2006), and Kassis & Schallie (2013);
- Well-defined method “of choice as it is detailed, rigorous, and systematic, yet it also permits flexibility and freedom” (Jones & Alony, 2011, p. 3) to the novice researcher; and
- Analytical tools which complement my own strengths and weaknesses, as grounded theory was flexible enough to accommodate different kinds of approaches and researchers (Martin & Turner, 1986).

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Ultimately, Anell (1996) argues that grounded theory “can be conducted within any qualitative paradigmatic position if ensuring commensurable process and claims of outcome” (in Birks & Mills, 2015, p. 8). Turner (1981) agrees and adds that grounded theory is particularly well suited to dealing with qualitative data of the kind gathered from participant observation, from the observation of face-to-face interaction, from semi-structured or unstructured interviews, from case-study material or documentary sources. As in my study, Bryant (2011) reports that “[a] particular strength of utilising grounded theory is that a documented record of the progress of the analysis is generated. Hence, it is always possible to trace the derivation of any concept or model by checking back through the data and memos” (p. 146).

3.1.2.2. History and Development of the Grounded Theory Methodology

The development of grounded theory in the early 1960s is indebted to Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (Charmaz, 2014; Covan, 2007; Birks & Mills, 2015). Glaser & Strauss (1967) wrote *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* in response to the positivist grand theoretical work, predicated on “the notion that the purpose of social research is to uncover pre-existing and universal explanations of social behavior” (Suddaby, 2006, p. 633). These authors argue that the positivist grand theory approach was too removed from people’s life and realities (Goulding, 2002). According to many commentators, Glaser & Strauss (1967) were influenced by different discourses at the time including the Chicago School of Sociology and its rich tradition of field research (Charmaz, 2005; Goulding, 2002) the emergence of participant observation methods, more focus on researchers and participants’ interactions (Dahlke et al., 2015), the symbolic interactionism movement, and the social construction of social behavior discourse among others (Blumer, 1969; Mead, 1934).

In *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, Glaser & Strauss (1967) define grounded theory as being all about data collection and analysis. In such an approach, the goal of research is to construct

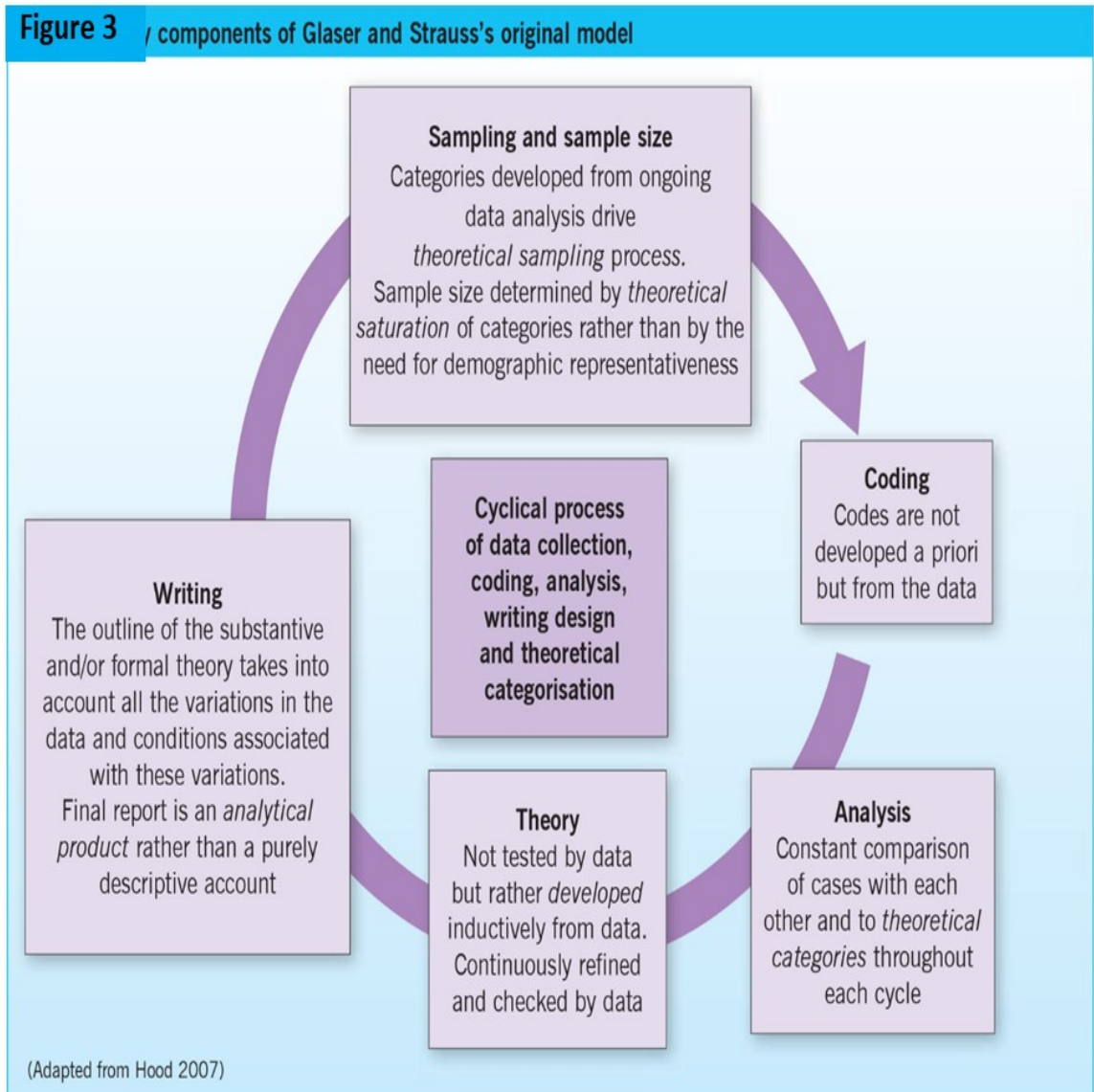
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a theory grounded in the data (Glaser, 1978, 1992; Glaser & Strauss, 1967, 2009; Strauss, 1987).

Glaser & Strauss (1967) also argue that grounded theory is exploratory and discovery-oriented qualitative research approach. Corbin & Strauss (1990) concurs that the grounded theory “procedures are designed to systematically and carefully build theory. Taking shortcuts in the work will result in a poorly constructed and narrowly conceived theory” (p. 26).

As a qualitative methodology, grounded theory allows the researcher to gain an understanding of the research participants’ experiences, feelings, understanding, interpretations, and the social processes associated with the phenomenon that concern them (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Figure 3: Key components of Glaser and Strauss’s original model (Lauridsen & Higginbottom, 2014) provides an adapted model of Hood’s (2007) overview of the key components of Glaser and Strauss’s original model. Lauridsen & Higginbottom (2014) argue that this original model constituted a cyclical and “ongoing systematic process of collecting, coding, analysing and theoretically categorising data using the information that emerges from the data itself, rather than forcing preconceived ideas onto the coding and subsequent analysis” (p. 9). According to Hood (2007), this process also involves collecting more data to add to the original data after coding and categorizing. The additional data, Hood continues, is “sought through theoretical sampling and compared to the emerging categories until saturation occurs. This ‘constant comparative method’ allows for the development of a theory that is analytically grounded in the data” (Hood, 2007, quoted in Lauridsen & Higginbottom, 2014, p. 9).

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According to Strauss & Corbin (1998), grounded theory methodology is best used

If someone wanted to know whether one drug is more effective than another, then a double-blind clinical trial would be more appropriate than grounded theory study. However, if someone wanted to know what it was like to be a participant in a drug study [...], then he or she might sensibly engage in a grounded theory project or some other type of qualitative study. (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 40).

In my study, I choose grounded theory because it offers a way to attend, in detail, to qualitative information in order to develop theory grounded in the data. My adoption of grounded theory

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(Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978; Strauss, 1987; Corbin & Strauss, 1990, 1998) amongst other qualitative methodologies is also due to its prevalence as a dominant paradigm for social research like psychology, education, and nursing (Mills et al, 2006).

According to Denzin & Lincoln (2008), grounded theory is “a largely inductive method of developing theory through close-up contact with the empirical world” (p. 383). Strauss & Corbin (1998) argue that grounded theory’s emphasis on theory development constitutes its main difference from other qualitative research methods: “theory is grounded when it emerges from and generates explanations of relationships and events that reflect the life experiences of those people and processes that the researcher is attempting to understand” (Lawrence & Tar, 2013, p. 31). Bryman et al. (2012) note that “practitioners of grounded theory – a common approach to the analysis of qualitative data – stress the importance of using data to develop theoretical ideas” (p. 135) as opposed to the other qualitative approaches which “treat theory as something that emerges out of the collection and analysis of data” (p. 135).

Corbin & Strauss (1990) identify three levels in the grounded theory approach, which my study strategically implemented. As the researcher, I was able to: “(a) present the data without interpretation and abstraction, relying on participants to tell their own story; (b) create a rich and believable descriptive narrative only using my field notes, interview transcripts; and (c) build a theory using high levels of interpretation and abstraction” (p. 31).

3.1.2.3. Divergence in Grounded Theory Iteration

Over the years, major points of divergence among theorists have led to several iterations of grounded theory (Devadas et al, 2011; Heath & Cowley, 2004; Howard-Payne, 2016; Kenny & Fourie, 2015). These included: classical or Glaserian (GGT); Straussian grounded theory (SGT); and constructivist grounded theory (GGT), as well as other related approaches (Morse, 2009).

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According to Howard-Payne (2016), the first two iterations, namely the Glaserian grounded theory (GGT) and Straussian grounded theory (SGT), are “theoretically, philosophically, and practically different from each other” (p. 51).

3.1.2.4. Glaserian grounded theory (GGT)

According to the Howard-Payne (2016), Glaserian grounded theory (GGT) has remained the closest to the initial post-positivist and inductive roots of grounded theory, founded in critical realism and objectivity. Glaser (1978) insists that grounded theory is discovered through pure induction and without pre-established bias or theoretical influences. Glaser (2002) asserts that if the researcher is exerting bias, then “this is a part of the research, in which bias is a vital variable to weave into the constant comparative analysis” (para. 12). To anticipate bias, GGT argues that researcher should avoid a preliminary literature review. However, according to Howard-Payne (2016), Glaser also argues for independence between the researcher and the method, “in respect of objectivity as it is understood by the post-positivist perspective” (p. 54). In my study, I elected to start with a preliminary literature review. In my literature review chapter 2, I based my approach on Charmaz’ (2014) argument that, as a researcher, I was not coming to the field totally bias-free. As a professional, who has worked for more than two decades in the field of human rights discrimination and harassment in university and community contexts, I am very much aware of most of the seminal literature in this field of study. Therefore, I could not agree with Glaser’s injunction for the researcher to avoid preliminary literature review.

3.1.2.5. Straussian grounded theory (SGT)

Straussian-grounded theory (SGT) diverges from GGT in many ways. For example, over the years, SGT has gradually denounced the post-positivist inclinations of grounded theory to adopt a more relativist and constructivist approach (Howard-Payne, 2016; Marchand, 2016), “allowing for some

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degree of theoretical influence, stressing a greater degree of reflexivity, and giving more freedom for deduction during analysis so long as it is verified in the data” (Marchand, 2016, p. 48).

According to Marchand (2016), where GGT advocates for the researcher to remain uninfluenced to allow for pure induction from the data” (p. 49), SGT, in both Cobin & Strauss’ (1990) work, recognizes the researcher’s past experiences, influences and the multiple realities socially constructed (Devadas et al, 2011; Marchand, 2016; Mills et al, 2006). To ensure validity, SGT “suggests using more structured analysis tools and methods that demonstrate greater rigour” (Marchand, 2016, p. 49). In SGT, Marchand (2016) adds that a “preliminary literature review is [encouraged] to support the researcher’s ability to recognize significant statements and connect them to meaningful abstractions” (p. 49), but like GGT, induction from the data is the primary analytic focus (McGhee, 2007).

Therefore, “by acknowledging researcher bias and theoretical predisposition, SGT also stresses greater reflexivity in the analysis process to make these biases and predispositions explicit” (Marchand, 2016, p. 49). A final point of divergence between GGT and SGT relates to the grounded theory data coding and analysis, where Glaser advocates for initial coding (Corbin & Strauss, 1990) and Strauss for open coding practices (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). However, both Anell (1996) and Birks & Mills (2015) argue that this division of grounded theory into either Glaserian or Straussian are unhelpful, and still fall short in “account[ing] for the subtleties and differences” in grounded theory research design” (Birks & Mills, 2015, p. 9). In my study, I mostly agreed with a Straussian grounded theory (SGT) approach to a preliminary literature review, though a constructivist grounded theory methodology constituted my final choice, for reasons I will demonstrate below.

3.1.2.6. The Constructivist rounded Theory: An Appropriate Methodology For This Study

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The third iteration of grounded theory is constructivist grounded theory (CGT) (Charmaz, 2000; Mills et al, 2006), a relatively new approach that moves even further towards relativism and constructivism (Evans, 2013). Since the mid-1990s, Charmaz (2000) has argued that a constructivist approach to grounded theory is desirable, because, “data do not provide a window on reality. Rather, the ‘discovered’ reality arises from the interactive process and its temporal, cultural, and structural contexts” (p. 524). Charmaz (2006) recognizes that constructivist grounded theory diverges from both Glaserian and Straussian grounded theory. She argues that CGT diverges from Glaserian Grounded Theory in that it opposes outright the post-positivist assumption that the researcher can discover theory through empirical, neutral or unbiased induction. Instead, CGT “stresses that theory is actively constructed and not discovered, and that the resulting models and theories are therefore embedded in a specific context and representative of a specific participants’ and researcher’s interpretation of a given phenomenon” (Marchand, 2016, p. 49). According to Lauridsen & Higginbottom (2014), CGT gives context to participants’ voices in both the final report and during the processes of theory construction. CGT also views SGT in its original form as post-positivist, and criticizes SGT’s rigid structures and prescriptive methods of data coding and analysis. As opposed to SGT’s advocacy for a neutral style, CGT argues for more creative freedom in the ways the researcher renders the stories, experiences and voices of participants, while allowing his own voice to come through. As a post-qualitative methodology,

[a] constructivist grounded theory distinguishes between the real and the true. The constructivist approach does not seek truth – single, universal, and lasting. Still, it remains realist because it addresses human realities and assumes the existence of real worlds. ... We must try to find what research participants define as real and where their definitions of reality take them. ... We change our conception of [social life] from a real world to be discovered, tracked, and categorized to a world made real in the minds and through the words and actions of its members. (Charmaz, 2000, p. 523).

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According to Charmaz, people construct their realities, contrary to Glaser and Strauss & Corbin's (1990 & 2008) approaches to grounded theory methodology which "assume an objective external reality and hence take a positivist and objectivist stance" (Gorra, 2007, p. 96).

One salient similarity between these three iterations of grounded theory to note is their final requirements of deriving theory from and developing theory from data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Charmaz, 2006). Therefore, even though any of these approaches (GGT and SGT) would have worked for my study, the constructivist grounded theory method (CGT) – opened to include some of the Straussian grounded theory features – is best aligned with both prejudice and discrimination research, and my research goals. For example, I used CGT particular strengths by including multiple voices and narratives and situating myself as a researcher in the final text to complete the lack of clear directions in current Straussian methodological texts on how to operationalize constructivism within SGT methods (Wilmot, 2015). In exchange, I sometimes referred to SGT clear definitions for sets of steps and methods to complement CGT's lack thereof.

To align with prejudice, discrimination, and Islamophobia research, my constructivist grounded theory design first assumed a critical stance and critical race theory approach (Malagon et al, 2009) that resists universalism, notions of Western ethnocentrism and Christian hegemonic religious ideology and seeks to include voices and narratives from other religious minorities on the university campus. Second, my grounded theory design endeavored to support my research goals to highlight the concepts and theories related to anti-Muslim prejudice and discrimination research praxis that is useful to university administrators and other practitioners. Although my design needs to resist universal generalizations and claims to truth (Charmaz, 2000), it still seeks inter-contextual relevance (Strauss & Corbin, 1998); in other words, though my theories were contextualized through description and narrative, my analysis needs to illustrate how the concepts and theories,

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which inductively emerge from these contexts, are relevant to other contexts (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). According to Charmaz, a constructivist grounded theory is rooted in the interactions between the researcher and the research participants, where the researcher's perspective is part of the research process and outcomes (Charmaz, 1995). In next chapter 4, I discuss these interactions between the researcher and the research participants in greater detail and how these contribute to the co-creation of new meanings from the data.

Constructivist grounded theory is consistent with the goals of my PhD study as referred to in my introductory Chapter 1. It should be noted that, according to Idrees et al (2011), "Grounded theory is congruent with the nature of PhD research" (p. 188), and this due to its ability to "capture complexity, linking well to practice, supporting theorizing of new substantive areas, and enlivening mature theorizing" (Locke, 2001, pp. 95-97, cited in Idrees et al. 2011, p. 2). These authors, however, also recognize some of the challenges many PhD students undergo in their application of the grounded theory methodology, listed below (Mehmetoglu & Altinay, 2006; Huehls, 2005; Nunes & Al-Mamari, 2008; Becker, 1993; Wilson & Hutchinson, 1996; Bryman, 2001). According to Mehmetoglu & Altinay (2006), grounded theory is most effective if used by experienced researchers. Huehls (2005) argues that novice researchers often confuse the process of grounded theory because "the process reverses the order of empirical research – hypothesis generation followed by data collection. The idea that theories can be generated from data – let alone qualitative data – contradicts the scientific tradition they were taught in elementary school science" (p. 328, cited in Idrees et al, 2011, p. 2) and it is time consuming (Nunes & Al-Mamari, 2008). According to Wilson & Hutchinson (1996), there has also been serious corruption of the method over time, which places its credibility at risk. Becker (1993) adds that "many purported Grounded Theory studies lack conceptual depth and are merely descriptive research as they are missing some of the

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key features of Grounded Theory” (p. 391). To this, Bryman (2001:391) concludes that the grounded theory method “may have been honoured more in breach than in observance” (p. 391, cited in Idrees & al., 2011, p. 2).

My study is also rooted in the three philosophical dimensions of the constructivist grounded theory methodology. These dimensions are pertinent to my study since the Muslim students’ experiences of prejudice and discrimination occur through a process affected by multiple factors and realities all contingent on both the socio-cultural and socio-political environments at the local and global levels: pragmatism, symbolic interactionism and constructivism/social constructionism. Pragmatism and symbolic interactionism have a lot in common since the latter derives from the former.

Pragmatism

Pragmatism is the argument that reality is subjective, fluid, value-laden, and dependent on the ways we interact with our social, cultural, political environments (Denzin, 2010; Strubing, 2007).

Pragmatism is well suited to studying Islamophobia as a form of intersectional prejudice and discrimination because Islamophobia is a social process located in complex social interactions, behaviors, attitudes and action. Islamophobia is not an incident but an ambient phenomenon. As Antony Bryant (2009) succinctly puts it,

Pragmatism[‘s] position that theories and concepts are best seen as tools; tools are assessed in terms of usefulness for particular tasks and applications. This can similarly be applied to methods, and GTM can then be assessed in terms of the concepts and theories that have been developed through use of the method; whichever version that has been adopted (p. 103).

In my study, tools or strategies such as the theoretical sampling and the constant comparison method were central to conceptualizing grounded theory that represents the participants’ concrete experiences.

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Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism was a concept popularized by Herbert Blumer (1900-1987), who argued that individuals create their social reality through their collective and individual action. This social reality, Blumer argues, is in a continuous process, because of people engaging in constant social interaction. According to Charon (1979), symbolic interactionists believe that both the “stability and change in the individual and society are understood through understanding interaction” (p. 31). This means that individuals’ actions and interactions indicate what an event means for them; likewise, it is through actions and interactions that individuals make sense of things and assign meaning. Blumer (1969) conceptualizes symbolic interactionism as based on three main premises: people’s actions are determined by their interpretation of reality; social interactions define the versions of reality people believe in; and, the meaning assigned to this reality is constantly changing as the context people are immersed in changes.

Human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them . . . [T]he meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one’s fellows . . . [T]hese meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters (Blumer, 1969, p. 2).

According Chamberlain-Salaun et al. (2013), ‘novice researchers’ like myself, will benefit by first establishing “the philosophical foundations of their research study from the outset” (p. 9), since “unpacking the assumptions highlights the inherent symbolic interactionist themes of meaning, action and interaction, self and perspectives, and explicates their links with essential grounded theory methods” (ibid). As symbolic interactionism assumes that the meanings individual assigned to things subsequently affects the kind of actions they will take, I used open-ended interview protocol to allow participants to reflect on those experiences they deemed relevant and meaningful to them. My own actions that I considered relevant for my study included actively engaging with

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various social events and activities with Muslim students' groups and Muslim communities in the city. These help me build relationships, trust, fraternity, and get a better assessment of the dynamics of the community.

3.1.3. Social Constructionism and the Co-Creation of the Research Data

Social constructionism asserts that “individuals in relationship with one another can and will co-create an effective future when a positive inquiry into the heart and soul of a system, its greatest accomplishments and deepest values, generates new meaning and inspires new possibilities” (Finegold et al, 2002, p. 235). Bryant & Charmaz (2007) define constructivism as “a social scientific perspective that addresses how realities are made. This perspective assumes that people... construct the realities in which they participate” (p. 607). According to Andrews (2012), “social constructionism has been instrumental in remodeling grounded theory” (p. 39) in that social constructivism “is concerned with how knowledge is constructed and understood. It has therefore an epistemological not an ontological perspective” (p. 44). In my study, a social constructivist lens provides direction to how I approach both the meaning participants assign to their experiences and the methods I used to collect, store, analyze, interpret and report these experiences in my final report. Following Charmaz’s (2006) advice, I used reflexivity and memoing (memo writing) to create an audit trail of my research process.

3.1.3.1. Reflexivity in This Study

According Lincoln, Lytham, & Guba (2011), reflexivity is a “critical reflection on ‘self as a researcher’... It is a conscious experiencing of the self as both inquirer and respondent, as teacher and learner, as the one coming to know the self within the processes of research itself” (p. 124). Gentles et al. (2014) add that reflexivity, in qualitative research, “often refers to the generalized

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practice in which researchers strive to make their influence on the research explicit—to themselves, and often to their audience” (p. 1).

3.1.3.2. Memoing/Memos Writing in This Study

According to Clarke (2005), “memos are sites of conversation with ourselves about our data” (p. 202). At the data analysis stage, memos are data that can be converted, coded, categorized, and searched with CAQDAS programs (Saldana, 2013, p. 42). Glaser & Holton (2004) argue that a memo can also “present hypotheses about connections between categories and/ or their properties and begin to integrate the connections with clusters of other categories to generate the theory (p. 52). In my study, I use the Birks, Chapman & Francis (2008) suggested framework where memos serve to:

- **Map** the research activities – documentation the decision-making processes of the research design and implementation as an audit trail
- **Extract** meaning from the data through analysis, interpretation, conceptualization, assertions, and theorizing.
- **Maintain** momentum (asserting the researcher’s perspectives and reflexivity throughout the study journey)
- **Open** communication for others to understand how the researcher has interpreted his data.

Writing memos throughout my study have allowed me to stop and analyze my ideas about my codes and the emerging categories as they occur (Glaser, 1998); and to stay involved in a way that helped increase the level of abstraction in my ideas (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007).

3.2. Research Methods

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This section describes the different methods or techniques I used to: (i) plan my research; (ii) sample and recruit participants; (iii) interview participants, prepare and manage data; (iv) code and analyse data; (v) ensure of sound procedures to establish research reliability, validity, significance, and ethical considerations; and finally, (vi) summarize the chapter. As Charmaz (2006) argues, the strength of constructivist grounded theory is that it allows flexibility for the researcher. As part of the qualitative methodologies, constructivist grounded theory also allows the researcher to employ different methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Creswell, 2009, p. 173).

3.2.1. Research Planning and Timeline

This section discusses the timeline of my research journey after a personal encounter with the challenges of interdisciplinary PhD studies. It all started on January 13, 2016, when I received a memo from the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies which stated: “Moussa Magassa successfully defended his Interdisciplinary Comprehensive Exam and defended his PhD dissertation proposal on Wednesday, January 13, 2016. The committee recommends that Moussa continue with his work and complete his dissertation. This decision advances Moussa to the status of ABD” (Appendix 1: Memorandum-Candidacy-January 13, 2016).

However, I did not know that I was then just about to embark on a nightmare common to many PhD students in Interdisciplinary programs (Benson, 1982; Byrne, 2014; Jones, 2010; and Petr, 1982 & 1983). To cut a long story short, it took eight months before I could break away and gather enough courage to disband my ineffective interdisciplinary committee! I today recognize that my poorest academic choice was to attempt the interdisciplinary study route! In retrospect, I take solace in Thomas Benson’s (1982) five arguments against interdisciplinary programs. In my case, committee members – except for one – (1) struggled to appreciate the benefit of disciplinary integration; (2) pedagogically doubted me instead of recognizing their inability to transcend

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disciplinary wars; (3) lacked commitment to substantially support me, a racialized black student, who has English as an additional language; (4) believed that “integrative studies courses are characteristically shallow, trading intellectual rigor for topical excitement” (p. 6); and (5) consequently, became a major burden on my mental health and financial well-being.

If it were not for one committee member, I would have left academia all together, as my trust in the institution and respect of academics was profoundly eroded. However, because of this one committee member’s humility, humanity and sincerity, I decided on August 2016, to transfer to the Department of Curriculum and Instruction (Appendix 2: Letter of Transfer), where officially I resumed my studies on September 2016.

The remainder of this section discusses the timeline of my research in the PhD curriculum and instruction program – Social, Cultural, and Foundational Studies. Due to the switching of programs and research topics, I had to submit a new research ethics application compatible with my new study. Previously, my research focus, in the interdisciplinary program, was to “explore whether the integration of the principles of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and the theoretical perspectives of Human Rights Education (HRE), contribute to new knowledge relevant to guide HRE practices for grassroots human rights organizations in Senegal”.

For my new PhD application to the department of Curriculum and Instruction, I decided to build on a previous 2015 research project I co-investigated with Dr. Charlotte Schallie of the UVic Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies, entitled: *Prejudice on Campus: Social, Cultural, and Religious Intergroup Attitudes at a Canadian University*. However, my adaptation of this study was very limited as I decided to focus on one specific subset of the groups of minority students studied then. My new research focuses on Muslim students and prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community. Contrary to the project with Dr. Schallie, in my new study, I also went back

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to the drawing board and developed my own new methodologies and instruments to research Muslim students and prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community by:

- adopting the constructivist grounded theory methodology instead of the mixed-methods approach that were preferred in the 2015 study with Dr. Schallie; and
- developing new research questions and data collection instruments.

My new study only includes qualitative methods such as semi-structured interviews, focus groups interviews, and document analysis as compared to the 2015 study, which emphasized a survey questionnaire as the primary research method followed by focus group interviews. Another difference between my new study and the 2015 study with Dr. Schallie, is that, because of the time elapsed between the two studies, my study only includes new students.

My application for a new research ethics permission was granted on June 13, 2016 until June 7, 2017 (see Certificate of Renewed Approval, protocol number 15-035). However, for personal reasons, on May 29, 2017, I had to request a renewal of the current certificate. This request was granted until September 30, 2017. I used the period between June 2016 to September 2017 to:

- develop a new research protocol compatible with my new study on Muslim students and prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community;
- sample and recruit participants to my study; and
- interview participants, code and analyse data at the same time as recommended for studies that use the constructivist grounded theory methodology.

3.2.2. Sampling and Participants' Recruitment

This section discusses the ways I sample, identify, consider and recruit prospective participants to my study. It also discusses the context or site where this study took place.

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3.2.2.1. Sampling

For this study, I used purposive sampling. Purposive sampling methods include a careful consideration of participants' familiarity with the phenomenon under study, their willingness to participate (Morse, 2007), to share their experiences and insights of it (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003), and to "speak articulately about the experience" (Morse, 2007, p. 231), as well as their capability to be 'reflective' (p. 231). Indeed, "the main objective of a purposive sample is to produce a sample that can be logically assumed to be representative of the population" (Battaglia, 2008, p. 2). The use of the words-of-mouth strategy, for example, which I used in some instances of this study, is "a form of purposeful sampling in qualitative research that "typically proceeds after a study begins and occurs when the researcher asks participants to recommend other individuals to study" (Creswell, 2012, p. 209). Applied to my study, the purposive sampling method includes a consideration for the site and context of the research, namely the university context, the community around it, and the different methods I used to recruit new participants.

The Research Site Context

The site of my study includes all physical spaces where Muslim students study and interact with other students and the surrounding communities. These spaces include the University of Victoria's (UVic) campus comprising the classrooms, the students' residences and other public amenities; and the Capital Regional District (CRD) municipalities such as Victoria, Saanich, Langford, Oak Bay, Central Saanich, Sidney, Esquimalt, North Saanich, Colwood, View Royal, Sooke, Metchosin, and Highlands, where most students reside or travel to for different reasons. As I explained in Chapter 1, both UVic and Victoria as part of Canada, are not immune to prejudice and discrimination against Muslim students and other minorities. Instead, many writers reported the prevalence of Islamophobia and its associated discriminations in Canada (Cooper, 2013; Loppie et al., 2014;

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Sinha et al., 2011; Timmons, 2013; Brockman, 2013; Houshmand & Spanierman, 2014; Mugabo, 2016; Kassis & Schallie, 2013 & 2014; Benhadjoudja, 2015; Ali et al., 2011; Alizai, 2017).

Characteristics of Participants in the Study

To be eligible to participate in this study, prospective participants had to identify as a Muslim student (undergraduate or graduate) at UVic or as a frontline staff with significant interaction with Muslim students on campus. Though these frontline staff could be non-Muslims, I only sought their experiences and insights in supporting students from a Muslim background among the wider student body and how these interactions are specific to Muslim students, in particular. Another reason for including this group of frontline staff was to gain their individual perspectives about servicing Muslim students and how much they feel empowered by various university policies and procedures (e.g. on equity, inclusion, discrimination, harassment and others). I believe these insights could help explain my research question about the various programmatic approaches and educational curriculum development that can contribute and support healthy relations between Muslim students and staff.

Some of the salient characteristics of all these research participants were their ethnic, socio-cultural, religious, political, demographical backgrounds and diversity in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, nationalities, religion, political views, sexual orientation, and professional background. Both the Muslim students' and frontline staff groups included Canadian and non-Canadian born, and international students, registered in either undergraduate, graduate, or English language programs at UVic. *Table 1: Participants Demographic Data* summarizes the demographical information of participants in this study, including their gender, age group, department and educational focus, length of stay in Canada, and country of origins.

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| Name | Date interviewed | Gender | Length of Stay in Canada | Country of Origins |
|--------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Brian | March 21, 2017 | M | 15 years | Sierra Leone |
| 2. Mohamed | March 23, 2017 | M | 2 years | Mali |
| 3. Dawood | March 27, 2017 | M | 3 years | Iraq |
| 4. Sam | March 27, 2017 | M | 4 years | Syria |
| 5. Mho | March 27, 2017 | M | Less than 1 year | Syria |
| 6. Sami | March 27, 2017 | M | 1 year | Morocco |
| 7. Bachar | March 29, 2017 | M | Less than 1 year | Cameroon |
| 8. Margo | March 30, 2017 | F | 31 years | Canada |
| 9. Ara | March 31, 2017 | F | Less than 1 year | Barbados |
| 10. Laila | March 31, 2017 | F | Less than 1 year | Malaysia |
| 11. Cupcake | March 31, 2017 | F | Less than 1 year | Pakistan |
| 12. Belle | March 31, 2017 | F | 2 years | Pakistan |
| 13. Lemon | March 31, 2017 | F | 30 years | Canada |
| 14. Sparkles | March 31, 2017 | F | Less than 1 year | Saudi Arabia |

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| | | | | |
|--------------|----------------|---|------------------|----------------------|
| 15. Ginger | March 31, 2017 | F | Less than 1 year | Pakistan |
| 16. Momar | April, 2017 | M | 21 years | Canada-Eritrea |
| 17. Bodour | April 6, 2017 | F | 2 years | Saudi Arabia |
| 18. Angel | April 6, 2017 | F | Less than 1 year | Saudi Arabia |
| 19. Nour | April 6, 2017 | F | 4 years | United Arab Emirates |
| 20. Abdullah | April 7, 2017 | M | 2 years | Pakistan |
| 21. Mali | April 8, 2017 | F | Less than 1 year | Saudi Arabia |
| 22. Ubaydah | April 10, 2017 | M | 5 years | Syria |
| 23. Raihan | April 13, 2017 | F | Less than 1 year | Sudan |
| 24. Badjibi | April 14, 2017 | M | Less than 1 year | Mali |
| 25. Jenny | April 17, 2017 | F | 30 years | Canada |
| 26. Fatma | April 19, 2017 | F | 30 years | Canada |
| 27. Clara | April 19, 2017 | F | 8 years | Spain |
| 28. Hamid | May 22, 2017 | M | 26 years | Canada |
| 29. Sasha | June 22, 2017 | F | 38 years | Canada |

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As Table 1 illustrates, Muslim students and frontline staff are from different backgrounds: gender, ethnicity/ race, country of origins, nationality, age, and length have been living in Canada. Some of these Muslim students were born in Canada and represent different races and cultural groups. For confidentiality reasons, I omit from this table, the all the participants' age, academic field and faculty of origin, as well as other demographic informations such as marital status and others. These differences in backgrounds contributed a significant diversity of views and experiences to my study. As previously pointed out, Muslim students are often conflated with the wider group of international students, though not all Muslim students are international students and vice-versa. According to the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE, 2018), there were 494,525 international students in Canada at all levels of study in 2017, which saw an increase of 119% between the period of 2010 to 2017, and 20% increase over the previous year (2016). Of these 494,525 international students in Canada, 24% are in the province of British Columbia, of which Victoria is the capital. CBIE (2018) adds that Canada also derives nearly \$8B annually from international student expenditures including tuition and living expenses, while the presence of international students created over 81,000 jobs and generated over than \$445M in government revenue (2010) (Kunin & Associates, 2012).

3.2.2.2. Participant Recruitment

In this section, I discuss the procedures and methods I used to recruit participants, following the specific methodology prescribed in grounded theory: purposive sampling/theoretical sampling and the constant comparative method.

Grounded Theory and Participant Recruitment Methods

As advised in Grounded Theory methodology, I only identified the initial participants for my study (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Charmaz, 2014). In order to fully develop the emerging theory of

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grounded theory, I later recruited participants as needed (Birks & Mills, 2011; Charmaz, 2006; 2014). Participants' recruitment throughout my study was a complex process as I was seeking multiple participants' voices and perspectives on the phenomenon of prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community.

Recruitment Methods in This Study

To recruit both Muslim students and frontline staff to my study, I drafted and distributed a letter (See Appendix 3: *Organization Solicitation Letter*), requesting various student groups and their representatives help distribute it among their memberships. This strategy was to establish trust and legitimacy of my study through these groups and organizational structures. I contacted various individuals representing the following groups mainly on campus in addition to also posting the organization solicitation letter in the Muslim prayer room in the Sedgewick building: UVic Muslim Chaplain office; UVic Muslims Students Association (MSA); Saudi Student Association; Pakistani Students Association; Bangladeshi Students Association; Indian Students Association; Persian Club (Iranian Students Association); UVic international students services; counselling services; English language centre; and Library services.

Once I started to interview participants to my study, I also used the word-of-mouth strategy, as “a form of purposeful sampling in qualitative research that “typically proceeds after a study begins and occurs when the researcher asks participants to recommend other individuals to study” (Creswell, 2005, p. 206).

The *Organization Solicitation Letter* (Appendix 3) includes information about my study, the purpose, the significance of the study, the benefits, risks, confidentiality and its voluntary nature. It also explains, in detail, to prospective participants how to participate and the two ways to participate (either in a focus group session or in a one-on-one interview meeting with the

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researcher). As soon as someone showed interest, I schedule a meeting with them to reiterate all of this information to them, answer any questions they might have, and provide them with the *Letter of Information for Consent* (Appendix 4). They were invited to sign the *Letter of Information for Consent* once they decided to participate in the study.

These methods of recruitment through representatives, group listservs, emails and word-of-mouth guaranteed the anonymity of those among the participant who had followed up (through the researcher's personal contact information/email on the letter of information for consent) and expressed interest in the study. To protect research participants' anonymity and confidentiality, the researcher ensured that both the association and the representative did not know who had come forward to participate in the study. The researcher did not communicate back the names of people interested in participating in either the focus group sessions or the one-on-one interview meeting with the researcher.

Prior to every interview session, the researcher (in some cases, the researcher assistant) met with prospective participants to answer their questions, explain the timeline, the goals of the study, and the location and structure of the meeting. Though there was no relationship between the researcher and the research participants, I recognize that prospective participants (especially in the focus group interview sessions) may have a relationship or know each other from different contexts. However, I believe that the voluntary nature of my request was clear enough to balance the power relationships regarding who would participate in the study. To balance power relationships, I only included the frontline staff in the one-on-one interview meetings with myself, while giving the choice to the Muslim students to participate in either a focus group session or a one-on-one interview meeting.

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The number of participants in my study was dependent on the process of development of the grounded theory (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). In total, I interviewed 31 participants, including 11 males and 20 female respondents. Using the technique of theoretical sampling, I continued to recruit new participants to my study until I reached a ‘data saturation’, “or a point when no new insights would be obtained from expanding the sample further” (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 80).

Theoretical Sampling

Theoretical sampling is the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 45).

The process of theoretical sampling is iterative, whereas the sampling of research participants is dependent on the analysis of the initial sample; and further sampling of new participants is used to refine emerging categories and theories. This sampling process is continued until the researcher notices a ‘data saturation’, “or a point when no new insights would be obtained from expanding the sample further. Theoretical sampling is mainly associated with the development of grounded theory” (Ritchie & Lewis, 2005, p. 80).

I applied in my study, after coding my first interview, the theoretical sampling method to expand on some of the codes and saturate the categories. The analysis of the first interview highlighted the different concepts (categories and sub-categories) that needed further investigation. This compelled me to move to the next person who had expressed interest in participating in the study. Some days, I found it necessary to interview more than one person depending on the different concepts I wanted to illustrate further and on the availability of prospective participants. In such circumstances, I did not have enough time to fully transcribe all interviews. Instead, I carefully listened to the audio-recording and noted down the key themes in the interview and assigned them preliminary codes. In some situations, I also strategized about whether a focus group would be best

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suited to investigate a concept (s) further and/or expand on a category (ies). This was the case when I started to realize certain commonalities in the specific experiences of most women Muslim students. Later, I decided to organize a focus group for the male Muslim students. I was curious to learn if whether there were any similarities between Muslim women students' experiences and that of Muslim male students. This approach also helped me to compare the codes in both focus groups and expand on categories and concepts developed to that point. Throughout the process of sampling research participants, especially during the one-on-one interviews, participants sometimes recommended that I talk to one of their acquaintances because they believed that person may have an in-depth personal experience that could benefit my study. These purposive recommendations have, in some instances, greatly contributed to the richness of my research data.

3.2.3. Interview Procedures, Data Collection, Preparation and Management

A basic principle of GT is that no rules apply regarding what data sources are appropriate for study (O'Reilly et al., 2012, p. 258).

For my study, I collected data using the following techniques: focus groups interviews; semi-structured interviews; and document analysis. O'Reilly et al (2012) argue that, it is "only when all of the GT tenets work together harmoniously through the interplays of data collection, data coding, data analysis, and iterative discovery can theory emerge" (p. 259).

This section details how I proceeded with collecting, preparing and managing data through semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and document analysis. In total, I interviewed 32 individuals for my study. Table 2: *Participants' Interview Statistics* illustrates how many people participated in these interviews based on gender and whether they took part in the one-on-one semi-structured interviews or in the focus group interview sessions. The one-on-one interviews also included two female participants from the Muslim women focus group. These two participants

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expressly contacted me. They wanted to talk more about some of their experiences with prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community.

Table 2: Participants interview statistics

| | Interviews | Focus Group | Total |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Males | 8 | 4 | 12 |
| Females | 13 | 7 | 20 |
| Total | 21 | 11 | 32 |

3.2.3.1. Semi-Structured Interview Procedure

I began interviewing (one-on-one semi-structured interviews and focus groups) as soon as I heard back from my first respondent on March 21, 2017. I completed my last interview on June 22, 2017. Most of the interviews lasted between 45 and 60 minutes in duration and were audio-recorded with participants' permission. All of the interviews took place on UVic campus, at a time that was convenient for interviewees.

Charmaz (2006) describes grounded theory interviews as “intensive, open-ended yet directed, shaped yet emergent, and paced yet unrestricted” (p. 28). In my study, I chose to use a semi-structured interview design with open-ended questions (Bryman & Teevan, 2005) as one data collection method in addition to focus groups and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews are among the most commonly used instruments in collecting qualitative research data such as grounded theory data. This kind of interview technique is a method of inquiry that combines a pre-determined set of open-ended questions, organized in an interview guide format (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006; Bryman & Teevan, 2005) – see *Appendix 5: Discussion Guide- Questionnaire for Focus Group and Semi-Structured Interviews*. My study draws on Charmaz’s (2014) three stages of

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semi-structured interview questions (pp. 66-67). My initial open-ended questions ask ‘what’ questions to elaborate on the past and the factual issues; my intermediate questions, use the ‘how’ questions, and try to get to the interviewee’s feelings; and my ending questions interrogate process and integrate both the ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions as well. In my study, I use these three types of semi-structured interview questions to elaborate on participants’ past and factual experiences of prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community; feelings; and the processes they have engaged in or not, in dealing with the situations that confront them as Muslim students or as frontline staff supporting Muslim students.

Cohen & Crabtree (2006) argue that the benefits of the open-ended questions and the semi-structured interviews allow the participants to freely reflect on their diverse experiences and views of the phenomena under study, on their own terms, without the interference of the researcher’s pre-established biases. Cohen & Crabtree (2006) add that, “semi-structured interviews can provide reliable, comparable qualitative data” (p. 2). Semi-structured interviews also allowed me to elicit narratives about the Muslim students’ experiences of prejudice and discrimination on campus, and of the frontline staff’s experiences supporting Muslim students or applying policy, program and educational curriculums to the specific cases and experiences of Muslim students.

3.2.3.2. Focus Group Interview Protocol

In grounded theory research, focus groups interview and in-depth interviews are the most common data collection methods (Guest et al, 2012). The use of focus groups is a common tradition in qualitative research (Museus et al, 2016; Bryman & Teevan, 2005) such as grounded theory, and especially in research on prejudice and discrimination and critical/multiracial theory (AhnAllen et al., 2006; Bradshaw, 1992; Sue et al., 2007). The data that emerges from a qualitative research such

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as constructivist grounded theory is descriptive and, most of the time, reported in words (Creswell, 2009, p. 195).

In my study, I used the focus group interview technique as a data collection method because, the focus groups technique allows me, “to develop an understanding about why people feel the way they do” (Bryman & Teevan, 2005, p. 194), in this case, Muslim students. Focus group interview methods also create space for Muslim students to share their feelings in a group setting where “they are forced to think about and possibly revise their views” (p. 195). Another benefit of focus group interview is that they provide the researcher, “an opportunity to study how individuals collectively make sense of a phenomenon and construct meanings around it” (ibid).

Focus groups are a technique designed for *small* groups. According to Berg (1998), “focus group interviews are either guided or unguided discussions addressing a particular topic of interest or relevance to the group and the researcher” (p. 100). Sociologist Robert Merton, a leading figure in the development of focus groups, has argued that these groups are structured guided discussions that have as their sole purpose the gathering of scientific data (Merton et al., 1956). However, in constructivist grounded theory research, Bryman & Teevan (2005) argue that focus groups are unstructured guided discussions. Whether in quantitative or qualitative settings, focus group discussions intend to engage participants to stimulate each other in an exchange of ideas that may not emerge in individual interviews or surveys. In a well-moderated focus group, the moderator can link ideas for further exploration as group interaction often generates insights that might not occur without the cross-fertilization of ideas.

As previously described, my study includes two focus groups with Muslim students as a way to expand categories for ‘data saturation’. *Focus group 1* was composed of 4 male Muslim

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students and held on March 27, 2017; *Focus group 2* included 7 female Muslim students and was held on March 31, 2017). I started each focus group as follows:

- Welcome the participants and thank them for their time
- Confirm that all have signed the informed consent form and are clear about the timeline and the benefits and risk of participating in the study
- Confirm that participants are still comfortable with my audio-recording the meeting
- Go over the code of conduct guidelines (see Appendix 6)
- Make a presentation of the study, its overview, purpose, and significance
- Facilitate the focus group interviews meeting (see Appendix 5: *Discussion Guide- Questionnaire for Focus Group and Semi-Structured Interviews*)
- Discuss and answer participants' questions about the next steps
- Bring the meeting to close.

The use of focus groups as a data collection method in this study facilitated dialogue between participants (Finegold et al., 2002) about their experiences and perspectives of prejudice and discrimination as Muslim students. It also helped compare codes, expand categories, and refine concepts and theories.

3.2.3.3. Institutional Documents and Reports Analysis

In this study, I also analyzed various reports and policy documents published by the university from 1998 to date. These include: the 1998 report to the President, *Voices for Change: Racism, Ethnocentrism, and Cultural Insensitivity at the University of Victoria* (Martin & Warburton, 1998); the 2006 follow-up report by Burley (2006); the partial analyzed survey data by Kassis & Schallié (2014) and their report, *Prediction of Anti-Muslim Sentiment on Campus: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Prejudice in Two University Populations*. I also looked at various human rights, equity,

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and other policy and program documents to gather more insights about the university's approaches to prejudice and discrimination on campus.

According to Charmaz (2006), "documents enter research in multiple ways that reflect contemporary worlds" (p. 44). As grounded theory data, documents can be treated as interview transcripts or field notes data, and be analyzed using iterative coding, and constant comparison. Though "the genre and specific form of a document as well as any written text in it draw on particular views and discourses" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 46), documents are relevant data for social science inquiry, qualitative research, and developing grounded theory, as they lament that libraries are stacked with "voices begging to be heard" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 163).

In my study, I included these institutional documents and other reports especially in the problem definition and literature review chapters. A review of these documents allowed me to gain a more in-depth understanding of the ways the university defines and addresses the phenomena of prejudice and discrimination, and how these approaches impact Muslim students on campus. Glaser (1998) agrees that "[t]he briefest of comments to the lengthiest interview, written words in magazines, books and newspapers, documents, observations, biases of self and others, spurious variables, or whatever else may come the researcher's way in his [her] substantive area of research is data for grounded theory" (p. 8).

Overall, the goal of these interviews procedures and data collection was to develop theory grounded in the Muslim students' experiences of prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community and to make recommendations to the university administrators.

3.2.3.4. Data Management and Participant Identification

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In this section, I describe how I develop a system to identify participants in my study and organize the data I gathered from the semi-structured interviews, the focus group discussions and the institutional documents analysis.

Participants' Identification in This Study

At the onset of each semi-structured interview or focus group interview session, I instructed each participant to choose a pseudonym as the name they will be identified with throughout the study. I explained that this is to ensure of their confidentiality and anonymity. All participants accepted to choose a pseudonym. The pseudonym was used to reference the participants in the data transcripts and in instances where I was referring to a direct quotation from an interview data. Therefore, every possible attempt was made to guarantee participants' anonymity, ensuring that there were no direct references in the final report to their official identity, department or community. For my personal references, I kept a master list to cross-reference these pseudonyms with participants' real names and other demographic information.

Utilization of English/ Western Sounding Names by some Muslim Students.

Throughout my study, it was interesting to notice how most Muslim students choose to use English/ Western sounding pseudonyms to anonymize their interview data. This choice was totally deliberate and struck me at the onset, because, as the researcher, I don't have an English/Western sounding name. However, since everything is data in grounded theory methodology, I decided to integrate this finding in my study.

I personally transcribed verbatim all interviews except those from the Muslim women focus group. The participants in this group requested to have a female Muslim student as a moderator, which prompted me to retain a female research assistant. Later, I checked the interview transcripts

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of the women's focus group to ensure accuracy. For most of the interviews, it took me approximately four hours to transcribe each interview, in addition to the one hour I usually set aside to quickly read through the first draft of the transcript or to listen to the audio-recording in order to gain a first impression of the data. During this first read or listen, I also do a preliminary coding of the data. Though this whole process is lengthy, I find it important process to help me engage intimately with the data.

Though many constructivist grounded theorists recommend a member-checking (Charmaz, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985), I decide against this approach for various reasons specific to my study. Member-checking is a process of 'taking ideas back to research participants for their confirmation ... [and/or] to gather material to elaborate your categories' (Charmaz 2006, p. 111). Though such a process is to establish trustworthiness and validate my data, I opted against it because "member-checking was an uncomfortable concept for me" (p. 26) for that: I didn't want to 're-traumatize' some of participants who were very distressed by their experiences and the impact on their well-being. Also, by the time I completed the final transcription of their interviews, some of the participants have already graduated or left Canada, mainly for political reasons in the case of Saudi students (who were instructed to return home immediately following a diplomatic crisis between the two governments of Canada and Saudi Arabia). Therefore, I didn't want to member-check with some and not all participants in my study. Charmaz (2014) herself is not always found of member-checking.

Organization of the Data in This Study

To organize the data in a comprehensive way, I create different folders for each participant where I stored their audio-recording, the transcript and coding file of their interview. I also designed a table with three columns which list the initial code, the intermediate/ focused code or categories, and the

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advanced codes or concepts. I assigned an identifier to each elements of this table, including the participant' pseudonym. I also designed a master folder and a master codebook that cross-references all codes, categories and themes. I used both an electronic filing system and a hard-copy file for an efficient data organization system.

3.2.4. Data Coding and Analysis

This section outlines my approach to coding, categorizing, analyzing, and how I visually represent the grounded theory data collected from the focus groups and the one-on-one semi-structured interviews with both the Muslim students and the frontline staff. The section also emphasizes how I use the storyline technique to integrate my theory together, and how I attained theoretical saturation in this study. In this section, I also explain how the qualitative data analysis (QDA) software was used to help organize and manage my overall study data.

3.2.4.1. Coding the Grounded Theory Data

The link between the final writing of the grounded theory report and the development of theory grounded in the data is dependent on the coding system adopted. Charmaz (2014) argues that data coding “is the pivotal link between collecting data and developing an emergent theory to explain the data. Through coding, you define what is happening in the data and begin to grapple with what it means” (p. 113).

My study adopts the coding system (initial/ open coding, focused coding, and theoretical coding) of constructivist grounded theory coding as described by Charmaz (2014).

Initial/ Open Coding Methods

The initial phase of coding the grounded theory data includes naming each word, line, or segment of data (Charmaz, 2006). In my study, I approached the initial phase by coding for word-by-word, line-by-line, segment-by-segment, or incident-by-incident. This approach helped me to become more intimate with the data. As Charmaz (2006) advises, the researcher needs to remain open, stay

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close to the data, keep codes simple and precise, construct short codes, preserve actions, compare data with data, move quickly through the data, and use words that reflect actions, such as *gerunds*. “Initial codes are provisional, comparative, and grounded in the data” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 37). The result of initial/open coding was the production of a list of codes and categories that I attached to each interview transcripts.

During this initial stage of coding, I also used ‘in-vivo codes’, which are codes describing the exact words and phrases of participants (Charmaz, 2006; 2014). Charmaz argues that using *in-vivo codes* “helps to preserve participants’ meaning of their views and actions” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 55). The use of in-vivo codes is also one way to avoid forcing the data to fit preconceived categories (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, 1978). Using in-vivo codes have helped me stay close to the data, especially in situations where I had to choose either my own interpretations or use the participants’ own words to describe a concept or phenomena.

As I alluded to earlier, I gathered and analyzed data simultaneously. I analyzed each interview before I moved onto the next one. This approach helped to ensure that my grounded theory method was part of a comprehensive and consistent process (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 1990), where each stage informed the next. During the interviews, I opened each interview with an open-ended question that would help the interviewee recall ‘their experiences’ of prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community. However, it also happened in more than one instance that participants jumped right into comparing their current experiences with experiences in other places or countries where they had it ‘worse’. This kind of comparative analysis has an impact on how participants describe, quantify and decide what is ‘important’ to share about their present experiences. This filtering of which experiences are most relevant to share with me may have had an indirect impact on my overall study and the ways I approached the constant comparison method.

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The Constant Comparison Method in Grounded Theory Study

There is a clear link between the constant comparison of the grounded theory data and the coding and analysis of that data. Coding the grounded theory data is at the heart of the emergence of concepts, categories, subcategories, new descriptions, narratives and further questions that result from the iterative process of the constant comparative method of data collection and analysis.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) note that “the purpose of the constant comparative method of joint coding and analysis is to generate theory more systematically” (p. 102). They add that the constant comparative method is “concerned with generating and plausibly suggesting (but not provisionally testing) many categories, properties, and hypotheses about general problems” (p. 104). Therefore, the constant comparative method only requires the ‘saturation of data’ in the sampling and interviewing stage. It can apply to any qualitative data, such as semi-structured interviews, focus groups interviews, reports, survey data, and policy documents.

In my study, I apply the constant comparison method by comparing each piece of data with other data in order to ensure consistency. Charmaz (2006) and Strauss & Corbin (1994) argue that such a practice allows for the discovery of the distinctiveness of the codes, categories, concepts and patterns in the data. I also reflect on Boeije’s (2002) advice about being more explicit about my use of the constant comparison method. In the next section, I explain how I implemented this advice through the use of the constant comparison method in my grounded theory data coding and analysis.

Focused Coding and the Development of Categories

The next step in the coding process is the focused coding phase – a process where I started to categorize my initial codes by grouping them around a phenomenon that was associated with the data and was of relevance to my research questions. This process occurred very naturally as I kept coding, analysing data and writing memos about my data. According to Charmaz (2006), focused

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coding means using “the most significant or frequent initial codes to sort, synthesize, integrate, and organize large amounts of data” (p. 46). With reference to the constant comparison method, Charmaz (2014) adds,

Grounded theory involves taking comparisons from data and reaching up to construct abstractions and simultaneously reaching down to tie these abstractions to data. It means learning about the specific and the general – and seeing what is new in them – then exploring their links to larger issues or creating larger unrecognized issues in entirety (p. 323).

In my study, I also notice that the resulting categories and focused codes were easy to link back to the initial codes. These categories and focused codes were more abstract than the initial/ open codes. To document this process, I developed analytical memos to reflect on the development of these focused codes supported by quotes extracted from participants’ interview data and by my own preliminary thoughts, reflections and questions about these codes. Writing memos about the focused codes helped me start to discern the emergence of patterns and theoretical concepts to help answer both my research core and secondary questions. I also started a codebook as a way to document this process. In the codebook, I entered the codes based on an inclusion rule that references the transcript number, represented by the participant’s pseudonym and the data line.

I also used the constant comparison method to draw any relationships between codes, categories, concepts and themes. The categories were a result of codes that were related. In some instances, I also raised specific codes to the level of categories/ concepts (Charmaz, 2014). For example, the category *blending in* is the sum of various codes: *wearing colourful clothes, dressing in modesty as advised in Islam, dress in an appropriate manner, fitting in as an outsider/ insider, wearing hijab with other trendy clothes, asking son to remove his goatee because can be misinterpreted, avoiding to be part of any faith community, and behaving carefully around Canadians because of fear.*

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According to Charmaz (2006), focused coding is an emergent, non-linear process where the research compares and reviews/reflects on open codes, categories and raw data to find new understandings and meanings embedded in the data. Following this process, I also developed a memo about *blending in* where I compared it to categories like *assimilating to social norms and expectations* and to concepts such as *belonging*. Later in my final coding, I went back to *blending in* and included it under the themes of *coping with Islamophobia strategies* and *countering ambient Islamophobia*.

Theoretical Coding and the Development of Concepts and Theory

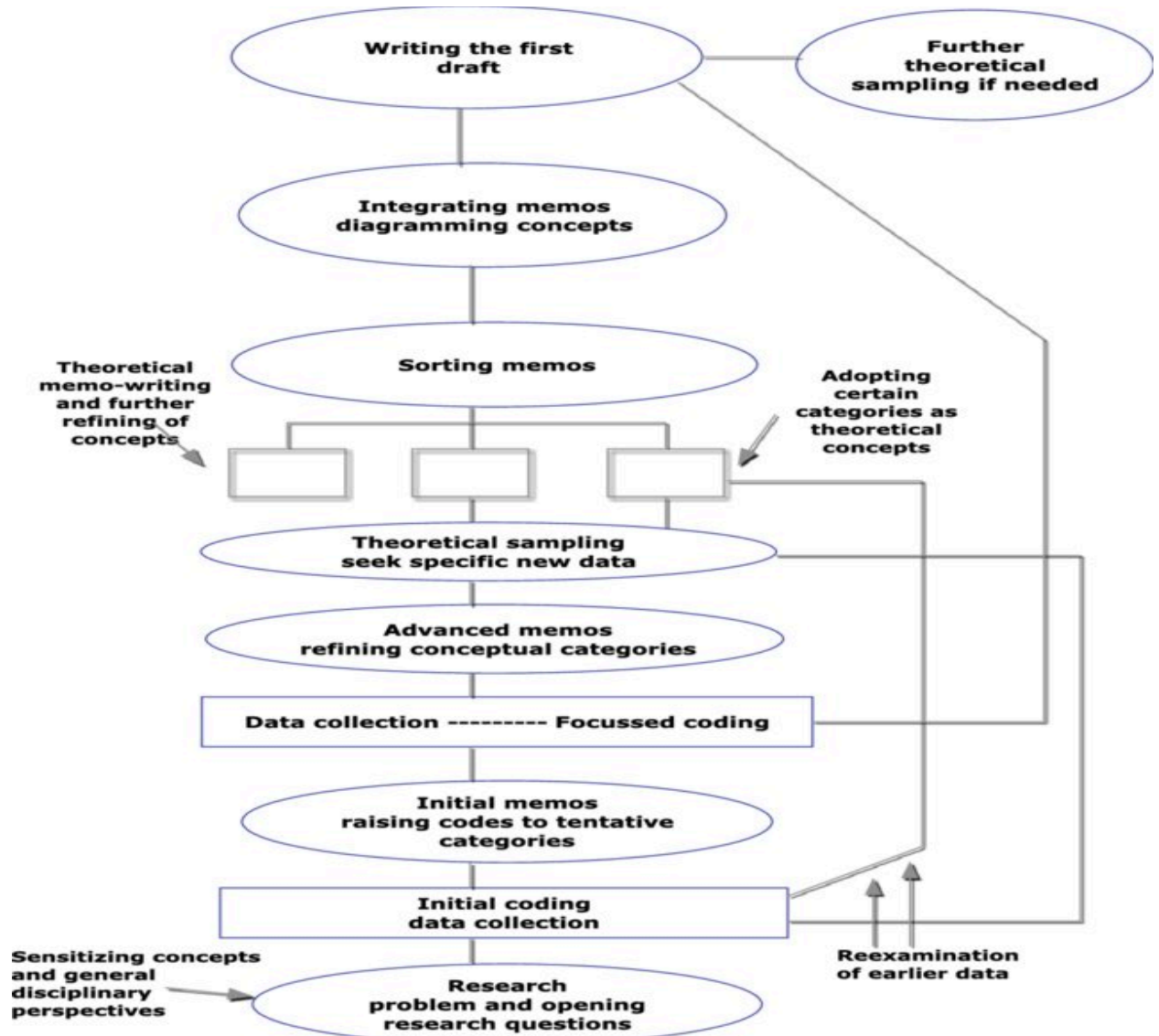
The purpose of these codes (theoretical codes) is to help you theorize your data and focused codes. Theoretical codes are meant to be integrative; they lend form to the focused codes you have collected. These codes may help you tell an analytic story that has coherence. Hence, theoretical codes not only conceptualize your substantive codes are related, but also may move your analytic story in a theoretical direction (Charmaz, 2014, p. 150).

Theoretical coding can help specify possible relationships between codes and categories, provide form to, and integrate categories to support the conceptualization and development of the core category according to Charmaz (2006; 2014). Theoretical codes/categories develop during the data analysis process. Glaser (1978) introduced theoretical codes as conceptualizing “how the substantive codes may relate to each other as hypotheses to be integrated into the theory” (p. 72).

In my final coding and categorizing of the grounded theory data, I used theoretical coding to develop of a theory that explains the relationships between categories/subcategories and themes in such a way that it “represented the stories of the people” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 103). The grounded theory, *enduring ambient Islamophobia* derives from such relationships between codes, categories, and concepts. Some of the key aspects of this theory are developed around the concepts of Muslim students’ experiences of ambient Islamophobia or prejudice and discrimination on

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campus and in the community. Figure 4: Constructivist Grounded Theory Process (Charmaz, 2006, p. 11) summarizes the coding process in my constructivist grounded theory study.



Charmaz's (2006) coding procedure is deliberately intuitive and interpretative. This means that "Constructivist GT study typically concludes with the researcher's interpretative understanding (rather than explanation) of the studies social process which is presented in the form of a "story" (Hallberg, 2006 quoted in Kenny & Fourie, 2015, p. 1279). Lawrence & Tar (2013) concede that,

Data analysis in grounded theory involves specific procedures which, when applied appropriately and with vigilance will result in theory that is rigorous and well-grounded in

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the data. Strauss (1987) points out that the procedures should be thought of as rules of thumb, rather than hard or fixed rules, and advises researchers to study these rules of thumb, use them, and modify them in accordance with the requirements of their research (p. 32)

In my study, to develop theory, I engaged in an iterative process that involved: relating my analysis of the data with the extant literature; creating diagrams that help connect everything together; explaining the relationships between codes, emerging categories, concepts and themes; and finally writing and reflecting on memos. I will elaborate on aspects of this process below.

Visual Representations

Throughout this study, I also use visual representations to clarify my understanding of the data. For example, visual representations helped to clarify the relationships between the contextual factors of Islamophobia and the processes of prejudice and discrimination Muslim students experience on campus and in the wider community. These processes are complex as they are informed by ideological and structural conditions of the current Canadian society, also rooted in neoliberal, Eurocentric, and Orientalist beliefs and approaches. For example, because of their concerns around belonging, Muslim students may indirectly encourage discrimination against them by choosing to *snub it* and ignore it for the sake of *blending in*.

The Storyline Technique for Theory Integration

To integrate my overall theory and draw a clear link between the core category and its properties and dimensions, I use the storyline technique – a most common analysis tool in grounded theory studies (**Figure 20: Enduring ambient Islamophobia: A basic social process**). According to Birks & Mills (2011), a storyline is “a strategy for facilitating integration, construction, formulation and presentation of research findings through the production of a coherent grounded theory” (p.115). Also, “as both a means and an end in itself, storyline enhances the development, presentation and comprehension of the outcomes of grounded theory research in nursing” (Birks et

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al., 2009, p. 405). I use the storyline, as a strategy, to illustrate the relationships between the different concepts developed from my grounded theory data. Birks et al (2009) argue that grounded theory study “aims to produce a theory that serves to explain a phenomenon in the context within which it exists” (p. 406). In my case, this grounded theory is **enduring ambient Islamophobia**.

In developing a storyline, Birks & Mills (2011) argue that theory should take precedence over literary prose, and the final storyline should serve as a high level of conceptual abstraction where theoretical concepts that demonstrate the relationship between categories also provide the theoretical framework of the grounded theory study. Otherwise, as the final analytical process of my grounded theory study, the theoretical coding should constitute the ‘advanced abstractions to provide a framework for enhancing the explanatory power of grounded theory’ (p. 176). Birks & Mills (2011) add that since these theoretical codes help develop the storyline, they also “not only conceptualize how your substantive codes are related, but also move your analytic story in a theoretical direction” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 63).

Theoretical Saturation

Charmaz (2006) defines theoretical saturation as “the point at which gathering more data about a theoretical category reveals no new properties nor yields any further theoretical insights about the emerging grounded theory” (p. 189). Contrary to some traditional research methods, in grounded theory research, theoretical saturation is not dependent on the number of participants interviewed in the study. Instead, theoretical saturation is achieved when further data collection ceases to provide new insight to the developing theory (Stern, 2007). In my study, I assumed theoretical saturation after 32 interviews. The 32nd interview did not provide additional insights to expand my codes or categories, and therefore, I felt confident to conclude my data collection.

3.2.4.2. Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) Software

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In the process of analysing my grounded theory data, I used a qualitative data analysis software to organize transcripts, texts and memos and develop codes, categories and concepts. Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software Methods (CQDAS) have been very popular since the mid-1980s (Ozkan, 2004). Their detractors argue that CQDAS can lead researchers in a ‘particular direction’ (Seidel, 1991, cited in Welsh, 2002, p. 4), distract them away from the data, or “encourage quantitative analysis of qualitative data’ to create a homogeneity in methods across the social sciences” (Welsh, 2002, p. 4). However, most analysts (Bringer, Johnson, & Brackenridge, 2006; Hutchison, Johnston, & Breckon, 2011; Ozkan, 2004), have found that CQDAS, like nVivo, a qualitative textual analysis program, help increase the researcher’s “speed and flexibility in coding, retrieving, and linking the data” (p. 591).

In my study, I used Atlas.ti 8, a qualitative data analysis software like nVivo that Ozkan (2004) finds appropriate, because of its “character-based coding, rich text capabilities, edit-while-you-code, multimedia data, and splitting up the information load that nodes were being asked to carry” (p. 590). I used Atlas.ti 8 because it has similar functionality as nVivo and is less costly than nVivo.

3.2.5. Procedures for Research Reliability, Validity, Significance, and Ethical Considerations

This section discusses the different procedures to ensure research reliability, validity and ethical considerations in grounded theory inquiry.

3.2.5.1. Reliability and Validity

As a qualitative research method, grounded theory encompasses specific procedures to establish reliability, validity or credibility. Merriam (1988) describes reliability as the extent to which research can be replicated and validity (internal and external) as the extent to which the research findings either match reality or can be applied to other situations (pp. 166-173). Validity “is based

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on determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers of an account” (Creswell, 2014, p. 201). The test of validity in this study is based on the correlation between the research data and the research questions. Though a focus group interview is difficult to repeat exactly, I tested the reliability and validity of my study by comparing whether the emerging concepts derived from the data answered the main questions of the study. I also sought answers as to whether my use of grounded theory methodology in this study aligned well with the kind of grounded theory research described by Howard-Payne (2016):

Grounded theory thus, unambiguously, abandons a priori theorising (which erects predetermined restrictions on the unearthing and expansion of theory) and is typified as a systematic process that is aligned with the area being investigated. As such, grounded theory was to serve two key functions: first, to guard against theoretical stagnation and immobility via novel theory generation; and, second, to institute an observation of field research as a source and locus of theoretical innovation so as to ground theoretical development in sound scientific data (p. 52).

As the researcher, I used the following strategies to establish reliability, validity or credibility of my study:

- I used the reflective process to reflect on my data, codes, categories and relationships with participants.
- I kept lengthy connections with the field and the participants, interacting with them in various settings: at socio-cultural events and religious events organized by the UVic Muslim Association (MSA) and the Masjid in the broader community. I was also co-organizer of some of these events in my capacity as the UVic human rights education advisor or a board member of the Victoria Multifaith Society (VMS). Creswell (2013) argues that such a ‘prolonged engagement in the field’ helps the research to build “trust with the participants, learning the culture, and checking for

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misinformation that stems from distortions introduced by the researcher or informants” (pp. 250-251).

- I listened carefully to my committee’s feedback and revised my analysis accordingly, going back and forth between the data and the extant literature.
- All this helped me stay ‘true’ to the methodologies of grounded theory. For example, I made sure that throughout my study I applied simultaneous data collection and analysis, engaged in theoretical sampling, constant comparison, memo writing relevant to the different stages of the study, while being flexible and open to theory emerging from the data.
- The simultaneous data collection and analysis, theoretical sampling, constant comparison, and memo writing helped me to conduct my study within the principles of constructive grounded theory, as these processes are “self-correcting nature of the data collection process” (Charmaz, 2000, p. 522).

3.2.5.2. Ethical Considerations

I conducted my study following the University of Victoria’s ethical guidelines for research involving human beings and the Tri-Council Policy guidelines. These guidelines include respect for persons or their intrinsic value and dignity, concern for welfare or quality of their experience of life in all its aspects, and justice or fair and equitable treatment of people (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2010, pp. 8-10). In compliance with these guidelines, I made every effort to adopt fairness, honesty, openness of intent, disclosure of my research methods and of the ends for which the information collected would be used (e.g., dissemination issues), respect for individual integrity and my obligation to guarantee them individual privacy (Leedy, 1997). As outlined in social research ethics (Trochim, 2004), I also ensured that participation was voluntary, with participants

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signing a consent form after they were genuinely informed and given every guarantee of confidentiality.

3.2.6. Summary Chapter 3

I used the constructivist grounded theory (CGT) methodology throughout my overall study, acknowledging its similarities and differences with other grounded theory methods such as Glaserian (GGT) and Straussian (SGT) grounded theory. Since grounded theory is expected to be grounded in the data, I ensure that participants' voices are 'heard' throughout the whole study while recognizing my own voice as active contributor in the process of meaning making and theory construction.

I recruited participants from the wider Muslim students' community on UVic campus. To contextualize the experiences of these Muslim students, I also recruited front line staff whose work involves daily interaction with Muslim students. To reach these participants, I used different recruitment strategies such as sending an invitation letter through their association, organization or networks through purposive sampling. With all participants, I used two different data collection methods: one-on-one semi-structured interviews and focus groups interviews. I also used document analysis but mostly at the problem definition stage and in literature review. I also demonstrated how I collected and analyzed data, establishing research reliability, validity and other ethical considerations.

In the next chapters Four and Five, I outline the findings/results of my study and the ensuing discussions that explain my constructivist grounded theory, titled **enduring ambient Islamophobia**.

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CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS: EXPERIENCES OF AMBIENT ISLAMOPHOBIA

Chapter 4 Overview

Charmaz (2006) describes the findings or results chapter as a strategy used by the constructivist grounded theory (CGT) researcher to revive the meaning, action, and process of the phenomenon studied within a specific social context. Therefore, the writing of the findings or results chapter should balance the reporting and theorizing of participants' experiences, using a structured story-telling style that includes evocation, feeling, analogies, metaphors, rhythm and reflectivity (Charmaz, 2006). According to Hallberg (2006),

The result of a constructivist grounded theory study is more seldom presented as a theory than as a story or a narrative, including categories, told by the researcher with a focus on an understanding of social processes. Charmaz states that the researcher's analysis tells a story about people, social processes, and situations. The researcher composes the story: it does not simply unfold before the eyes of an objective viewer. Accordingly, the story reflects the viewer as well as the viewed (p. 146).

According to Vickers (2016), "category development provides insight into how the phenomenon operates at a higher abstracted level, thus providing insight into action, interaction, and the operation of tacit social processes" (p. 120).

Charmaz & Mitchell (1996) assert that,

[A] constructivist approach strives to understand the experience of the phenomenon by those within it through a theoretical rendering that "describes, explicates, and synthesises multiple statements and observations" (p. 295, quoted in Vickers, 2016, p. 120).

The Findings chapter is therefore narrative in style and dependent on the linkages drawn between the category development and the theory construction processes. According to Glaser (1978), the finding section in a grounded theory study should first begin "with an overview of the theory in which the basic social problem and the basic social process and its core concepts are named and conceptuality identified" (quoted in Munhall, 2007, p. 259).

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In my analysis and theorizing of participants’ experiences of Islamophobia, I first begin with an overview of the basic social problem (BSP) and basic social process (BSPs) as recommended by Glaser (1978). I will relate these BSP and BSPs to the theory and its core concepts. In the second part, I introduce the constructivist grounded theory, characterized by the core concept/category in this study. According to Glaser & Holton (2005), the core concept or core category “has the prime function of integrating the theory and rendering the theory dense and saturated as the relationships increase” (p. 1-2).

The third part of this chapter uses an in-depth analysis of the properties or sub-categories of the core concept/category to render my constructivist grounded theory dense and saturated (see Figure 5: Core category and its properties). Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary of key concepts developed throughout the study.

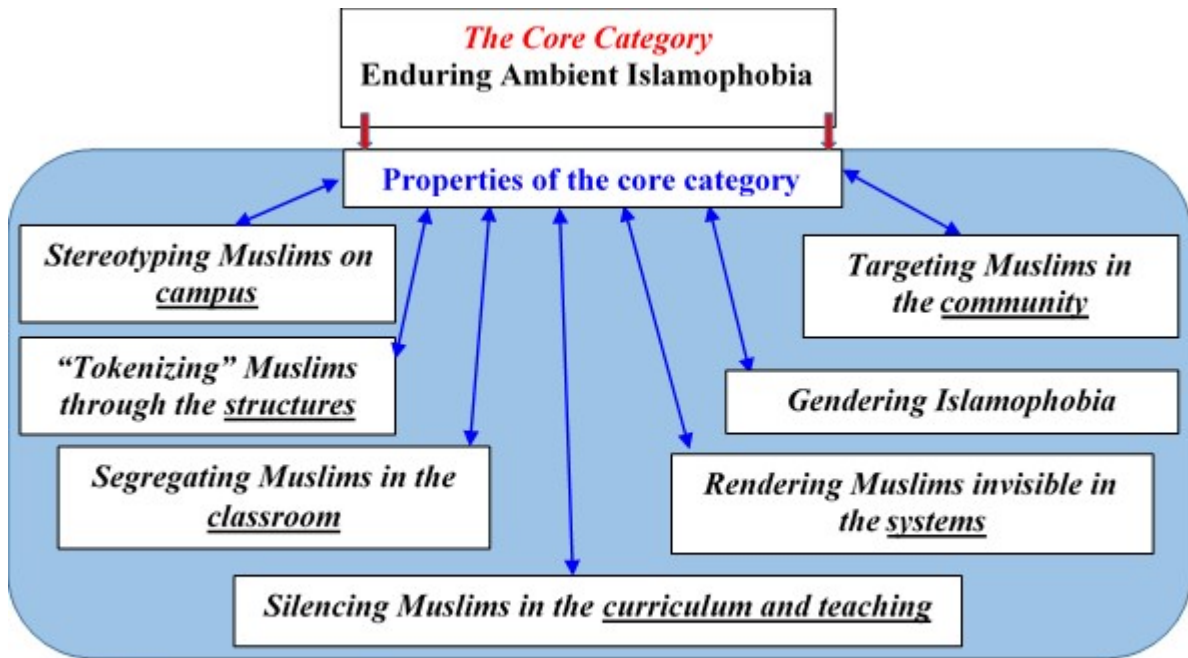


Figure 5: Core category and its properties

Use of Verbatim Quotations from Interview Transcripts and Fonts

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In order to maintain the integrity of the participants' voices, I use the participants' quotations verbatim from their interview transcripts. According to Lauridsen & Higginbottom (2014), constructive grounded theory indeed should give context to participants' own voices during the processes of theory construction and in the final report. Also, to personalize these quotations, I append the participant's pseudonym. I also use different font styles to distinguish different aspects of my theory. For example, I use *gerunds* - verbs ending in 'ing' - to describe the different kind of codes in my study (general codes, in-vivo codes and focused codes) and to emphasize actions and processes (Charmaz, 2006). I bolded the core category, **enduring ambient Islamophobia** throughout my whole report, and bolded and italicized the other categories and sub-categories, which I sometimes refer to as properties and dimensions.

4.1. Basic Social Problems and Basic Social Process

Glaser (1965) argues that social problems are entrenched in attitudes and behaviors of “secrecy, sensitivity, taboo topics, stigma, and legality, and because people in these situations are usually adept at covering the facts when necessary” (p. 436). Therefore, the basic social problem forms a framework that inhibits people from escaping a discriminatory social phenomenon, rooted in overall social, systemic and ideological contexts and structures. According to Joel Best (2013), the sociology of social problems is a constructionist analytic approach defined as “a process, rather than a type of condition. It focuses on how and why people come to understand that some condition ought to be viewed as a social problem, that is, how they socially construct social problems” (p. 1). The experiences of Muslim students with Islamophobia on campus and in the wider community is a social problem worthy of academic inquiry in my study. Best (2013) describes social problems:

[t]ypically, the social problems process begins with claims makers who make claims that some condition ought to be considered a problem, that this problem should be understood in particular ways, and that it needs to be addressed. Other people respond to those claims and rework them, so that the social problem is constructed and reconstructed by the media, the

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general public, policymakers, the social-problem workers who implement policy, and critics to assess the policy's effectiveness. The process is complex: some claims produce a speedy reaction, while others have difficulty finding an audience (p.1).

4.1.1. The Basic Social Problems (BSP) in Grounded Theory Research

In my study, Muslim students are the claim-makers. The basic social problem (BSP) emerges as the students reflect on their experiences on campus and in the community in response to the research questions. As such, my study identifies, as a basic social problem (BSP), Islamophobia – an ideological, socio-cultural and political system of prejudice and discrimination – entrenched in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors directed towards Muslims in general and Muslim students in particular on the university campus, the community at large and in the Canadian society. These systemic, ideological, socio-cultural and political attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors target Muslim students and contribute to the variance in their “action/interaction/emotional responses” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 97) to prejudice and discrimination – often based on their religious, ethnic, racial, cultural, social, linguistic backgrounds and other physical attributes.

Islamophobia, as a basic social problem, rooted in ideologies of Eurocentrism, colonialism and orientalism, is, often silenced if not denigrated by Western academics and political pundits (Bleich - 2012; Doughart & al-Mutar, 2012; Goldberg, 2015). In the context of the Canadian higher education institutions, Alizai (2017) and Hirji-Khalfan (2017) report that university administrators often misinterpret Muslim students' experiences of Islamophobia. They argue that these attitudes and behaviors are fundamentally rooted in these administrators' skewed worldviews and lack of appreciation of the full context of Muslim students' lives on campus.

My study adds that these experiences of Islamophobia go unaddressed also because of university administrators' lack of appreciation for the structural root causes of Islamophobia, its intersections with other forms of racism, and its systemic impacts on Muslim students' academic

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and social well-being both on campus and in the community. Therefore, an explication of the complex and societal nature of Islamophobia can help understand the processes at work in Muslim students' interactions and relationships on campus and in the community and the importance of these. One of the interviews respondents, Margo, clearly speaks to this interconnectivity between the campus and the community: "we are part of the larger community" which extends beyond the university campus.

4.1.2. The Basic Social Process (BSPs) in Grounded Theory Research

The construction of a basic social process (BSPs), on the other hand, is often dependent on the core category (Glaser & Holton, 2005; Munhall, 2007). According to Glaser & Holton (2005)

BSPs are just one type of core category—thus all BSPs are core variables (categories), but not all core variables are BSPs. The primary distinction between the two is that BSPs are processural or, as we say, they "process out." They have two or more clear emergent stages. Other core categories may not have stages, but can use other theoretical codes (p. 1-2).

In this study, the BSPs "account... for most of the variation in the behavior about the problem" participants experience and react against. It was during my interviews and observations of the participants that I realized ambient Islamophobia is a basic social process or BSPs (Glaser & Holton, 2005) as per its causes, intensity, range and societal implications for Muslim students. Therefore, for my study, I adopted **enduring ambient Islamophobia** as the BSPs or core category. Ambient Islamophobia, as a basic social process, disrupts Muslim students' prior beliefs and *expectations of Canada as a multicultural country* and leads them to *becoming aware* of a different reality rooted in ambient Islamophobia and in Eurocentric and orientalism ideologies. During both one-on-one interviews and focus groups discussions, many participants reported how they were confronted with ambient Islamophobia, only after they have **become aware** and developed a more thorough *understanding of the social clues and hints*. As one example, Belle reported:

"So now, I am more conscious, probably with experience, I have learned where to locate the discriminatory behavior" (**Belle**, Women focus group).

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In the next section, I describe how my findings illustrate the development of the constructive grounded theory, **enduring ambient Islamophobia** in greater detail. It is important to note that, according to Glaser (1978), there is a direct relationship between the basic social process and the grounded theory core category, since the BSPs is a “patterned, systematic uniformity flows of social life” (p. 100).

4.2. The Grounded Theory in This Study: Enduring Ambient Islamophobia

In my study, the core category, **enduring ambient Islamophobia**, culminated into the development of the constructivist grounded theory, through the ongoing application of the constant comparison method (Munhall, 2007) at various stages of the data analysis process and especially at the focused coding stage. For example, *Figure 6 - A Progression From Initial Codes to Focused Codes*, illustrates various initial codes to form the focused code, ***being excluded from classroom conversations***. I used this kind of approach throughout my study, to develop theoretical categories.

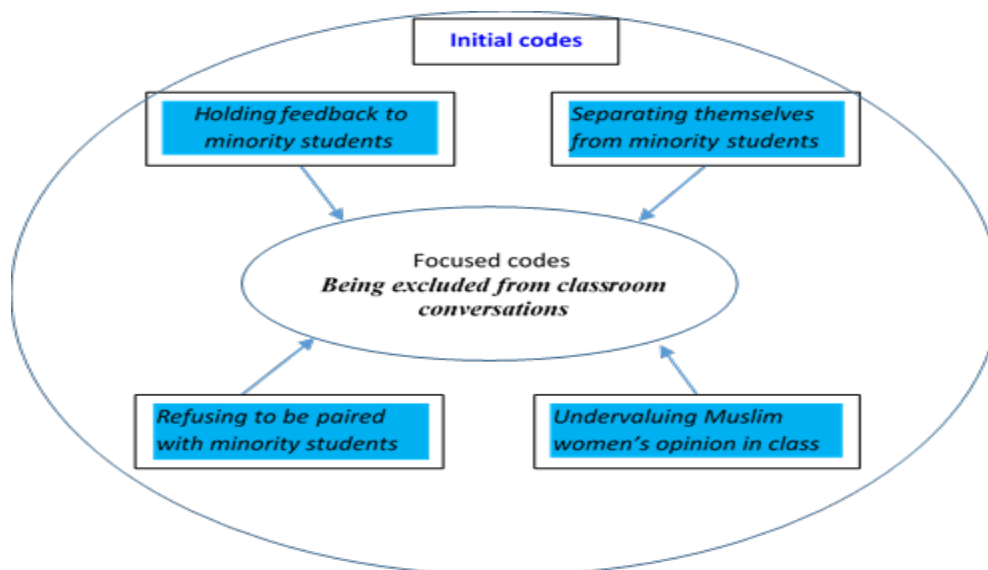


Figure 6 - A progression from initial codes to focused codes

In my study, I identify **enduring ambient Islamophobia**, as the core category or constructivist grounded theory, because it is central to all the major categories or theoretical codes. The major categories/themes or theoretical codes that illustrate the properties of my core category, **enduring ambient Islamophobia**, include the following (see Figure 5: Core category and its

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properties): *stereotyping Muslim students on campus; segregating out Muslim students in the classroom; silencing Muslims in the curriculum and instruction; gendering Islamophobia; “tokenizing” Muslim students through the institution and its structures; rendering Muslim invisible in the systems; and targeting Muslims in the community.*

The identification of the core category or constructivist grounded theory, **enduring ambient Islamophobia**, also integrates the properties of ambient Islamophobia on campus and in the community. It describes and contextualizes Muslim students’ experiences of and reactions to ambient Islamophobia and its intersectional forms of prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community, based on their ethnic, racial, cultural, social, religious, linguistic backgrounds and other physical attributes. The theory is also a representation of the Muslim students’ on-going systematic experiences of and reactions to Islamophobia and other forms of prejudice and discrimination on the campus and in the community.

Ambient Islamophobia, according to the study participants, is entrenched in ideologies and societal attitudes, beliefs and behaviors founded on Eurocentrism and Orientalism. It is named as such because like these ideologies and ethe, something ambient is all encompassing, in the atmosphere. For example, below, I report verbatim these quotes from Sparkle and Belle – participants in this study who notably adopted a westernized name to represent them – two women participants in the Muslim women focus group, who describe the ambient character of Islamophobia on campus and in the community.

Sparkle, one of the participants in the Muslim women focus group, argues there is a generalized Islamophobia, mainly targeting people who look like her, as a brown person:

“So, it is not just me. It is a general attitude towards non-white” (**Sparkle**, Muslim women focus group).

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Belle, another participant in the same Muslim women focus group, concurs that Islamophobia is systemic and globalized to affect only brown people and people who look Middle-Eastern.

"But again, the problem is not going to away as I said earlier. It's there. Muslims are there. Islamophobia is there. It might come up with other groups as well. Like, we see and we have seen the phenomena Canada gets affected by what is happening in the neighborhood. So, it's always receding from the U.S. and you've seen the Sikh people getting targeted because people think they are Muslims and Hindus are being targeted because people think they are Muslim. So, anyone who looks brown or who looks Middle Eastern they think they are Muslims. So, if university is not going to take notice. I mean mmm you shouldn't you shouldn't hide your head in the sand and you should pre-empt you should pre-plan before some tragedy happened" (**Belle**, Muslim women focus group).

Memo: The Ambient Characteristics of Islamophobia

Islamophobia, in **Belle's** and **Sparkle's** words, is out there, systemic, and as a systemic phenomenon with overall local, individual, group and global impacts. It is global/international, because, according to **Belle**, Canada has been affected by "what is happening" in the neighboring country and worldwide. Islamophobia, **Belle** also notes, is not a rational behavior, as it can be mistaken in differentiating Muslims from other groups. It may generalize all (brown) people under one stereotypical label. In this case, it can target all Middle Eastern looking people because of their racial, cultural and religious characteristics. This point agrees with what Marranci (2004) describes as the characteristics of Islamophobia: the "cultural and religious signifiers are the most important factors for developing Islamophobia" (p.107).

According to **Momar** (a black male respondent born in Canada with strong ties to East Africa), in a one-on-one semi-structured interview, the basis of Islamophobia and religious prejudice against Muslim are: *avoiding you; leaving you out of something* because of your religious affiliation, or ethnic background.

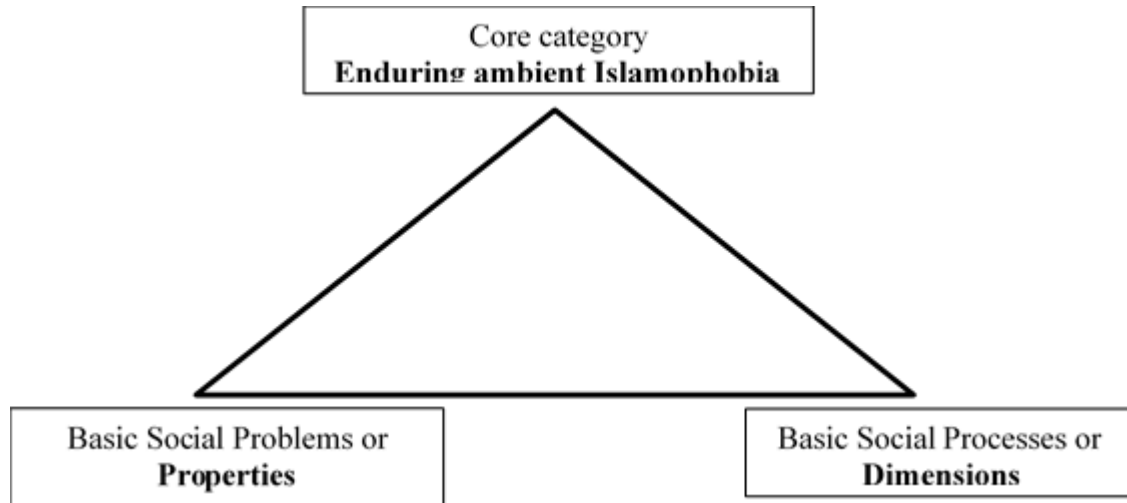
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“The way I kind of look at prejudice is you know, like not just...umm, avoiding like...umm, or it is part of like you are leaving somebody out of something just because, say, their religion, their ethnic background” (Momar, one-on-one interview)

The gerund *enduring* represents the systemic, on-going nature and continuity in Muslim students’ experiences, feeling, attitudes, behaviors and actions to ambient Islamophobia, which they experience as generalized, all encompassing, and as an ongoing process rather than a one-off incident or accident in their relationships and interactions with non-Muslims. As Charmaz (2006) advises, my use of *gerunds* - verbs ending in 'ing' – helped throughout my study to describe codes and emphasize actions and processes. According to Waite (2009), to endure means to bear, tolerate, suffer, undergo, stomach, withstand, sustain, stand, experience, brave, put up with, go through, succumb, last, continue, persist, survive, persevere, prevail, live, remain, go on, carry-on; keep on (p. 280). Therefore, **enduring** Islamophobia in such a context is surviving the “institutionalized, structural and systemic war on Muslim people and anyone who is seen as associated with Islam, Muslimness, and Muslim issues. As such it constitutes a systemic form of racism and racial discrimination” (Carter Center, 2018, p. 15).

According to Strauss & Corbin (1990), as a grounded theorist “when you begin to develop a category you do so first in terms of its *properties*, which can then be *dimensionalized*” (p. 69). Properties and their dimensions represent the sub-processes or sub-categories and categories that illustrate the constructivist grounded theory core category or BSPs. Strauss & Corbin (1990) argue that “properties and dimensions are important to recognize and to systematically develop because they form the basis for making relationships between categories and *subcategories*” (pp. 69-70). In my study, there is a clear relation between the properties and the dimensions of the core category. Properties represent the characteristics of the core category define as basic social problems (BSP) while the dimensions represent the basic social processes (BSPs).

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In the following sections, I outline the key characteristics of the properties or BSP (italic black-bolded) of my constructivist grounded theory core category or BSPs, **enduring ambient Islamophobia** (see Figure 5: Core Category and its Properties).

4.3. Properties of the Core Category/ Constructivist Grounded Theory

As illustrated in *Figure 5: Core Category and its Properties*, the core category of my study, **enduring ambient Islamophobia**, includes seven properties or sub-categories: *stereotyping Muslim students on campus and in the community; segregating out Muslim students in the classroom; silencing Muslims in the curriculum and instruction; gendering Islamophobia; “tokenizing” Muslim students through the institution’s structures; rendering Muslim students invisible in the systems; and targeting Muslims in the community.*

(a) Stereotyping Muslim Students on Campus and in the Community

As discussed in Chapter 2: Literature Review, stereotypes, much like prejudice, inform (implicit or explicit) biases that work together to create and maintain social inequality (Dahl et al., 2015).

Stereotypes are also “cognitive representations of how members of a group are similar to one another and different from members of other groups” (p. 1). According to Young-Bruehl (1996), stereotypes are generalized perceptions, beliefs, and expectations a person has about members of an out-group, schemas people can hold about an entire group of people. In my study, Muslim students

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represent an out-group, subjugated to ongoing experiences of prejudice and discrimination both on campus and in the community, based on their ethnic, cultural, social, and religious backgrounds.

The focused codes or sub-categories that illustrate the category ***stereotyping Muslim students on campus*** include the following processes: *pigeonholing Muslims in general stereotypes*; *discriminating against Muslims on campus (acting on religious bigotry on Muslims)*; *fearing Muslims as the 'other'*; and *excluding Muslim students* (see figure 7: Category: Stereotyping Muslim students on campus).

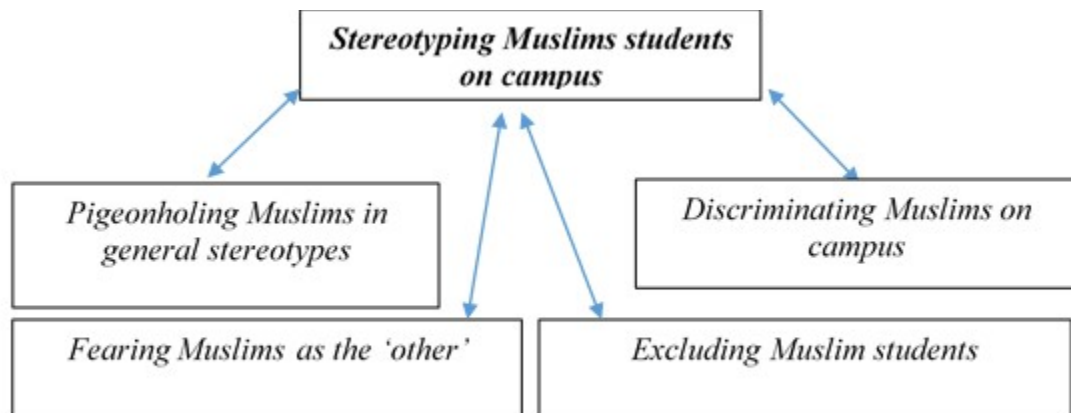


Figure 7: Category: Stereotyping Muslim students on campus

- *Pigeonholing Muslims in General Stereotypes*

Pigeonholing someone is to put them into a box or a particular category in order to stereotypically exclude them for a score of reasons. Many respondents have reported that there is an on-going *pigeonholing of Muslims into general stereotypes*. These stereotypes, covert and overt, include *accusing Muslims of being: violent, terrorists, anti-feminist, holding stereotypical ideas about them, generalizing and labelling Muslims negatively, and dismissing Muslims' 'ways of being' and cultures*. **Belle** (in her one-on-one interview) reports that because of the general stereotypes of *Muslims as violent and terrorists*, she has imposed on both her daughter and son

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drastic restrictions for the sake of their safety and protection in the public arena. She has prohibited her daughter from wearing the hijab and her son from growing the beard:

I don't do it by choice but ...because I don't want her to stand out among all the children and people are already suspicious and if you are so visibly Muslim than she is definitely going to get in trouble (**Belle**, one-on-one interview).

The fear of 'standing out' and then attracting attention is also the reason she also put restrictions on her son:

Similarly, my son was supporting a small goatee just as a fashion statement, but we thought that it is better if he removes it because beard [worn by a Muslim man] is again identified with terrorism and violence (**Belle**, one-on-one interview).

Belle's reactions are not novel, as many Muslim students describe the university campus as a space where they continuously experience pervasive forms of Islamophobia based on their socio-cultural and religious characteristics. **Mohamed** argues that these experiences describe a campus environment *discomforting/making Muslim students uncomfortable*. Such an environment, he adds, tries to compel Muslim students to act in ways that stand against their cultural, religious and personal values:

So, if you find yourself in an environment where you think you are obliged always to distance yourself from what you truly believe from the inside, so... it's not a discrimination or anything like that, but it's a discomfort, right? Because you always find yourself, you have to act rather than be yourself, right (**Mohamed**, one-on-one interview).

Another respondent, **Margo**, a white female Muslim convert (who wears the hijab), in her one-on-one interview, echoed both **Belle's** and **Mohamed's** stories. For **Margo**, stereotyping of Muslims is rampant to the extent that as a Muslim woman, "*you can unjustifiably be accused of being anti-feminism*". In her case, she reports that the attack was from another non-Muslim white woman.

I was just walking to the bus stop [aha] and she actually yelled at me as I was walking by that "Oh, you wouldn't support women's rights because, you know, you support a particular religion." [hum] So, it was very, yeah, it's not like having a conversation with her. I was just walking by... So, and, yeah, I actually responded to her. Just I said to her, "Mind your

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own business” but again not really an academic context. It is a social context, but it was on campus, but that happened (**Margo**, one-on-one interview).

Brian, a 2nd year law student, adds that non-Muslims on campus are very fast at *negatively labelling* and *mistrusting practicing Muslims in general*.

Of course, there is a negative connotation to being from a practicing Islamic faith. That always kind of... Unless people, unless my colleagues know me, there is... I feel like I have to earn people’s trust necessarily to be able to be in their social network (**Brian**, one-on-one interview).

According to **Mohamed**, these prejudicial attitudes of non-Muslims on campus are part of a generalized socio-cultural context where *holding stereotypical ideas of others* is a commonly accepted attitude and behavior.

That’s where the problem comes from, [it is] when people really don’t care, are not exposed, are not willing to listen to the other party because they were brought up with this idea that it’s... ok. (**Mohamed**, one-on-one interview).

Angel, a Saudi female student wearing the hijab, in a one-on-one interview, summarizes these stereotypes as she describes the non-Muslim white Canadians.

... they have some ideas in their minds (thinking) maybe I am a terrorist or I am a very closed-minded person” (**Angel**, one-on-one interview).

I assume she mentioned whiteness specifically. Of course, lateral violence including Islamophobia is common among people of colour and it is also found among many progressive leftists, particularly militant atheists.

The accompanying in-vivo code to the above quote, “they have some ideas in their minds about me” clearly describes the gravity and extent of the kind of stereotypical prejudices some Canadians have about Muslims in general and especially Muslim students.

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Mali, a female Saudi student who also wears the hijab, in a one-on-one interview, reported that these *ideas in their minds* extend to the kind of beliefs (see in-vivo code): “*Muslims are not peaceful*”; therefore, some non-Muslims think they have an ethical right over Muslims to *policing their clothing*.

I was waiting on the bus stop, at the stop and then a lady started coming to me. I was wearing like a white shoe and a white hijab. And, she was like: Are you acting all like you're peaceful because you're Muslim? We all can wear white. And, I'm like: so...I'm just wearing, you know? And she's like: We're not your enemy like America is your enemy. She started saying weird things, you know. And, I was like: I can wear whatever I can wear, you know. And she's like: you can't wear white because all people are wearing like...because we're in the winter and it was rainy, all people are wearing black, you shouldn't be wearing white because you're Muslim. That is really stupid, right? (Laughs) (**Mali**, one-on-one interview).

These behaviors of non-Muslims, according to **Mali**, arise in that they often feel compelled to *label[ing] the hijab as oppression* for Muslim women. In the case of one of her friends who took off her hijab, “*teachers are happy because she's Saudi and she didn't wear hijab*”. These teachers were congratulating her friend:

They thought it was like her freedom, you know, that she was free and that we're all trapped or something, you know (**Mali**, one-on-one interview).

Mali adds, from her friend:

... “she said they were kind of like congratulating me, like: wow, you managed to take off your hijab”. Which is weird like why would you judge people for wearing, like, we can wear whatever we want you know? We should have that right at least (**Mali**, one-on-one interview).

Bodour, another female Saudi student, corroborates these experiences denouncing stereotypical attitudes towards Muslims. In her case, she was *being praised for being a 'modernized Muslim'* because she was wearing colorful clothes. However, the stereotypes of Muslim are not gender centered only towards women. According to **Bodour**, *stereotyping Muslim men as abusers of their women* is another preexisting idea in the non-Muslim psyche.

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In summary, stereotyping and the *pigeonholing of Muslims into general stereotypes* means having an unfair idea of what type of person someone is. It means assigning someone to a particular category or class, especially in a manner that is too rigid or exclusive (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019) as stereotypes don't usually take the individual differences of Muslim students into account (see Table 1 & 2, Chapter 3, about their demographic origins, gender, socio-cultural background and so on). However, in this study, Muslim students argue that these stereotypes inform the prejudicial and discriminatory beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and attitudes towards them. **Mali**, in her one-on-one interview, also believes that the stereotypes towards Muslim students can lead to discrimination as in her experiences; this may have been why she and her friends were *being failed during an English test*.

... so, the thing is because we are Saudis and we have a government scholarship so when we were studying in English, we were supposed to be studying six levels. And, sometimes you were at the fifth level or something you would be doing good but some teachers would manipulate the grades to make us fail because they know the government will pay for us again. So, they're trying to keep us for a long time, for longer time (**Mali**, one-on-one interview).

- *Discriminating Against Muslims on Campus*

Laila, a hijab wearing Muslim women from Malaysia, in a one-on-one interview, argued that discrimination against Muslim women wearing a hijab is most prevalent and is culturally and gender motivated. She recounts the following incident with a female white 'disabled' person on the bus on campus:

There were, once in the bus...that person was, I think a disable person like there is some cognitive disability (with them). She was just *asking me to take off my hijab right there*. (**Laila**, one-on-one interview).

Angel reports that usually, Muslim women, "they are attacked (but) they don't say anything" (**Angel**, one-on-one interview). She adds that these Muslim women, like herself, will not

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report to the police as, “they just like go around the thing and then keep it down” (**Angel**, one-on-one interview).

Members of the Muslim male focus group also substantiated these observations through the following code, *witnessing ‘hijabi’ Muslim women shouted at*. **Laila** argued that the hijab has a role in these kinds of encounters. According to her, the hijab or niqab reveals your cultural identity as a Muslim and therefore constitute a reason why people target Muslim students.

... I think having a hijab on is already a very strong symbol that you are a Muslim. Everything is kind of just get tucked under it (Laila, one-on-one interview)... I think that piece of clothing really kind of highlights that you are a Muslim and you are targeted differently (**Laila**, Muslim women focus group).

In **Angel**'s case, these discriminatory attitudes of Canadians include her being *told to go back home if wants to wear the hijab*.

Islamophobia as culturally motivated discrimination is a recurring incident according to

Laila. In addition to personal experiences, she also witnessed it against other Muslims:

There was a woman (white) who complained about (that) this Saudi woman's perfume on the bus, was just too strong (**Laila**, one-on-one interview).

She adds:

Some random dude just usually shout at people. Like hey fag... Or like, I can't really quite think but I have seen a few of those like random guys shouting at people along the line of you are colored skin kinda thing... but it was more so because of what you are wearing. What you put on your head. Either shouting about the hijab or shouting about skin color. I have seen those before (**Laila**, one-on-one interview).

Angel added that her friend had a similar experience while crossing the street (SUB crosswalk?)

Yeah! Like, I had a friend who was hit in her back while she was crossing the street. There were a lot of people. I am sure that someone saw the woman (who) hit her back. (The

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friend) got like a very big mark on her back and (but) she did not do anything (**Angel**, one-on-one interview).

Both **Brian**, and **Belle**, reports *witnessing people abusing Muslim students at UVic or outside campus*. **Belle**, in her one-on-one interview, explained her trauma of witnessing Islamophobia; and how this fear led her to prohibit her daughter from wearing the hijab.

Yeah... similarly, I have seen people abusing the Muslim students in UVic or outside who are covering their head and insulting them and calling them names and (this is why) I don't allow my daughter to cover her head (**Belle**, one-on-one interview).

- *Fearing Muslims as the 'Other'*

Mohamed called these non-Muslim attitudes a *lack of awareness about Muslims or lack of confidence in themselves*. **Momar**, another interview respondent, argued that these kinds of attitudes are more about fear of the Muslim 'other' and illustrate how non-Muslims have constructed Muslims. The focused code *fearing Muslims as the 'other'* illustrates these processes.

[w]hen I look around ... I see certain people...they are almost, I want to say like afraid of umm... Umm, I am particularly talking about, like, non-Muslims per say...they are afraid but they are like too...like almost to like a offend people who are Muslim (**Momar**, one-on-one interview).

Whether non-Muslim people on campus lack awareness about Muslims or fear the Muslim 'other', most respondents in both the one-on-one interviews and focus groups, report the existence of a pervasive climate of *stereotyping of Muslims on campus*. The consequences of such stereotyping which is the foundation block of ambient Islamophobia, **Mohamed** explains, are terrible on Muslim student's identity, as they are compelled to give up their values:

On the contrary, if you believe in religion or you are a faithful person, you always feel that you have to meet other people's expectations of you (in a 'lack of inclusive environment'). That's the feeling you start to get. You know you always feel like you have to meet other people's expectations of you (**Mohamed**, Muslim men focus group).

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The act of *discriminating against Muslims students on campus* goes against the university's policy on discrimination and harassment, which recognizes that discrimination "has the effect or purpose of unreasonably interfering with that person's or group's employment or educational status or performance or of creating a hostile or intimidating work or educational environment... (and may also include) adverse effect or systemic discrimination which consists of entrenched and institutionalized practices, systems, and structures that operate to limit a group's or an individual's rights to opportunities or to exclude a group or an individual from participation on the basis of any Prohibited Ground of Discrimination". Therefore, the proof of exclusion is obvious in discriminating against Muslim students on campus.

- *Excluding Muslim students*

Discriminating or fearing Muslims as the 'other,' is not only expressed in non-Muslims' thoughts, attitudes and discriminatory actions, but can be entrenched in their behaviors as well. **Mohamed** reports that because of the 'fear' of Muslims as the 'other', non-Muslim students often *avoid altogether mingling* with people like him because of his cultural and religious background.

What I heard from other people and, also, usually, people from Western cultural traditions, usually... to avoid being accused or you know, discriminating against other or so, sometimes, they avoid altogether mingling with people from other cultures. So, even though it cannot be called discrimination it's not conducive to inclusion (**Mohamed**, one-on-one interview).

Excluding Muslim students is equal to marginalizing them. As the following in-vivo code illustrates "*you don't get invited to all white gatherings*" (**Belle**, in Muslim women focus group), stereotypes and fear also exclude Muslim students from social gathering and other opportunities. According to **Angel**, from Saudi Arabia, *being marginalized*, puts Muslim students in a state of confusion about their identity. In her case, marginalization leads her to feel homesick. Sad and confused, she

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reported that Muslim students, especially some female students, end up renouncing the hijab and other distinctive cultural and religious apparel because of fear and wanting to belong.

... it feels me sad. It feels me hurt when they sit and nobody want to talk to me and nobody have the courage (**Angel**, one-on-one interview).

The campus environment, Muslim students describe, is oppressive. It is an environment that compels them to comply with the status quo. Muslim students argue that their experiences of Islamophobia – through the processes of *pigeonholing Muslims in general stereotypes; discriminating against Muslims on campus; fearing Muslims as the ‘other’; and excluding Muslim students* – also extend beyond mere **stereotyping on campus**. These experiences, they add, also contribute to or add to their segregation out in the classroom by both peers and instructors.

(b) Segregating Muslim students in the classroom

The segregation of Muslim students in the classroom demonstrates the extent of their exclusion. The Cambridge Dictionary (2019) defines the term “segregate” as “to keep one thing separate from another; to keep one group of people apart from another and treat them differently, especially because of race, sex, or religion”. In my study, the classroom, like the university campus, is a site where Muslim students report being segregated out, silenced, intentionally and actively discriminated against, because of their race, country of origin, accent, gender, cultural and religious backgrounds. Muslim students also report being excluded, intentionally segregated out from classrooms conversations, group projects and social events; and being rendered fearful of speaking in class. They argue that instructors and faculty are often indifferent to their plight and try to stay out of these processes where non-Muslim students will consciously segregate out Muslim students in class conversations or group projects. The focus codes and sub-categories that compose this category, ***segregating out Muslim students in classroom*** include: *being excluded from classroom conversations; segregating Muslim students out in class projects; excluding Muslims students from*

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socializing events; and bullying students through ethnic jokes (see figure 8: Category: Segregating out Muslim students in the classroom).

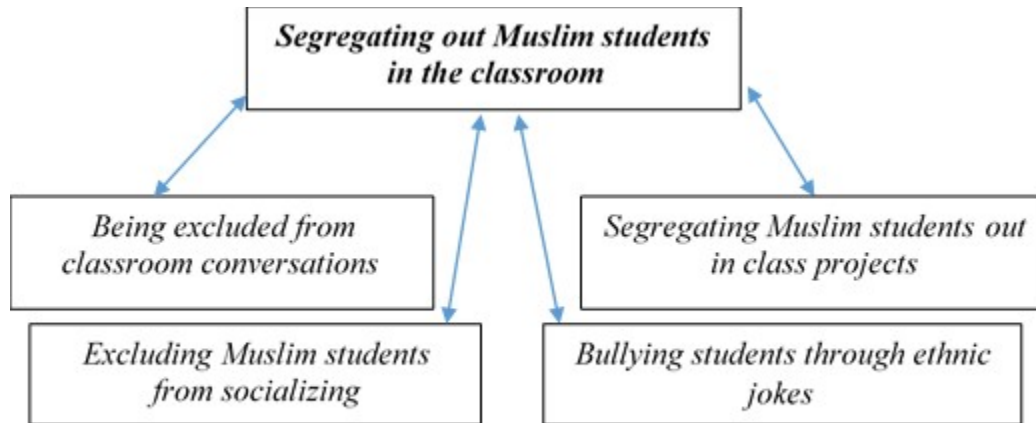


Figure 8: Category: Segregating out Muslim students in the classroom

- *Being excluded from classroom conversations and segregating Muslims out of class projects*

Many Muslim students reported being excluded and shut out from conversations in class. They reported that non-Muslim students base these exclusion and segregation of Muslim students on such behaviors (described by the following codes) as: *separating themselves from minority students; refusing to be paired with Muslim students in class conversations; holding feedback to minority students; undervaluing Muslim women's opinion in class; and openly discriminating against Muslims because of their accent.*

According to **Belle**, non-Muslim Canadian students often opt to *separating themselves from minority students* during classroom processes (conversations, small group work, and major group projects and assignments):

I have seen that there are big classrooms and the minority students they make a one group together and the Canadian students they divide themselves into separate groups. They don't like being grouped with minority students even for the class projects. I have seen TA's talk about that white students do not want to be paired with minority students. And if you force them they go complain that they are being forced in and if you let them stay that way they

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can never integrate, whites are with white and minority people are with minority people (**Belle**, one-on-one interview).

Bodour argues that some of the reasons for these attitudes in white students are based on the fact that these non-Muslim white students are *worrying to be impeded by international students' low English*. **Margo**, a white woman converted to Islam and wearing the hijab, recognizes that being able to speak fluent English is indeed a privilege and being without it can hinder Muslim students overall academic and cultural learning in class.

I considered the privilege that I speak English as a first language and I can't imagine being a student that doesn't; [uhm] because they may not pick up those subtle little hints that profs give, right? [Yes] you know maybe like an idiom that they can't use or something but I feel in general there's been many classes where there's just be a small comment that prof makes, that kind of ridicules of a religion or religious behaviors and it's a problem (**Margo**, one-on-one interview).

Belle reports that the attitudes of Canadian students to separate themselves from minority students and *refusing to be paired with Muslim students in class conversations* are conscientious acts of exclusion of Muslims and other minority students. According to **Mohamed**, Canadian students use tactics by *segregating Muslim students in class conversations* and by *holding feedback from minority students*.

So, she told me that she was taking a class, a nursing class. So you know, usually, classes or courses that require some practical training, etc... collaboration between students is very important; so what she felt was, people who were usually from francophone background, Canadian francophone, precisely from Manitoba etc, so usually they used to kind of like talk to each other and address the talk to each other rather than to the different ethnic background in the classroom like the Moroccan, the Arabs, the Africans (**Mohamed**, one-on-one interview).

Margo adds that discrimination in the classroom by Canadian students also includes them *undervaluing Muslim women's opinion in class*. Though white, she has herself experienced "having her opinion not valued as a Muslim woman in class". Whether it is because they are Muslim or

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because of their low English fluency, Muslim students experience exclusion. **Bodour** illustrates this reality

Some classmates, they don't want to be partner with me because of English (**Bodour**, one-on-one interview).

Language therefore is one of the "biggest marker of prejudice". According to **Margo**, the concerns with language fluency also contribute to division and segregation between *being a native English speaker versus non-native students*, where the *non-native students are missing language subtleties*. Another dimension of this exclusion, is the fact that Canadian students are *discriminating against Muslims because of their accent* in class. **Margo** reports that Muslim students are often part of those people *being laughed at if not getting the joke*. **Margo** also adds that the fact that Muslim students are *lacking awareness of the impacts of idioms as a Canadian, failing to pick up subtle prejudice (because of limited language), and using idioms that stifle conversations in class*, all contribute to exclude them from the classroom conversations. She argues that *language is of utmost importance in communication with administration*. Most respondents in the Muslim women focus group, argue that when Canadians students are *avoiding to talk to you because of your accent* (Muslim women focus group), it does make Muslim students *feeling treated by classmates as they do not belong*. In conclusion, **Bodour** argues that *language barriers impact (Muslim students' abilities in) discerning Islamophobia* in class.

- *Excluding Muslims students from socializing events*

The focused code, *excluding Muslim students from socializing events*, is one that triggers Muslim students to avoiding contact, a sub-category under the theme **coping with Islamophobia**.

Socializing in a student life is a cornerstone in social (and by extension, academic) well-being.

According to participants in the Muslim women focus group, the extent of Islamophobia prevents Muslim students from being invited to social events with non-Muslims. The following in-vivo code

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illustrates this level of exclusion: “*you don't get invited to all white gatherings*” (Muslim women focus group). Even if you are invited, you end up as reported by one participant in the Muslim male focus group as *being cast out in socializing because of not drinking*.

Ah, I would say on the social interactions outside of the school, it's a bit difficult especially when everyone wants to drink and they ask you why you don't want to drink... Mostly, it's fine, like you would give the reason and everyone mostly respect it. But, the thing is that you get, they make, they isolate you [Uhm]. So, the next time they go out, they not, they don't necessarily tell you about all the things about the future events or stuff. Privately. I'm not talking about UVic event or something like that. So, that's the most, like the experience I faced. The most of the times, I get aside, put on the side. Ahh, other than that, it's mostly positive (**Sam**, Muslim male focus group).

There is a terrible loss for Muslim students to not be able to socialize and build social network. This lost also has a detrimental impact on their academic success and social well-being.

- *Bullying students through ethnic jokes*

Muslim students also talk about being bullied through ethnic jokes and other insensitive cultural stereotypes. In **Margo's** experiences, bullying happened by Canadian students *making cultural jokes about how graduate students enter class discussions*, which just contributed to *waiting off bad classroom experiences (sic)*. According to **Mohamed**, these unwanted discriminatory cultural and ethnic jokes are just part of the bigger issue of Islamophobia where Canadian students, in classroom discussions about religion, are often *holding stereotypical ideas of others* like Muslims.

That's where the problem comes, when people really don't, are not exposed, are not willing to listen to the other party because they were brought up with this idea that okay, this one way is scientific and its intellectual, everything else is just imagination and people are making up story (**Mohamed**, one-on-one interview).

According to **Mohamed**, non-Muslim students are also *lacking awareness about the human rights discrimination policies*. Because of this lack of awareness or lack of mindfulness, **Bodour** reports that the classroom has become an oppressive space that not only segregates out Muslim students

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like her, it stifles them with the *fear of participating/talking in class and sharing ideas* thereby silencing their voices, as illustrated in the next section.

(c) Silencing Muslims in the curriculum and instruction

The category *Silencing Muslims in the curriculum and instruction* is one key outcome of *segregating out Muslim students in the classroom*, as Muslim students then become *excluded from classroom conversations*, class projects and assignments. In the cases where Muslim students experienced being silenced in the curriculum and instruction, the emphasis was also on how they were excluded, stereotyped, prejudiced, and their views ignored and dismissed. In this study, Muslim students describe their experiences of being silenced in the curriculum and instruction, summarized throughout the following focused codes (*see figure 9: Category: Silencing Muslims in the curriculum and instruction*).

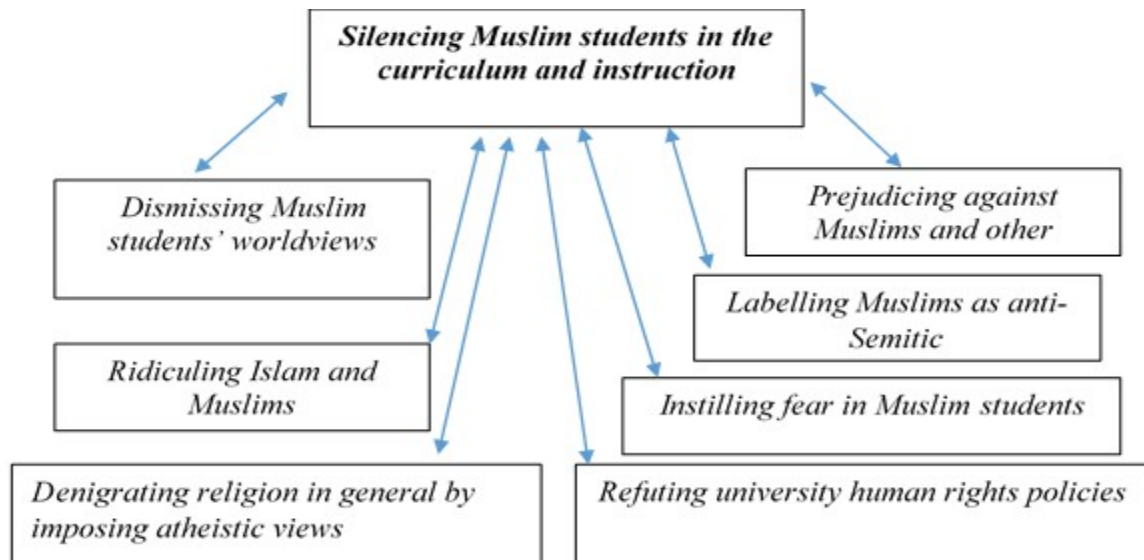


Figure 9: Category: Silencing Muslim students in the curriculum and instruction

Muslim students experience being silenced in the curriculum and instruction by the ways the faculty are: *dismissing Muslim students' worldviews; ridiculing Islam and Muslims; prejudicing*

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against Muslims and other minorities; Labelling Muslims as anti-Semitic; denigrating religion in general by imposing atheistic views; refuting university human rights policies; and instilling fear in Muslim students.

- *Denigrating religion in general: Imposing atheistic views*

According to some Muslim students like **Margo** and **Mohamed**, *religious bigotry* is an attitude engrained in most faculty and instructors. **Margo** reported witnessing professors *imposing their atheistic views* on students, *mocking* (the act of) *believing in God* and exhibiting a *constant ridicule of religion by professors in various classes and levels*.

[t]here's been many classes where there's a small comment that prof makes that kind of ridicules a religion or religious behavior and it's a problem (**Margo**, one-on-one interview).

Mohamed, a male PhD student also recognizes this constant denigration of religion by most faculty.

I'll give you a precise example. For example, once in one of the classes, once I made a comment, right... about religion, for example. So, the Instructor's reply to me was, "Oh! religion is man-made anyways" (**Mohamed**, one-on-one interview).

- *Dismissing Muslim students' worldviews*

For most students, like **Margo**, **Mohamed** or Laila, they argue that Muslim students are often dismissed in the curriculum and instruction, and that there is a constant intolerance of other worldviews among faculty. **Mohamed** describes this intolerance, through two codes: *Faculty lack of awareness about other views* and *Lack of awareness about Muslims*. According to **Margo**, this attitude of intolerance also epitomizes *professors lacking awareness of students' experiences*. **Mali**, a Saudi Muslim woman, donning a hijab, reports this very extensive experience:

So, I once had an experience with a religious study professor. Which is shocking but as a religious study professor should be like, you should be well educated and you should

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understand that like, how can I say... Once, when I was in his class, he was talking about Islam and he gave a wrong information to student and I hesitated but then, I said, I'm going to correct him. Especially because he is teaching people about religion so... So I raised my hand and I told him "excuse me but you said that... and its kind of a mistake, because we don't do that in Islam". He was like, "okay" and he corrected it; and after that I went to him so that I can make sure that I didn't embarrass him or something, you know. And, he was afraid, and when I went to speak to him, he would just like step back and wouldn't look at me and he was like "okay, okay, I apologize". And, I wasn't there to make him apologize, I was just trying to talk to him, yeah. So, that was really strange! (**Mali**, one-on-one interview).

- *Ridiculing Islam and Muslims*

Some Muslim students argue that the attitudes and behaviors of some faculty go beyond the lack of awareness of Islam and intolerance towards other worldviews. **Laila**, for example, argued that it is that faculty are constantly *misjudging the very goals of Islam* while **Mohamed's** interview emphasizes through the following codes, that faculty are conscientiously *lacking sensitivity* or *lacking discernment about religious diversity*.

... whether you believe in religion or you don't believe in it; your initial belief you cannot prove it to anybody beyond doubt. If that were to be the case then everybody in this world would have believed in the same thing, right? So, to me then, to try to explain things only using this one way (Eurocentric) of looking at things is really not, an academic (way) and you should really not do that, especially, if we are living in an environment where you have multiple faiths and then you have people from multiple cultural backgrounds (Mohamed, Muslim men focus group).

For **Margo**, the issue of *silencing Muslim students* in the curriculum and instruction goes beyond tolerance, respect and acceptance. She argues that it is about 'political correctness, one key social behavior in *older profs who are not used to understand political correctness*, and therefore, their lack of sensitivity towards other faiths and lack of appreciation of the diversity in their classrooms is apparent – diversity which they often stifle through the prejudice directed towards Muslim and other minority students.

- *Prejudicing against Muslims and other minorities: Open/direct prejudice*

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Prejudice from instructors, **Mohamed** argues, should not happen to any students. **Belle** reported, in her one-on-one interview, that some faculty displayed their prejudice by *dismissing Islamophobia research as a less serious academic field*. She explains how she became interested in undertaking Islamophobia research and how her academic supervisor stifled her points:

... I don't see published research on this, and as I said being a graduate student. When I discuss with one of my supervisors, and he told me that...um... "you know, it's not easy to get funding for a research project that targets Muslim community because, seriously, Canadian academia...uh... or the policy makers do not think this is a burning issue or this is an issue worthy of their finances". Well, I think otherwise. I think that this is a budding problem, and this is an area on which the policy makers should sit and think about and they should target it (**Belle**, Muslim women focus group).

Another kind of discrimination talked about by some Muslim students like **Ara** is *accent discrimination*.

And I understand exactly what they're saying perfectly but they're actually just being so stubborn and they want you. It's not that they can't understand you. They just want you to speak in the way that they think you should be able to speak. They don't want this accent so they want you to get rid of it and then come back to their class kind of thing (**Ara**, in Muslim women focus group).

Mali stated that prejudice and discrimination against Muslim students, especially Saudi students, is also sometimes based on economics and finance.

Okay, so I studied here at UVic while I was learning English in the Continue Study Building. And me and couple of my Saudi friends were there, so the thing is because we are Saudis and we have a government scholarship so when we were studying in English, we were supposed to be studying six levels. And sometimes you were at the fifth level or something you would be doing good but some teachers would manipulate the grades to make us fail because they know the government will pay for us again. So, they're trying to keep us for a long time, for longer time (**Mali**, Muslim women focus group).

Attention to the issues of economic or financial discrimination against Muslim and other minority students was most recently drawn through student demonstrations on the doorsteps of university administrators. Last Friday, April 5, 2019, students walked out of classes and held a sit-in in the

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office of the President, in solidarity with international students who were being charged a 20% tuition hike. Students argue that this tuition hike is discriminatory towards international students.

However, prejudice against Muslim students and other minorities in the curriculum and instruction, also goes beyond the dismissal of their views, ideas and academic interest in researching Islamophobia. Most participants in the Muslim women focus group, for example, talked about the prejudice through the faculty *displaying general discomfort with non-white students and faculty showing discomfort with female Muslim students* (**Sparkle**, Muslim women focus group).

There are some faculty members who in a certain way as she said they do make you feel uncomfortable as if they are not comfortable dealing with people like me or different backgrounds... Yeah! I think so, and it's, and there are a couple of other students with whom I have talked on this issue and students like me, and they feel the same way. So, it's not just me. It's a general attitude towards non-white (**Sparkle**, Muslim women focus group).

- *Labelling Muslims as anti-Semites:*

Faculty prejudice against Muslim students and other minorities also includes the labelling of Muslims as predisposed to hold anti-Semitic views. **Margo** and **Mohamed** both recognized how they were *being perceived as anti-Semitic because is a Muslim* (**Margo**). Another form of labelling described by **Margo**, is faculty *directing questions of anti-Semitism to Muslim students only*.

I once had a history class... we were looking at events that involve racial relations post World War One... and every time the topic of Jewish people came up ... refused to accept Jewish refugees, and, you know, instances of anti-Semitism in Canadian history, she (the professor) always directed the questions at one of my friend (who was a Muslim), which was odd... I really like the prof [yeah]... perhaps wanting to engage in debate [yeah], but to me, I take that as a bit of prejudice [yes] as you know, it's kind of based on preconceived notions that perhaps I don't support [chuckles] I don't, [yeah] but because of (being a Muslim), you know (**Margo**, one-on-one interview).

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Momar, in reflecting on the research question on “How does prejudice affect your learning and social integration on campus?” argued that prejudice from professors “limit(s) your learning” (in vivo code):

I think that you would develop some sort of bias and like for instance, I mean, if let’s say a professor, they kind of showed some sort of like prejudice towards some students, then like, you would feel like, “okay, well I’m not getting the best results in that class because of certain prejudice that may be shown”. So, I think it (prejudice) would perhaps limit your learning (**Momar**, one-on-one interview).

- *Refuting university policies on human rights*

For **Margo**, what is most worrisome for Muslim students – in addition to the concerns that professors can get away with *dismissing Muslim students and their worldviews, ridiculing their religion (Islam) and persons as Muslim, prejudicing against Muslims and other minorities, labelling Muslims as anti-Semitic and denigrating their relation in general* – is that most faculty *lack awareness about university policies*.

However, this lack of awareness or attitudes of refuting University human rights policies end up fostering a climate of insecurity for Muslim students because perpetrators behave with impunity and think they may not be subject to the justice measures.

- *Instilling fear in Muslim students*

Muslim students are instilled with fear by the attitudes and behaviors from faculty. **Margo**, illustrated this sentiment in the following codes: *feeling one’s religion ridiculed, knowing one’s opinions will be stifled by professors*. She concludes that *being religious not popular in the academy*.

Yeah, I think in general there’s this kind of attitude in the academic community that, um, you know, being religious is [uhm] not a popular thing certainly in a society today. And I believes that profs will often times make underhanded comments or kind of very small cultural nuances [Yes] that send a message that they don’t believe in higher power or god

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and I want to use the word 'ridicule' here because I definitely feel that way (**Margo**, Muslim women focus group).

According to **Mohamed**, *lacking courage to defend one's faith* has the overall impact of Muslim students being silenced in the curriculum and the instruction:

... if you believe in religion or you are a faithful person, you always feel that you have to meet other people's expectations of you (in a 'lack of inclusive environment'). That's the feeling you start to get. You know, you always feel like you have to meet other people's expectations of you. You really don't have the courage, right, to express what you truly believe in. Sometimes, for example, even in a classroom discussion, for example, to make the discussion more inclusive, so basically, huh.... It is kind of like we are led to believe that you always have to ground what you say in some European, Eurocentric views of the world. Or you always have to reference John Davey or I don't know Einstein or Karl Marx or you know Lady Di, so you always feel that there is this kind of pressure, right? (**Mohamed**, Muslim men focus group)

Memo

Category: *Silencing Muslim students in the curriculum and instruction*

It is quite interesting that both **Mohamed** and **Margo** distinguished prejudice/ discrimination from those attitudes and behaviors held by instructors which can 'discomfort' Muslim students.

These attitudes and behaviors are summarized under the *in vivo code* "**Lack of consideration for other views**". The English Oxford Living Dictionaries define "**lacking consideration for other people**" as "**concerned chiefly with one's own personal profit or pleasure**"

(<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/selfish>). This 'me first' attitude/ behavior also means a lack of caring for others and their needs. In some cases, this selfishness also escalates to the point of dismissing/reprimanding or dismissing other people's views, values and worldviews such as their cultures, religions, etc.

In the case of faculty, **Mohamed** argued that these attitudes and behaviors amount to "imposing Eurocentric views" on Muslim students; faculty "imposing their power conferred by

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their position" through *imposing own atheistic views of religion as "a man-made"*, and other veiled "religious bigotry". See the following quotes:

For example, once in one of the classes, once I uh, made a comment right... about religion for example. So, the Instructor's reply to me was, 'Oh religion is man-made anyways (**Mohamed**, Muslim men focus group)

Mohamed also said that there is, in our society, a kind of 'essentialization' of Islam where people tolerate Islam but don't totally accept it as a religion with people who have it as their rights to a religious. However, what is striking to me, is that he doesn't only limit himself to just a philosophical debate. **Mohamed** has ideas on how the university can address these ideas of 'essentialization' and superficial acceptance. He suggested that the institution should:

- Provide information through the whole pre-arrival and orientation processes by posting more information on the website about the religious communities on campus and how students can access these; including this information in the letter of acceptance sent to students; including it in the curriculum.
- Educate students about the environment and issues of Eurocentrism, White supremacy, colonization, and so on.
- Bring in credible scholars who represent a majority of Muslims and not favor those so called 'moderate scholars' because they hold Western values and worldviews.
- Watch out for the legalistic approach vs. Humanistic approach (in the curriculum and teaching)

However, is **the lack of consideration of other views** a more serious and endemic issue in academia than society? How is this lack of consideration of other people's views, religions and faith is at odds with the realities of current worldwide 'Islamophobia' and religious bigotry?

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For example, is the attitude of dismissing other people's religions/faith at the core of the current Bill 62 legislation in Quebec? What about the influence of political rhetoric worldwide, in the USA, Canada, France, Australia and other places in the Western World? Is it a dismissal of the topic of Orientalism? Has the West failed to understand the Rest or has it consciously chosen to ignore/ dismiss other peoples' cultures because of its cultural imperialism/essentialism/ ethnocentrism?

All Muslim students, and **Mohamed** in particular, have argued that their religion is important to them and to their overall social well-being. **Mohamed** argues:

faith is important/ the most important aspect of people's life: faith informs how you think about the world and behave. Without it, you experience discomfort (**Mohamed**, Muslim women focus group)

Finally, I should revisit **Brian**'s interview and see how **Mohamed**'s argument differs or corroborates his, as my first interviewee in this study.

Bodour also talks at length about the 'modernized Muslim' who is *"being praised for being a 'modernized Muslim'"*. However, she is very skeptical of some Canadians attitudes towards Muslims like herself because of their 'modernization of their Muslim outfits'. When Canadians praise Muslims for being 'modernized Muslims', they imply that these Muslims have adopted 'Canadian Euro-Christian ways of being and living'.

However, this is not what **Bodour** means by being a 'modernized Muslim'. For her, 'modernizing her dress code' by wearing more colorful clothes, adopting the hijab as opposed to the burqa or habaya, is a coping strategy to stand out less and protect/mitigate against Islamophobia. She is not pretending to renounce her core beliefs and values as a Muslim, but

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to adapt her appearance in order to "fit-in" (see this memo for more elaboration under the category *coping with Islamophobia* as a strategy). Therefore "Being praised for being a 'modernized Muslim'" falls under the category "Rendering Muslims invisible", as a theme of the general ambient Islamophobia Muslim students are experiencing, and it forces them to devise coping and resistance strategies for survival on campus and in the community.

"She said, "No. I hope you are not offended, but I asked you because I had Master student before you and they were wearing a long veil, and they are covering their face properly". Because, before I was not wearing my hijab like this, I was wearing like turban, you know, style... She said, "because, the way you wear your hijab, it is not like them and the way you dress you wear tight pants, short pants, sometimes, you are not like them, that's why I asked, is there difference in your religion?" I said, "no, I am in between. I choose to be like this, because I want everything to be easy and smooth on me"" (**Bodour**, one-on-one interview)

However, 'modernized Muslim' is not be the same as 'Moderate Muslims' as **Mohamed** described it in his interview. For **Mohamed**, a 'moderate Muslim' is those Muslim scholars who pretend to speak on behalf of all Muslims but fail to correctly and courageously convey the true message of Islam. 'Moderate Muslims', **Mohamed**, argue, are often preferred by the university because they align more with the status quo instead of denouncing Islamophobia and the ways Western Eurocentric ideologies are undermining Islam and Muslims.

According to Kassam (2018), the moderate Muslim is also the 'Acceptable Muslim' one that is a 'good', 'modern', and 'assimilable':

The Acceptable Muslim sustains the narrative of the Canadian nation-state as liberal, democratic, secular, modern and inclusive, even as it relentlessly excludes, punishes and eliminates the Muslim Other. In this sense, Acceptable Muslims stand as sentries at the (symbolic) borders of the nation, reanimating the racialized boundaries of acceptability and signaling that those beyond the boundaries can be legitimately policed by the nation-state. The figure of the Acceptable Muslim is central in Canadian debates about multiculturalism, immigration, citizenship and secularism, contestations which often reinforce differential (and racialized) notions of belonging. For the Acceptable Muslim, the price of (conditional) inclusion is fidelity to the ideological goals of the Canadian nation-state (Kassam, 2018, p. ii).

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(d) Gendering Islamophobia

I think it's maybe because women, we are more obvious because we wear hijab. And yeah, so if you see a guy even if he was from Saudi Arabia or wherever, you wouldn't know if he was a Muslim or not. But we're like see me here, I am a Muslim. I think we're more, like we're an easy target kind of (**Mali**, one-on-one interview).

The quote above, from **Mali**, a female Muslim student from Saudi Arabia, succinctly describes the gendered dimensions of Muslim students' experiences of Islamophobia based on their gender, dress code and appearance.

The category *Gendering Islamophobia* builds on the attitudes, beliefs and behaviors non-Muslim Canadians display against Muslim in general and Muslim students in particular on both campus and in the community. *Gendering Islamophobia* is a form of religiously and racially motivated violence directed toward Muslim students based on their gender. *Gender-based Islamophobia* is a direct prejudice and discrimination against Muslim students (see Figure 10: *Category: Gendering Islamophobia*).

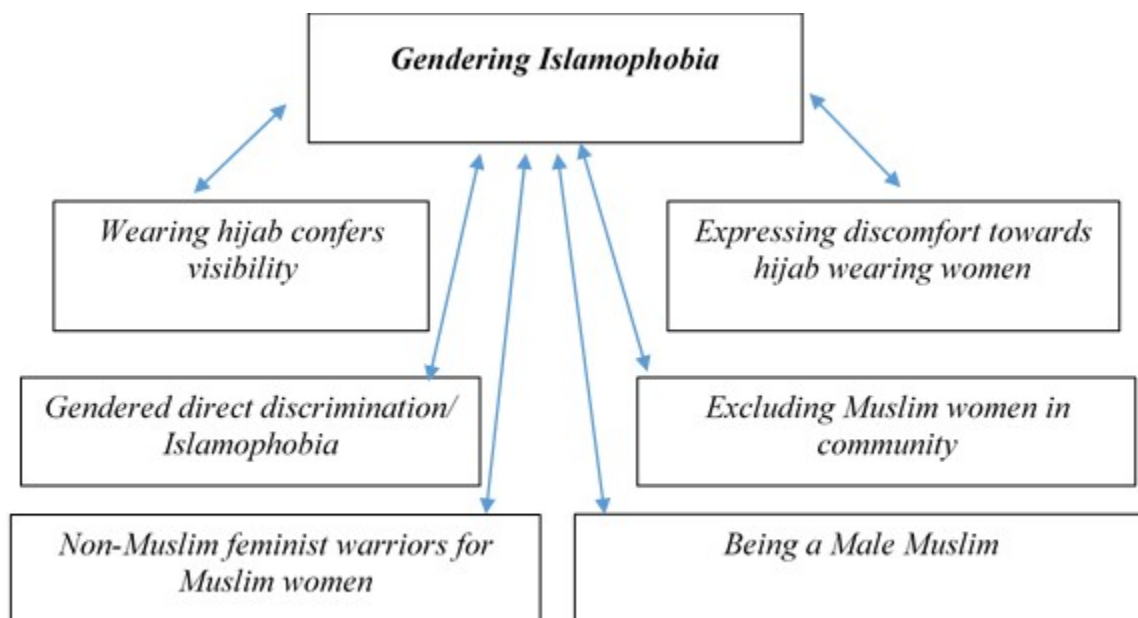


Figure 10: Category: **Gendering Islamophobia**

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In this study, the Muslim students' experiences of gendered Islamophobia are summarized below by the following focused codes: *wearing hijab confers visibility; gendered direct discrimination/Islamophobia; expressing discomfort towards hijab wearing women; non-Muslim feminist warriors for Muslim women; and being a male Muslim.*

- *Wearing hijab confers visibility*

Most respondents, in this study, recognized that Muslim women who wear the hijab are more likely to be targeted directly by Islamophobia and subjected to verbal abuses and physical attacks in some cases. The codes that illustrate these experiences include: *wearing hijab as expression of beliefs; visibility of the hijab; being a 'visible Muslim' (hijabi wearing); standing out because wearing a hijab'; different experiences of hijab wearing women; experiences of Muslim women wearing hijab; being aware that wearing hijab may invite stigma and prejudice; 'I feel that the way I dress is the primary origin of this prejudices'; "not visibly Muslim" because not wearing hijab.*

According to **Momar**, the act of wearing the hijab confers *visibility* to Muslim women in a way that set them as target of Islamophobia. This visibility makes Muslim women to *standing out because of wearing a hijab.*

I think because of my religion because I look like a Muslim 'cause I'm wearing hijab. So, I think that's why. Sure. 'Cause just 'cause you know the climate that we are in, it's not really so much racial; a lot of times, I think, when you're a hijabi, like, the hijab or your religion is the thing that stands out more (**Cupcake**, WFG)

For **Ara**, another female student, wearing hijab confers the quality to Muslim women of being perceived and seen by others as *being a 'visible Muslim'*. In her case, this visibility was also combined with another dimension of her person – her short height – which she has always experienced discrimination with:

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I would say that, you know, I'm a visible Muslim. So, for me, I have experienced, I would think, some pretty interesting experiences both like verbal kind of abuse, etc. But, I would say, I was actually expecting it. I think, the family that I grew up in, my dad was very short. This is to say, kind of, this gives us an idea of what the world thinks of Muslims like us, as I was growing up. It's kind of, I always had this impression that it is how people see me. So, it's something that I've got accustomed to... I was expecting people to kind of approach me in a rude way or say mean things and that kind of thing... (**Ara**, in the Muslim Women Focus Group).

Momar understands that Muslim women *wearing hijab is an expression of beliefs*.

However, **Margo** argues that Muslim women are *being not compelled to wear hijab (as they) could choose not to*. She adds, in the following in vivo code: *I feel that the way I dress is the primary origin of this prejudice*. In other words, she is also *being aware that wearing hijab may invite stigma and prejudice*.

I know that, as a Muslim woman who dresses the way I dress, I'm essentially inviting that (stigma and prejudice). Yeah! you know, I could choose to not wear hijab or whatever. So, the consequences are something of my own doing, so to speak; but I take that on as my part of identity and it's not something I will change based on someone's response to me (**Margo**, one-on-one interview).

There are differences in Muslim women who wear the hijab or not. For **Belle**, the latter are "*not visibly Muslim because not wearing hijab*", as per her experience, after the Quebec Mosque attack, when she stopped wearing her hijab. However, there are a variety in Muslim women's experiences of Islamophobia as both **Momar** and **Brian** describe it. **Brian**, a black student at the Law faculty, described his mother's experiences as:

Just too much going on... You cannot start dwelling on things you could or should probably suspect every day in your life. Especially if you are a devout, because, I know my mom and family are really devout Muslims. Oh! Yeah... she tells me a lot about her experience and how she's treated, especially when you are wearing a hijab (**Brian**, one-on-one interview).

- *Gendered direct discrimination/ Islamophobia*

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The consequences of being visible as a Muslim woman, as **Margo** described above, are direct gendered Islamophobia – something which someone like **Bodour**, a female Muslim from Saudi Arabia, has experienced in the community, as she felt *being treated differently because of her Muslim appearance*:

Exactly, she said to the lady, because there were a lady holding her baby, and the stroller in front of her, and she hit her by accident and she said, “oh, I am sorry” and then she come and she start hitting my stroller. She didn’t say sorry at all. And you know, her face she was... hmm, I couldn’t say this in English, but she was, (her face was as angry). She was saying, hung! Hung! (**Bodour**, one-on-one interview)

Some participants in the Muslim women focus groups, like **Ara**, also report *being attacked because of her hijab*:

And it was just very shocking to see that was the reason, I was attacked because of a piece of cloth on my head...and, it's just the thing is that we're talking about that happened outside of the community and I feel like within the UVic community everyone is here to learn (**Ara**, participant in the Muslim women focus group).

Many participants in both the one-on-one interviews and the focus groups interviews with Muslim male and female students also acknowledged that Muslim women *can face more discrimination as a Muslim woman* (Muslim men focus group). According to **Bachar**, a mature graduate black student in Engineering, there is a *marginalization of female Muslims wearing hijab*, as an aspect of the exclusion of female Muslim students in classroom discussion:

Because sometimes, even they want, sometimes to speak or discuss with their classmates; but sometimes, they are marginalized for this reason that they wear the Hijab and there is, maybe this, they are not accepted in their neighborhood (**Bachar**, one-on-one interview).

Many of these respondents also had either experienced Islamophobia directly or witnessed it against another Muslim and in most cases against Muslim women wearing a hijab or a burqa. For **Cupcake**, what hurt most was the cowardly act of *being given the middle finger by a white male because of hijab*.

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I was in, like, the bus exchange area and I was just able to cross the street and some guy in a truck, he, like, put the middle finger for me and as he was like... but he hides his face and I couldn't see him. I didn't even notice and then I realized that somebody was just like give me a finger (**Cupcake**, Muslim women focus group).

Respondents noted that minding one's own business doesn't protect Muslim females from being subjected to gendered Islamophobia. **Ginger**, a non-hijab wearing Muslim woman, reported the following personal experiences of witnessing a direct Islamophobic attack:

Not at UVic campus not at all. But one time we (pointing to her two friends), we were traveling in a bus and there was a girl on the bus and she was wearing hijab. But she was sitting just behind the driver's seat. So, she was away from all those young boys who were sitting at the back. And it was, I think, Friday night or Saturday night. Maybe they (those young boys) were going to downtown or something and they kind of started passing comments and remarks like in a loud noise and cursing and everything...and... abusing Muslims and everything, so the girl got like frighten and she just requested the bus and got off the bus. We were frightened too but we were not visibly Muslims...So... but, we were like aw...so frightened! Like, this could happen to anyone (**Ginger**, Muslim women focus group).

Participants in the Muslim male focus group also reported *witnessing 'hijabi' Muslim women shouted at* (Muslim women focus group). These attacks, **Laila** argued, are because:

I think that piece of clothing (hijab) really kind of highlights that you are a Muslim and you are targeted differently (**Laila**, one-on-one interview).

Overall, one code that stood out for me in this account of Muslim students' experiences is the code of *being treated differently because of her Muslim appearance*, reported by **Bodour** in her one-on-one interview. This prompted me to write a memo about it then (see box below):

Memo

Being treated differently because of her Muslim appearance

This code explains the conscious nature of Islamophobia whereby someone selectively targets one person just because of their appearance/hijab. As **Bodour** describes, "what makes me know she did this on purpose, because when she was getting in the bus, she hit by accident the lady who was

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holding her baby, she said “I am sorry”. She said sorry to a Canadian, but she did not say sorry to me” (**Bodour**, one-on-one interview).

Though I am not sure if the name captures what is in this quote well, **Bodour’s** last sentence also triggered me to think about another code, an in vivo: "Showing politeness towards white vs. rudeness towards others" as the white woman was very respectful of the first white person on the way but not to **Bodour**. My question is WHY? Or maybe the reason is obvious, as **Bodour** described it as Islamophobia.

- *Expressing discomfort towards hijab wearing women*

Showing or expressing discomfort towards hijab-wearing Muslim women is a common behavior or attitude among non-Muslims, which **Mohamed** was referring to earlier on in his argument of how non-Muslim students and faculty were *pigeonholing Muslims in general stereotypes*. According to **Momar**, non-Muslims on campus and in the community behave by insidiously *staring at hijab wearing women* and constantly *expressing discomfort towards hijab wearing women*:

... the woman, she was wearing her hijab. I just remember seeing some people, it wasn’t necessarily that they were making any, say like remark or like, hey, you’re a refugee or what not. But it was like looking at them, and they glance at them and they give like a cold shoulder. It just seemed they were very like, how do I say, umm, like, just they, like uncomfortableness; you know you could see it form visual. (**Momar**, one-on-one interview).

These attitudes of discomfort toward hijab wearing Muslim women are often the norm in society.

Clara, one of the frontline staff and a non-Muslim woman, testifies to these kinds of attitudes in many non-Muslim people on campus and in the community:

... I have my own bias about Muslim women who were covered. Now I kind of took this out, you know. We all have our own circumstances, our own culture, and our own ways of

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doing. So, I am not going to judge or guess even the (hijabi women) just because of their appearance. I am open to everyone (now) (Clara, frontline staff member).

- *Non-Muslim feminist warriors for Muslim women*

Some participants also explain that gendered Islamophobia is not only about the direct or indirect violence perpetuated against Muslim bodies and souls, it is also about their misrepresentation, victimization in both literature and in social narratives. Both Muslim women and men have complained about this mindset in the so-called *non-Muslim 'feminist' warriors for Muslim women*. According to **Margo**, as a Muslim woman, because she chooses to not play into this scenario, she was accused of being an anti-feminist. For **Bachar**, he saw a problem when *non-Muslims trying to control Muslim women wearing hijab*, arguing that the hijab is a prison for Muslim women and that they need to free themselves from it. Another male participant of the Muslim male focus group, **Dawood** argued,

My interpretation is that what people think when like they don't really know much about the Islamic, actually they don't know what the head scarf is for. When asked from them is that men aren't forced to wear" (**Dawood**, Muslim male focus group).

Laila, a female graduate student in Educational Leadership studies reported how she stood up against her professor *assuming hijabi are victims*, from their male counterparts and society.

... and so, I said to her: well, actually I just recently decided to wear the hijab after moving to Victoria. It's just easier for me to kind of restart my life that way instead of having to respond to people why I start putting the hijab on... so, she asked me why do I... So what made you decide to do it? And I said: oh! most people would think that it was because after I got married, but not really...I've thought about it long enough and moving to a new country is just an easy reason to kinda jump-start your life pretty much. (**Laila**, one-on-one interview).

For both **Bachar** and Mohamed, *non-Muslims trying to control Muslim women to not wear the hijab* is problematic and feed into the paternalistic attitudes the West has towards the 'others' because of Eurocentric and Orientalist ideas.

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- *Being a Male Muslim*

In terms of gender being a factor, being a Muslim male confers a totally different privilege and therefore a different kind of experience of Islamophobia and racism. As one participant, **Sam**, recognized in the male focus group, male Muslim men pass, as it is *harder to identify male Muslims than females hijabi*.

... Uhhh! Sam again. I've seen mostly, because, I feel because, we are males. So, it's really hard to identify if you are Muslim just by looking at us but I've seen this (Islamophobia) happening to Muslim woman especially who wears hijab. Ah... some people shout at them or look at them differently or stuff like that. (**Sam**, Muslim male focus group).

Momar totally agrees with this fact. Though he is Black and mention how he experiences heightened intersectional prejudice with anti-Black racism, he also recognizes how Muslim women wearing the hijab are affected by Islamophobic attacks and hate crimes.

You know to be honest, like, I mean, its being a male Muslim, and also that I'm African America, or African Canadian I should say. I feel like perhaps its because of the color of my skin but, umm, like, for instance, umm, woman who are Muslim when they wear the hijab, that is like the first thing people see. That they are you know, that they cover their head in a certain and that really portrays what their beliefs are in respect to Islam. I would say that perhaps for me, being a male, I think, its, the first thing would be my ethnic background rather than my religious (**Momar**, one-on-one interview).

Mali, a female respondent also concurred with this male privilege, a marker of gendered Islamophobia that it mostly targeted to Muslim women.

I think it's maybe because women, we are more obvious because we wear hijab. And yeah, so if you see a guy even if he was from Saudi Arabia or wherever, you wouldn't know if he was a Muslim or not. But we're like, see me here (showing her hijab), I am a Muslim. I think we're more, like we're an easy target kind of (**Mali**, one-on-one interview).

Overall, gendering Islamophobia is viewed by many as pervasive in terms of attitudes and behaviors that sustain stereotypes and discriminatory practices against women and men Muslim students on campus and in the community. Among these negative attitudes and behaviors, non-Muslim also exercise *direct discrimination against Muslim students, express discomfort towards*

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hijab wearing women, and then ‘tokenize’ Muslim women as non-Muslim women feminist warriors (think they need to rescue) Muslim women from oppression.

(e) “Tokenizing” Muslim students through the institution’s structures

Islamophobia, indeed, goes beyond the gendering of Islamophobia. Some Muslim students at the university report feeling tokenized by its institutions, and throughout their time there. For example, many concur with **Mohamed**’s definition, that tokenization is based on the misuse and misrepresentation of Muslim students by the institution without a genuine recognition of their full humanity. **Bodour**’s example, illustrates how Muslim students are *being tokenized by some departments for marketing purposes*.

Even when I was there, I didn’t see any brochure about any Islamic country. I said, “can I bring something”. They said, “oh! maybe you can bring it but we can’t guarantee you that we can leave it at the office”. After that I stop volunteering with (name of UVic department). I did not feel I am welcomed. I felt I was used because I am wearing hijab so they will put my picture everywhere, and you know (they will say), we include everyone. But actually, what appears they include everyone, but they are rude (**Bodour**, one-on-one interview).

Tokenization of Muslim students often goes hand in hand with the lack of representation of Muslim people in the university staff body. **Jenny**, one of the frontline staff members recognized that as a pressing issue:

I remember one person came out after the incident at the Mosque in Quebec and, you know. I’m kind of processing what happened...Umm, it doesn’t happen that often that I hear directly [directly] about their experiences of prejudice as Muslim students. I would say...it makes me wonder like, you know,...would they feel comfortable coming to (name of her department) services where by the way there are no Muslim (advisors) counsellors...(Jenny, frontline staff, in one-on-one interview).

Mohamed reports that tokenization also happens in a context where there is a *lack of inclusive environment* created by faculty. Some faculty, he reports, often engage in *imposing same expectations on both non-believers and believers and discriminating against minority religions*.

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Because for example, let's say somebody, let's say he doesn't believe in organized religion or anything sacred, if he finds himself in this kind of environment, he has no problem, he doesn't have to act, he can always freely say what he wants to say. On the contrary if you believe in religion or you are a faithful person, you always feel that you have to meet other people's expectations of you (in a 'lack of inclusive environment'). That's the feeling you start to get. You know you always feel like you have to meet other people's expectations of you (**Mohamed**, one-on-one interview)

Tokenization also happens with university administrators, when their use of Muslim students as volunteers never concretize into their representation into university personnel. **Bodour** for example, describes this tokenization as when Muslim students feel *being tokenized by some departments for marketing purposes*.

Even when I was there, I didn't see any brochure about any Islamic country. I said, "can I bring something". They said, "oh! maybe you can bring it but we can't guarantee you that we can leave it at the office". After that I stop volunteering with (name of UVic department). I did not feel I am welcomed. I felt I was used because I am wearing hijab so they will put my picture everywhere, and you know (they will say), we include everyone. But actually, what appears they include everyone, but they are rude (**Bodour**, one-on-one interview).

Respondents reported that tokenization, by extension, often leads Muslim students to be rendered invisible regardless of their racial, ethnic, religious, linguistic, and gender diversity.

(f) Rendering Muslim students invisible in the systems

Sparkle, a female Muslim student from Saudi Arabia, argued that people need to be *celebrating Muslim diversity and* cultures in order to revert their invisibility in the system, and additionally, there needs to be a strategy for *rendering Muslim humans by 'normalizing and showcasing their cultures and practices*.

... I think maybe the university can arrange some cultural events like where they can invite different Muslims people from different Muslim students from different backgrounds and countries to represent their culture so that the Canadians or people on campus would know that... how different and how different Muslims are, and in some ways not so different from them as well (**Sparkle**, Muslim women focus group).

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As sketched in Figure 11 -Category: rendering Muslim students invisible in the systems, the following section details the properties of the category **rendering Muslim students invisible in the systems**.

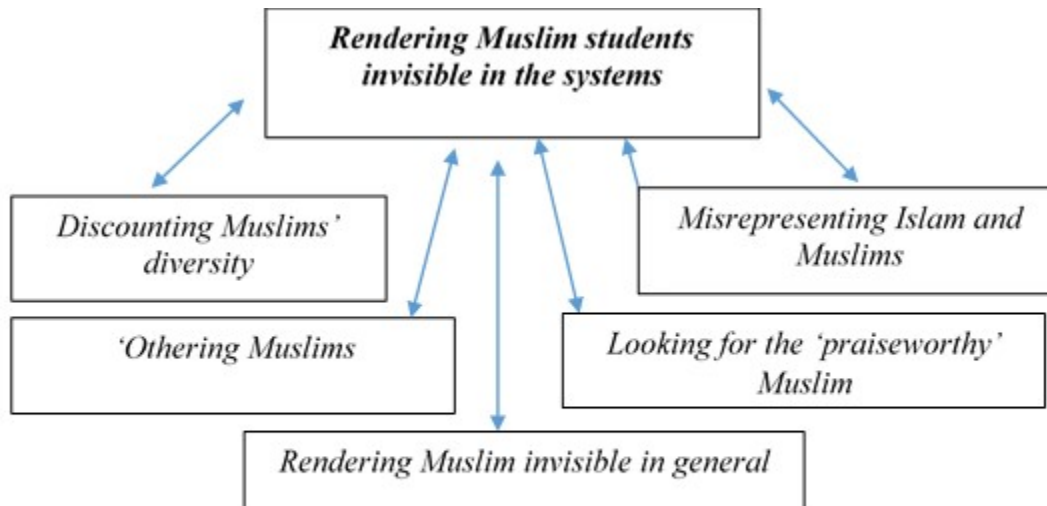


Figure 11: Category: Rendering Muslim students invisible in the systems

- *Discounting Muslim diversity*

Discounting Muslim diversity, according to Muslim students, is equal to rendering them invisible in the university systems. The focused code/sub-category, *discounting Muslim diversity*, includes the following property that exacerbates the issue:

Ignoring the complexity of Muslim traditions, according to **Mohamed**, happens when the university only focuses on inviting specific guest lecturers from one specific Muslim school of thoughts to campus. Such a practice will render the rest of the Muslim community invisible and misrepresented. This is also the case when non-Muslims and the institution go around to *dismissing the diversity of origins of Muslim students (Mohamed)*. According to some participants in the Muslim men's focus group, some of these practices amount to *discounting experiences from an*

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Arab or Middle Eastern context (Muslim men focus group) which is obviously problematic and a basis for discriminatory practices.

For me, I'm Sammy. Well, I agree with Dawood or David that, you know, when you apply for jobs, it's, they actually look at your name and like, they will be like, ok, he might be an Arab or something. We won't, maybe, give him that opportunity because like; if like, white guy applies for, it's better we give it to him. That's how I feel as well, because I don't get as much interviews. Also, on the resume, like, if you have, like, an Arab or Middle Eastern like experience, they wouldn't take them into account as if you have worked here or your experiences here. So, there's discrimination, I think (**Sammy**, Muslim men focus group)

- *Misrepresenting Islam and Muslims*

Momar argues that the discounting of Muslim students' diversity also amounts to sometimes *misrepresenting Islam as also a way of life* and for non-Muslims, for *missing a comprehensive learning(opportunity) about Islam (especially in high schools)*. According to **Mohamed**, this also amounts to misrepresenting the "Muslim majority":

I think that is still also an insistence on excluding the Muslim majority. Because usually the person you see they give importance to, they do not represent the community at large. They do not represent the Islamic scholars you know at large (**Mohamed**, one-on-one interview).

- *'Othering' Muslims*

Misrepresenting someone can also lead to them feeling that they are *being marginalized*. The "Being marginalized in socialization" describes the state of confusion of some Muslim students due to exclusion on campus and in the community. Exclusion from socializing with other Canadians because of stereotypes and prejudice causes some Muslim students to fall into homesickness like **Angel**, meaning that they miss home and the social life they used to enjoy. Sad and confused, some of these Muslim students, especially, the female students like **Belle**, end up renouncing the hijab and other distinctive religious apparel, one of their core values and identity markers as a Muslim. **Angel**, explains how being marginalized as a Muslim woman has impacted her morale in general:

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Because I always thought about going back home....I don't feel like I can (though). While I was back home,... and I was very social and I know everyone. But here, when I went to the university, it fills me with sad(ness); I feel hurt. When they sit and nobody want to talk to me and nobody have the courage... (**Angel**, one-on-one interview).

Margo reports that this 'othering' exclusion is sometimes articulated during those instances when Muslim students are *being asked where you are from*. Another aspect to this 'othering' is when non-Muslim are "*speaking about Muslims like we some sort of alien*" (**Ara**, from the Muslim women focus group). Though there still exists the risk of *being given 'a cold shoulder'*, as **Momar** argues, **Brian** believes that in order to avoid *being perceived as 'something else'*, he needs to behave differently, out of his own comfort zone.

... I feel like, I have to engage in social activities such as what they are doing, like drinking; and you know, partying; and you know, doing all those things they are doing (**Brian**, in one-on-one interview).

The Muslims who acts accordingly is described by respondents **Mohamed** and **Margo** earlier, as the 'moderate' or 'modern' Muslim', who is always praiseworthy for non-Muslims.

- *Looking for the praiseworthy Muslim*

The praiseworthy Muslim, according to **Bodour** is when she wears colorful clothing, as a strategy to minimize the attention on her hijab and Muslim identity. In these situations, she reports *being praised for being a 'modernized Muslim'*:

I remember, one day, during my Masters, I went to my supervisor, I needed to talk to her about something, and she said, "can I ask you a question?" I said "yes". She said, "you don't look like other Muslims". Her question hit me. I said, why I look different. She said, "Muslim style..." something like that. I said, "Yeah, because I want to make easy for myself here. I am not here to justify or whatever. This is not me. I am peaceful person. I am here for a reason. That is why I am just like this. To make easy for me and for them. Easy to communicate (**Bodour**, one-on-one interview).

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For **Bachar**, however, those attitudes of non-Muslims in congratulating Muslims for their outfits is purely hypocritical and Muslim students should understand that they are *being hypocritically congratulated for your outfit* for very insidious reasons:

So, yeah, this is actually what we are experiencing here in Canada. Yeah, most people like, when they are going to the mosque, wearing things Muslim dress other are... so you see how people are happy about that. I know...some are just trying to make you feel better from...to take you away from the media to what is happening in some different country it is not the case in Canada. But with that even only the media we leave sometimes we are not actually free so... (**Bachar**, one-on-one interview).

- *Rendering Muslims invisible*

Overall, most of the respondents referred to above, argued that Muslim students are being rendered invisible in many ways by both the systems and the individuals they interact with in class, on campus and in the wider community. Other aspects of this act of *rendering Muslims invisible*, according to **Margo is** through *assuming that women who wear hijab don't speak English* and *being prejudiced if wear hijab and has an accent*.

Ummm... for me, the initial reaction that I get when people look at me because I wear the hijab... People think I don't speak English (**Margo**, one-on-one interview).

Clara, one of the frontline staff argues that the problem is often rooted in the non-Muslim's own mental framework which can't comprehend the daunting experience of invisibility of the Muslim students.

I am part of the Leadership Victoria Program ...it has made me more aware about my own bias, or even bubble. Sometimes, I'm just in my own bubble and don't communicate with others... 'No, I have to be more proactive about that and learn from others even if they are different from me (**Clara**, a frontline staff member, in one-on-one interview).

According to **Cupcake**, from the Muslim women focus group, there are more dimensions to the invisibility of Muslim in the system and society in general. Race, she argued is also a strong determinant in her case. **Brian** reported that there is a culture of *overlooking the rights to be*

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identifying Black. Therefore, **Cupcake**, describes the *invisibility of Black Muslims* in the following terms:

I think it's difficult 'cause like for me there is like layers right like... I'm Muslim and I'm also black. right. People always forget about us Black Muslims were kind of in the space where like it is either Muslim is like one type maybe Arab or south Asian, black people are just non-Muslims. So, its like maybe my identity as a black Muslim is maybe it's a little bit its different with other Muslims that's where I kinda have a problem, but like I don't know how those two things at same time like affect me I feel like for me it's more like of a hijab thing. What about you? (**Cupcake**, Muslim women focus group)

Overall, the sub-category, *rendering Muslim invisible* exacerbates the issues of intersectionality between religion, race, gender, language fluency, and others. *Rendering Muslim invisible* also operates throughout different processes, which are characterized by the focused coded: *discounting Muslims diversity; misrepresenting Islam and Muslims; 'Othering' Muslims; looking for the praiseworthy Muslim; and rendering Muslim invisible in general* – all of which add to a state of endemic Islamophobia that expands beyond the university to Muslim students interactions in the wider community. **Jenny**'s statement below clearly emphasizes this systematic nature of the invisibility of Muslim students:

I think, you know I supported Muslim students but, I think a lot of time, I haven't known they are Muslims. You know, I find myself being curious about... how well they access or whether they access (at all) ... services? Like, what the differences are between say, Muslim students and international students and Muslim students and domestic?... So, we don't actually know and I feel like that's... a missing piece for me (**Jenny**, a frontline staff, in one-on-one interview).

Jenny's quote also points to the issues of record keeping and statistics. As Jenny later explained, her department doesn't collect the kind of information that will identify religion for example. However, this lack of information about students' religious affiliation contribute to rendering Muslim students invisible in the system.

(g) Targeting Muslims in the community

Targeting Muslims, whether in curriculum and instruction, the classroom, the campus, in the community or globally, is not accidental or hidden, as all participants in this study argued. They all pointed out that ambient Islamophobia is more than the individual racist attacks: it is rooted in

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cultural and social attitudes and behaviors. Huntington (1996), in his infamous (Maranci, 2006) “Clash of Civilizations” demonstrates this point in the following passage:

Western Culture is challenged by groups within western societies. One such challenge comes from immigrants from other civilizations who reject assimilation and continue to adhere to and to propagate the values, customs, and cultures of their home. This phenomenon is most notable among Muslims in Europe....In Europe, western civilization could also be undermined by the weakening of its central component, Christianity (pp. 304–305).

However, Marranci (2006) disagrees with Huntington. She argues, “Actually, it is not the immigrant that anguishes Huntington [and those who think like him], but multiculturalism and the connected risk of *transculturation* processes” (p. 114). It is unsurprising then that the following section summarizes the experiences of Muslim students as they are being targeted in the community based on multiple cultural dimensions of their identity: physical appearance, religion, dress code, gender identity, race, ethnicity and country of origins (see Figure 12: Category: ***Targeting Muslims in the community***).

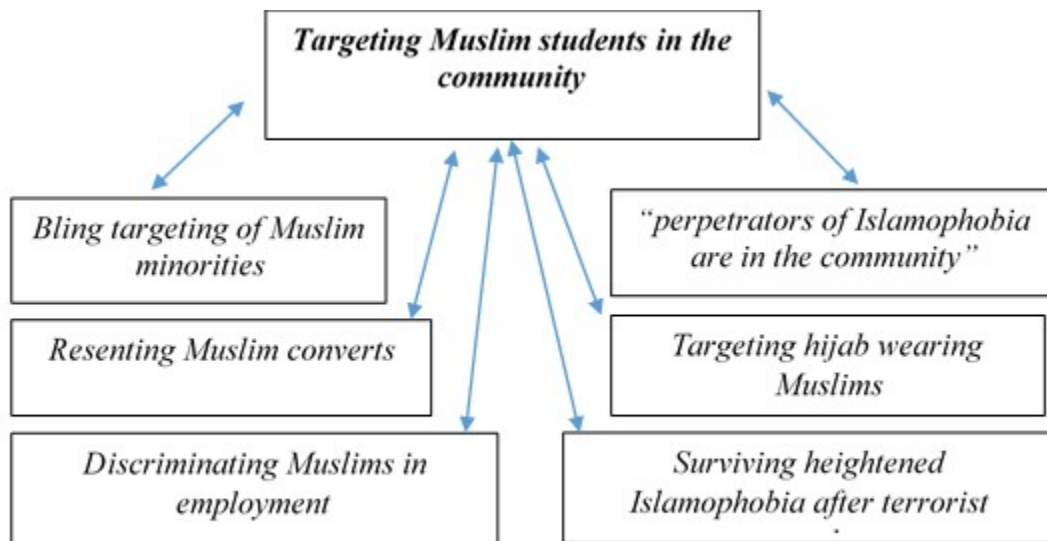


Figure 12: Category: Targeting Muslim students in the community

The category ***targeting Muslims in the community*** – a property of the core category, **enduring ambient Islamophobia** – is composed of the following focused codes: *blind targeting of*

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Muslim minorities; perpetrators of Islamophobia in the community; targeting hijab wearing Muslims; resenting Muslim converts; discriminating Muslims in employment; and surviving heightened Islamophobia after terrorist attacks.

- *Blind targeting of Muslim minorities as an ambient reality of Islamophobia*

Like on campus and in the classroom, **Belle** argues that there is a *blind targeting of minorities* in general and Muslim students, in particular in the community.

Ironically, it's not only the Muslims that are being targets, it's the Hindus, the Sikhs, the Indian people and Middle Eastern people.... Because people take them all to be Muslims that's again is stereotyping, anyone who looks like an Arab you think he is a Muslim. No one goes and asks him whether he is a Muslim. You just target, then you just abuse them or you kill them outright. You saw what happened in Seattle. This Sikh guy he was standing outside his home they came and they shot him and he died and similarly the Indian engineer who died in the USA... Yeah... two of them in the pub, so the one of them died on the spot. He was an engineer and he was a Hindu, he was not a Muslim." (**Belle**, in one-on-one interview).

For **Bachar**, there is a *generalized Islamophobia* which **Belle** characterizes as *generalized Islamophobia against all brown people*. According to many respondents like **Margo**, **Momar** and **Bodour**, these discriminatory behaviors are prevalent in the community as well. They can evolve from *subtle prejudicial comments (Margo)* to *mistrusting Muslims (Brian)* to *discriminating them (Muslims just)* according to how they look like.

"So, they went to swimming pool and oversee the woman, like, wears hijab... But they, actually one guy looked at them and, like, shouted at them. That's what I heard. So, he was discriminating them according to how they look like. He obviously knew that they were Muslims so it was a little bit not good. Yeah, that's what I heard from a friend." (**Sammy**, in the Muslim men focus group).

Belle argued that unfortunately the problem is not going to go away. In the case of **Bodour**, Islamophobia translates systemically in that, her *complaints to the BC Transit office are responded with excuses for the drivers*. **Belle** also noticed that, *being Muslim, the stereotype can go against*

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you in conflict as well. **Momar** agreed with **Belle** and he added that the permanence of Islamophobia is something, as a Canadian-born black male, he “*has experienced much like discrimination here*” all his life, because “*people have stereotypes of you because of who you are (race or religion)*”. **Belle**, concluded that Islamophobia is endemic in the community, blindly targeting minorities in general and Muslims in particular.

But again, the problem is not going to away as I said earlier... It's there... Muslims are there. Islamophobia is there. It might come up with other groups as well. Like. We see and we have seen the phenomena Canada gets affected by what is happening in the neighborhood. So, it's always receding from the U.S. and you've seen the Sikh people getting targeted because people think they are Muslims and Hindus are being targeted because people think they are Muslim. So, anyone who looks brown or who looks Middle Eastern they think they are Muslims. So, if university is not going to take notice... I mean mmm you shouldn't you shouldn't hide your head in the sand and you should preempt you should pre-plan before some tragedy happened (**Belle**, Muslim women focus group).

- *Perpetrators of Islamophobia in the community*

Islamophobia, as an enduring attitude and behavior in the hearts of racists and religious bigots, is a system upheld by specific individuals and groups in the society in the actions they carry out.

Bodour accused white woman and white female drivers as perpetrators in the following in vivo code: *I think the problem, maybe, is Female drivers*. **Angel**, another Saudi woman, also reported *getting attacked by a woman on the bus because of her hijab*. Islamophobic attacks against Muslim women are also perpetuated by older white males. However, young people are no less innocent as many respondents reported in their experiences on both campus and in the community. **Ara** also reported *noticing [that] older generation [are] more prejudiced and discriminating*:

Whereas, I feel as though, personally, just that outside the community, it is filled with much more older generation and they're not, I feel, not so open to kind of accepting new cultures or new religions or just new people that they don't understand and are not willing to kind of... (**Ara**, Muslim women focus group).

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As in all situations where Muslim students interact with others, those perpetrators of Islamophobia and other hate crimes target specific characteristics of minority students such as their physical appearance, outfits, religious affiliation, race, gender, country of origins and their dress code (e.g. the hijab or burqa).

- *Targeting hijab and burqa wearing Muslims in the community*

Muslims wearing the hijab or the burqa are main target of Islamophobia in the community. As reported by respondents in this study, under the category, **Gendering Islamophobia**, most of these discriminations can be catalogued under the same focused codes described then: *wearing hijab confers visibility; expressing discomfort towards hijab wearing women; and gendered direct discrimination/ Islamophobia*.

In the community, **David**, from the Muslim male focus group, reported that *wearing Muslim outfits drew attention and stereotypes*. **Bodour** conceded that her hijab is indeed a source for her different treatment because of her Muslim appearance. She added that this different treatment amounted to her *being (also) discriminated because of cultural appearance* (dress). For **Margo**, this also resulted in her *being called names because [of] wearing a hijab*. According to **Laila**, she experienced a random person “*asking her to take off [her] hijab right there*”.

There were one (incident) in the bus, but that was still me though. I forgot about that incident but that person was, I think a disabled person, like, there were some cognitive disability (with them). She was just asking me to take off my hijab right there. But I just ignored it. There was (also) a woman who complained about this Saudi woman’s perfume on the bus was just too strong. I understand it was too strong but that was more so (laughing)... (**Laila**, one-on-one interview).

Margo adds that the perversity of Islamophobia based on the hijab as conferring visibility to Muslim women also creates assumptions and stereotypes about their companions’ religions

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affiliations, putting them at risk like all other Muslims. The code *outing her husband as a Muslim male because of her hijab* describes this situation:

I, two of my sisters, when I go around the town with them, they noticed, they definitely noticed all of sudden people start looking at us more. Or even (her husband), like people sometimes think he is like a Mexican, right? But, when he is with me, everybody knows we are Muslims (**Margo**, one-on-one interview).

In the community, **Bachar**, notices, *people react to Muslim outfits*. With reference to the focused code *expressing discomfort towards hijab wearing women*, people often show their *being uncomfortable with Muslim outfits* (**Margo**) because it is *something unfamiliar so [it] makes people uncomfortable*. However, these attitudes are not just a matter of surprise. **Momar** reported that many Canadians are *showing being offended by the presence of Muslims*. These attitudes, according to **Margo**, explains indeed such Islamophobic remarks such as: *“You should not be allowed to wear” this here*. **Angel** reports that she was even *being told not supposed to wear hijab in Canada*.

Yeah, I use to have a friend who covers her whole face (burqa). She always shows her eyes. So, but she always wears, like colorful dresses and scarves. But she always gets negative comments. And I always can't stop... hear like discrimination just listening to that. One day, we were in the Bay center and then...uh... an Old man walked by and said that, “you are not allowed to wear this in Canada. If you want to wear it, go back home!” So, and then, like, I screamed. I couldn't hold it. I screamed like, “this is none of your business. She is free. She is in Canada. She can do whatever she wants. And then like, he was surprised that I replied to him, because usually, Muslim girls, they are afraid to show their, like, opinions and say it (**Angel**, one-on-one interview).

Gendered direct discrimination/Islamophobia is also prevalent in the community and internationally. Most respondents in this study reported either a direct experience or witnessing Islamophobia such as: *being screamed at because wearing a niqab at Walmart* (**Margo**); *shouting at Muslim women on the bus* (**Sam**); having heard about discrimination towards other Muslims (**Nour**, Muslim women focus group); *being told to go home or take off her hijab* (**Angel and Ara**); *being thrown slurs on the bus by a guy* (**Ara**); *being physically assaulted* (**Angel**); and her son *being scrutinize/ sniffed by dogs if wearing a beard* (**Belle**, in Muslim women focus group).

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Ambient Islamophobia against children is something **Belle** is hurting from as well, like many Muslim mothers have witnessed *having their children yelled at the swimming pool*

(Sparkle):

So, a friend of mine, she's visibly Muslim and she has two teenage daughters in the middle school ...she was telling me about them, that they go to Gordon head for swimming and this happened over there ... one of the girls wears hijab. The other one doesn't...and while she was there for a swim lesson, a guy started screaming and shouting on the girl who was wearing the hijab...and she was so scared that she locked herself in the change room. But still, he kept on going and they had to call the security and 911. And the girl obviously was very scared after that. So, and because it happened to the one who was wearing the hijab, I mean, I cannot basically never after hearing that... I would never allow my girls to wear hijab even if they would want to, because, if this is something that has been going on, I would never want them to face this kind of discrimination (**Sparkle**, Muslim women focus group).

It should be noted that Islamophobic behavior is not reported as being only found in adults.

The code *Children developing Islamophobia from adults* (**Belle**, one-on-one interview) illustrates how pervasive this phenomenon is in the community and society. Muslim parents are also *enduring Islamophobia through one's children experiences* (**Belle**).

... some of the naughty children, they would make a joke that they would come and they will say now (tauntingly) we know you are a Muslim, now you are going to say Allah-u-akbar and you'll blast our school. So, yeah then, she came home and she was upset and she told me yeah mom, some of the children, their attitude changed when they knew that I'm a Muslim; so they think that I'm going to blast the school (**Belle**, one-on-one interview).

- *Surviving heightened Islamophobia after terrorist attacks*

These references to terrorism by children are not to be taken lightly. As **Hamid** reported there are *exceptional experiences of women in hijab after major terrorist attacks* that continue to demonize Muslim women. Though *being Muslim shouldn't mean being responsible of other Muslims' wrongdoings*.

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So, Sam here. I actually disagree with, if someone says he's Muslim and he or she does something, I don't believe that I should be responsible to explain why the behavior is done in what way and what belief. I think it's me, you have to treat everyone as human. So, being a Muslim is something for you and not necessarily for responsibility to the society... (**Sam**, Muslim men focus group).

If **Sam**'s logic is denied, then should people also accuse all Christians/white people for being responsible of the Quebec mosque shooting and other killings of Muslim people worldwide, especially that they are mainly based on Islamophobia and hate? For **Bachar** for example, Muslims "were not expecting" *Quebec bombing*. However, because these attacks and travel bans against Muslims (in the USA), **Sammy** suggested *being conscious when traveling to USA because of profiling*. **Lemon**, in the Muslim women focus group, argued that there is a *risk (of) being equated to a terrorist as a Muslim women* (**Lemon**).

- *Discriminating Muslims in employment*

Many respondents report that Muslims are also discriminated against in employment because of their names, outfits, race, gender, country of origins and accent. For example, **Ara** reflected on her experiences of *being discriminated in employment because of hijab and height*:

And when they realize, when they see it's me ... it's someone who's wearing a hijab, who is short, who's kind of a little pet's person, you know, they don't believe that I have the capability of being leader of speaking out loud, of talking about something that's important, of having anything to say (**Mali**, Muslim women focus group).

Muslim students also reported *being overlooked for leadership opportunities in employment* (**Belle**); being discarded as capable of being a leader (**Ara**); *being banned from work in certain companies because US ban* (**Sam**); and *realizing white folks are preferred in leadership roles* (**Belle**). **Margo** insisted that there is an *impact of Muslim names when looking for a job*. **David** felt like he has *been discriminated against for employment because of [his] Arabic name*:

Ah, one of the things that I might, I want to say, it's negative... that, I feel that I experience is when applying for jobs. Maybe, people see my name, my Arabic

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name... I wouldn't say consciously this is a bad person but I think, like, I read about it. It can be just... unconscious thing (**David**, Muslim women focus group).

Sammy, another participant in the Muslim men's focus group, though that he is *getting less interviews because of [his] name*.

Well, I agree with Dawood that, you know, when you apply for jobs, it's, they actually look at your name and like, they will be like, ok he might be an Arab or something. We won't, maybe give him that opportunity because like, if like, white guy applies for, it's better we give it to him. That's how I feel as well, because like, I don't get as much as interviews. Also, on the resume like, if you have, like, an Arab or Middle Eastern like experience, they wouldn't take them into account as if you have worked here or your experiences here. So, there's discrimination, I think. (**Sammy**, Muslim men focus group).

In the university context, Muslim students reported how *discrimination in employment contradicts equity policies*. For example, **Belle**, in the Muslim women focus group, openly talked about how she *resentful against the institutions hiring policies*.

I feel like if (the institution) is so open and welcoming to international students, then there should be a conscious effort of hiring people who can deal with those others and not the white people. So, I have a strong issue with you (the institution) hiring policy (**Belle**, in Muslim women focus group).

However, as referred to above in reporting the diverse experiences of Muslim students and their diversity as pertaining to their gender, age, race, religious schools of thoughts, class, country of origins, there is also a need to acknowledge the unique experiences of Muslim converts, oftentimes white Canadians, with Islamophobia and the backlash from their own families and communities.

- *Resenting Muslim converts*

Muslim converts are being caught off guard by prejudice and discrimination (**Margo**) like every other Muslim student. **Margo**, who is 5th generation Canadian and white, reported about her conversion to Islam and her experiences of *being resented by own family because [she had] converted to Islam*.

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People don't like to hear that. I've been called betraying (my race). I've been called traitor because I'm a convert. Ummm, traitor. They like to call me a traitor, which is odd but... But not on campus, because it's important to, young people on campus, you can tell, they can understand more. They are exposed to different ideas. They are exposed to different people. It's not like you go downtown and you are walking into a tea room and there's some old British people. Their life experiences are different. They interpret you in different way (**Margo**, one-on-one interview).

Like **Margo**, **Lemon** also, a white woman converted to Islam, has been *getting backlash from family because [she] converted to Islam*; and reported *being yelled at by family members*:

It is very embarrassing. My cousin is quite, mmm, he is not very smart ...he's not very smart and he got rowdy, a drunken rowdy at some family events and he was saying: "get out the way, Muslims", bla bla bla ... You know, that kind of yelling in front of everybody and I'm just, dude, just sit down. But it's... I don't threaten people because they don't see me like... they don't it's... like it doesn't matter. So, it is interesting for me to see people's response (**Lemon**, Muslim women focus group).

4.4. Summary of Chapter 4

The chapter, Findings: Ambient Islamophobia, Its Processes and Properties, quantifies and categorizes the experiences of Muslim students with ambient Islamophobia. The analysis of participants testimonials led to the development of theoretical categories and the construction of a constructivist grounded theory grounded in the data, **enduring ambient Islamophobia** (Strauss and Glaser, 1967).

To realize this constructivist grounded theory, I first used, in my data analysis and theorizing, Glaser's (1978) advice to begin the finding chapter "with an overview of the theory in which the basic social problem and the basic social process and its core concepts are named and conceptuality identified" (quoted in Munhall, 2007, p. 259). In the second part of my analysis, I built on these basic social problem and basic social process to draw their relationship with the core concept or core category, **enduring ambient Islamophobia**.

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The core category has properties or sub-categories which I spent a great deal of time describing, analyzing, comparing and theorizing, with the goal of rendering my constructivist grounded theory dense and saturated. These properties or sub-categories illustrate my constructivist grounded theory. They tell a recurring story of the ambient Islamophobia Muslim students endure on campus and in the community. This ambient Islamophobia is grounded in pervasive processes such as: *stereotyping Muslim students on campus; segregating out Muslim students in the classroom; silencing Muslims in the curriculum and instruction; gendering Islamophobia; “tokenizing” Muslim students through the institution and its structures; rendering Muslim invisible in the systems; and targeting Muslims in the community.*

However, properties are also dimensionalized (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Therefore, an analysis of ambient Islamophobia is never complete without assessing the dimensions of its properties, or the context, conditions, range, intensity and variation in the pattern of behaviors and attitudes that describe and/or perpetuate the phenomenon of ambient Islamophobia. Chapter 5: Theory Integration: Dimensions and the Story of Ambient Islamophobia, attends to the contextualization of these dimensions in the overall theory integration pathway of my constructivist grounded theory.

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CHAPTER 5: Theory Integration: Ambient Islamophobia, Dimensions and Storyline

Chapter 5 Overview

This chapter is a continuation of the one which precedes it. As mentioned, Strauss & Corbin (1990) argue that the properties of the core category are also dimensionalized. Therefore, the analysis, theorizing and integration of the constructivist grounded theory, **enduring ambient Islamophobia**, in my study, will only be complete with further analysis, theorizing and the incorporation of the dimensions of the properties of the core category.

In this chapter, I first analyze and theorize the categories and sub-categories that define the ‘dimensionalized’ characteristics of the properties (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) of my constructivist grounded theory core category. I divide the ‘dimension’ section into two parts: the context in which ambient Islamophobia occurs; and the range, intensity and variation in the pattern of behaviors and attitudes that describe or/ and perpetuate this phenomenon (Birks & Mills, 2011) of ambient Islamophobia. Secondly, building on the analysis of the dimensionalized properties of the core category, I develop, using the storyline technique, a conceptual relationship between the different theoretical categories from the data, with the goal of integrating my overall constructivist grounded theory. Finally, I conclude with a summary of key concepts developed throughout this chapter.

5.1. Dimensions of the Properties of the Core Category, Enduring Ambient Islamophobia

The dimensions of the core category refer to the conditions/context under which its properties operate (Birks & Mills, 2011). Birks & Mills (2011) argue that these “properties of categories and sub-categories should be considered in term of their dimensions or the range of variance that the property demonstrates” (p. 98). They add that the dimensions of a property define both the contexts where ambient Islamophobia occurs; and the range, intensity and variation in the pattern of behaviors and attitudes that describe and/or perpetuate the phenomenon of ambient Islamophobia.

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Figure 13: *Core Category, its Properties and their Dimensions* illustrates the overall dimensions (in red ink, boxed for those dimensions under the context section and plain text (without box) for those dimensions deriving from theoretical categories and sub-categories).

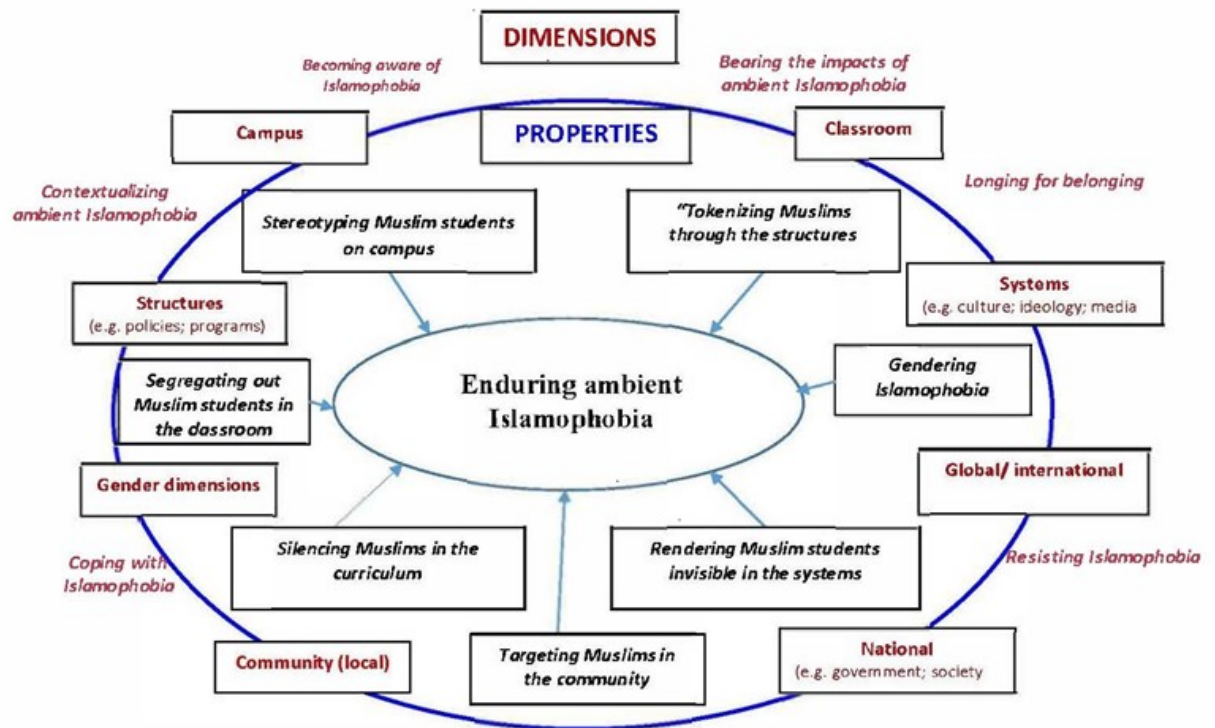


Figure 13: Core category, its properties and their dimensions

5.1.1. The Contexts Where Ambient Islamophobia Occurs

The socio-cultural, political, and physical contexts of ambient Islamophobia include the campus, the classroom, the curriculum, the instruction, the structures of the institution (e.g. services, programs, policies), the community, the national and global cultures, attitudes and behaviors, and the ideologies and worldviews of both the perpetrators of discrimination and the Muslim students (see the red ink boxed text in Figure 1 above). As many respondents reported in this study, Ambient Islamophobia also targets Muslim students' race, ethnic, gender, cultural, social, and religious

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identities. For example, **Mali**, a female Muslim student from Saudi Arabia, spoke strongly about Islamophobia as it impacted her religious identity, ethnicity/race and gender. **Mali** reported that she was attacked and yelled at, because of her hijab, and such experiences happened twice, on the bus and in her apartment building:

Yeah, but as I said, before, these kinds of prejudices relate to mostly my background, because I'm Saudi; most of the time, and then, there's, like sometimes, because I'm a Muslim.... Like... what happened to me at my building and at the bus stop (**Mali**, one-on-one interview).

The context of ambient Islamophobia also includes the spaces Muslim students attend school. In these spaces, the perpetrators of Islamophobia are part of the extended network of the Muslim students, like peers, faculty, TAs, sessional instructors, and community members.

So, for me, the relationship I have with administration... or whatever the faculty, is when receiving a lecture. Typically, so, language is of utmost importance here. So, I think language is probably the number one biggest, hmm, marker of prejudice that you are going to notice (**Margo**, one-on-one interview).

The kinds of prejudice Muslim students notice is ultimately patterned in the social behaviors and attitudes of their perpetrators.

5.1.2. Range, Intensity and Variation in the Pattern of Behaviors and Attitudes that Describe and/or Perpetuate the Phenomenon of Ambient Islamophobia

The range, intensity and variation in the pattern of behaviors and attitudes that describe and/or perpetuate the phenomenon of ambient Islamophobia (Birks & Mills, 2011) are embedded in six processes (moment, ideology and culture, impact, belonging, coping with and resisting to) or sub-categories (see red ink plain text (without box) in Figure 1 above) which define the dimensions of ambient Islamophobia as experienced by Muslim students: *becoming aware of Islamophobia; contextualizing ambient Islamophobia within ideologies; bearing the impacts of ambient Islamophobia; longing for belonging; to coping with Islamophobia; or resisting Islamophobia.*

These six sub-categories can also be organized into four themes:

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- i. Contextualizing ambient Islamophobia:
 - Becoming aware of Islamophobia
 - Contextualizing ambient Islamophobia
- ii. Longing for belonging.
- iii. Bearing the impacts of ambient Islamophobia
- iv. Countering ambient Islamophobia:
 - Coping with Islamophobia
 - Resisting Islamophobia

In the next sections, I provide an in-depth analysis and theorizing of these six dimensions or sub-categories of the core category, **enduring ambient Islamophobia**, as illustrated in Figure 1 above.

(a) Becoming aware of ambient Islamophobia

Muslim students reported undergoing different stages in *becoming aware of ambient Islamophobia* and how it impacts their social well-being and academic success. It is founded on four stages illustrated by the following four focused codes (see figure 14). These focused codes describe the socio-cultural, political, environmental, and ideological dimensions of the category, *becoming aware of ambient Islamophobia: developing awareness of social cues; distinguishing Islamophobia from other discriminations; discerning Islamophobia from other forms of interactions; and navigating the subtleness of Islamophobia.*

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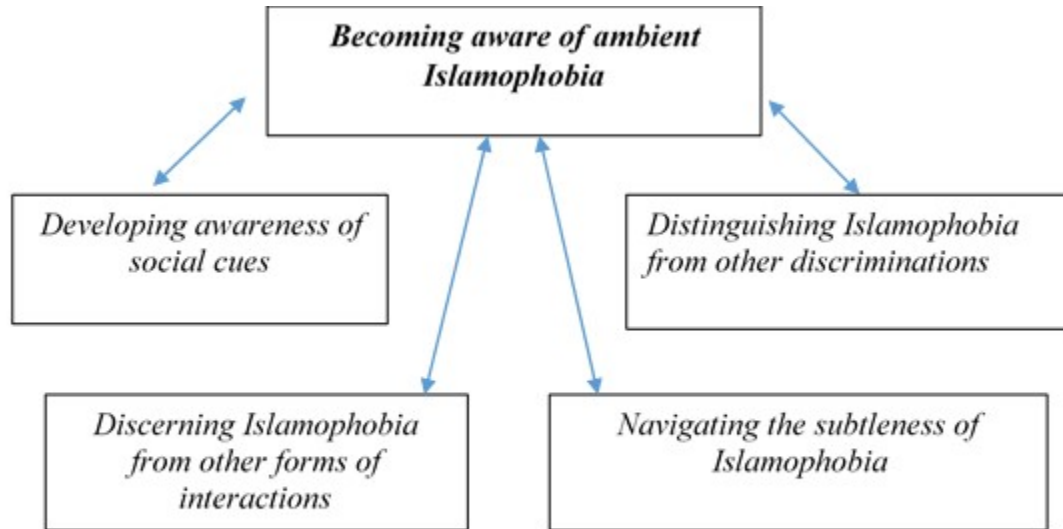


Figure 14: Category: Becoming aware of ambient Islamophobia

- *Developing awareness of social cues*

This focused code, *developing awareness*, was developed based on a different code, *developing understanding of the meaning of social cues and hints*, which was first referred to in the Muslim women focus group. Understanding is a process and occurs in a context where an individual comes to notice differences in things, attitudes and behaviors, and is then able to assess and compare these differences to their previous or current knowledge of what things used to be, ought to be or should not be like. **Belle** described how she became aware of the meaning of social cues and hints and learned to recognize prejudice and discrimination.

And in the beginning, I even didn't realize that there was some discrimination under the tones of racial profiling or discriminatory behavior. But later, I came to realize that... you... people gave you certain cues and hints and you have to learn how to read those...and...So, now I'm more conscious probably with experience I have learned where to locate the discriminatory behavior (**Belle**, Muslim women focus group).

For **Belle**, developing awareness is gaining consciousness about the discriminatory behavior/attitude. She added that it is with experience that she has come to know where to locate this behavior/attitude in people discriminating against her as a Muslim woman.

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Ara, another participant in the Muslim women focus group, added that Islamophobia, at the beginning, feels normal for many Muslim students:

Sometimes, you can feel the undertones of the discrimination and I came to...uh...I came to feel that after spending some time in UVic. Like, initial six seven months, I thought this was the norm, right? But later when I started comparing, started seeing how people behave with fellow white Canadians and how they behave with me, I could detect the hints of the difference (**Ara**, Muslim women focus group).

Both **Belle** and **Ara**, talked about the time it took before they recognized the discrimination. They also realized this discrimination by comparing previous experiences against how they are been treated currently. **Belle**'s and **Ara**'s statements beg therefore the question of whether Muslim students are really looking to find discrimination and Islamophobia in other people's behaviors/attitudes towards them or whether the social clues and hints are so obvious that with time, they can't ignore them? Is it also because these clues and hints contradict their expectations of how they wanted to be treated at UVic, in Victoria, and by extension, in Canada?

As will be discussed later under the category, *longing for belonging*, the answer to these questions can be looked for in the narrative of how Canada, Canadian 'multiculturalism' and Canadians are perceived in the World at large. Some respondents in the study, like **Momar**, define belonging and integration, through the following two in-vivo codes: "*Academic success means having supportive peers around you*" and social "*well-being is achieved when developed healthy good relationship with people*" (**Momar**, one-on-one interview). Other students, like **Brian**, equate belonging to Muslim students "needing trust" of their peers, the institutions, the employees, and the society at large.

Therefore, the code *developing understanding the meaning of social cues and hints* defines a process that goes against Muslim students' expectations of Canada and of belonging. According

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to **Ara**, some of these expectations about Canada also fall into the category of mythology, such as how Canada is different from USA and other European countries when it comes to Islamophobia:

I remember when everything happened in Canada like with mosque burning down and the shooting and everything. My mom was terrified and she wanted me to stay home and stop going out past five and those kinds of things and I was terrified. I mean you know these are these are actions I never expected to happen especially in a place like Canada because for some reason you know I have I would still had this idea even if I have been here for two years that Canada was this little you know this little bubble and nothing really bad happens in Canada. People might say a bad word or whatever but people don't have that hatred in Canada like do everywhere else in the world (**Ara**, Muslim women focus group).

Ara also recognizes that most Muslim students are enough aware to distinguish Islamophobia from other forms of discrimination such as racism.

- *Distinguishing Islamophobia from other forms of discriminations*

Throughout this study, Muslim students have insisted on their ability to recognize, categorize and distinguish Islamophobia from other forms of discrimination. The codes that compose this focused code, include, among others, the following: *distinguishing Islamophobia from other discriminations*, there are: *distinguishing nature of discrimination based on words used* (**Ara**, Muslim women focus group); *being privy to other people's negative experiences* (**Dawood**, Muslim men focus group); *"sometimes you feel that from peoples' facial expressions they don't like you"* (**Angel**, one-on-one interview); *they have some ideas in their minds about me* (**Angel**, one-on-one interview); *being confused about which identity she is being discriminated against* (**Ara**, Muslim women focus group). In addition, **Angel** distinguishes facial expressions as a descriptor of rejection and exclusion of others because they are Muslim:

... Sometimes, like it's not very obvious, and maybe, I could be like very picky at this... and sometimes, you feel that from peoples' facial expressions, they don't like you or they feel like uncomfortable about you.... (**Angel**, one-on-one interview).

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However, *becoming aware of ambient Islamophobia* includes more than just distinguishing facial expressions and other attitudes and behaviors of non-Muslims. It is also discerning ambient Islamophobia which involves other abilities such as hearing and understanding the discriminatory words, idioms and silences. For **Margo**, it is also being able to properly speak and understand English which is a key entry point in *discerning Islamophobia from other forms of interactions*.

Discerning indeed involves being able to see, recognize, understand, decide or make careful judgment about something. For example, some Muslim students reported that “*sometimes you can feel the undertones of the discrimination*”. They associated these with how they have come to *noticing how they’ve been treated differently as time goes on* (**Belle**, one-on-one interview). According to **Cupcake**, unless Muslim students consciously choose to *notic[e] only obvious discrimination*, ambient Islamophobia is unavoidable, since *discrimination in Canada is very subtle*.

The thing with discrimination in Canada is, it's very subtle like it's so hard to see any type of discrimination...like you got to wonder if it's even there sometimes. It's really hard to see it... (**Cupcake**, Muslim women focus group)

However, some Muslim students may just miss the point as they may be unable to speak and understand English as **Margo** pointed out earlier with the code *discerning Islamophobia is dependent on understanding English*:

... One of my friends, she wears the abaya. She is a Saudi, dark dress, she covers her face, and everything black. And she told me, when we told her: I am sure no one is attacking you on the street? She said, “no, no-one, I usually go back and forth to school, no one said anything to me”. Because she does not know English. And after three months, when she mastered the English, at some point, she knows, she started to hear bad words people are telling her on the street. So, she said, “oh! No wonder you asked me”. I said, yeah, I know. Because I myself, I look modernized, sometimes I get some discrimination and what about you. I was pretty sure something happening with you. Because of language barrier, she was not understanding what they were saying (**Bodour**, one-on-one interview).

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Besides the ability to develop awareness of the social clues of Islamophobia, of being able to distinguish it, discern it beyond the language barriers, another aspect of becoming aware of Islamophobia is being able to navigate its subtleness.

- *Navigating the Subtleness of Islamophobia*

According to **Belle**, discrimination, and particularly Islamophobia, is not always obvious and therefore demands skills to navigate its subtleness:

It's never it's never open. It's always like subtle and it's there but not all the time (**Belle**, Muslim women focus group).

Some of the codes that describe this focused code are: *discrimination is not obvious but subtle and temporal* (**Belle**, Muslim women focus group); *“positive experiences can blind from noticing negative ones* (**Bodour**, one-on-one interview); *those kind of events showed me that Islamophobia can occur in Canada* (**Ara**, Muslim women focus group); *being exposed to the real racism in Canada* (**Bodour**, one-on-one interview). The following memo summarizes the key points from my analysis and theorizing of the category, *becoming aware of Islamophobia* and how the *subtle (nature of) discrimination prevents people from intervening in situations of Islamophobia*; and help instead to normalize it. This subtle nature of Islamophobia can also impact Muslim students from *becoming aware of Islamophobia* and for mastering skills *to distinguish, discern, and navigate it*.

In conclusion, as a site of conversation with myself, I now turn to the following memo to summarize my thoughts and reflections on this category, *becoming aware of Ambient Islamophobia*.

| |
|-------------|
| Memo |
|-------------|

Subtle discrimination prevents people from intervening in situations of Islamophobia

This code, *subtle discrimination prevents people from intervening in situations of Islamophobia*, from the Muslim women focus group, is unique as it not only points to the pervasive nature of Islamophobia as sometimes hidden in ‘subtle prejudice/discrimination’ and the so-called ‘Canadian correctness’, but it also describes how this subtleness can prevent people from intervening to stop discrimination against Muslim students. **Ara** argues that

I feel like if people were more kind of openly discriminatory then you would have a lot more people kind of coming to their aid saying that this is wrong (**Ara**, Muslim women focus group).

She adds that such “*subtle discrimination prevents people from intervening in situations of Islamophobia*”, because people may think that no harm has been done. The subtleness of Islamophobia and other forms of discrimination, also confuse and prevent Muslim students from ‘understanding the social cues and hints’ or of developing ‘awareness of Islamophobia’ in their social and academic interactions. This code, *subtle discrimination prevents people from intervening in situations of Islamophobia*, I will therefore conclude, definitely shines a different light on the subtleness of Islamophobic attitudes, behaviors against Muslim students and also on how they go about navigating the subtleness of Islamophobia in their daily interactions on campus and in the community.

As **Ara**, **Bodour**, and many other participants in this study argued, the difficulty with subtle discrimination is that it can be assumed ‘normal’ by Muslim students and as just ‘nuisances’ embedded in the Canadian culture. In such a cultural context, **Cupcake** recognized, “*people don’t practice discrimination openly*”, but they still discriminate in ways that “normalize discriminating remarks” (**Ara**). **Ara** adds:

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I would comment that I do feel as though people, I guess, don't make as big as a spectacle in discriminating people but I feel as though, because the subtle remarks have become so normalized because they kinda of just slip under and actually, I feel like, it makes a bigger effect (**Ara**, Muslim women focus group).

(b) Contextualizing ambient Islamophobia through ideologies

The myth of there being a so-called 'Muslim world' is one of the foundations of Orientalism. Said (1978) argues that "one ought never to assume that the structure of Orientalism is nothing more than a structure of lies or of myths which were the truth about them to be told, would simply blow away" (p. 14). Or, as **Margo** aptly noted, "there is an amazing myth about the Muslim world that is very current in the Western world" (**Margo**, one-on-one interview).

The falsity of the myth of the Muslim world leads to the need for Muslim students to contextualize/put into context its resultant product, ambient Islamophobia. In my study, the category *contextualizing ambient Islamophobia* is composed of the following focused codes as shown in Figure 15: Category: Contextualizing ambient Islamophobia. Here, contextualizing ambient Islamophobia also include deconstructing the Eurocentric ideologies prevalent in the curriculum and instruction as previously argued by Muslim students; the media and its misrepresentation of Muslims and Islam; the cultural and political normalization of Islamophobia; the resistance of certain academic to recognize various intersections to Islamophobia such as race; and the rendering invisible of the Muslim diversity within the multicultural discourse of Islam and Muslims in Canada. The focused codes that illustrate this category include *imposing Eurocentric ideologies on Muslim students; misrepresenting Muslims in the media; intersectionality; violence against Muslims; countering the 'fallacies' of the Canadian multiculturalism ideologies; and the residence length in Canada.*

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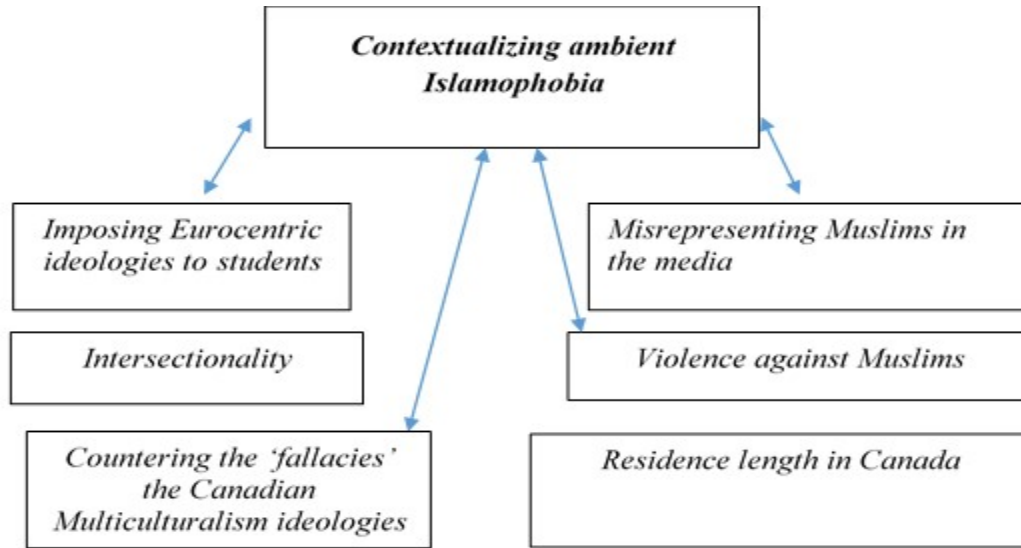


Figure 15: Category: Becoming aware of ambient Islamophobia

- *Imposing Eurocentric and Orientalist views on Muslim students*

According to Hobson (2012), Eurocentrism is a worldview centered on Western civilization. The recognition of this worldview became predominant in the 1990s in the context of decolonization politics and development discourses that constructed a so-called ‘Third World’ in dire need of the humanistic charity of a ‘First World,’ comprising the imperialist industrialised Western countries. Edward Said (1978) describes Orientalism, as the West’s patronizing representations of “The East” or the people and cultures from the Middle East, Asia, and North Africa. Said argues that Orientalism is inextricably tied to Western imperialist societies who view themselves as superior to the rest. The focused code, *imposing Eurocentric and orientalist views on Muslim students* is based on these views of superiority.

This focused code comprises the following codes which describe Muslim students’ experiences of Eurocentrism and Orientalism in class, in the curriculum and instruction, in society, the culture, the media and worldwide. **Mohamed** described this state of affairs earlier, where Muslim students endure *xenophobic associations* by faculty; are forced into *essentializing*

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Eurocentric views; and are *compelled to ground ideas in Eurocentric views* in order to satisfy faculty. He added that, like many other students, Muslim students have been *noticing a Eurocentric environment* normalized in class; the *forcing [of] atheistic views on (them and) others*. Overall, Mohamed argued that Muslim students are compelled to *living in a Eurocentric environment*. In such environments, **Momar**, another respondent, reports that Muslim students have *to endure teaching of Islam in ‘vague and general terms’ (as early as) in social studies classes [in public school]*. In situations where the university needs to invite a Muslim scholar, **Mohamed** argued that, to reinforce this ‘vague and general terms’ pedagogy, there was recruiting and *preferring ‘moderate’ scholars’ voices in Western media and conferences is often as the policy*.

According to **Bodour**, other dimensions of ambient Islamophobia rooted in Eurocentric and Orientalist views, include *constantly undergoing stereotyping of Muslim men as abusers of their women; the prioritizing Christian holidays over others (Mohamed)*; and, as **Margo**, argued, the fact that most non-Muslims often *assume(d) that if you are covered, you are some religious minority*:

I was going to say... so, definitely, the power relations needs to be encouraged but also, ahh, I find like, just in general conversation that there's this attitude that, you know... the West is more progressive and we've liberated from our religious past and there's this, if I can say, linear scale, right? Who is more progressive versus who is in the darker ages. And they view that religious people or minorities or people who, you know, do traditional jobs that kind of thing... And that, I think you would agree...like are a societal problem. This is way bigger than the university (**Margo**, one-on-one interview).

As with *rendering Muslim students invisible*, Muslim students reported that the classroom, the curriculum, and instruction, are structured to *impose (on them) Eurocentric and orientalist views*, by way of silencing their voices, and ‘othering’ and reinforcing stereotypes about Muslims. Muslim students argued that these behaviors are more pervasive in the current climate, unrelenting media campaigns, and in the wake of growing white supremacist and white nationalists groups worldwide.

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- *Misrepresenting Muslims in the media and on social media*

The misrepresentation of Muslims in the media is a recurring theme in most studies on Islamophobia. Some of the codes that composed this focused code, include: *our reputation was way better than now (media destroyed it)* (**Sammy**, Muslim men focus group). **Sammy** added that the media contributes to *promoting Islamophobia*. For **David** (Muslim men focus group), the *media is playing a big major part in promoting Islamophobia (MFG) and contributes to the good or bad image of groups*. **Angel** and **Momar** agreed that *social media and the media represents Islam negatively*. **Sammy**, an engineering student, originally from Morocco, from the Muslim men focus group, reported:

Again, our reputation was way better than now because like if you look at the time back, for example, a white guy or girl meets a Muslim. They would be like, oh, what is Islam? They don't know anything about it. They will go online and search what is Islam. For now, when you're Muslim, oh you're Muslim? Ok. and.... ISIS people or something, you know. So, the media is playing a huge role just want to destroy us so if we want to control the media, it needs a whole research to do so (**Sammy**, Muslim men focus group).

According to most respondents, the media and social media misrepresentation contribute to *demonizing Muslims in general to prospective employers (Sammy)*. According to **Bachar**, the *media stereotypes impact Muslims' freedom (Bachar)* to the point where Muslim students are afraid to wear a traditional outfit, (as) *media portrays [them] as terrorist (Sam, Muslim men focus group)*. Since *appearance plays a huge role again from media*, according to **Sammy**, wearing traditional clothing can trigger profiling and stereotyping. Because of this, **Bachar** recognized that many Muslim students elect to *hiding their identity because of media stereotypes of Muslims*.

As a Muslim, as you say, some Muslim because of the media, they hide they are [afraid] (**Bachar**, one-on-one interview).

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Mho, originally from Syria and a participant in the Muslim men focus group, argued that the media has a double standard, especially in cases of terrorist attacks: *media's portrayal of Muslims as terrorists and whites as suffering of mental health*. Such a double standard, **David**, argued, derives from *generalization of Muslims based on one person's misdeeds*. The impacts of the media can have dire consequences for the whole Muslim communities. **Angel**, in a one-on-one interview, argued that *the media and social media don't show the actual Islam, the real*.

In the case of this issue, some Muslim students have argued for different approaches to counter academia and media's misrepresentation and mischaracterisation of Islam and Muslims in the media. The following in-vivo code, *I wish the media [could] just be neutral, be objective* (**Bodour**), illustrates a common expectation from Muslim students for a media that is objective and neutral. **David**, from the Muslim men focus group, wished that the Muslim communities could also *have a Muslim leader as role model (who) can change media perceptions* and counter the culture of misrepresentation and mischaracterization of Islam and Muslims.

- *Countering the 'fallacies' of the Canadian multiculturalism ideologies*

The culture of misrepresentation and mischaracterization of Islam and Muslims in the media is part of the wider Canadian multiculturalism narrative, which as pointed out earlier, contributes to 'normalizing Islamophobia within a context where "people don't practice discrimination openly" (**Cupcake**) and therefore, the *subtle (nature of) discrimination prevents people from intervening in situations of Islamophobia* (**Ara**). **Ara** also wondered about the so-called "Canadian political correctness' mindset and whether it has an impact on Islamophobia or other forms of discrimination.

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Canadian culture is kind of respectful, you don't want to step on anybody's toes and part of that is also kind of like you don't end up asking the questions that need to be asked (**Ara**, Muslim women focus group).

She argued that *political correctness stifles the real issues*. **Bodour** added that because of political correctness, “they will act like you fit in, but you are not one them,” as was illustrated in the conversation with her supervisor where she was made to feel like she was different than “them” (i.e. other Muslims) while still being categorized with them.

Bodour recognized that the reason she doesn't “get that much of direct prejudice and discrimination (is) because the way I look now, because I am a modernized Muslim”. This concept of the “modernized Muslim” however, contradicts the concept of ‘moderate Muslim’ in both Mohamed's and Bachar's, her peer's, opinions. The ‘moderate Muslim’ is often the Muslim that is acceptable and palatable by the institutions while the ‘modernized Muslim’ is the one that doesn't stand out too much and is a Muslim who tries to *blend in*, at best to go unnoticed. Both the ‘moderate Muslim’ and the ‘modernized Muslim’ are highly sought by the Eurocentric Multicultural culture which has at its foundation Orientalism and ‘political correctness’. Such a culture endeavors to ‘normalize’ whiteness to which other cultures are a ‘visible minority’.

However, such a contextualization of multiculturalism also creates a whole host of structural issues that stand in sharp contradiction with the fact that Canada *want(s) to maintain a secular face* (**Belle**, one-on-one interview). According to **Margo**, these contradictions are also rooted in the *issues of inter/ cross-cultural communication in classroom interactions* and the ways Muslim students and other newcomers to Canada to be *assuming [that] multiculturalism means people are more accepting of difference*. However, lived experience leaves Muslim students confused and disenchanted. **Bodour** reported an encounter on the bus and what she was told about multiculturalism and how Canadians live it:

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We start chatting and I told him I am doing my research about Saudi students who are studying abroad, blabla...then he said, "What the things you come up with so far?". I said, well, I did my interviews and all my participants, they said they chose Canada because it is a peaceful country and people are educated, multicultural. He said: "no, no, that's totally wrong. People here are very racist but they are not showing it. They are afraid because there is law". I was looking at him, shocked. He said, "no, don't be fooled by that, when people smile at your face and being nice to you, because deep inside, they have something else, and they are afraid to show it because of the law" (**Bodour**, one-on-one interview)

However, these kinds of beliefs are mutually -reinforcing pair of phenomena because white supremacists also argue that Muslims see non-Muslims with suspicion and disdain. **Bachar**, a male respondent in a one-on-one interview, added that often, the belief that Canada's multiculturalism sets it apart from other countries helps minimize if not 'normalize' Islamophobic behaviors and attitudes in the public. He also reported his *friend's experiences of racism in other places* which, in comparison, makes Canada seem like a safe haven:

People are more racist in Italy from the experience... my discussion with my friends who live over there sometime. What they face in the bus is not what we are facing here in Canada to be truthful (**Bachar**, one-on-one interview).

However, this kind of attitude and belief, described by this kind of code, *friend's experiences of racism in other places*, comparing discrimination between two countries or places, has enduring consequences on the ways Muslims students' respond or react to Islamophobia. I discuss this issue in more detail under the category *coping with ambient Islamophobia* where Muslim students' attitudes and behaviors of minimizing and *snubbing* prejudice as a *countering mechanism*. **Sparkle** reported, from the Muslim women focus group, that despite these differences in experiencing Islamophobia globally, being a visible minority (and a Muslim student), amounts to *being seen as the 'other'* and *being spoken differently because of race*:

Because they see us as the 'other'. They're not comfortable in the same way... but not every time... I mean not everybody is like that but I have noticed this many time... I have noticed at different places, like Mac's and, when you on the tail... if the person right in front of you is a white person, there's a visible difference how they communicate with that person and then with you... I've noticed this many time, although even though we do have a smile on

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our face, we do try to be friendly, but there definitely is a barrier (**Sparkle**, Muslim women focus group).

Muslim students argued that these barriers and uneasiness towards Muslims in general and Muslim students in particular, amount to *fearing Muslims in general* because of their reduction into statuses of ‘visible minorities’, ‘newcomers’, ‘international students’ and so on. **Belle** for example, argued that this fear also translates into mistrust or distrust and profiling. She *came to know that the government watches Muslim chat rooms and discussion places* and that the *whole community [is] constantly under scrutiny*.

Before we used to go freely to the mosque whenever we felt like it, now we are careful not going to masjid you never know who is keeping a watch who’s coming, who’s going and then we are having some friendly discussion on the social media and we came to know that the government watches the Muslim chat rooms and discussion places and then I asked my children not to be part of any faith discussion or any faith community because we don’t want to get into any trouble (**Belle**, in one-on-one interview).

- *Intersectionality*

Though Crenshaw (1994) originated the concept of intersectionality to focus primarily on race and gender, “today, intersectionality encompasses more than just the intersections of race and gender. It’s now widely used to illustrate the interplay between *any* kinds of discrimination, whether it’s based on gender, race, age, class, socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability, gender or sexual identity, religion, or ethnicity” (IWDA, 2018, p. 1). In my study, Muslim students argue that ambient Islamophobia targets various intersections of their identities. Taras (2011) acknowledges the implications of intersectionality in Islamophobia, as it “bundles religious, ethnic and cultural prejudices together even though a narrow definition of the term flags religion as playing the central part” (p. 417).

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In my study, the focused code *intersectionality* is illustrated by various codes. These are based on such identities as regional origins: *associating Muslims to Middle Eastern people* (**Margo**), *“being stereotyped because of place of origin”* (**Hamid**); race: *being discriminated in co-op hiring as black* (**Bachar**), *“not being trusted as Black by co-op managers”* (**Bachar**), *being discriminated by landlords for being Black* (**Bachar**), *struggling to distinguish discrimination based on race or religions* (**Bachar**), *struggling to differentiate between racism and Islamophobia* (**Bachar**), *being Black* (**Momar**), *“because of the colour of my skin”* (**Momar**), *race discrimination can override religious discrimination for Black males*; or on both the intersections of religion and race as **Cupcake** illustrated in this quote:

I am Muslim and I am also Black. Right? People always forget about us Black Muslims. We are kind of in the space where, like, Muslim is one type, maybe Arab or South Asian; Black people are just non-Muslims. So, it's like maybe my identity as a Black Muslim is a little bit, it's different with other Muslims. That's why I kinda have a problem, but I don't know how those two things at same time, affect me. I feel like, for me, it's more like of a hijab thing... (**Cupcake**, Muslim women focus group).

Race prompting religion is a code that also affects intersectionality. According to **Sam** from the Muslim men's focus group, Muslim students are *being discriminated against based on other factors* (such color, darker skin, Muslim, Arab). **Belle** (in a one-on-one interview) reported her experiences of discrimination *based on one's difference* such as cultural outfit. **Momar** reported *being portrayed based on [their] outfit* to the extent that, as a Muslim person, one sometimes starts *doubting if (whether) you belong here (and just) because of [an] outfit*. **Margo** concurred that as a Muslim, one always *“will be prejudiced if you wear hijab and have an accent”*. For **Hamid**, who just came from another region of Canada, he has experienced *being yelled at because of his 'accent and appearance'*. Muslim students also reported being targeted because of the intersection of age (**Bachar**, **Margo**, **Bodour**).

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Intersectionality also encompasses the issues of *power and privilege relations in the classroom* (**Margo**), often reinforced by Eurocentric views of superiority. These views and attitudes, **Margo** argued, often *essentialize Western perspectives and cultures at the expense of other cultures*. According to **Bachar**, there is a direct relationship between intersectionality and Islamophobia, as Muslim students struggle with identity crisis:

Sometimes, we confuse with being black and being Muslim. Yeah, someone might maybe hate you because you wear the Muslim dress, but you don't know it maybe because you... are black. We are facing two different problems, but actually they look like the same. So, we don't understand why it is (the case). Yeah, actually, maybe it is the marginalization of blacks or it is racism, or something else, and it is less observable here in Canada as compared to Italy (**Bachar**, one-on-one interview).

Overall, this demonstrates the importance of intersectionality in contextualizing ambient Islamophobia and those ideologies which help entrench it in the socio-cultural and political attitudes and behaviors of most non-Muslims. The ideologies, such as the discourse of multiculturalism and 'political correctness' can also attempt to minimize it, therefore *preventing people from intervening in situations of Islamophobia* (**Ara**, Muslim women focus group). It should be noted that, it was reported as not being easy to ignore or misunderstand Islamophobia in such contexts, unless one's length of time spent in Canada was shorter. This had an impact on Muslim students' understanding of the nature of Islamophobia, be it subtle or direct.

- *Residency status*

The length of time spent in Canada contributes to Muslim students' *becoming aware of Islamophobia and understanding of the meaning of social clues and hints*. Being new to Canada contributes to *being less informed (of Islamophobia) because being new on campus* (**Bachar**) means having less exposure to it. **Mho** from the Muslim men focus group, recognized that because he just *came recently as a refugee*, he doesn't always understand the social clues and hints that will help him discern Islamophobia.

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Yeah, I will tell you, for example, I'm from Syria. I came recently as a refugee so as I know many Syrians, Syrian refugees, they need more education to, you know, it's difficult for them to live in Canada. It's different culture. So, for this reason, we need more education (**Mho**, Muslim men focus group).

However, the inverse of this phenomenon is that *being born and raised in Canada* does shelter Muslim students like **Momar** from some Islamophobia and other discrimination based on race or cultural outfits. At the same time, for people like **Bodour** who *came to Canada in 2011* or **David** (from the Muslim men focus group) who reported, "*I've been here for more than a few years,*" the length of residency in Canada did not shelter them from Islamophobia and discrimination.

Overall, Islamophobia is entrenched in the Eurocentric and Orientalist ideologies, views and culture. In the classroom and the instruction, it is often about *imposing Eurocentric and Orientalist views on Muslim students*, under the guise of academic freedom. In the community, it is justified based on liberal ideologies of freedom of speech, media, multiculturalism ideals and political correctness attitudes and behaviors, all of which participate directly in condoning structural violence and demonizing Muslims and Islam. Such a state of things is however in sharp contradiction with what Muslims students are really hoping and expecting to find in Canada and on the university campus: belonging.

(c) Longing for belonging

The global image of Canadian multiculturalism and Canada's particularism compared to other Western nations are the reasons why most foreign Muslim students choose to come to the country, as **Bodour** reported from her M.A research project. This reputation sets Canada as a welcoming and inclusive society, where Muslim students expect to belong and be accepted regardless of their salient differences of race, ethnic, gender, cultural, social, class, and religious identities. The quote

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below, from **Mali**, a hijab wearing woman, illustrate the power of the myth in the fact that Muslim students, regardless of the prejudice and discriminatory attitudes of some, in Canada, still view this country as one of the best compared to others – something seen above in **Bachar**'s friend's experiences in Italy as compared to Canada:

many people here are nice and really well-educated. Like, even when I go to a restaurant or something and I ordered anything, they would say: Oh, it contains pork and you don't want that, you know? Like many people told me, that something contains alcohol, they would tell me, even if I didn't say that like I don't drink or I don't eat (**Mali**, one-on-one interview).

Most interview respondents recognized this 'nice' side of some Canadians. In choosing to study in Canada, Muslim students therefore expect that all Canadian people have this 'personal' or 'cultural trait'. The following focused codes summarize this sub-category, *longing to belong* (see figure 16): *expecting Canada to be a beacon of safety for Muslims; striving to belong; being trusted; volunteering as a way to belong.*

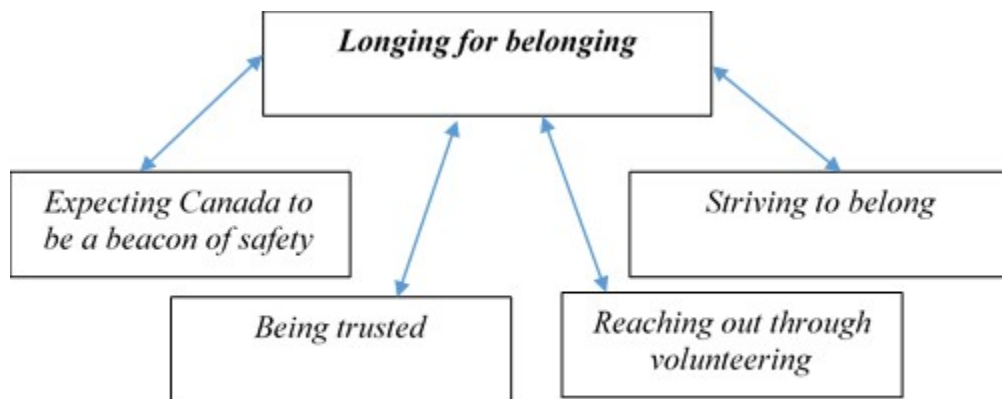


Figure 16: Category: Longing for belonging

- *Expecting Canada to be a beacon of safety for Muslims*

Muslim students like **Angel**, reported that they were *having a purpose in coming to Canada*. She was *believing Canada is a country with rule of law*. For **Ara**, when coming to Canada, she was

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expecting Canada to be a beacon of safety for Muslims, until she witnessed the Quebec City mosque shooting in January 29, 2017.

Another code that clearly illustrates this focused code, *expecting Canada to be a beacon of safety for Muslims*, is the in-vivo code “*the reason I came to here is because of the freedom of religion, freedom of everything*” (**Sam**):

I think, at least for me, the reason I came to here is because of the freedom of religion, freedom of everything. Growing up, that was what always the Western world projected to us: is that you have rights, you have freedoms, unlike where we live...there's nothing: no freedoms of any sorts! When I come to here, I came for that reason. I don't want to be restricted on freedoms that other Canadians have... (**Sam**, Muslim men focus group).

However, Muslim students like **Sam** or **Angel** were not totally blindsided by these expectations as they later were able to discern Islamophobia in Canada. **Angel** for example, acknowledged that while she expected Canada to be a country of law and welcome, she was also *hearing negative stereotypes of Westerners back home* in Saudi Arabia. Like **Belle** said, she also realized like many other Muslim students that “*though Canada is not USA, Canada is not Canada anymore*” (**Belle**). However, most Muslim students like **Ara** “*didn't expect personal and character assassination*”; instead they were *expecting younger generation to be less prejudiced*; or to experience less discrimination compare to their previous experiences: “*expecting them to just think Muslim terrorists kind of things,*” and this was based on the fact that she was *expecting to be stigmatized because of prior experiences* and as *people always assume the worst from her*. For **Angel**, these expectations of being discriminated were based on her *family's experiences of prejudice and discrimination*, based on height, where her father was very short like herself.

However, many Muslim students didn't expect Islamophobia in Canada or at least at this extent. **Sparkle** for example, was shocked, as she believed that “*in the academic settings people don't really do that openly*”:

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I think in the academic settings people don't really do that (Islamophobia) openly; but outside, probably there would be many incidents and people have quoted them but I've never seen it happening to myself since I have been in Canada (**Sparkle**, Muslim women focus group).

Muslim students expect Canada to be a lot of things but not overtly Islamophobic and racist.

However, even if Islamophobia is blatantly in their faces, they still strive to belong as the next section, *striving to belong*, will illustrate.

- *Striving to belong*

One aspect of how much Muslim students want to belong in Canada is their adoption of 'Canadian names,' most of which have Christian connotations. The focused code, *striving to belong*, is a categorisation of various codes that describe, quantify and contextualize the processes of Muslim students' attempts to belong and expectations about how Canadians should treat them in order to make them belong. For **Brian**, for example, this would be achieved if Muslim students, on campus, were *belonging to relevant social networks; belonging to the student body; belonging with them*. According to **Momar**, belonging also means respect, *having others show respect to your religious celebrations and being integrated in the society as a Muslim is success*. When there is belonging, **Momar**, insisted, "*Well-being is achieved when you (also) developed healthy good relationships with people*". You will be *feeling welcomed in classroom (Bodour)* and as a person, you will think, "*I want to fit in.*"

However, according to Sam, a participant in the Muslim men's focus group, belonging is a two-way process and it also requires Muslim students to reach out, as "*a person should always adjust to where they're living as long as it doesn't violate their religion*". To belong, according to **Bodour**, it is first and foremost to feel welcomed and included, especially "*feeling welcomed in classroom:*"

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We did the presentation, and everything went well. To be honest with you, I didn't do that much work. I was just there sitting silent; they were brainstorming, doing everything, planning everything. I did nothing. And when we give the professor the paper who did what, they wrote my name as I brought the materials and I did the poster. I did nothing. So, this story has strongly impacted me. It makes me feel I am welcomed, and then, pushed me a little bit forward so, the next class and the next class, I was more outgoing and to interact with other classmates (**Bodour**, one-on-one interview).

Ara explained that when one is feeling welcomed and included, one will indeed be *defying other people's expectations by working hard*. The reason for that is that one will feel trusted.

- *Being trusted*

Muslim students like **Brian** insisted on the need for *earning people's trust*, especially from non-Muslim students. He argued that this was important because being trusted would lead to belonging. Therefore, Muslim students would be *needing trust in order to belong*. **Brian** acknowledged that,

There is a negative connotation to being a practicing Islamic faith. That always kind of... unless people, unless my colleagues know me, there is not trust... I feel like I have to earn people's trust necessarily to be able to be in their social network (**Brian**, one-on-one interview).

Margo added that trust should be also based on *generational acceptance*, especially between mature students like herself and younger generations.

- *Reaching out through volunteering*

One way to build trust in the community and create a sense of belonging for Muslim students is by *volunteering in the community*, **Margo** recommended. However, **Bodour** cautioned that, as a Muslim student, one can be taken advantage of, as in her case where she ended up *realizing to being used as a volunteer*.

Either way, Muslim students long to belong. Belonging and the feeling that they are trusted, accepted and respected by their peers, faculty, university administrators and community at large,

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contribute to Muslim students' social well-being and academic success. **Momar**, provided specific definitions for these terms in the context of the classroom the campus and the community. For him, *social well-being is to have contact with peers outside class. Academic success means having supportive people around you; academic success (also) means having your professors' support; and finally, academic success means one has a completed degree and can contribute to society* (**Momar**). The code, *believing healthy relationships and academic success are interrelated*, by **Margo** is also relevant in this discussion.

February 3, 2018

Memo

Multiculturalism

I was struck by the concept of multiculturalism and how it has affected Muslim students' decisions to come to Canada. According to Burnet & Driedger (2014),

Multiculturalism, as a term, first came into vogue in Canada in the 1960s to counter "biculturalism," popularized by the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. It has to a considerable extent replaced the term "cultural pluralism," although that term is still used in Québec. Its use has now spread from Canada to many countries, notably Australia. In many ways a contested concept, multiculturalism is used in at least three senses: to refer to a society that is characterized by ethnic or cultural heterogeneity; to refer to an ideal of equality and mutual respect among a population's ethnic or cultural groups; and to refer to policies implemented by the federal government in 1971 and subsequently by a number of provinces (p. 1).

The belief in multiculturalism has an impact on many Muslim students and what they expect of Canada. As Ara, one of the participants in the Muslim women's focus group, said, she was actively "expecting Canada to be a beacon of safety for Muslims". However, how is this expectation impacting Muslim students' processes of then "becoming aware of ambient Islamophobia" and being able to contextualize this within Eurocentric and Orientalism ideologies? Is this skewed picture of multiculturalism in Canada a hindrance to Muslim students'

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experiences, discernment of ambient Islamophobia and "*understanding and discernment of those social clues, hints*"? How does this have an impact of the way they view and report ambient Islamophobia in this study?

Burnet & Driedger (2014) add that, "though Will Kymlicka and Charles Taylor have been among the most influential Canadian thinkers on the subject of multiculturalism... Both work within a liberal framework, but at the same time critique and distance themselves from certain "difference-blind" elements of liberal thought in order to defend the application of special minority rights in certain exceptional circumstances, such as that of Québec" (p. 5).

Therefore, I conclude with the realization that my reflection about multiculturalism also lead me to reflect more on its adjacent definitions and processes of belonging, integration, settlement and so on.

(d) Bearing the impacts of ambient Islamophobia

As presented throughout the previous chapter and this one, Muslim students bear or endure ambient Islamophobia in all contexts. Ambient Islamophobia also impacts Muslim students, cognitively, affectively and behaviorally. Figure 17 illustrates the four dimensions of the impacts of ambient Islamophobia under the following focused codes: *cognitive impacts of ambient Islamophobia; affective impacts of ambient Islamophobia; impacts of ambient Islamophobia on Muslim students' behaviors; impacts on Muslim students' relationships with each other; impacts on social well-being; and impacts on academic learning.*

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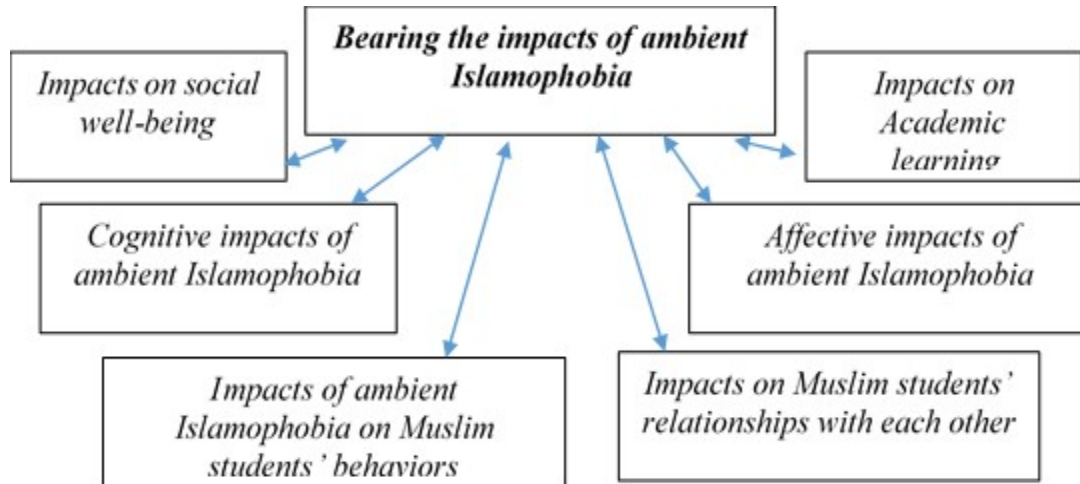


Figure 17: Category: **Bearing the impacts of ambient Islamophobia**

- *Cognitive impacts of ambient Islamophobia*

Ambient Islamophobia impacts Muslim students' psychological well-being and, by extension, their academic learning. According to **Bachar**, *prejudice and discrimination affect cognitively Muslim students*. In order to belong and fit in, Muslim students think they need to be *acting against their own values and renouncing their own values*. They display such behaviors against the backdrop of fear of *being perceived as "something else"* (**Brian**). Such behaviors, according to **Mohamed**, arise because he is *trying to assimilate himself*. However, **Mohamed** recognized that there are *psychological impacts of acting against (one's) own values* as these can lead to identity crisis and alienation.

But if you feel that you always have to act to meet someone else's expectations, sometimes it's, hmmm...psychologically... uncomfortable (**Mohamed**, one-on-one interview).

However, this fear, is real, among Muslim men and women, especially as *attacks against Muslims and mosques create fear in the community and erode their trust* (**Belle**). Because of it, Muslim students feel they are *being prevented from practicing their religion [which] can lead to psychological alienation* (**Brian**); *restraining one's public activities because of fear* (**Belle**); *Muslim*

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parents afraid for their children's safety (**Belle**). Overall, ambient Islamophobia (is) creating anxiety in Muslim women (**Belle**); while many Muslim males are feeling bad and powerless about the discrimination against Muslim women (**Mho**). As **Mho** succinctly stated, "I feel bad at the same time because I cannot do anything" (**Mho**, Muslim men focus group).

The psychological impacts of ambient Islamophobia have a toll on Muslim students' overall well-being. **Brian** reported how the state of ambient Islamophobia has made him constantly struggle with an identity crisis:

Yeah, it is different when I was younger and you know growing up. You know, identity is a big part of our lives. I think, I struggled with that for most of my youth because of that. Having a Muslims name, being black and all that stuff. My struggle to just try to fit in and try to be part of this Western kind of culture... (**Brian**, one-on-one interview).

There is indeed a direct relationship between identity and having a Muslim sounding name, especially when looking for employment. **Cupcake** recognized struggling to find a co-op position because of her name:

But, when I apply for co-op jobs, I wonder... having a hard time finding a job because of my name, my Muslim name. I wonder that, sometimes, you know, I noticed like the people who have names that are a little bit not white sounding in my program, (they) have a hard time finding jobs. But other than that, it's been ok in general (**Cupcake**, Muslim women focus group).

- *Affective impacts of ambient Islamophobia*

Brian also illustrated the affective impact of Islamophobia on Muslim students as they feel their peers are *compelling you to do things*. Muslim students are often driven to *refuse to stand out* because of the fear of violence and Islamophobia. According to **Bachar**, they are *fearing for their life and afraid of being marginalized as a Muslim*:

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And people most often...fear of being shot from there back by something else. Sometimes you can't prove your identity as a Muslim. So, you fear many things (**Bachar**, one-on-one interview).

Fear often lead Muslim students to waste valuable time *rationalizing (their) faith*, because they are *very ashamed about kind of my religion in general (Ara)*. According to **Lemon**, this rationalizing is a result of being *worried to speak for fear of becoming emotional (Lemon)*. **Belle** reported that the kind of context Muslim students live in instills in them such fear that they are *"afraid when you are going to pray."* Fear also created a constant feeling of powerlessness and discomfort in Muslim students. For example, Muslim men students reported feeling *uncomfortable when Muslim women are discriminated against*. However, fear also holds them back from intervening as they are afraid of the reactions of non-Muslims.

Fear also lead some Muslim students to patterns of avoidance and withdrawal. For example, **Sparkle's** responses to ambient Islamophobia led her to fear *her daughters wearing hijab*. In **Belle's** case, she *had to stop sending them (daughters) to prayers*. For **Ara**, though she is an adult, her parents tried to stop her from going out: *"my mom was terrified and she wanted me to stay home"*. **Ara's** parents' reactions to her wearing a hijab, were similar to both Sparkle and Belle's reactions, as they were *prohibiting (their) daughter from wearing hijab because of fear (Belle)*.

These affective impacts of ambient Islamophobia also include codes associated with how Muslim students wished they had engaged in class, against fear, powerlessness, and ambient Islamophobia. **Margo** for example, was *regretting to not have engaged more in class*, if it was not for ambient Islamophobia. However, she recognized there may have been due to no opportunity as she was *wishing to have had an opportunity to engage more in classroom discussions*. Instead, she experienced insensitive language (which) can affect students' academic learning. Such insensitivity

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in language and behavior towards Muslim students, was prevalent in both students, faculty and administrators. **Sparkle** reported *being made uncomfortable by some faculty members*:

But there are some faculty members. And obviously because we're not going to point that out. There are some faculty members who in a certain way as she said they do make you feel uncomfortable as if they are not comfortable dealing with people like me or different backgrounds (**Sparkle**, Muslim women focus group).

As for **Angel**, there was a recurrent theme of *being hurt by being marginalized in class*, and of *hurting inside because of powerlessness* among Muslim students. Many of these students also reported *lacking confidence to report Islamophobia as an international student*. Other Muslim students recognized how they came to *noticing the powerlessness of (Muslim) international students in the face of violence and Islamophobia*. All of which makes Muslim students *not feeling at home (and specially) after mosque attacks* (**Belle**). According to **Ara**, ambient Islamophobia makes her *feeling upset and saddened because of wearing a hijab*. She told of an encounter on the bus, where she was attacked and insulted and subjected to hate speech. The following in-vivo code describes how she felt: *"I felt like the weight of the words on me honestly"*.

I felt like the weight of the words on me honestly. He just kind of just kept close to me and only one spoken kind of spoke out and said (to the attacker): you don't know this person, so maybe you shouldn't say those kinds of things. But he (the attacker) just seemed like a very angry person in general and he shouted at the bus driver to stop and he jumped off and everything (**Ara**, Muslim women focus group).

In addition to these kinds of instances where Islamophobia is direct and violent, Muslim students also recognized the affective impact of ambient Islamophobia. For example, **Bodour** reported that this affective impact is on-going, and it is ambient, as described in the following in-vivo code: *sometimes, I feel negative energy coming from them*. According to **Ara**, there is a *solidarity between hijab-wearing Muslim women*, which is fostered by being collectively and individually targeted all the time. However, according to **Lemon**, convert Muslim women like

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herself experience worse discrimination from both sides. As a white woman who converted to Islam, **Lemon** argued that she has also experienced discrimination and sometimes mistrust from fellow Muslims because of her ‘whiteness’. She believed that these *attitudes towards her* were *informed by the ways these Muslim people were treated by the wider (white) society*.

- *Impacts of ambient Islamophobia on Muslim students’ behaviors*

Ambient Islamophobia also affects Muslim students’ behaviors. Because of Islamophobia, Muslim students report changing their behavior to “*fit in*”, to avoid “*standing out*” and to “*working hard in group projects to earn the trust and respect of peers*”. The behavior changes also include *deflecting the prejudice* instead of responding to it; *focusing on most relevant prejudice; differentiating between prejudices; trying to outperform others (non-Muslim students); showing no solidarity with topic (of Islam)* as a way to avoid drawing too much attention on them. In the case of **Margo** for example, she went to the extent of *holding back participation because was laughed at in class* as a Muslim woman. **Bachar**, like **Margo**, argues that in order to survive in class and in the campus environment, ‘*you have to hide your identity as a Muslim*’. For **Bodour**, hiding your identity as a Muslim can be achieved by *being a modernized Muslim*, which means wearing colourful clothing.

Ambient Islamophobia also affects Muslim students through the ways they interact with professors/instructors misrepresenting Islamic teachings and Muslim voices. Many Muslim students like **Mali**, **Bachar**, **Margo**, and **Mohamed** reported how professors’ disrespect and misrepresentation of Islam and Muslims have affected their trust and respect of the curriculum and instruction. In **Mali**’s case for example, she grew to *doubt the integrity of the professor* – an attitude that has dire consequences for her academic learning:

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it has a really negative, as I said the professor, I never asked him about, when I was studying for the final, I realized that he also gave us, he was giving us another like wrong information you know? He was teaching us about Arabic poetry, Islamic poetry and then there were, he said a poem about an Arabic Muslim woman, she wrote it and then my mother is a writer and she knows a lot of well educated people in Saudi Arabia; they are into literature and so I asked her, I was really curious to know the poem in Arabic. And I told her, I searched for it everywhere and I couldn't find the translation and then she said: I'll ask everyone I know. And not a single person of them said that she doesn't have this poem, she has other poems but this one it doesn't exist. So, I think someone else wrote it and then they kind of put her name on it or whatever and so she told me that you tell the professor that or make sure what source does he have you know? And I'm like I never told him because I know what reaction he would bring and I don't think he would change it. He would just think that I'm attacking him or something (**Mali**, one-on-one interview).

- *Impacts on academic learning*

In addition to distrusting faculty and *doubting the integrity of the professor* in interpreting Islamic teachings and the voices of Muslim scholars, Muslim students also find it difficult to relate to Western counselling services, sometimes *hesitating to go to counseling because of their own cultural biases* (**Ara**).

So, I remember like counseling services. It wasn't something that I wanted to go to because when I'm talking about certain things that happened into my culture and like certain things my dad may say or my mom may say or something and they find that... ok, so like in Black families... personally, I got beaten a lot. Like beatings happened... I don't know if this is just a thing for all Black families, but for white people, I feel like, they don't get beaten (**Ara**, Muslim women focus group).

The academic impact of ambient Islamophobia is something **Sam** also recognized as detrimental to Muslim students' academic success, as described in the following in-vivo code:

“prejudice is very devastating to my education and will put us in isolation”.

...it will be very devastating to my education and will put us in isolation as actually what some people wants. Because, once you segregate society, this is Muslim, this is non-Muslim, then it's easy to discriminate against some part of the society so there'll be more discrimination to be...very harder and will make people afraid of freely practicing their religion (**Sam**, Muslim men focus group).

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According to **Jenny**, a frontline staff member, there is an inherent power dynamics issue in the supervisory-student relationship.

... there's communication issues that I hear the stories... what the students are experiencing...I don't know the professor side of the story, but I feel like that power, you know, there's lots of power dynamics in the university of which the supervisor [has over] students [especially international and other minority students] (**Jenny**, frontline staff member, in one-on-one interview).

My own experiences, as a visible minority student, speak loud about these unequal dynamics, where most of us fall victims of the somehow negative academic learning environment maintained by some faculty

- *Impacts on social well-being*

The segregation and isolation of some people also impacts Muslim students' social well-being.

According to **David and Mho**, from the Muslim men's focus group, *prejudice has severe mental effects on Muslim students; also, prejudice makes Muslim students miss opportunities*. For **Belle**, *Islamophobia "impacts everything"*:

Even though I didn't experience it first hand, but the feeling of it happening is always there. And that fear affects your social life, your educational life, it impacts everything. Like I shared the example of after the Quebec [massacre], so I stopped sending my children to mosque for prayers because we were terrified and even I talked to my supervisor and I told her I want to conduct a research on the...she her uh... my primary area of research is anxiety in women and I said to her I want to do research on Muslim women and anxiety because being a mother myself, I have experienced the anxiety because of religious discrimination and fear for the safety of my children (**Belle**, one-on-one interview).

Belle added that *Islamophobia has affected our (Muslims) lives, as Islamophobia undermines other minorities' safety*. Like most Muslim students, **Belle** concluded that *"Islamophobia is fear that 'affects your social life, your educational life'"*.

- *Impacts on Muslims relationships with each other*

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The impact of this fear has led some Muslim parents like **Sparkle** and **Belle** to *stop sending their children to the mosque for prayers*. Refraining children from going to the mosque has serious consequences for the whole community, and particularly for the Muslim community.

Additionally, due to Islamophobia, trust has been eroded between the wider Canadian communities and Muslim communities which, in turn, affects relationships within Muslim communities. **Lemon**, a Muslim woman convert, reports in the Muslim women focus group discussions that she was *being more welcomed in the Muslim than the larger community*.

I don't face discrimination in that space. I might face suspicion or other things but I don't face discrimination because the power is different. And I find I get more hugs more kisses more love yeah in Muslim community than the larger community (**Lemon**, Muslim women focus group).

Lemon, also recognized *facing more scrutiny as a convert from other Muslims*. She added that she is often *not being taken seriously as a white Muslim* by white people and also by some Muslims.

Cupcake argued that there is indeed a *particularity of the white Muslims converts' experience*. This group of Muslims have the privilege of being born in Canada, to speak the language fluently and understand the cultural cues and hints. **Lemon** recognized that such a particularity confers *different experiences of discrimination because of the power held as white converts* is totally different from that one held by a non-white Muslim person. Such differences, **Cupcake** added, results in non-white Muslims *being 'otherized' because of their appearance (race)*.

Therefore, Muslim students' experiences of ambient Islamophobia in this study, also have cognitive and affective dimensions that impact their attitudes, behaviors, social well-being, academic learning and relationships with each other. Muslim students, however, are not always passive in front of prejudice and discrimination. Over time, as they are *becoming aware of ambient Islamophobia* and developing a certain *understanding of the meaning of the social clues and hints*,

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Muslim students develop various strategies to cope with or resist Islamophobia. The two categories below (coping with Islamophobia and resisting Islamophobia) describe these processes.

(e) Coping with Islamophobia

... it was just me, more so forgiving her for not knowing or assuming that's what their religion is about. Like, you know, avoiding things or blindly following things and so forth
(**Laila**, one-on-one interview)

Coping with something or someone is a self-defense strategy. According to Radzi et al. (2014), coping is a behavioral or cognitive process that helps a person manage a stressful situation. Coping with Islamophobia has come to mean the development of strategies to manage its impacts. Coping with Islamophobia in this study is a strategy some Muslim students adopt to belong or fit in. These coping strategies include the following six focused codes or properties of the category, **Coping with Islamophobia**, as illustrated in figure 18: *assimilating to social norms and expectations; blending in/ fitting in; concealing identity; categorizing degrees of prejudice and discrimination; snubbing prejudice and discrimination; and avoiding contact.*

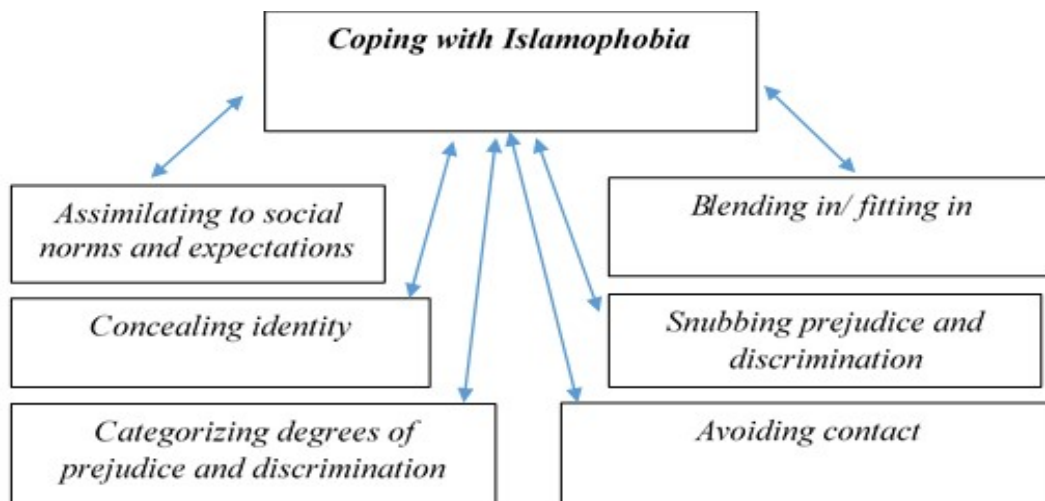


Figure 18: Category: Coping with Islamophobia

- *Assimilating to social norms and expectations*

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Though Muslim students try to assimilate to Canadian social norms and expectations, it is important to note that assimilation is not belonging. Muslim students in this study define assimilation here as a coping strategy against ambient Islamophobia. They do this by *compromising their own values and by assimilating oneself without conditions*. Otherwise, assimilation here could also be defined as a coercion.

In *compromising (their) own values*, Muslim students feel as they were being “obliged” to *distance themselves from their belief (Mohamed)*. **Brian** argued that by *compelling (Muslim students) to do things or to renounce to their own values* is to compromise their identity and freedom. **Mohamed** added that such assimilation is pervasive as it also forces Muslim students to *act against (their) own Muslim values*.

So, if you find yourself in an environment where you think you are obliged always to distance yourself from what you truly believe from the inside, so... it's not a discrimination or anything like that, but it's a discomfort, right? Because, you always find yourself you have to act rather than be yourself, right? (**Mohamed**, one-on-one interview).

Having to forcefully assimilate to the social norms and expectations is, according to some Muslim students like **Mohamed**, *conforming to others' expectations*. For example, **Mho**, from the Muslim men focus group, noticed the impact of *being compelled to meet others' expectations such as having to conform to Canadian 'dress code' (Mho)*. **Sammy**, a respondent in the same Muslim men focus group didn't think it is wrong for Muslims to assimilate. He argued that “*Muslims should accept 'limitations' set forth by host country*”. Among all the respondents in this study, only **Brian** seemed to agree with Sammy. According to **Brian**, “*all Muslims should be assimilating oneself without conditions*”. He thinks that this is the price Muslim people should pay, in order to belong or fit in. However, **Mho** believes that assimilation in its forms of compelling Muslim people to

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compromise their values and conform to other people's non-Islamic expectations is like taking away a Muslim person's soul.

- *Snubbing (ogring) prejudice and discrimination*

Snubbing prejudice (Hamid) is ignoring the impacts and implications of prejudice and discrimination on Muslim students' bodies and souls. **Brian** explained that he snubs Islamophobia by *shaking off the prejudice*:

it has happened but you just shake it off because you have found different survival skills to deal with it (**Brian**, one-on-one interview).

Many Muslim students, like **Brian**, also survive Islamophobia by *deflecting prejudice*:

Yeah, the way I conduct myself is always in anticipation of, like deflecting any sort of like bias or stereotype that might come my way (**Brian**, one-on-one interview).

According to **Angel**, she "*just like ignores it and continues,*" while for **Bodour**, she actively and consciously engages in *deciding to ignore prejudice*. She explained that she has developed a survival strategy: "*I train myself just to remember the good things*".

Most Muslim students recognize that ambient Islamophobia is pervasive, and their goal in coming to Canada is not to endure it but to belong and flourish, socially and academically. Instead, they quickly realize that they have to develop strategies to assimilate in, to compromise certain of their values, to learn to snub/ignore Islamophobia or to blend in. The next section analyzes and theorises the data that helps construct the focused code, *blending in/fitting in*.

- *Blending in/fitting in*

I try my best to like blend in by different kind of conducts or different ways I do things, I guess (**Brian**, one-on-one interview).

According to **Brian**, see quote above, *blending in*, like *snubbing prejudice and discrimination*, is an active and conscious choice with a specific goal in mind, to belong, to stop being a target of

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Islamophobia. Some of the strategies Muslim students use to *blend in* include: *wearing hijab with other trendy clothes (Ara)* or *wearing colourful clothes (Bachar)*.

Yes, I wear a hijab but I don't wear a Niqab; and I don't wear a burqa or those kinds of things. So, I wear jeans and I wear a shirt. So, basically, I'm kind of like everyone else, just to have hijab on (**Ara**, Muslim women focus group).

However, according to **Momar**, *dressing in modesty (is) advised in Islam* for Muslims to “*dress in an appropriate manner*”.

For **Belle** (one-on-one interview), some of her coping strategies have been: *asking her son to remove his goatee because it can be misinterpreted; avoiding to be part of any faith community; and behaving carefully around Canadians because of fear*. However, if blending in seems a bit easier for some, *fitting in as an outsider/insider (Momar)* is not always obvious, as it literally means for **Momar** *belonging* as a full Canadian citizen:

You know we will like even in the manner in which you talk it says a lot about someone and one thing I learned about myself is, over the years is that you know its easier to fit in like its easier to fit in as an outsider into an insider than to be as an insider to an outsider (**Momar**, one-on-one interview).

The code "fitting in" is one that runs through most of the Muslim students' stories of how they tried to cope with ambient Islamophobia in class, in the teaching and curriculum, and also in the broader community. Fitting is for some just an aspiration and for others, it is a behaviours and attitudes change, renunciation. To fit in, some Muslim students like **Brian** and others, will start drinking and eating pork, *acting against their Muslim values*. Others, like **Bodour** will "become modernized Muslims" or give up any association with Muslims like **Belle**. Others again, like **Nour**, will go to the extent of changing their names to adopt an Anglo-Saxon name (personal communication with Nour after interviews), or to *shortening or changing Muslim names (Margo)*.

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However, *fitting in* at any cost has consequences, such as its impacts on identity and Muslim students' mental and affective health.

- *Concealing identity*

According to Major et al (2002),

When individuals face identity threats, they employ diverse coping strategies. One strategy is to trivialize stigma-related events by simply diminishing the discriminatory value of a potential stressor (quoted in Kunst et al., 2012, pp. 519-520).

To survive the threats of ambient and *global Islamophobia* (**Bachar**), Muslim students report to reverting to *concealing (their) identity* (**Brian and Mohamed**), *fearing to identify as a Muslim* (**Bachar**) and *trying to hide their religion, especially Islam in these recent times* (**Margo**). **Brian** adds that *concealing (one's) identity because of ambient Islamophobia* is sometimes contingent on how Muslim students want to fit in, belong. For example, drinking with peers or joining in other activities prohibited by Islam.

Yeah, and this is what may be my observation in this environment... Some people might try to hide their identity maybe because they want to smoke (and drink). (However), in our religion, we don't want such kind of things. (Therefore) you hide your identity, "that's ok, I'm not a Muslim..." (**Brian**, one-on-one interview).

In class, the fear of being ostracized as a Muslim compels Muslim students into *preferring to keep the religion to the private sphere* (**Margo**), thus consciously *avoiding/ disengaging in discussions* about Islam (**Brian**), *avoiding discussions about religion* (**Belle**), and *avoiding to speak up because of ambient Islamophobia* (**Bachar**). To survive, some even go to the extent of not *showing solidarity with the topic* (**Brian**) and *holding off talking about religion when making friends* (**Mho**).

Yeah, first I should not talk about my religion to anyone. You know this is not good to talk about religion in general but, first I treat, if I will be kind and respect other people and other

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opinions, other beliefs, I show my respect for other people, this is the way to start friendship, something like that (**Mho**, Muslim men focus group).

Concealing identity is also something Muslim students do through their choice of dress as illustrated by the following codes: *avoiding to dress in Muslim traditional outfits* (**Hamid**); *telling their daughters to remove the hijab* (**Belle**); *“I don’t allow my daughter to cover her head”* (**Belle**). In concealing identity, **Angel** recognized that, *stopping to wear hijab decreased negative comments towards her*.

- *Categorizing the degrees of prejudice and discrimination*

In coping with Islamophobia, Muslim students also use tactics to *categorize the degrees of prejudice and discrimination*, thus rationalizing at the same time their impact. They do this by comparing current to past experiences in other settings and believing that there is less in Canada compared to other countries or settings. Some of the processes of *categorizing the degrees of prejudice and discrimination* are embedded in the following codes: *comparing multiculturalism in Africa and Canada* (**Mohamed**) and believing there is none back home and that they are lucky that Canada is a ‘multicultural society’; *distinguishing experiences in other settings* (**Mohamed**) and still thinking it is better here than elsewhere; *welcoming and liberal campus and welcoming campus compared to others* (**Brian**), as UVic is compared to other university campuses around Canada; *comparing UVic small numbers of Muslims to other campuses* (**Hamid**); *feeling of inclusion compared to other places* (**Hamid**); *“found UVic inclusive and accommodating” compared to others* (**Hamid**). Muslim students report *worse experiences in other places* and *worse experiences in other settings* (**Brian**). For example, **Bachar**’s insisted on *comparing Canada to other countries and comparing experiences of racism in other countries versus Canada*; or **Ara**’s argument in *comparing Canada and other countries*. **Sammy** argued that the overseas memories of Muslim students is their *experiencing prejudice in other countries*, which for **Bodour**, in the case of

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comparing with Saudi Arabia, recognizes that there is a “*big difference between back home in Saudi and here*. Though, compared to Toronto, Muslim students like **Hamid** could not help but *notice less visible minorities compared to other places*, **Belle** argued that “*as far as religious practice's concern, UVic and Canada are very open.*”

As far as religious practice's concern, UVic and Canada are very open and there is no stopping you from taking leave or anything, like if you want to go for Jummah prayer; and if you are fasting or you have religious holiday to observe, they always accommodate you (**Belle**, Muslim women focus group).

Comparing or categorizing the degrees of prejudice and discrimination between Canada and other places and setting is a coping strategy used by Muslim students to endure ambient Islamophobia. This strategy helps them minimize the impacts of Islamophobia on their social well-being and academic learning and convince themselves that there is worse to deal with in other places and settings. Though they are *being treated differently on campus and in the community* (**Margo**), Muslim students want to reassure themselves, and for this, will spend time *comparing Muslim experiences against Asian students* (**Lemon**) or *comparing Muslim women's experiences with those of men's* (**Angel**).

Another coping strategy Muslim students use to reassure and soothe themselves is *acknowledging a co-existence of multiple faiths* (**Mohamed**) in Canada, something always problematic back home. The essence of this diversity is neatly captured in the following code derived from **David**'s reflections in the Muslim men focus group: *being Sunni or Shia is more relevant back home*.

Therefore, Muslim students also recognize the shortcomings of their countries of origins as compared to Canada. According to **Sammy**, *Muslim countries also have behavioral rules as*

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opposed to Western countries. However, these Muslim countries often are also *failing to respect*

Islam and its rules:

I don't know his point. The main point here comes to us educating ourselves or our countries especially like he's saying like, oh, our rules are massed up kind of like and they're not following the Muslim rules in general, you know, they say we're in Muslim countries and they are not following any Islamic rules whatsoever. And they're making like some Islamic rules that is not Islam. It doesn't make any sense. And media, it's actually reasonable for white people, non-Muslim people to look at these countries and say, oh these rules do not make sense (**Sammy**, Muslim men focus group).

Overall, categorizing or comparing the extent of Islamophobia in both Canada and other countries or settings is a coping strategy that Muslim students develop to minimize its impacts and justify their passivity accordingly. These attitudes and behaviors of categorising and comparing are however embedded in attitudes and beliefs that also rationalize these degrees of prejudice and discrimination.

- *Rationalizing degree of discrimination/ prejudice*

Rationalizing is justifying the reasons for Islamophobia and why it is there in the first place, considering the circumstances and all the people and dynamics involved. Rationalizing can be interacting interchangeably with categorising or comparing, where Muslim students may only focus on the positive experience (which) outweighs the negative (**Bodour**). Some of the codes that illustrate the focus group *rationalizing degree of discrimination/ prejudice* (**Mohamed**) include *differentiating between prejudices* (**Brian**); *differentiating discrimination and insensitivity* (**Mohamed**); *believing these are just subtle prejudices* (**Brian**); *experiencing subtle prejudice* (**Brian**); and *focusing on most relevant prejudice* (**Brian**). **Laila** describes a kind of subtle prejudice that is embedded in the way non-Muslims speak to Muslim students and international students.

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And, it was more so, sometimes, you know, people talk to you differently in a (manner) that you know they are not being nice to you or very reluctant to make friends or talk positively (**Laila**, one-on-one interview).

However, for **Brian**, there is a price to be paid in *rationalizing faith* based on these attitudes and behaviors of categorising and comparing degrees and intensity of Islamophobia, as it pertains to place, time and people.

I see that devout friends who are Muslims and they stick to (it); and then, I see a lot in between and I wonder how they do rationalize the way (they practice Islam), and their conducts (**Brian**, one-on-one interview).

These conducts are often informed by Muslim students' attempts to assimilate, blend in, fit in, or conceal their identity in order to belong. However, the impacts of ambient Islamophobia are so pervasive, one coping strategy is not enough. Another strategy, Muslim students report using in the face of ambient Islamophobia is to avoid contact with non-Muslims both on campus and in the community.

- *Avoiding contact*

As a coping strategy against ambient Islamophobia and the social and academic exclusion and rejection of Muslim students on campus and in the community, some Muslim students consciously decide to only engage in minimal contact or to best avoid contact with non-Muslims if at all possible. These attitudes and behaviors however are a consequence of their alienation and marginalization in the classroom, the curriculum and instruction, and in the community. In the academic context, some of the codes that describe these choices Muslim students make in *avoiding contact* include *withdrawing from socializing (because rejected by non-Muslim students)* (**Mohamed**); *minority students they make a one group together* (**Belle**); *focusing only on studies* (**Bachar**) as a consequence; *“always focused on getting results”* (**Hamid**); *psychological impacts of acting against own values* (**Mohamed**).

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Socially, the consequences of *avoiding contact* lead Muslim students to behaviors such as *restraining one's public activities because of fear (Belle)*; *avoiding taking the bus (Laila)*; and even *avoiding speaking to old people* as in the case of **Laila**. The incident from when **Mali** was confronted for wearing white at the bus stop illustrates the context of this fear.

Coping with Islamophobia is a strategy that Muslim students use to endure the psychological, affective and physical effects of ambient Islamophobia on their social well-being and academic learning on campus, the classroom, the curriculum and instruction, and in the community. Though some of the coping strategies like *assimilating to social norms and expectations, snubbing prejudice and discrimination, blending in/ fitting in, concealing identity, categorizing degrees of prejudice and discrimination, or avoiding contact* do work most of the time, **resisting Islamophobia** is another strategy that Muslim students have used to counter ambient Islamophobia.

(f) Resisting Islamophobia

I think we should be more involved you know. ... Join social groups here on campus, make friends with the other students because once you have like, once you have a prejudgement on someone and then you meet them and they turn out to be a nice person, you change the idea about the whole, they changed you, you know? And, so, once you meet a lot of Muslim students and they turn out to be a nice or just like normal people, they don't have to be nice you know? Then you're not scared of them anymore you know? (**Mali**, female Saudi student, one-on-one interview)

In this study, Muslim student participants recount being engaged in resistance as a strategy to counter, confront, defy, prevent, endure, maintain, and stand up to ambient Islamophobia. The focused codes that compose this category, **resisting Islamophobia** (see figure 19) include: *countering Islamophobia; about 'radicalization'; educating non-Muslims about Islam and Muslims; educating Muslims about their faith and themselves; maintaining faith; and creating solidarity across common experiences.*

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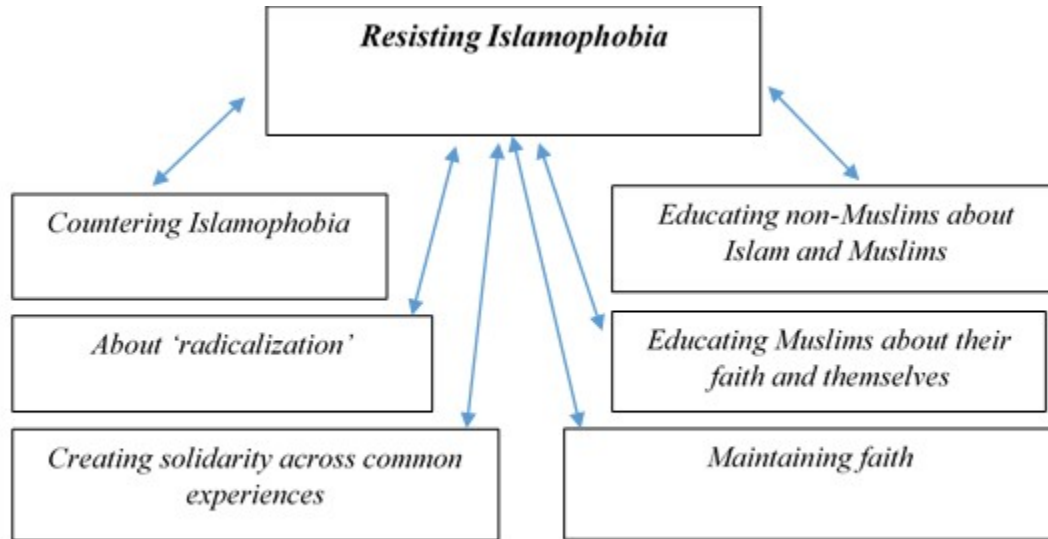


Figure 19: Category: Resisting Islamophobia

- *Countering Islamophobia*

To counter Islamophobia, Muslim students develop strategies that challenge it. Countering Islamophobia is more than snubbing or ignoring Islamophobia. According to most Muslim students, countering Islamophobia includes *fighting back against discrimination (Angel)*; *fighting back Islamophobia in order to fulfill one's career goals (Belle)*; or *not being willing to give any chance to anyone to point a finger at you (Belle)*. For **Sammy**, standing up to Islamophobia is not only about standing up for yourself against an attacker, but to be an active bystander and intervene in situations where you have witnessed Islamophobia. The following code, “*If I were there I would stand obviously up*” (**Sammy**), illustrates this point. Such a tactic was previously relayed to us by **Sammy** as he recounted the story of a Muslim family who was attacked at the swimming pool.

Speaking up against Islamophobia is a resistance strategy that some Muslim students use to *speak (ing) back to stereotypes (of language stigma) (Margo)*. For **Momar**, resisting Islamophobia is also achieved by *breaking stereotypes through engaging in dialogue and emphasizing common similarities through dialogue*. **Sammy**, however, argues that to resist Islamophobia is also for

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Muslim students to *be (ing) cautious when talking to the media*. He sees the media as one key perpetrator of Islamophobia.

So, we would rather not to approach public like for example media (**Sammy**, Muslim men focus group).

Showing pride in one's Muslim identity instead of concealing it with the hope of blending in, fitting in, is also resistance strategy. For some Muslim students like **Bachar** and **Momar**, it is imperative for Muslims to proudly identify as Muslims. The following codes illustrate this behavior of showing pride in one's Muslim identity: *refusing to conceal one's Muslim identity; preferring to openly show Muslim identity; showing pride in being Muslim; and engaging in students association as strategy to maintain identity (Margo)*. For **Momar**, his Muslimness is obvious as he was *taught to be proud of being Black and Muslim*, and he will not detract from his heritage. **Bachar** reported that to show pride in his Muslim identity and heritage, he makes a point of *wearing Muslim outfits on his social media profile*.

For **Margo**, to counter Islamophobia, it is imperative to *practice (one's Muslim) faith openly without fear*. To do so, **Brian** recommended *to sticking to faith regardless of Islamophobia*. **Momar** went beyond, recommending that Muslim students not avoid talking about Islam, but to *disclose one's Muslim faith*. According to **Sam**, this would help *normalize the Muslims' image in all forums and serves as a strategy against media stereotyping (Sam)*.

When everyone is just with everyone then, it's... (if) they see you in television; they see you in the... running for parliament; they see you... so, you are more normal to them than (if) they don't ever see you. Then, all of sudden, something happens, then everyone is explaining (**Sam**, Muslim men focus group).

Sam also added that Muslims should "*show the community that we're all humans*" through such strategies as in *educating non-Muslims about Islam and Muslims*.

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- *Educating non-Muslims about Islam and Muslims*

I developed the focused code, *educating non-Muslims about Islam and Muslims based on the code*, “*needing to intervene in certain situations to educate the attacker*” referred to in the Muslim men’s focus group. Education, as a resistance strategy is indeed a recurring code throughout my data. Here, the theme of educating non-Muslims includes educating/teaching non-Muslims about Islam and Muslims, educating about the hijab, educating about the Muslim diversity and cultures, and educating through other community outreach strategies.

In educating/teaching about Islam and Muslims, **Sam** argued that *education is always the key to break any barriers*. According to **Belle**, *Muslim students should help educate about Islam*. **Ara** concurred and argued that *the role of Muslim students is to educate about Muslims and Islam and not convert people*:

One thing that needs to be defined is the fact that we're not here to convert people. We're just here to educate. We're just here to have a conversation. We're just here to understand each other. It's not about, like you know, conversion because people like attack you at a bus stop and they start talking to you and you know, they literally just trying to talk to you about their religion and convert you. But that's not the point of any of these activities (organized by the Muslim students’ association on campus) (**Ara**, Muslim women focus group).

As a resistance strategy, Muslim students define educating non-Muslims as *breaking stereotypes through engaging in dialogue with non-Muslims (Momar)*; *teaching non-Muslims about how to respectfully speak to and about Muslims*; and *teaching non-Muslims about Muslim people and their cultures (Ara)*. **Momar** added that such an education also requires *teaching people about your religion as a responsibility* and willing/wanting to share about one’s faith with friends. **Bachar** agreed that it is important for Muslim students to be *educating their friends about their Muslim identity and culture*. **Sammy** argued that educating about Islam and Muslims should also expand beyond the boundaries of the university campus and the Canadian society to include the

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people in the Muslim students' own countries of origins. He recognized that there is a *need to educate our country or our government to follow true Islam*.

For **Sam**, education as a resistance strategy will also empower Muslim students to recognize *the need to intervene in certain situations to educate the attacker*:

I think it's always a good idea to intervene in certain situations, not necessarily in a physical manner but perhaps go talk to the guy or the woman. It's not only men who discriminate against Muslim women. Something even women. Other than that, as David said (about) education, try to always speak what is that (Islamophobia), what is Islam is about. It's the only option you have" (**Sam**, Muslim men focus group).

Mohamed cautioned against taking education as the solution to all problems. He argued that in the context of the university, education means something different. For **Mohamed**, *the goal of education in the Western context is an education about and for the promotion and preservation of Eurocentric and neoliberal ideals*. Such an education, however, is totally different from the kind of education Muslim students are talking about. The kind of education the Muslim students in this study describe is one that dispels stereotypes and prejudice and challenges ambient Islamophobia. **Mho** argued that such an education will *need more time as it educates about Islamophobia*, an anti-Muslim racism embedded in the socio-cultural, political ideologies and structures of Western societies. Therefore, educating non-Muslims about ambient Islamophobia will require time and patience from Muslims:

People think Muslims are terrorists and they are dangerous and they need more time to understand who are Muslims, you know. And, also, we can help to explain what does Islam mean or...when we treat people ...this is the only solution, I think (**Mho**, Muslim men focus group).

Educating about Islamophobia, also requires educating non-Muslims about the meaning of the different kinds of the Muslim headscarves like the hijab, niqab, headwraps, the burqa, and also

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about Muslim diversity and cultures through such topics. According to **David**, Muslim students need to educate non-Muslims about why wearing the hijab is a 'noble' and 'modest thing':

My interpretation is that what people think when like they don't really know much about the Islamic (teachings); actually, they don't know what is the headscarf for (**David**, Muslim men focus group).

Education centred on teaching about Muslim diversity and cultures would be geared towards *breaking stereotypes of Muslim diversity* (**Cupcake**), because the Muslim community is not a monolithic group. Such an education, **Ara** argued, would also need to *show the diversity that is within Islam*. According to **Sam**, *the religious diversity among Muslims (also comprises) the Sunni and Shia; as well as the cultural diversity in Islam* (**Belle**). In educating about this Muslim diversity, **Ara** noted that the role of Muslim students can be as little as *bringing different cultural artifacts of one's culture to share with non-Muslims*. For **Sparkle**, this education could also engage Muslim students to promote opportunities where they can *celebrate Muslim diversity and cultures* with other Muslims and non-Muslims.

Other forms of education as a resistance strategy to Islamophobia include Muslim students working through their students' association, by *promoting cultural events to showcase diversity* (**Sparkle**); *promoting Islamic awareness week as alternative to conferences* (**Ara**); and other outreach events such as *"cookie sales in the engineering building"* (**Sam**).

To educate non-Muslims, **Bodour**, admits that she often challenges non-Muslims to visit her country and meet real people instead of relying on biased stereotypes of Muslim people: *"If you want to know about our situation, go there and meet real people"*. She continued:

Another thing. I think my baby was about fourth month. At the same bus stop, I was standing. (On my) left, and there were two Canadian ladies with a little girl. We started talking and chatting. They ask me what is my experience here in Canada? I said, oh! In general, it was good. Canadians are nice people, blablabla, they are friendly. I always say the same thing, even

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though I don't believe in it sometimes. But I am trying to be polite. They ask me about Saudi, and about Muslims, and are women really subjugated to their husbands. And you know, this issue, you can't avoid it. You have to talk about it. So, I said, with me, the issue is totally opposite with what is happening there. If you want to know our situation, go there and meet real people. Because the media, they show what they want. Anyway, the bus came, then I... they told me go ahead because you have a stroller (**Bodour**, one-on-one interview).

- *Educating Muslims about their faith and themselves*

Muslim students also argued that for education to succeed as a resistance strategy with non-Muslims, Muslims have to be educated themselves about *distinguishing cultural practice from religious teachings* (**Lemon**); be clear in *defining faith versus belief*; and *providing credible Islamic guidance* (**Mohamed**).

So, usually I think one of the most important key elements that university might be able to do to contribute in this academic success and also well-being (of Muslim students), etc; is to bring credible scholars from within the Muslim community from time to time, even if its once a year or twice a year to lecture. To talk to the students about different topics: about the academic life, about how, for example, how to create the balance between the Islamic world view and also living in a non-Islamic environment (**Mohamed**, one-on-one interview).

These credible scholars can indeed help to *educate Muslims about good behaviors* (**Sammy**) that help them preserve those values and ethics they feel compelled to compromise in their **longing to belong** within the Canadian campus and community.

Another resistance strategy, according to Muslim students, most of whom are also international students, should demand that *people teaching international students are respectful towards them* (**Ara**). In the context of the university, to *think we (Muslim students) need education/orientation more than Canadian* and therefore look for it (**Mho**); recognize that *Muslims also can hold some biases* (**Bodour**) and need *getting away from Muslim students' own biases* (**Margo**). **Bodour** added that Muslim students also *need to learn about others as well* as many are coming from cultures that are not inclusive of diversity.

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However, in educating themselves about their religions and the world, Muslim students also need to be mindful about *looking up things online* and reflect on what *educating oneself online implies* (**Margo**) as there is serious danger in educating oneself from unauthenticated online sources. One of these dangers, some people, argue is about radicalization.

- *About radicalization*

Radicalization, according to the Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence (2018), “is a process by which an individual or a group gradually adopts extreme positions or ideologies that are opposed to the status quo and challenge mainstream ideas” (p. 7). However, for most Muslim respondents in this study, radicalization means their youth falling prey to ‘unauthenticated online sources’. According to **Mohamed**, ambient Islamophobia can lead Muslim students astray in *compensating for social rejection and discrimination*. The danger is that they may fall victim to the wrong allies (Muslim and non-Muslim) and *being misguided* as they *don’t have a very rigorous training in Islam* and could be *risking co-optation*. Therefore, he added, *radicalizing Muslims (is sometimes a) consequence of rejection*. In situations of social rejection and discrimination, therefore,

Anybody can catch you in the way, even if he doesn’t know anything, simple because you will be attracted to him, because he is, looks like you or is saying he is Muslim even if he does not have the necessary knowledge or even if he cannot guide you properly (**Mohamed**, one-on-one interview).

Among the common dangers, there is the rhetoric of "going back" to so called "fundamentalist" sources (Mohamed), often through *educating oneself online* (**Margo**). Either way, **Bachar** reported that because of Islamophobia, some Muslims can be lured into the ‘temptation to take revenge if prevented from practicing one’s religion’.

- *Maintaining faith*

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As faith is important (Mohamed) and faith is part of personal life (Margo), Muslim students should be able to distinguish between schooling and education (Mohamed) and learn how to strike a balance between different worldviews (Mohamed) regardless of one's socio-cultural background and the demographic of young people (Margo) who are still maturing. However, it is important to consider religion as part of identity (Margo). Identity (indeed) is intertwined with religion and ethnicity (Momar).

Though there are *different personal conceptions of religion (Mohamed), being a Muslim is a cornerstone of identity (Margo):*

I consider being a Muslim to be a real cornerstone, part of my identity. So, when I joined UVic, I joined the Muslim students' association or at least I kept up with what they are doing. I strongly believe that in order to maintain that part of my identity and keep my faith strong, I need to engage in, you know, activities that kept strengthen that. So, I did join the Muslim students' association and that was like the only big thing overtly Muslim on campus (Margo, one-on-one interview).

Otherwise, "being able to have a base understanding of my religion" (Momar) *and to be a real Muslim (Bodour) are crucial. Each one of us is responsible to represent Islam in the right way (Mho). Therefore, it is expected that Muslims be good role models representing Islam to their own friends (Sammy), emulating good Muslim behaviors and attitudes (Dawood), seeing oneself as ambassador of own country and culture (Dawood) as each person represents his country as well (Mho).*

According to Margo, a Muslim woman should be *considering hijab as part of her identity (Margo), acknowledge that the hijab is very symbolic to Islam (Angel) and therefore accepting the consequences of wearing hijab as one's own doing (Margo) as a reason to wear the hijab/burqa is obeying God (Bodour). Bachar recommended that Muslims not behave like non-Muslims because*

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of fear of marginalization and also *recommended Muslims not hide their identity*. He reported that the *Quran prohibit concealing one's identity as a Muslim*.

- *Creating solidarity across common experiences*

As **Margo** stated, joining the Muslim Students' Association was an opportunity to strengthen her Muslim identity and integrate with a community of people who have common worldviews. **Belle** recognized that belonging in such a community could help one to contribute to *creating solidarity across common experiences*. To this community of common experiences and to the Canadian one at large, **Mali**, concluded:

I think, we should be more involved, you know? Join social groups here on campus, make friends with the other students. Because once you have like, once you have a prejudgement on someone and then you meet them and they turn out to be a nice person, you change the idea about the whole, they changed you, you know? And, so, once you meet a lot of Muslim students and they turn out to be a nice or just like normal people, they don't have to be nice, you know? Then you're not scared of them anymore, you know? (**Mali**, female Saudi student, one-on-one interview).

In developing coping and resistance strategies, Muslim students try to foster relationships and interactions where they are seen as normal people, and people "you are not scared of anymore". However, coping with Islamophobia is not the choice that Muslim students always want to make. Instead, some will prefer to resist Islamophobia and devise different approaches to counter it, such as educating non-Muslim people about Islam and Muslim, educating Muslims themselves about their faith, maintaining their faith by reverting to follow its principles without compromising this in their longing for belonging, and creating communities of solidarity and of common goals.

In the next section, I elaborate on and integrate my constructivist grounded theory, **enduring ambient Islamophobia**, using the storyline technique.

5.2. Integration of the Constructivist Grounded Theory Using the Storyline Technique

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To draw a clear link between the core category (or BSPs) and its properties and dimensions, I use the storyline technique – a common analysis tool in grounded theory studies (Figure 20: Enduring Ambient Islamophobia: A Basic Social Process). According to Birks & Mills (2011), a storyline is “a strategy for facilitating integration, construction, formulation and presentation of research findings through the production of a coherent grounded theory” (p.115). Also, “as both a means and an end in itself, storyline enhances the development, presentation and comprehension of the outcomes of grounded theory research in nursing” (Birks et al., 2009, p. 405). I use the storyline, as a strategy, to illustrate the relationships between the different concepts developed from my grounded theory data. Birks et al (2009) argue that grounded theory study “aims to produce a theory that serves to explain a phenomenon in the context within which it exists” (p. 406). In my case, this grounded theory is **enduring ambient Islamophobia**.

In my study, I perform theoretical development and integration by using the concept map developed around the storyline, the memos I wrote along my journey and the constant comparison method which helped ground my analysis in the data and the participants’ experiences. The concept map provides a schematic representation of the order and sequences of the categories and sub-categories that helped develop the core category and the grounded theory.

The conceptual map in my study explains the ambient nature of Islamophobia from the moment Muslim students have started *becoming aware* of Islamophobia and contextualizing/putting into context *the ideological foundations of Islamophobia* and its social and political bearings. Ambient Islamophobia has overall *impacts on Muslim students’ social well-being and academic learning*. However, these students, like many Muslims around the world, continue to devise various strategies to *survive* Islamophobia by *coping* with it or developing *resistance strategies* to **counter** it. The theoretical codes that highlights this process include the

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following categories: *enduring ambient Islamophobia, becoming aware of ambient Islamophobia, contextualizing the ideological foundations of Islamophobia, bearing the impacts of ambient Islamophobia, coping with Islamophobia and resisting Islamophobia.*

The storyline integrates the grounded theory, **enduring ambient Islamophobia** and its properties and dimensions. It helps decipher a new a field of knowledge grounded in the intersections of different interrelated processes or categories, conceptually staged around the properties of the core category: *stereotyping of Muslim students on campus; segregating out Muslim students in the classroom; silencing/targeting Muslims in the curriculum and instruction; gendering of Islamophobia; “tokenizing” Muslim students through the institution’s structures; rendering Muslim students invisible in the systems; and targeting Muslims in the community.*

Therefore, developing my grounded theory study using the storyline technique provides a format to explain the construction of a substantive theory from the data. Birks & Mills (2011) define theory as an ‘explanatory scheme comprising a set of concepts related to each other through logical patterns of connectivity’ (p.119). According to Charmaz (2006), theorizing “entails the practical activity of engaging the world and of constructing abstract understandings about and within it” (p. 128). For my constructivist grounded theory study, “theorizing concerned guiding interpretive theoretical practice rather than providing a blueprint for theoretical products” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 129). Consequently, interpretative theorizing in my study, concerned the construction of meaning making instead of the discovery of facts. As Corbin & Strauss (2008) argue, “concepts and theories are constructed by researchers out of stories that are constructed by research participants who are trying to explain their experiences and/or lives” (p. 10).

The Storyline Technique:

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I present my constructivist grounded theory as follows: Muslim students on the university campus and in the Victoria community **endure ambient Islamophobia** or religious prejudice and discrimination. These students *become aware of ambient Islamophobia* through recurrent processes where they finally develop an *understanding of social clues and hints that* demonstrate the pervasive and enduring nature of Islamophobia on campus and in the community at large. Muslim students also become aware of ambient Islamophobia through the socio-cultural and political ideologies of Eurocentrism and Orientalism that are endemic to such liberal ideologies like multiculturalism and neoliberalism. Ambient Islamophobia is indeed *strengthened by a complex and multilayered ideology* rooted in Eurocentric and orientalist conceptualisations of Muslims and Islam by the West and the Western people. Muslim students also notice that Islamophobia is inserted in the *intersectionality* of race, gender, language, country of origins, length of time spent in Canada, and assumed power, powerlessness, and privilege. These ideologies stand in sharp contradiction with Muslim students' *expectations of Canada* a welcome and inclusive society. Ambient Islamophobia, however, *targets Muslims students* based on their ethnic, racial, cultural, social, religious, linguistic backgrounds and other physical attributes. Ambient Islamophobia arises in different socio-political contexts or spatial dimensions: in the classroom, on campus, in the curriculum and the teaching, in the institution's policies, services, and in the community. In my study, Muslim students reported that they are "being discriminated against by those who know of them and their religious affiliation" (see code from Muslim women focus group); and by strangers whom they come to share social, physical or environmental space together (e.g. campus and the community. Islamophobia is also ambient and pervades through a worldwide global ambient Islamophobic network/system. The *impacts* of Islamophobia are disastrous on Muslim students' cognitive, affective, social well-being, academic learning and relationships with each other and with the community at large. In order to survive ambient Islamophobia, Muslim students develop

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various *coping* and *resistance strategies* to help diffuse or resist the enduring *impacts of ambient Islamophobia* on their cognitive, affective, psychological, physical, academic and social well-being. However, what Muslim students at UVic really strive for, is *belonging*, as opposed to *being assimilated* or *compelled to compromise* their religious and individual values and identities. Their *expectations of coming to UVic and Canada* remain the same, to study and live in a society that is accepting of them just as human beings.

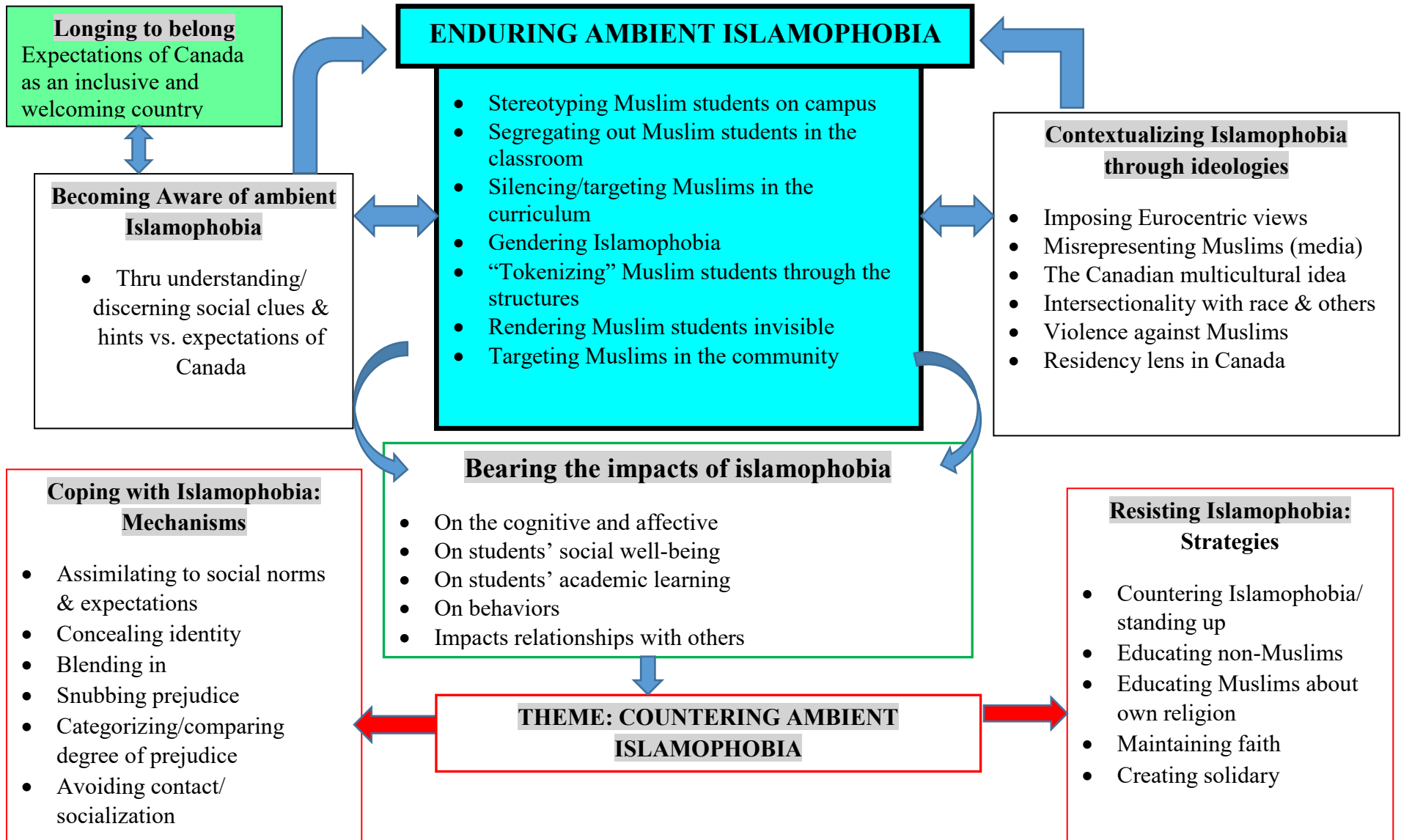
5.3. Summary Chapter 5

In Chapter 5, which is a follow up to Chapter 4, I expand the dimensions of the core category or my constructivist grounded theory, **enduring ambient Islamophobia**. These dimensions comprise the contexts where ambient Islamophobia occurs (e.g. the socio-cultural, political, and physical contexts of ambient Islamophobia include the campus, the classroom, the curriculum, the instruction, the structures of the institution and the community, the national and global levels, attitudes and behaviors, and the ideologies and worldviews of both the perpetrators of discrimination and the Muslim students); and the range, intensity and variation in the pattern of behaviors and attitudes that describe or/ and perpetuate the phenomenon of ambient Islamophobia (e.g. *becoming aware of Islamophobia; contextualizing ambient Islamophobia within ideologies; bearing the impacts of ambient Islamophobia; longing for belonging; to coping with Islamophobia; or resisting Islamophobia*).

The chapter concludes with an in-depth analysis and integration of the constructivist grounded theory, using the storyline technique.

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Figure 20: Enduring ambient Islamophobia: A basic social process



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CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

Chapter 6 Overview

Chapter 6 explores the relationships between the constructivist grounded theory, **enduring ambient Islamophobia** with the literature on Islamophobia and associated prejudices and discrimination.

Figure 21, presents a condensed visual summary of the outline of Chapter 6. In this chapter, I begin my discussions of the findings by providing an overview of the study's framework which includes the purpose of the study, research questions I attempted to answer, and the methodology and methods I used to collect data, analyze and report on it. Such a contextualization helps explain how my study contributes to an understanding of Muslim students' experiences of ambient Islamophobia or anti-Muslim prejudice and discrimination on the university campus and in the community. The **second part** of the chapter highlights the relationships between my study findings (presented in the form of theoretical categories and themes) with the overall literature on Islamophobia, anti-Muslim prejudice, discrimination, racism and their intersections with identity, gender, class, ethnicity, immigration, 'otherness' experiences and so on. I divide this part into two sections: section one discusses the relationships between the literature and the theoretical categories or *properties* (developed in Chapter 4) of the constructivist grounded theory, and section two discusses the relationships between the literature with the *dimensions* (see Chapter 5) – causal conditions, impacts, response strategies, and integration goals for belonging – of the constructivist grounded theory. **Part three** of this chapter discusses the theoretical and practical implications of the study findings (in Chapters 4 and 5), with the goal of making recommendations to various university stakeholders, administrators, faculty and others, on how to improve Muslim students' social well-being and academic success on campus and in the community. **Part four** discusses the limitations

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of my study. In **part five**, I make specific recommendations for future research on Muslim students' experiences on campus and in the community. In **part six**, I briefly summarize chapter 6; and in **part seven**, I conclude my study by bringing all of the pieces together.

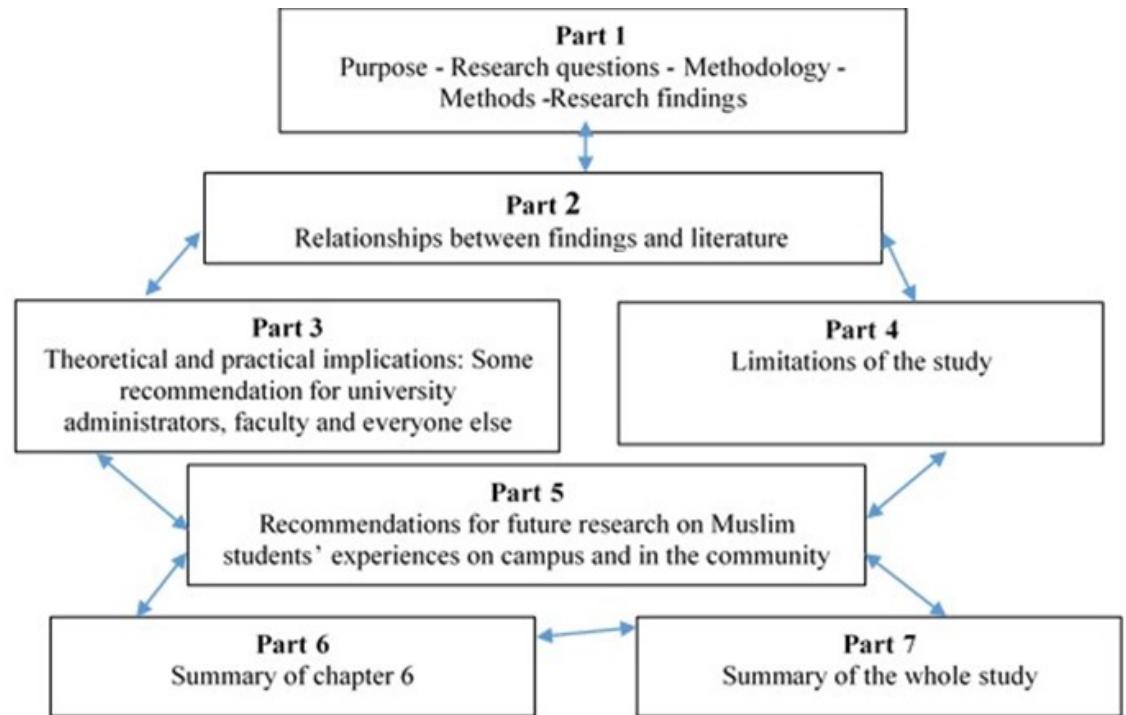


Figure 21: Visual summary of chapter 6 outline

6.1. Study Overview: Purpose, Research Questions, Methodology and Methods

This section reviews my overall study and how I integrate all its components together – purpose, research questions, research methodology and methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation, all of which are sanctioned by a comprehensive ethics review and approval process.

Research methodology and methods

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To answer the research questions, I adopt the constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2014) among different research methodologies (see Chapter 3). As data gathering and analysis methods, I also adopt face-to-face and focus groups interviews approach.

These interviews with Muslim students illustrated the complex and multifaceted aspects of their interactions on and off campus. These interactions are most often tainted by incidents of ambient Islamophobia or anti-Muslim racism and other forms of intersectional discriminations. Muslim students' report that their experiences of Islamophobia or anti-Muslim racism also affect their other identities, such as gender, race, ethnicity, nationalities, religion, cultural and social background, political views, sexual orientation, language, length of residence in Canada, and professional background.

I interviewed 31 Muslim students (11 males and 20 females) through face-to-face or focus groups interviews. These students come from 16 different countries located on one of 3 continents: the Middle East, Africa, and North America. Another characteristic of these Muslim students is that some of them have also lived in other countries before coming to Canada. These experiences of other places, for some, have impacted on their attitudes, behaviors and interpretations of their personal experiences of ambient Islamophobia on campus and in the community (see for example the coping and resistance mechanisms some of them have developed over time to counter ambient Islamophobia, Chapter 5).

The interviews and data collection and analysis methods were part of a structured process described in detail in Chapter 3, which was sanctioned by ethics application (Protocol Number: 15-035) approved by the UVic Human Research Ethics Office. Though these research methodology

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and methods were well structured and supplemented by a rigorous use of the theoretical sampling and constant comparison methods – Glaser and Strauss (1967) describe these methods as a joint coding and analysis of the grounded theory data with the goal “to generate theory more systematically” (p. 102). At times, many realities have challenged my oft taken for granted Westernized assumptions of human relations and interactions. Among the challenges I experienced during the interviews, there were the issues of meeting and interviewing some female Muslim students, from a more traditional inclination. These Muslim women students often asked for a female Muslim to facilitate their focus group discussions and one-on-one interviews. On one occasion, I had to hire a research assistant who is also a Muslim woman. Another challenge I encountered throughout my study was with the transcription and analysis of some of the interviews data. The main issue with transcribing these recordings was the heavy accent of some respondents. Most of these Muslim students have English as an additional language or have very limited vocabulary to express all the things they want to share with me.

My study was conducted within a context where I had to navigate different values, worldviews and socio-cultural aspects of gender, language, race, country of origins, religious affiliations and other intersections of my study’s respondents. These contextual factors greatly impacted the research findings and their interpretation. It was evident throughout the data and from the testimonials of Muslim students that Islamophobia was a pervasive and ambient intersectional form of discrimination which combines prejudice, bias, racism, gender, and capabilities. Ambient Islamophobia, as a concept that emerges from the data, has an enduring impact on students' social well-being and academic success. My study focuses on understanding Muslim students’ experiences on campus and in the community, through their interactions with other students,

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faculty, university administrators and community members at large. Muslim students reported experiences of both overt and latent Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the classroom, on campus, in the curriculum, the instruction, and in the community. Muslim students also reported being stereotyped on campus and in the community; segregated out in class projects and during students' social gatherings; 'tokenized' by administrators and faculty; gendered; silenced in the curriculum and instruction; rendered invisible in the university systems; and targeted in the community. Other impacts of these discrimination and stereotypes, are Muslim students feel 'otherized', excluded, and overtly marginalized.

Faced with such systemic adversity, Muslim students, however, have not stayed passive, but have chosen to develop individual and group strategies to counter ambient Islamophobia in the classroom, the campus and in the community. For example, as a resistance strategy, some Muslim students elected to defend their faith, educate non-Muslims about Islam, and about Muslims and their diversity. Some Muslim students have strategically stood up in class to challenge erroneous stereotypes of Islam. Overall, my study also points to an urgency for educational institutions in Canada to devise more strategies to prevent, address and educate about Islamophobia, anti-Muslim racism and other intersections of race, gender, and other social identities, especially in the current global context of religious bigotry and increasing white nationalist rhetoric.

6.2. Relationships Between the Study Findings and the Literature

This section explores the relationships between the literature and the study findings. As discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, my analysis of the data yielded specific findings grounded in the data. A rigorous analysis of these findings led to the development of a core category or constructivist grounded theory, **enduring ambient Islamophobia**. This core category or constructivist grounded theory was

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also substantiated by a group of categories representing its properties (see Chapter 4) and dimensions (Chapter 5). According to Rossman & Rallis (2003), a category is a word or phrase that describes an explicit segment of the data; and a theme is, “a phrase or sentence describing more subtle and implicit processes” (p. 282). Glaser & Strauss (1967) argue that “a category may subsume common themes and patterns in several codes” (p. 189). They add that a category is also “a conceptual element in a theory” (p. 188). In my study, the properties and dimensions of the core category are theoretical categories. However, though some researchers use these terms interchangeably, Morse (2008) argues that there exist explicit differences between a category and a theme, especially in their formulation.

A category is a collection of similar data sorted into the same place, and this arrangement enables the researchers to identify and describe the characteristics of the category. This, in turn, enables the category itself to be defined, and then compared and contrasted with other categories, or if broad in scope, to be divided into smaller categories, and its parts identified and described. A theme, on the other hand, is a meaningful “essence” that runs through the data. Just as a theme in opera occurs over and over again, sometimes in the foreground, sometimes in the background, and sometimes co-occurring with other tunes, so does the theme in our research. It is the basic topic that the narrative is about, overall (p. 727).

In this chapter, I make this distinction between category and theme (see Table 3 below: *Themes and Theoretical Categories in This Study*).

| Themes | Categories |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Ambient Islamophobia is endemic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stereotyping Muslim students on campus and in the community • Segregating out Muslim students in the classroom • Silencing Muslims in the curriculum and instruction • Gendering Islamophobia • “Tokenizing” Muslim students through the institution’s structures |

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| | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rendering Muslim students invisible in the systems • Targeting Muslims in the community |
| 2. Causal conditions: Contextualizing ambient Islamophobia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming aware of ambient Islamophobia • Contextualizing ambient Islamophobia through ideologies |
| 3. Impacts/ consequences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bearing the impacts of ambient Islamophobia |
| 4. Strategies in countering ambient Islamophobia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coping with ambient Islamophobia • Resisting against ambient Islamophobia |
| 5. Muslim students' integration goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longing for belonging |

To explain more about these relationships between categories and themes, I also develop the model illustrated in *Figure 22: Integration of the Overall Constructivist Grounded Theory*. This model links the different themes, sub-themes (in bold) and categories (or properties/dimensions) of the core category.

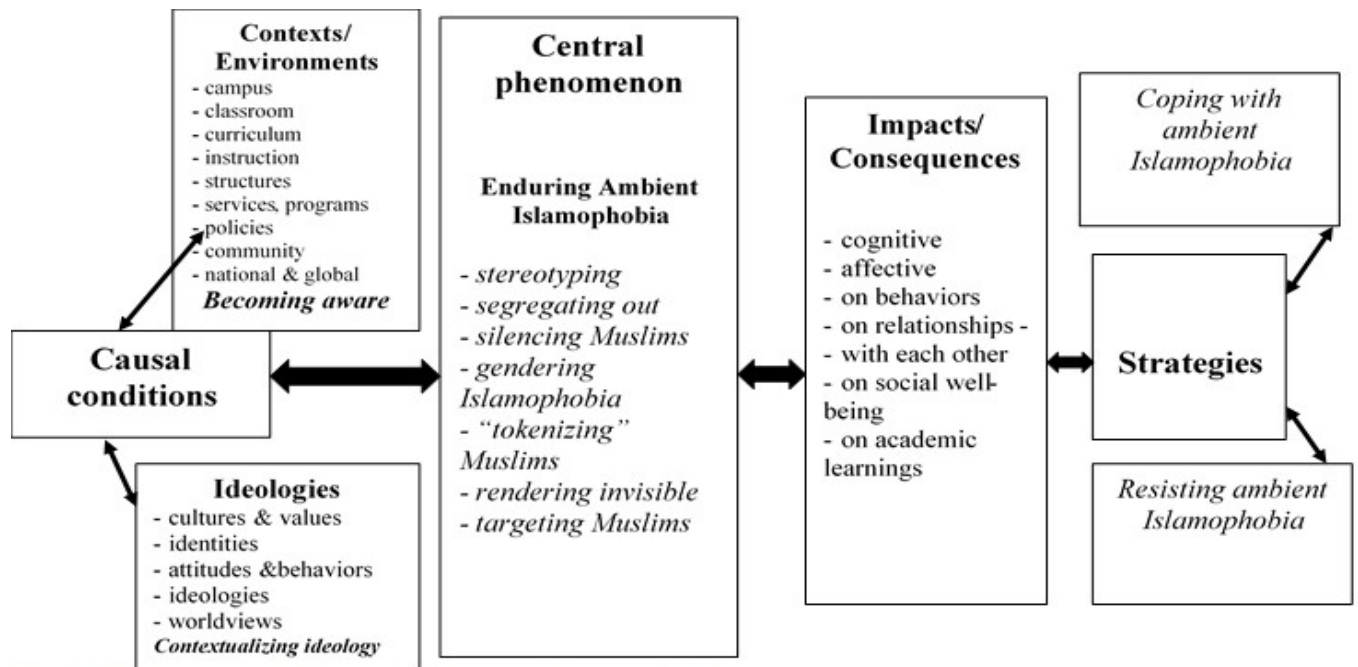


Figure 22: Integration of the overall constructivist grounded theory

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In the next sections, I discuss the relationships between the literature and each of these theoretical categories/ sub-categories.

6.2.1. Relationships Between the Literature, the Constructivist Grounded Theory and its Properties or sub-categories (Theme 1)

The relationships between the literature and the properties (see Figure 5: Core Category and its Properties, in Chapter 4) of the constructivist grounded theory, **enduring ambient Islamophobia** should, by now, somewhat self-evident. In my study, Muslim students report that ambient Islamophobia is an intersectional form of discrimination and racism that impacts various aspects of their identity (race, religion, gender, appearance, language) and life (on campus, in the classroom, in their interactions with the curriculum and the faculty, their peers, the university administrators and employees, as well as with the wider community, whether on the bus, at the store, swimming pool, or at the airport

These experiences of Muslim students are consistent with the literature on Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in Canadian society in general, and on university campuses in particular (Alizai, 2017; Dimandja, 2017; Kassis & Schallie, 2014). According to a 2018 survey by Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME, 2018), an advocacy organization based in Montreal, “religious discrimination – especially Islamophobia – stands as an ongoing challenge to Canada’s multicultural society” (p. 2). The survey found that Canadians are least comfortable with a figure of authority who wears a hijab versus any other type of religious garb; more likely to harbor negative stereotypes about Muslim Canadians; far less comfortable welcoming a Muslim into their family versus people from other religious faiths; less concerned for the religious rights of their Muslims co-citizens though they believe in the protection of religious rights generally; and

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most (17%) perceive the Muslim Canadian community as a monolith. The survey adds that 81% of these Canadians recognize that Islamophobia does exist in Canada. Another 60% think that government should take action to combat Islamophobia. The CJPME (2018) adds that the “attitudes towards religious discrimination are extremely politically polarized” in Canada where “many political leaders are off target when they speak about Islamophobia.” A November 29, 2018 article by the *Guardian newspaper* also corroborates these findings. In its report on the status of hate crimes in Canada, the *Guardian newspaper* found that Canada’s hate crimes were up 47% as Muslims, and targeted mostly Jews and Black people.

Anti-Muslim racism in Canadian society is also central in the report, *Islamophobia in Canada*, submitted to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage on systemic racism and religious discrimination in Canada (2017). Though the motion, known as M-103 was defeated by the conservatives in the House of Commons (Wilkins-Laflamme, 2018; Forrest, 2018), Islamophobia was recognized as endemic in Canada. Islamophobia in Canada is based on “unfounded or irrational fear and/ or hatred of Islam or Muslims (or people perceived to be Muslim),” leading to violence and systemic discrimination” (Kanji, 2017, p. 2). In the M-103 report, public perceptions in Canada of Islam and Muslims were found to be very negative: 46% of Canadians hold unfavorable views of Islam and Muslims; 56% believe that Islam suppresses women’s rights; more than half of Ontarians believe that mainstream Muslim doctrines promote violence; 47% support banning the Muslim headscarves in public (compared with 30% of Americans); and 51% supported government surveillance of mosques (as compared to 46% of Americans). The M-103 report also found a disproportionate amount of negative media coverage of Islam and Muslims; an Islamophobic approach in national security laws, policies, and practices and

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how these impact Muslim women. The M-103 report recognizes how this state of affairs puts a limitation on human rights tribunals and courts in providing remedies for Islamophobia.

In most cases, Muslim students (especially international Muslim students) didn't expect Islamophobia from Canadians. However, the next sections present a suite of processes in detail (see *Figure 13: Core Category, its Properties and Their Dimensions*) that characterize Islamophobia and its relations with the literature and the theories of social control (which summarizes the first four processes of stereotyping Muslim students on campus and in the community; "tokenizing" Muslim students through the institution's structures; silencing Muslims in the curriculum and instruction; rendering Muslim students invisible in the systems); and social dominance (which discusses the last three processes of segregating out Muslim students in the classroom; gendering Islamophobia; targeting Muslims in the community).

- Stereotyping Muslim Students on Campus and in the Community

The stereotyping of Muslim students on campus and in the community is based on various tactics such as: *pigeonholing Muslims in general stereotypes* by holding and spreading erroneous views of Muslims as violent, terrorists, anti-feminist, "not peaceful" people; *discriminating against Muslims on university campus* by accusing them of not fitting it, unable to adapt, and therefore they should "go home if [they] want to wear the hijab" in Canada. Many Muslim students, especially women Muslim students, report been attacked and pressured to take off their Islamic dress. According to Marranci (2004), this form of Islamophobia directed towards Muslim students' dress-code is emblematic of systemic Islamophobia as the "cultural and religious signifiers are the most important factors for developing Islamophobia" (p.107). Other stereotyping tactics include

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unjustified *fear of Muslims as the 'other,'* (i.e. the outsider who can't belong) and the *exclusion of Muslim students* from both class projects and social gatherings.

Dahl et al. (2015) argue that stereotyping and biases work together to create and maintain social inequality. In the Muslim students' experiences, stereotypes are founded in generalized perceptions (Muslims are 'violent', 'terrorists'), beliefs (can't belong because are the out-group), and expectations (Muslims should change) of non-Muslim people (students, faculty, administrators, and community members) (Eid, 2014; Young-Bruehl, 1996; Zine, 2004). The media is reported by many authors as a key propagator of stereotypes about Muslims (Eid & Karim, 2011; Mahtani, 2009; Nisbet, 2016; Sayyid, 2014). In my study, Muslim students described how the media's overall stereotyping of Muslims in general contributes to form Islamophobic opinions and attitudes. Shahzad (2014) agrees with these findings and reports,

...the media represents Muslims in a particular way that forces people to view them through a lens crafted by stereotypes and fear. The representations are so powerful and exclusionary in their nature that they generate a fear of Muslims and ultimately categorize them as dangerous and non-trustable (p. 479).

The generalized negative stereotypes of the Western media contribute to embolden non-Muslims to hold prejudice, discriminate against and exclude Muslims.

- “Tokenizing” Muslim Students Through the Institution’s Structures

As per Muslim students' experiences, the basis of their tokenization is stereotypes and the biases held by non-Muslims. According to **Mohamed**, for example, non-Muslims often do not fully appreciate the full humanity, intersectional identities and diversity of Muslim students.

Tokenization like stereotyping, is experienced by Muslim students as a *lack of inclusive environments* on campus and in the community. Muslim students report *being tokenized by some*

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departments for marketing purposes. They also report the impact of faculty and the latter's behaviors in *imposing same expectations on both non-believers and believers.* Though some Muslim students acknowledge the various steps achieved by the institution to promote a multifaith society on campus and the creation of a Muslim prayer room, they still argue that the system tokenizes them in various ways. **Jenny** argues that in order to achieve genuine equity, the institution needs to hire people representative of the experiences of marginalized groups (e.g. Muslim and other minority students).

These findings are compatible with the literature on systemic discrimination and system justification theory. According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, "systemic discrimination can be described as patterns of behaviours, policies or practices that are part of the structures of an organization, and which create or perpetuate disadvantage for racialized persons" (p.1). According to Henry et al (2016), systemic discrimination is prevalent in Canadian universities' hiring, promotion and retention policies and practices of racialized and Indigenous faculty and staff. Erkan & Walker (2018) concur that discriminatory attitudes and behaviors are also prevalent in some university administrators, who often show a total "indifference to students' challenges" (p. 73).

In my study, the Muslim students accuse university administrators, students and faculty of using system justification tactics to justify attitudes and behaviors that condone Islamophobia and discrimination. Vargas-Salfate et al. (2018) report that

According to system justification theory, people are actively motivated to justify the social, political, and economic arrangements to which they belong. In that sense, they perceive that these systems are legitimate and fair, even if they contradict their own material interests (Jost et al., 2004; e.g., Jost, 1997; Proestakis & Brañas-Garza, 2016). This theoretical approach proposes that the main psychological mechanisms of the system justification are related to the fulfilling of epistemic, existential, and relational needs (Hennes, Nam, Stern, & Jost, 2012). So, system justification allows people to achieve certainty, to reduce external

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threats, and to share a common reality with other individuals, even in the face of social inequality (p. 2).

Therefore, system justification attempts to preserve the status quo while maintaining an “us versus them” social divide which hinders Muslim students’ voices and visibility. System justification also serves as a strategy to preserve the power and unearned privilege of the dominant group.

This is consistent with the literature on power and privilege. According to Max Weber (1947) power is “the ability of an individual or group to achieve their own goals or aims when others are trying to prevent them from realizing them” (p. 152). Weber distinguishes between coercive power and authoritative power where the former is achieved through physical or military might and the latter through social positioning or status. Further “according to Bourdieu, power is culturally and symbolically created and continuously re-legitimized through an interplay of agency and structure that takes shape through habitus: ‘the socialized norms and tendencies that guide behavior and thinking’” (ShinghaRoy, p. 15). One key concept in Bourdieu’s (1984) conceptualization of power and habitus, is ‘doxa’. According to Bourdieu (1984),

Doxa happens when we ‘forget the limits’ that have given rise to unequal divisions in society: it is ‘an adherence to relations of order which, because they structure inseparably both the real world and the thought world, are accepted as self-evident’ (Bourdieu 1984, p. 471, cited in Powercube, 2019, p. 2).

Privilege is embedded in systems and social patterns, all of which are reinforced by power and habitus. Unearned privilege is intimately related to power and system justification theories. According to Peggy McIntosh (1988), in her most publicized work, *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*, un-earned privilege is an invisible knapsack of assets that an entitled group can refer to on a regular basis to more effectively negotiate their daily lives. Robinson (1999) argues that privilege creates confusion about identity. Our identities are socially constructed in society by

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way of discourses and discourses “position individuals in power relations with one another” (Robinson, 1999, p. 73). In the course guide, *Privilege 101: A Quick and Dirty Guide*, Siam Ferguson (2014) teaches that all aspects of our identities, whether oppressed or privilege by society –interact with one another. Therefore, to unpack the various “isms”, around religion, race, gender, sexuality, and disability, requires that an individual unlearn previously acquired privilege (Robinson, 1999).

- Rendering Muslim Students Invisible in the System

Rendering Muslim students invisible in the systems is a direct consequence of system justification based on attitudes of prejudice, stereotypes, bias, tokenization and silencing Muslim students.

Rendering Muslim students invisible affects all dimensions of their identity (race, gender, religion, sexuality, family status, country of origin, social status) and capabilities (language fluency, work experiences, intellectual abilities, and others). Muslim students report being rendered *invisible in the system* because of the ways non-Muslims *discount Muslims diversity; misrepresent Islam and Muslims; ‘Otherize’ Muslims; look for the praiseworthy Muslim; and render Muslims invisible in general*. All these attitudes, Muslim students report, contribute to a state of endemic Islamophobia that expands beyond the university and affects Muslim students’ interactions in the wider community.

These findings are also consistent with the literature on Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. *Rendering Muslims invisible* is to refuse to acknowledge their voices and the diversity of their Muslim identities. According to Sayyid (2008),

This refusal to acknowledge Muslim identity as being a proper form of political identification, is perhaps one of the hallmarks of Islamophobia (p.92).

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Discounting Muslims and their diversity is indeed *ignoring the complexity of Muslim traditions* and *discounting Muslim students' experiences* as related to their ethnicity or geographical origins, whether they are from an Arab Middle Eastern background, African or Canadian Caucasian cultural heritage. Othering Muslim students through marginalization, questioning where they *are from because of their Muslim background* or *speaking about Muslims like they are some sort of alien* is part of the Orientalist mindset which portrays Muslims and the Muslim worlds as the dangerous and untrustworthy 'other' depicted in Huntington's (1996) culturally biased *Clash of Civilizations* (Shahi, 2017). According to Dimandja (2017), Edward Said (1997) succinctly,

explained that "the general basis of Orientalist thought is an imaginative and yet drastically polarized geography dividing the world into two unequal parts, the larger, 'different' one called the Orient, the Other, also known as 'our' world, called the Occident or the West ..." (p. 4). Said clearly articulated a power relationship in which Muslim international students represent the "Orient" and the West embodies the "Occident." Experiences of discrimination and prejudice that some Muslim international students face may be perpetuated by campus policies and programs (Occident) that are either consciously or unconsciously designed, based on a history of terror incidences that have covertly influenced a climate of anti-Muslim views and suspicion (Allen, 2010).

Because of this skewed vision of the Muslim world, non-Muslim misrepresentations of Muslims and Islam also show that they are *missing a comprehensive learning (opportunity) about Islam (throughout high school to university) as they perceive Muslim people as 'something else'* instead of conferring to them humanity and acceptance of their diversity. The refusal to confer to Muslims their humanity is a denial of Muslim self- agency. This denial is often played out in the case of Muslim women viewed by non-Muslims as passive victims of patriarchy. However, Muslim women like **Bodour and Mali** among others, debunk these beliefs. According to both **Bodour** and **Mali**, wearing the hijab was a choice they consciously made:

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... “she said they were kind of like congratulating me, like: wow, you managed to take off your hijab”. Which is weird like why would you judge people for wearing, like, we can wear whatever we want you know? We should have that right at least (**Mali**, one-on-one interview).

Another social behavior that renders Muslim students invisible is the systemic tendency to invite ‘moderate’ scholars to speak on behalf of all Muslims or to praise Muslims who have taken off their hijab or adopted a less formal dress code like **Bodour**. **Bodour** reported that she was *being praised for being a ‘modernized Muslim’* because she was wearing colorful clothes. Overall, the expectations of non-Muslims about how Muslim students should look and behave contributes to *rendering Muslim students invisible*.

- Silencing Muslims in the Curriculum and Instruction

Silencing Muslims in the curriculum and instruction is about instilling fear for speaking their minds while participating and interacting with the curriculum and the faculty. As for the Arab woman whom the West constructs as a passive victim to be silenced (Fayad, 2010), Muslim students in my study are silenced externally by the curriculum and the instruction for fear of ridicule, stereotyping and segregation. According to many, microaggressions, which are direct violence, show how Muslim students’ experience being silenced by non-Muslims. Microaggressions, Muslim students add, also invalidate their lived experiences of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism (Alizai, 2017). The impacts of microaggressions are racism, Islamophobia or religious prejudice and discrimination (Dimandja, 2017; Harwood et al. 2015). Chester Pierce, a professor of psychiatry and education at Harvard (Yosso et al., 2009), to whom we are indebted for introducing the term in 1969, defines microaggressions as “subtle, innocuous, preconscious, or unconscious degradations; and putdowns, often kinetic but capable of being verbal and/or kinetic” (Pierce, 1995, p. 281, cited in Dimandja, 2017). According to Sue et al. (2007), “microaggressions are brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to people of color because they belong to a racial minority group” (p. 273). They add,

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Microaggressions are often unconsciously delivered in the form of subtle snubs or dismissive looks, gestures, and tones. These exchanges are so pervasive and automatic in daily conversations and interactions that they are often dismissed and glossed over as being innocent and innocuous. Yet, as indicated previously, microaggressions are detrimental to persons of color because they impair performance in a multitude of settings by sapping the psychic and spiritual energy of recipients and by creating inequities (Franklin, 2004; D. W. Sue, 2004, cited in Sue et al., 2007, p. 273).

In my study, the silencing of Muslim students through microaggressions strategies is exerted by both non-Muslim students and faculty through various tactics of: *dismissing Muslim students' worldviews* in class discussions; *ridiculing Islam and Muslims* by adopting the textbook without applying any critical lens; mis-defining the teaching of Islam by imposing selective readings; showing blatant lack of discernment of the diversity in the Muslim religion by always privileging Muslim literature from only Arab authors; *prejudicing against Muslims and other minorities* by shutting down any reference to Islamophobia as a valuable academic research field; and showing great discomfort toward non-white students' accent or female Muslim students donning the hijab or Islamic dress during class discussions. Other microaggressions from non-Muslim students and faculty are expressed through *labelling Muslims as anti-Semitic* because of the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinians; *denigrating religion in general and Islam in particular*; *imposing atheistic views* by mocking any act of believing in God; *refuting the universality of human rights and university policies on accommodation, discrimination and harassment*; *as well as instilling a constant fear in Muslim students*. These attitudes and direct discrimination make Muslim students realize how much their religion is hated, their opinions unwelcomed by professors, and that they are on their own. Sue et al. (2007) identify three forms of microaggressions:

Microassault, represents verbal or nonverbal attacks that are overtly and racially derogatory and designed to harm the recipient through insults, avoidant conducts, or deliberate discriminatory actions. The second, microinsult, refers to subtle insults, often unconsciously perpetrated, but overtly communicates a hidden offensive message to people of color. Microinvalidations as the third form of racial microaggression denote communications that invalidate and exclude the psychological viewpoints or experiences of a person of color (Dimandja, 2017, p. 39).

Social Control Theory

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Overall, the key characteristic of these four processes – stereotyping Muslim students on campus and in the community; “tokenizing” Muslim students through the institution’s structures; rendering Muslim students invisible in the systems; and silencing Muslims in the curriculum and instruction – is exclusion and social control. According to Kassis & Schallie (2014), in the context of the university campus, domestic Canadian students’ social prejudice attitudes toward Muslim students are rooted in “social control mechanisms” (p. 141). Shahzad (2014) argues that social control mechanisms are fueled by a fear discourse which is

expanded through propaganda, manipulation of information, symbolic manipulation, cultural support, nationalism, consensus against an “enemy,” social institutional stories about threat, language, pervasive communication, symbolic awareness, and a sense of disorder. In the context of the War on Terror, this discourse has become far more erudite due to the inclusion of terrorism and “rests on important changes that have occurred in our culture and social institutions” (Altheide 2006b, 150–151). These changes have been made to exert extensive social control efforts that resonate with a collective identity about the legitimacy of “us” (the victims) against “them” (the terrorists) (Altheide, 2006a, quoted in Shahzad, 2014, p. 469).

In order for university stakeholders to effectively revert social control fueled by a discourse of fear, they need to address the roots of stereotypes, prejudices, biases, tokenization, silencing and the pervasive acts of rendering Muslim students invisible. University stakeholders also need to develop a holistic approach that challenges Islamophobia or anti-Muslim racism at its very roots, buried in the Western culture psyche founded on attitudes, beliefs and behaviors of exclusion, social control and system justification. Finally, university stakeholders also need to root out social dominance, wielded through attitudes and behaviors of segregation, gendering and targeting Muslim students in all spaces.

- Segregating Muslim Students in the Classroom

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According to the literature, while stereotyping is based on beliefs and assumptions, segregation, like social exclusion, acts specifically to prevent members of an out-group from gaining access to a given resource or to participate in an activity. Dimandja (2017) acknowledges that,

[t]he historical legacy of inclusion and exclusion (resides in) [t]he preservation of archaic campus policies and programs that cater mainly to a homogeneous population, including behaviors that include multicultural interaction, are exclusionary practices that reflect a historically segregated culture [Hurtado et al., 1998, 1999; Milem et al., 2005]. These practices connote Muslim international students as the Other, as those who do not belong, which demonstrates the existence of Islamophobia and is based somewhat on the Orientalist View [Edvardsson, 2008] (p. 46).

In these campus spaces, segregation focuses to keep one group of people (the out-group) apart from another (the in-group). Some of the key features of the Muslim students' experiences of segregation are *being excluded from classroom conversations* and witnessing non-Muslims *segregating Muslim students out in class projects, excluding Muslims students from socializing events, and bullying Muslim students through ethnic jokes* (see Figure 8: Category: Segregating out Muslim Students in the Classroom). Alizai (2017), in her Masters thesis, *Impact of Islamophobia on Post-Secondary Muslim Students Attending Ontario's Universities*, acknowledges how university administrators' skewed worldviews and lack of appreciation of the full context of Muslim students' lives on campus contribute to their segregation among other forms of religious and racial discrimination. Garner & Selod (2015) also notice how Muslim students were excluded based on their race and other religious signifiers. Dimandja (2017) also reports how Muslims students are segregated out in class projects and social events because of their accents and the fact that English is not their native language. Muslim students also reported "*being cast out in socializing because they do not drink*". In my study, Muslim students also accused non-Muslim students and faculty for

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“undervaluing Muslim women’s opinion in class”, “bullying Muslim students through ethnic jokes, and “making cultural jokes about how non-white graduate students enter class discussions.

Segregating out Muslim students also mean that non-Muslim students often choose to *“separate themselves from minority students”* by *“refusing to be paired with Muslim students in class conversations”* or *“withholding feedback from minority students”* whom they will be openly *“discriminating against because of their accent”*. In such instances, Muslim students report *“feeling treated by classmates like they do not belong.”* According to Woods (1983), segregation is indeed exclusion. Fisher (2011) adds that,

...the term ‘exclusion’ can potentially provide a wider scope to the analysis of the dynamics producing a situation of disadvantage. He emphasizes that different forms of exclusion may or may not be related to actual lack of means, as people can be excluded on the basis of their race, age or gender, etc (Fisher 2011, quoted in Bernt & Colini, 2013, p. 5).

Levitas (2007) defines social exclusion as “the lack or denial of resources, rights, goods and services and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities available to the majority of people in a society” (p. 9, quoted in Bernt & Colini, 2013, p. 5). Therefore, social exclusion, which arises from overall exclusion of Muslim students in various settings, is both a process and a condition. Bernt & Colini (2013) report that,

[S]o far, a generally accepted understanding among scholars seems to point to exclusion being both a process and condition, one resulting from a combination of intertwined forms of social, economic and power inequalities and leading to disadvantage, relegation and the systematic denial of individuals’ or communities’ rights, opportunities and resources. (p. 5-6).

It is clear that Muslim students’ experiences on campus and in the community are combined with a denial of their voices, a lack of recognition, suppression of their rights to participation, practice their religion and be themselves, as well as access services and resources without being segregated out and subjected to Islamophobia and other intersectional forms of discrimination, one of which is gendered Islamophobia.

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- Gendering Islamophobia

Islamophobia, indeed, has a gender dimension. Gendering Islamophobia is a theoretical concept I recognized in the discrimination and anti-Muslim racism directed towards Muslim women wearing the hijab or Islamic dress. As stated in the literature, the experiences of Muslim women is indeed specific (Alizai, 2017; Dimandja, 2017; Zine, 2006). According to Zine (2006),

“The veil positioned them (the Muslims, and particularly the Muslim women) as foreigners who did not belong to the Canadian social fabric and the Islamophobic attitudes they encountered cast them as illegal immigrants, a tantamount denial of their citizenry (Zine, 2006, cited in Alizai, 2017, p. 27).

Most participants in my study recognized the impact of the veil on Muslim women, as they have experienced gendered Islamophobia either as a victim or a witness. Based on these experiences, they have accessed gendered Islamophobia directed towards Muslim women donning Islamic dress as endemic on campus and in Canadian society. Although gendered Islamophobia can be embedded in condescending attitudes towards Muslim women and tokenization, it is an explicit direct Islamophobic behavior. Respondents in my study, all argue that gendered Islamophobia is rooted in Western cultural attitudes and beliefs about Muslim women as exasperatedly passive and victims of patriarchy. In their attempts to *help free Muslim women*, non-Muslims often alienate and segregate out Muslim women.

One of the key features of gendered Islamophobia is stigma. Muslim students experience stigma as being *treated differently because of their Muslim appearance; attacked because of (their) hijab; marginalized; and shouted at* in public. The stigma of being Muslim women gives license to non-Muslims to openly *express their discomfort towards hijab-wearing women*. According to Muslim students, they are challenged by the paternalistic and condescending attitudes and behaviors

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of so-called *non-Muslim feminist warriors* who believe that they have a so-called ‘divine’ responsibility to ‘empower’ or liberate Muslim women from their own Muslim cultures (Abu-Lughod, 2002). These saviors also believe that in order to free Muslim women, they need to help them get rid of their Islamic dress, especially the hijab. These saviors, many Muslim students argue, can be found among the faculty, some of whom *assume that hijabi (women) are victims of their Muslim societies*. These findings are also compatible with the literature. Many writers report these common attitudes from non-Muslims who believe that “Muslim women need of saving” (Khan, 2009, p.138) from their cultures and societies (Abu-Lughod, 2002; Allen, 2017; Khan, 2009; Shomer, 2015).

To survive gendered Islamophobia, Muslim students like **Bodour** have turned the stigma attached to their Islamic dress into positive capital and an element of their free choice and self-respect (Amir-Moazami, 2010). **Bodour** adopted to wear more colorful hijabs to earn herself the title of being a ‘moderate Muslim’ and to be less of a target for Islamophobia in the community.

- Targeting Muslims in the Community

Most respondents reported that targeting Muslims in the community is a wide-spread social phenomenon. The literature corroborates these issues. According to Zine (2019), for example,

Statistics Canada’s results sound the alarm:

Statistics Canada found hate crimes against Muslims in Canada grew 253 per cent from 2012 to 2015. It got even worse: police-reported general hate crimes shot up by 50 per cent in 2017 reaching a new all-time high. These numbers are largely driven by incidents targeting Muslim, Jewish and Black people with the increases being driven mainly by events in Ontario and Québec.... Muslims have been constructed as the “enemies within” and represent the new folk devils that threaten the stability of the nation. According to a 2017 Radio Canada poll, most Canadians (74 per cent) favour a Canadian values test for Muslim immigrants, while 23 per cent favour a ban

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on Muslim immigration, a level of support that rises to 32 per cent in Québec (Zine, 2019, p. 2).

In my study, Muslim students also report that ambient Islamophobia translates into generalized *blind targeting of Muslim minorities and other brown people*. As in social control situations on campus and in the classroom, **Margo** recognized that targeting Muslims starts with stereotypes and *subtle prejudicial comments*. *Mistrusting Muslims* is also a result of these stereotypes and biases, according to **Brian**. Muslim students argued that the perpetrators of Islamophobia are in the community: “people have stereotypes of you because of who you are (race or religion).” **Bodour** reported that Muslim students’ complaints to the BC Transit office are responded to with excuses for the drivers by the transit authority. Therefore, when attacked in the community, Muslim students like **Bodour, Ara, Mali** and others often try to avoid retaliating, as they have little trust in the overall system (police and transit office). They argued that, “being Muslim, the stereotype can go against you in conflict as well”.

Again, female Muslim students are the main targets of Islamophobia in the community because of their Islamic dress. These students often get “attacked by other women on the bus because of (their) hijab”. They also get screamed at in the stores (e.g. Walmart), called names, and asked “to take off my hijab right there” (**Mali**, one-on-one interview). People, indeed, often react violently to Muslim outfits, expressing discomfort towards hijab-wearing women, showing offence because of the presence of Muslim women, and yelling at them because they have the power and privilege to do so: “*You should not be allowed to wear this here*”.

Additionally, being Muslim is a hefty price to pay, especially in the context of employment. Many Muslim students report being discriminated against in employment and in the workplace.

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Some of these discriminations are *because of the hijab*. Muslim student also reported *being overlooked for leadership opportunities in employment or being (overtly) banned to work in certain companies because [of the] US ban*. Another aspect of ambient Islamophobia is related to families and relatives of Muslim converts or white people who converted to Islam like **Margo and Sparkle**. These Muslim students have been resented by their own and are rejected or excluded by family members as a way to punish them for leaving the family's traditional Christian religious faith.

Social Dominance Theory

The key combined characteristics of segregation, gendered Islamophobia and targeted discrimination against Muslims in the community is social dominance. Social control mechanisms help legitimize the collective identity of 'us' (non-Muslims) and 'them' (the Muslims), and reinforce the social dominance of one group over another (Shahzad, 2014). Social dominance is a theory popularized by Sidanius & Pratto (1999) which describes the dynamics of intergroup relations and how an in-group will struggle to maintain group dominance over out-groups. Like prejudice and intergroup bias (Allport, 1979; Dahl et al., 2015; Dion, 2001; Dovidio, 2001; Dovidio et al, 2010; Fiske, 1998; Hewstone, Rubin & Willis, 2002), social dominance is discrimination (subtle or direct), where the dominant group's main purpose is to maintain their group dominance and hierarchy over other groups they perceived as low-status and as deserving of less of everything (Hummel, 2012; Rubin & Hewstone, 2004; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Discrimination in this case is defined by Dovidio et al. (2010) as a negative "behaviors that creates, maintains, or reinforces advantage for some groups". According to Hummel (2012),

Social dominance theory notes that oppression, of which discrimination is an aspect, is caused by institutional and individual factors. Ideologies become the focus in which people share knowledge and beliefs that facilitate that discrimination. People who accept these

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ideologies desire some form of group-based dominance. The level of individual acceptance of these ideologies is reflected in that individual's social dominance orientation. A high social dominance orientation indicates a strong desire to promote some form of an inter-group hierarchy (p. 36).

Here, I should however highlight keywords in Hummel's statement: 'discrimination'; 'oppression'; 'individual and institutional factors'; 'ideologies'; 'shared knowledge and beliefs'; 'group-based dominance'; 'high social dominance orientation'; 'inter-group hierarchy'. These words of Hummel (2012) clearly corroborate the findings in my study about Muslim students' experiences of ambient Islamophobia and how these are reinforced by social dominance and social control mechanisms entrenched in attitudes and behaviors rooted in Eurocentric and Orientalist beliefs, culture and ideologies. In my study, the discriminatory and oppressive attitudes and behaviors in the individuals and systems, are characterized by segregating out Muslim students in the classroom; gendering Islamophobia; and targeting Muslims in the community.

However, my study also found that social control mechanisms and social dominance attitudes and behaviors are not enough to subdue Muslim students and subjugate them to the yoke of ambient Islamophobia and its intersections. Instead, with time, Muslim students develop various strategies to *cope with* or *resist ambient Islamophobia*.

6.2.2. The Relationships between the Literature and the Dimensions of the Constructivist Grounded theory, Enduring Ambient Islamophobia

The relationships between the literature and the dimensions of ambient Islamophobia appear to be clear (Alizai, 2017, Bazian, 2017; Bleich, 2012; CAIR-CA, 2015; Dimandja, 2017; Erkan & Walker, 2016; Gulson & Webb, 2013; Sarwar & Raj, 2016; Shahzad, 2014; Zine, 2006). In the next sections, I discuss the relationships between the literature and the dimensions of my constructivist grounded theory. Such discussion is based on the relationships between the literature and the

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theoretical categories (*Figure 13: Core Category, its Properties and Their Dimensions*) that define the various themes illustrated in *Figure 22: Integration of the Overall Constructivist Grounded Theory*: the causal conditions of Islamophobia (Theme 2); impacts or consequences of ambient Islamophobia (Theme 3); strategies in countering ambient Islamophobia (Theme 4); and the integration goals of the Muslim students (Theme 5).

6.2.2.1. Causal conditions: Contextualizing Ambient Islamophobia (Theme 2)

As per the findings in this study, at the beginning of their journeys on campus and in the community around, Muslim students don't expect Islamophobia. However, over time, they develop a clear awareness of social clues and hints and learn to understand the causes and historical, ideological, socio-political and cultural conditions under which ambient Islamophobia affects Muslim students on campus, the classroom, the curriculum and instruction, and in the community.

- **Becoming Aware of Ambient Islamophobia**

Muslim students in my study reported that becoming aware of ambient Islamophobia is a long process. However, they also recognized that it is not straightforward process as their acknowledgment of the existence of Islamophobia on the campus and the community around is often hindered by their prior expectations of Canada as a multicultural society and a liberal democracy, respectful of all human rights. Therefore, Muslim students often show a complex process of becoming aware of ambient Islamophobia. At the end of this process though, Muslim students reported that they developed full *awareness of social cues; understanding of the meaning of social cues and hints*. They also reported being able to *distinguish between Islamophobia and other forms of discrimination; notice between obvious discrimination and subtle ones*; and compared how they've been treated differently as time goes. Muslim students confirmed that, in the

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end, becoming aware helped them to *be able to navigate the subtleness of Islamophobia* on campus and in the community, since *"academic success means having supportive peers around you"* and *social "well-being is achieved when developed healthy good relationship with people"*.

The literature corroborates these findings as Islamophobia is primarily an ideology (Bazian, 2017; Bleich, 2012; Klug, 2012; Kundnani, 2016). Kundnani (2016) adding that Islamophobia is also a structural feature of capitalism embedded in a 'general pattern of racisms' which serve the imperial ideologies of the New World order. According to Gulson & Webb (2013) argues that, though Islamophobia

is not a biological or somatic premise for pernicious action... What is argued to make Islamophobia unique, however, is the combining of nationality, religion and politics, that is frequently produced in Orientalist, Islamophobic and racist discourses (p. 629).

According to Carrol (2017), a Gallup World Religion Survey found that someone who harbours Islamophobic tendencies towards Muslim will also have "equivalent negative bias toward Jews". Carroll adds that, "in fact, contempt for Jews makes a person "about 32 times as likely to report the same level of prejudice toward Muslims". Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia are halves of the same walnut" (p.). To develop awareness of Islamophobia and other forms of racism, Ladson-Billings (2013) advises the use of the power of stories in order to contextualize (and center) the narratives of the victims.

- Contextualizing Ambient Islamophobia Through Ideologies

The data in my study clearly states the impacts of ideology on ambient Islamophobia. According to Muslim students, Eurocentric and Orientalist ideologies are pervasive on campus and in society. The curriculum and instruction are rooted in Eurocentric ideologies. Muslim students repeatedly reported the effects of *Eurocentric and Orientalist* ideologies in the demeaning of Islam and

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Muslims by the faculty. They also related the instances they have been forced to silently seat through faculty atheistic rants. In order to survive certain faculty, Muslim students are *compelled to ground their ideas in Eurocentric views*.

Muslim students also reported that the ideological context of the campus and the community is one that constantly promotes the *stereotyping of Muslim men as abusers of their women*. Such a culture also *prioritizes Christian holidays over others*, clearly demonstrating the Eurocentric attitudes embedded in the systems. Non-Muslims, often *assume that if you are covered, you are some religious minority*, and by extension a Muslim and a potential terrorist threat. Such a Eurocentric and Orientalist environments are sustained by the *misrepresentation of Muslims in the media* and the *myths of the Canadian multiculturalism ideologies* which entrench the beliefs that in Canada, *“people don’t practice discrimination openly”*. As with fear discourse, fear grounded in Eurocentric and Orientalist ideologies translates into mistrust, distrust and profiling of Muslims. According to **Belle**, *“the government watches the Muslim chat rooms and discussion places”* while the *“whole community is constantly under scrutiny”*. Overall, Muslim students recognize the pervasiveness of the Eurocentric and Orientalist ideologies on campus and in the society, as these *essentialize Western perspectives, attitudes, behaviors and cultures* that provide context and justification to ambient Islamophobia.

These findings are definitely compatible with the literature which summarizes the key tenets of ambient Islamophobia (Bazian, 2015; Fry, 2018; Grosfoguel, 2010; Harris, 2017; Johnson, 2011; Runnymede, 1997; Said, 1978) as follows:

- Islamophobia is endemic and pervasive.
- Ambient Islamophobia silences and renders Muslim students invisible.

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- Islamophobia is rooted in Eurocentric and Orientalist ideologies of the Western World.
- *Multiculturalism doesn't mean that people in Canada are more accepting of differences.*
- The media has an overall impact on the promotion of Islamophobia and violence against Muslims.
- Political rhetoric legitimizes Islamophobia.
- Islamophobia is a social construct, founded on prejudice, bias, stereotypes, fear of the different 'other', moral panic and other assumptions, and active discrimination against Muslims and Islam.
- Islamophobia has a legal basis, as the legal system is often challenge assess to courts and tribunals for victims of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim racism attacks.
- Intersectionality: Islamophobia is multi- dimensional and affects an individual religion, race, gender, appearance (e.g. wearing a hijab) and so on.
- Islamophobia has a very clear link to racism and critical race theory.
- Storytelling is a powerful research tool to draw out and capture Muslim students' experiences of ambient Islamophobia on campus and in the community.

6.2.2.2. Impacts or Consequences: Bearing the Impacts of Ambient Islamophobia (Theme 3)

From the testimonials in the data, the impacts of ambient Islamophobia have dire cognitive, affective, and behavioral effects on Muslim students and their social well-being, academic success, and relationships with each other and non-Muslims. The cognitive impacts of ambient Islamophobia include the fact that Muslims students are compelled to *act against and renounce their own values in class* in order to fit in; that though they are *being perceived as "something else"*, they still should *try to assimilate themselves* to the dominant Eurocentric and Orientalist culture. Muslim students

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also reported the *psychological impacts of acting against (their) own values* and how this creates an *identity crisis and alienation* for them, as they are *being prevented from practicing one's religion*, and restrained from participating in public activities because they are feared. The literature confirms these findings as authors (Bleich, 2011 and 2012; Eagly & Chaiken, 200; Samari, 2016) define discrimination and especially prejudice, as

typically conceptualized as an attitude that, like other attitudes, has a cognitive component (e.g. beliefs about a target group), an affective component (e.g. dislike), and a conative component (e.g. a behavioral predisposition to behave negatively toward the target group) (Dovidio et al., 2010, p. 5).

Moghissi, Rahnema & Goodman (2009) also confirm the impact of ambient Islamophobia on Muslim students as the misrepresentations of Islam as backward and fanatical led to a new group identity among Muslims in Canada (in Alizai, 2017, p. 69-70).

In addition to these cognitive and affective impacts, Muslim students also reported how such a context and ideologies of ambient Islamophobia affect their behaviors as they struggle to “*fit in*” and avoid “*standing out*”. These findings are also confirmed in the literature. Many authors argue that open Islamophobia prevents Muslim students from participating in classroom discussions and other extra-curricular activities (Alizai, 2017; Dimandja, 2017; Gasman, 2018, Wessler & Preble, 2010). According to Gasman, Muslim students who wear the hijab on campus are often scared to participate in classroom discussions. Wessler & Preble (2010) report in their study, *The Respectful School: How Educators and Students can Conquer Hate and Harassment*, that the effect of fear on one Muslim student’s behavior after the September 11 attack prevented her from attending school for several days. Ali & Bagheri (2018) argue that,

Although classroom discussions should be challenging and students have the right to express their beliefs and opinions, if such discussions are not monitored properly by professors, they can lead to the expression of ridicule and discrimination toward Muslims and Islam (Speck, 1997 cited in Ali & Bagheri, 2018, p. 49).

These authors also add that

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Muslim students have also reported hesitance in correcting professors due to viewing the professor as an authority figure with power over their grades and class standing (Speck, 1997 cited in Ali & Bagheri, 2018, p. 49).

The literature also corroborated the findings on the impacts of ambient Islamophobia on Muslim students' academic learning and social well-being. Islamophobia, indeed, affects Muslim students as many recognize how *prejudice is very devastating to (their) education and will force them to isolate themselves*. They also recognized that because of prejudice and Islamophobia, they will be *hesitating to go to counseling because of their own cultural biases*. Muslim students also recognize that *prejudice has severe mental effects on Muslim students and makes Muslim students miss opportunities*. According some respondents, *Islamophobia "impacts everything", as it affects Muslim students' lives, undermine minorities' safety, and, Islamophobia, as fear, 'affects Muslim students' social life and educational life*.

Similarly, many authors (Ali & Bagheri, 2018; Alizai, 2017; Bleich, 2012; Dimandja, 2017) corroborate these findings in the literature. Ali & Bagheri (2018) report that

Anti-Islamic sentiment in the classroom can also contribute to feelings of isolation among Muslim students, especially if a student is the only Muslim in the class. The simple fact of being a minority in the classroom can create an uncomfortable learning environment. In classes that discuss social, cultural, and religious topics, the potential for discrimination is always present. (Ali & Bagheri, 2018, p. 49-50).

Anti-Islamic sentiments can also negatively impacts Muslim students' relationship with non-Muslim students and other community members. Ambient Islamophobia in my study, also contributes to *stopping Muslim parents to send their children to mosque for prayers*, contributing to their further marginalization from the wider community. Muslim students' relationships with the rest are also affected by them *not being taken seriously* if they converted. This situation impacts the

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trust issues between converts with both Muslims and members of their original non-Muslim communities.

Overall, it is daunting for Muslim students to be enduring ambient Islamophobia in all contexts and throughout all their interactions on campus, in the classroom, the curriculum, the instruction and in the community. With reference to faculty's contribution to discrimination and ambient Islamophobia, Kanazawa (2010) argues that, "when academics choose to denigrate a particular demographic, curbing to an appetite fed by entrenched hate and the opportunity for an agreeable, well-primed readership, they betray the responsibilities of their training".

In the next sections, I focus on some of the strategies Muslim students have developed to counter ambient Islamophobia.

6.2.2.3. Strategies for Countering Ambient Islamophobia

My study finds that Muslim students are not giving up on their personal agency to combat ambient Islamophobia. Among the strategies they have adopted, there are two that clearly describe the processes Muslim students interchangeably engage in: coping with ambient Islamophobia and resisting ambient Islamophobia, both of which are corroborated by the existing literature.

Coping with Ambient Islamophobia

As Radzi et.al. (2013) define, coping is a behavioral or cognitive process that helps a person manage a stressful situation. In coping with ambient Islamophobia, Muslim students revert to *assimilating to social norms and expectations; blending in/ fitting in; concealing their Muslim identity; categorizing the degrees of prejudice and discrimination* as a way to decide which one to focus on or ignore; *snubbing prejudice and discrimination; and avoiding contact*.

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In assimilating to social norms and expectations, Muslim students feel like they are being “obliged” to distance (themselves) from their belief and compromise their values. They believe that they need to assimilate without conditions since as Muslims, they *should accept the 'limitations' set forth by host country*. According to Peter Li (2000), there are indeed unspoken limitations set forth in the Canadian culture as “a segment of the Canadian public persistently sees visible minorities as being the major problem of immigration, and that their alleged unwillingness to adapt to Canadian values and lifestyle is undermining Canada's “social cohesion” (Li, 2000, p. 15).

In coping with Islamophobia, Muslim students also revert to deflection or snubbing techniques where they try to shake off the prejudice directed towards them or *just like ignore it and continue*, as they force themselves *just to remember the good things*. Oplatka and Lapidot (2012), argue that for Muslim women in graduate studies, ignoring things was not an option for them to be accepted in higher education. Some Muslim students also engage in a cognitive exercise to compare different experiences of Islamophobia according to the place, the context and the circumstance of their occurrences. In this exercise, they *compare Canada and other countries* with the goal to minimize the discrimination. Some Muslim students have also used the Multiculturalism card to downplay the extent of Islamophobia, as they would rather *acknowledge the co-existence of multiple faiths* as a characteristic of Canada.

Such attitudes of snubbing the extent of Islamophobic incidents also lead Muslim students to *rationalizing the degree of the discrimination and prejudice* they experience. The result is that they become caught in drawing differences between what is discrimination versus insensitivity; subtle prejudice and Islamophobia; or what most relevant prejudice to focus on is or not. At the end of the day, Muslim students, all recognize that there is a price to be paid if they have to waste time

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in *rationalizing about their faith* and whether Muslims deserve to be discriminated against because of the ways they also treat racial minorities in their countries of origins.

Another coping strategy the data refers to is *avoiding contact*. These findings corroborate the literature on religious and spiritual coping (Alizai, 2017; Kunst et al., 2012; Radzi et al. 2013). I will also agree with Dimandja (2017), and argue that

The psychological dimension of the campus climate framework stresses that racially and ethnically diverse groups of people tend to perceive the campus climate different as their racial/ethnic identities, differing power position (majority/minority), inter-racial interactions, and institutional history affect the ways in which they experience and perceive the campus (Hurtado et al., 1998, 1999; Milem et al., 2005). As such, students in this study experienced and perceived others' perceptions of their racial/ethnic identities as negative within the classroom context. An institution's historical legacy of exclusion further promotes practices that view racial minority groups, such as undergraduate Muslim international students, as the Other due to their racial/ethnic identity (Hurtado et al., 1998, 1999; Milem et al., 2005). These students are perceived as different and academically limited because they do not belong in the majority (Dimandja, 2017, p. 129).

According to Kunst et al. (2012), "When individuals face identity threats, they employ diverse coping strategies" (p. 519-520). One of these strategies is activism grounded in spirituality which was used by respondents in Alizai's (2017) study of Muslim students attending Ontario Universities. She argues that "Islamophobic discourses prompt Islamic identity, which is considered the best defense against Islamophobia, as students' lives are marked by an intensified global surveillance (p. 67-68).

Overall, Muslim students used different strategies in coping with Islamophobia. According to Radzi et al. (2013) framework, "a person could use various ways to cope mentally, psychologically and even behaviorally with any stressful behavior" (p. 315). An application of this framework to my study will result in the following: **emotion-focused coping** will include behaviors such as fitting in; renouncing on standing out; assimilating; **problem-focused coping** includes

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behaviors like avoiding conversations about Islam and any related topics; educating non-Muslims about Islam; **religious coping** will mean Muslim students learning more about their own religion; seeking out credible Muslim scholars to speak on behalf of Muslims; promoting the voices of Muslim; avoiding internet teaching; educating non-Muslims about Islam; and **self-regulation coping** will include avoiding contact with non-Muslims, and developing strategies about how to socialize with others safely.

Resisting Ambient Islamophobia

As found in Chapter 5, Muslim students have distinguished resistance from coping. As a strategy, they define resisting ambient Islamophobia as countering, confronting, defying, preventing, and standing up against discrimination and anti-Muslim racism. The literature on countering Islamophobia and how Muslim students resist stereotyping and discrimination corroborates my findings. For example, Hirji-Khalfan & Rakie (2017) argue that there is a need to continuously *challenge Islamophobia on campus* as “[t]he denial of Islamophobia and the erasure of the lived experience of staff, students and faculty on campus with racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia” (p. 20) is prevalent in senior administrators and faculty’s attitudes and behaviors. In the context of my study, Burley’s 2006 report still echoes the experiences of Muslim students on campus who still experience racism, ethnocentrism, and cultural insensitivity in the curricula, the classrooms, and in the attitudes and behaviours of students and faculty. My study reinforces Burley’s (2006) observations, that “most participants felt that the problem of racism is at an institutional level and needs to be deeply, sincerely, and constantly challenged by the University” (p. 3).

The literature also corroborates the study’s findings about resisting through anti-racism education. Dei (1997), defines anti-racism as an “action-oriented strategy for institutional, systemic

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change to address racism and the interlocking systems of social oppression” (p. 25). According to Pon et al. (2011) “anti-racism education is a political practice and theoretical framework that informs critical scholarly work, pedagogical, curricular, and organizational change measures” (p. 395). However, education, can be a double-edged sword, according to Ratna (2018).

It can be used to promote critical individual development and thus counter extremist ideology. But it can also be used to indoctrinate people to becoming radicalized and willingly subscribe to extremist ideologies... what makes education different from indoctrination is not only the content but the methods of teaching. Paulo Freire (1970) called teacher-centered education “banking education,” which is to mean prescribed knowledge is deposited by the teacher to the student just as people deposit money into bank accounts (p. 26).

6.2.2.4. The Integration goals of the Muslim students (Theme 5)

- Intersecting Theme 5: Longing for Belonging

Inclusion and belonging are indeed key aspirations for Muslim students. Throughout their experiences of developing *understanding of the social clues and hints* about Islamophobia, its complex and multilayered ideological and Eurocentric and Orientalist framework, impacts and coping and resistance strategies, Muslim students’ main goal remains belonging on campus and in the community. For this, they expect Canada to be a beacon of safety for Muslims as they believe that Canada is a country founded on the rule of law; is not the USA; and it guaranteed to minorities a certain *freedom of religion* until the recent adoption of Quebec’ Bill 21 or religious symbols law which, though presented as a bill to promote religious neutrality of the state, is a veiled attack on minorities’ religious traditions and culture (Pawson, 2019).

6.3. Theoretical and Practical Implications of the Study Findings: Some Recommendations for University Administrators, Faculty, and Everyone Else

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One goal of this study is to make recommendations to university administrators, faculty and staff about how to improve Muslim students' social well-being and academic success. I divide my recommendations into seven sections. The first six sections are grounded in the study findings and represent Muslim students' recommendations for the classroom, curriculum, faculty, systems, community and the Muslim students themselves. The seventh section summarizes key findings that are substantiated in the literature.

6.3.1. To avoid "standing out" Muslim students

The findings in this study stress that *Muslim students want to be heard first* and not be made to stand out as a group in need of saving:

- Not to 'stand out' Muslim students as a special group in "need of saving". Instead, the university should do a better job to create genuine inclusion of diversity on campus.
- Avoid, therefore, giving 'special treatment to Muslim students' only but devote special care to the issues that confront them, namely ambient Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism on campus and in the community.
- Refrain from segregating Muslims among other students as many Muslim students find the language of accommodation very confusing when in reality what they need is support from faculty and instructors with reference to classroom participation and belonging.
- Treat Muslim students equally, while ensuring equity and fairness
- Don't box Muslim students in a single faith group as this is not a solution to root out ambient Islamophobia. The problem is not the Muslim students' diversity but the lip service given to Muslim diversity.

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6.3.2. Recommendations for Classroom and Curriculum

According to Muslim students, the classroom and the curriculum are sites of various forms of Islamophobia. In order to root out these beliefs, attitudes and behaviors, Muslim students recommend that faculty and instructors need to:

- Create environments where Muslim students can talk overtly about issues instead of avoiding engagement in discussions of certain topics for fear of ridicule and stigma.
- Promote religious tolerance (and religious literacy) instead of instilling hate towards Islam and Muslims by ridiculing Islam and spreading false claims about Islam.
- Promote multifaith awareness and education by inviting, for example, a chaplain from the multiple faith services into your classroom.
- Encourage all students to share about their religion, faith and spirituality
- Encourage students to open their minds, by carefully moderating classroom discussions in a respectful and caring way.
- Work to support & empower marginalized students to express their views in class by diversifying modes of instruction.
- Before the start of the semester, design instructional strategies that help to know more about students.
- Cultivate in students an understanding of multiple perspectives by including readings from different authors originating from different cultures, religions and countries.
- Create space where non-Muslim students have more opportunities to interact with Muslim students. This will develop trust between students and promote understanding and tolerance of each other's diversity, accent and cultural background.

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- Don't let students self-select themselves for group projects. Ensure there is enough representation of Muslim students, international students and racialized students in each group.

6.3.3. Recommendations for Teaching (Faculty and Instructors)

Since some of the faculty and instructors are reported in this study as promoting or perpetuating Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism, my analysis of the data has yielded the following recommendations:

- According to some Muslim students, there should be a code of conduct for faculty with regards to promoting Islamophobia and religious intolerance. Though this recommendation may fall within the rhetoric of academic freedom, this needs further scrutiny. Academic freedom is being used by some folks to dog whistle racism without impunity.
- Muslim students also recommend faculty to be more open towards other worldviews, appreciate other people's views, especially in situations where Muslim students take on themselves to challenge them on certain claims about Islam and Muslims.
- Understand the importance for creating a genuine inclusive and welcoming environment in class.
- Respect other cultural backgrounds by constantly checking their behavior for ethnocentrism and unconscious bias.
- Respect the diversity of religious, faith, and spiritual traditions.
- Remember that academia should be a healthy space for debates by making, for example, the debates between creationism and evolutionism respectful.

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- Distinguish between enabling people and shutting them down.
- Ensure that students don not self-select in group projects. Faculty should be more proactive in ensuring heterogeneity & equity in group work & assignments
- Self-inventory: Faculty, must reflect critically on their overall behavior; they need to ask themselves how much they lack cultural awareness about certain specific groups in their classrooms and make an effort to take some ‘sensitivity training’
- Learn more about UVic religious accommodation policies and about the specific offices such as the Equity and Human Rights office which oversees the policies on discrimination and harassment; and the sexual violence policy.
- As an instructor, your responsibilities also include to be fair, respectful and *able* to discern and dispel Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism. Therefore, it can be chilling for a Muslim student to realize that their instructor is an Islamophobe (El Sayed, 2010).

6.3.4. Recommendations to University Regarding Policies and Programs

Muslim students in my study want the university to *acknowledge their experiences of ambient Islamophobia* on and off campus, regardless of its institutional goals and commitments. The university claims in its 2018-2023 Strategic Framework to be “deeply committed to contributing to a better future for people, places and the planet. This Strategic Framework defines UVic’s role in creating a strong, healthy future for our students and for our local and global communities” (UVic, p. 2). Strategy 1.2. further recommends that administrators at the university “embed practices of equity, diversity, accessibility, inclusion and dialogue throughout the university community so that

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all members feel welcomed, valued and supported to achieve their highest potential” (p. 4).

However, considering the enduring ambient Islamophobia, Muslim students recommend

- The university be more specific in its policies regarding the recognition and respect of religious pluralism: “don’t think extra laws/policies would be helpful” to address prejudice and discrimination on campus, instead operationalize those that already claim to be doing the job.
- Educate more students about campus resources and policies as many student lack awareness of campus resources. For example, the university should continuously send reminder about worship spaces and publicize these resources upfront on its various media platforms.
- Invite 'credible' Muslim scholars instead of those so-called 'moderate' scholars who may end up doing more damage to the reputation of Islam and Muslims.
- Promote forums where different faith groups can share their teachings and stories. The Multifaith service is already doing a great job but the bulk of those faculty who need to learn about religious tolerance do not attend.
- Recognize that Muslim students are part of the whole university and avoid segregating them.
- Give more support to students’ religious clubs/ associations through UVic administration instead of assuming that this role is filled by UVSS.
- Recognize Muslim associations are part of a wider community. Muslim students appreciate that UVic has provided a Muslim prayer space.
- Hire and promote more international faculty as UVic is lagging behind its equity commitments in hiring, promotion and retention of minority employees.

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- Have more people in student services with backgrounds that can help them understand Muslim students' experiences.
- Facilitate interactive dialogues for faculty to hear Muslim students' experiences
- Publicize more about the UVic complaints processes and associated policies
- Muslim students need more education about their human rights
- Should seriously tackle the issues of Eurocentrism, white supremacy, racism and systemic discrimination against minorities.
- Need to recognize 'white fragility' as an issue that challenges anti-racism work on campus.

According to DiAngelo (2011),

White people in North America live in a social environment that protects and insulates them from race-based stress. This insulated environment of racial protection builds white expectations for racial comfort while at the same time lowering the ability to tolerate racial stress, leading to what I refer to as White Fragility. White Fragility is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium (p. 54).

- Need to develop policies around religious bigotry and professors ridiculing religion.
- Give more space to talking about religion as this is an urgent social issue.
- Truly make Muslim students feel they belong. For this, there is a need for more programming around integration and belonging.
- Need to consider the place of Islamophobia and anti-Semitism in new policy development at the university.
- Need more resources for international students' integration on campus and in the community.

6.3.5. "We have to get out of the bubble" - Recommendations to Muslim Students

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According to the findings in this study, Muslim students also need to get out of their bubble of believing Canada is less Islamophobic than the USA or that Canadians are more accepting.

- Muslim students need more exposure to other countries/cultures.
- Muslim students need to interact more with non-Muslims.
- Muslim students should also avoid isolating themselves from Canadian communities, even in the case of heightened Islamophobia and terrorist attacks.
- As a strategy against Islamophobia, Muslim students should reach out and make friends among non-Muslim in order to dispel stereotypes about Muslims.
- Muslim students should also actively seek help from other communities when they are being targeted by Islamophobia and hate crimes.

6.3.6. Recommendations to Canadian Communities and Society

The recommendations to the wider non-Muslim community members include for them to:

- Step in when they witness overt and direct Islamophobia. In a healthy community, it is the responsibility of all to root out Islamophobia. According to Muslim students, Canadians should not sit quietly and let the hatemongers spoil our relationships and racial/cultural harmony.
- Teach a comprehensible course on Islam in K-12 social studies; such a course should address the issues of Islamophobia and link it to other forms of discrimination in the community such as anti-Semitism.

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- Encourage parents to teach their children about empathy and be mindful about the kind of conversations they entertain around the dinner table.

6.3.7. Recommendations Substantiated by the Literature

These findings in the data are also confirmed in the literature on Islamophobia (Abdullah, 2013; Ali & Bagheri, 2009; Alizai, 2017; Dimandja, 2017). In addition, Ali & Bagheri's (2009) recommend that

Student affairs practitioners can assist Muslim students in overcoming barriers to spiritual exploration and religious adherence in many ways. In addition, they can be instrumental in improving campus climate for Muslim students by directly addressing Islamophobia and misunderstandings between Muslim and non-Muslim students (p. 51).

The literature also recommends more research on Islamophobia and Muslim students' experiences that focuses on the interactions of the campus and the community dynamics (Abdullah, 2013).

6.4. Limitations of the Study

This study is based on a constructivist grounded theory methodology grounded in Muslim students' experiences of ambient Islamophobia and associated forms of prejudice and discriminations. I used a well-structured research methodology supplemented by rigorous theoretical sampling and constant comparison methods (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). However, the study concludes that more research needs to explore this multilayered issue/policy and to evaluate the impact of the policy and practice recommendations made above. In light of the pervasiveness of ambient Islamophobia, it is clear that the sample size of respondents in this study will need to be expanded to be more representative of Muslim diversity. The current sample doesn't represent the experiences of all Muslim students and whether they all have encountered Islamophobia.

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There is also a need for more research to be done in the area of Muslim students and sectarian and ideological conflicts, especially in the Canadian university context. Much of the research and literature this thesis relied on was in the American and European context. Language barriers were another limitation to this study and affected both the interview process and the data transcription and analysis phases. Because of this language challenge, it was decided to avoid mixed methods approaches like surveys. Another limitation of this study is that it cannot be generalized, as different universities in Canada have different social, academic, and community dynamics that may have tremendous impact on Muslim students' social well-being, academic success, and relationships with others (other Muslims and non-Muslims).

Though I used an intersectional lens that combines different anti-oppressive, social justice, and critical anti-racism (CRT) theories, Abdullah (2013) argues that CRT is a limitation for Islamophobia research “because it situates race and racism at the center of the analysis, however, the concept of intersectionality is powerful and has the potential to inform Critical Muslim Theory” (p. 56). I concur with this author, especially that his supporting argument is convincing enough. Abdullah (2013) argues that ‘Islam is a way of life, and’,

Its system of thought projecting its vision of reality and truth and the system of value derived from it are not merely derived from cultural and philosophical elements aided by science, but one whose original source is revelation (Quran), confirmed by religion, affirmed by intellectual and intuitive principle (Al Attas, 2005, p. 13, cited in Abdullah, 2013, p. 57).

Racism, as I state at the beginning of this project, is very personal to me, as a Black male, a Muslim, and a newcomer to Canada, born and raised in a different culture and society. While listening to these stories of Islamophobia, anti-Muslim racism, segregation, tokenization, and dehumanization from Muslim students, I re-experienced trauma and a sense of despair. Research in Islamophobia should consider these experiences of the Islamophobia researcher as an insider-

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outsider. Because of my insider-outsider positionality, I kept a close look at my unconscious bias, throughout the study, by developing a memo bank where I critically reflected on my assumptions and prejudgments.

6.5. Recommendations for Future Research

My study extends the knowledge area about Muslim students' in the combined setting of the university and the community at large. It offers insights into the individual and systemic processes of ambient Islamophobia, its ideological foundations, as well as its overall cognitive, affective and behavioral impacts. My study also provides a complex analysis of the ways in which Muslim students cope with and resist intersectional religious prejudice and discrimination such as ambient Islamophobia. It is my hope that the findings generated from this research can inform academic communities, and influence future policy making to support Muslim students' social integration and academic success. However, based on the study findings, I wonder if mixed-methods research would have yielded additional insights on for example, the perceptions of Muslim and non-Muslim students of each other and how this is impacting their relationships at the onset. A mixed-methods approach, such as a survey method could, for example, help determine the percentage of Muslim students on campus who have encountered prejudice and discrimination and to what extent. Further research should also explore conflict theories and the impacts of sectarian and ideological conflicts between Muslim students as they come from different sects and ideological orientations. It would be interesting to expand anti-racism education policies and programs on university campuses to include more focus on religious intolerance and Islamophobia. For example, further research should explore short and long-term impacts of Quebec Bill 21 on Muslim students in this province. Jordan (2019) argues that Bill 21

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is discriminatory, racist, and counter to our values as a teaching and research department. We denounce this bill for systematically targeting and discriminating against specific racialized and religious groups within Québec society. If implemented, Bill 21 will not only have a direct impact on communities that wear religious symbols, but will further a climate of suspicion, fear, hostility, and racism towards people who wear religious symbols. As such, it would limit possibilities for significant segments of the Québec population to participate in the public life of Québec, and jeopardize the futures of large numbers of Québec students (p. 1).

Finally, it would be insightful to expand Islamophobia research using different research methodologies such as participatory methodologies. Such a participatory approach can be used to develop a community resource that considers all the issues of voice, language ability, representation, gender, age and sectarian views.

6.6. Summary of Chapter 6

In Chapter 6, I discuss my research findings and draw attention to the relationships between key concepts developed from the data to the literature on Islamophobia, prejudice and discrimination, anti-Muslim racism, and intersectionality. In doing so, I first re-contextualize the chapter within the overall study framework as a strategy to keep my discussions within the confine of constructivist grounded theory methodology. The next step was to clearly articulate the relationships between the literature with my study findings as a way to confirm some of the data and at the same time highlight new insights and gaps. My analysis confirms a direct relationship between the literature and the findings in my study. In part three, I discuss the theoretical and practical implications of the study findings and make specific recommendations to university administrators, faculty, staff and others stakeholders on how to successfully improve Muslim students' social well-being and academic success on campus and in the community. My study, however, has some limitations which I discuss at length in part four. In part five, I recognize that this is not an exhaustive list of

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recommendations for future research as Muslim students are part of a complex and multilayered web of identities, ethnicities, religious orientation, cultures, genders, and others.

CONCLUSION OF MY OVERALL STUDY

Ambient Islamophobia is grounded in different epistemologies and ontologies. My study highlights specific relationships between various research traditions: prejudice and bias research, anti-oppression, human rights discrimination and harassment, sexualized violence and gender studies, critical race theory and critical anti-racism education theory, segregation and exclusion theories, social control theories, social domination theories, system justification theories, acculturation theories, critical multiculturalism theories, identity theories, power and privilege, white fragility, and many more.

The ontological nature and context of ambient Islamophobia is also a wide field of study. Ambient Islamophobia occurs on campus, in the classroom, the curriculum, the instruction, in the institution's policies and program, in the community, at the national and global levels. It is also obvious in the belief systems, attitudes and behaviors, and is reinforced by ideologies of Eurocentrism and Orientalism. The range, intensity and variation in the pattern of behaviors and attitudes that describe and/or perpetuate the phenomenon of ambient Islamophobia is based on specific processes where Muslim students develop a clear awareness of ambient Islamophobia through understanding the social clues of prejudice and stereotypes; put into context the supporting ideologies and belief systems that promote, condone and perpetuate Islamophobia; and develop coping and resistance strategies to offset the enduring *impacts of ambient Islamophobia*. Additionally, they clearly define their goals for *belonging* and how this will contribute to their integration, social well-being and academic success.

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To contextualize these findings, in **Chapter One**, I situate my study in the local and global context of prejudice and discrimination studies with a focus on Muslims and Muslim students. An exploration of the historical and ideological underpinnings of prejudice and discrimination with reference to religious prejudice allowed me to identify the intersections of prejudice and discrimination with race, gender, religion, particularly on Canadian university campuses and how these intersect with the issues of colonization, power, privilege, and globalization. **Chapter One** also includes my research goals and questions. In **Chapter Two**, I explore the academic literature on prejudice, discrimination and Islamophobia research. **Chapter Three**, emphasises the processes I engaged in to select an appropriate research methodology and methods. Here, after critically analysing various approaches, I chose the constructivist grounded theory as most potentially catalytic and meaningful to the research questions. This choice of methodology led me to adopt semi-structured and focus groups interview methods as my primary data collection strategies. In **Chapter Four**, I report on my research findings and how they contributed to the development of my constructivist grounded theory, **enduring ambient Islamophobia**. **Chapter Five** expands my analysis of the data and presentation of further research findings in the forms of *dimensions* of the constructivist grounded theory. In Chapter Five, I also use the storyline technique to further illustrate my theory. In **Chapter Six**, I discuss my overall study and provide recommendations grounded in the data to the university administrators, faculty, staff and other stakeholders on how to improve Muslim students' social well-being and academic success. My study concludes with specific acknowledgments and heartfelt gratitude to the amazing human beings who have walked alongside me in the completion of this dissertation.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Memorandum-Candidacy-January 13, 2016)



University
of Victoria

Department of Political Science
PO Box 1700 STN CSC
Victoria British Columbia V8W 2Y2 Canada
Tel (250) 721-6637, Fax (250) 721-7485
polisec@uvic.ca Web www.uvic.ca/socialsciences/politicalscience

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 13, 2016
To: Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
From: Dr. Scott Watson, Graduate Advisor, Department of Political Science
Re: **Doctoral INTD Candidacy Exam and Proposal Defense
Moussa Magassa V00656806**

Moussa Magassa successfully defended his Interdisciplinary Comprehensive Exam and defended his PhD dissertation proposal on Wednesday, January 13, 2016. The committee recommends that Moussa continue with his work and complete his dissertation.

This decision advances Moussa to the status of ABD.

Dr. Scott Watson
Co-Supervisor, Political Science

Dr. William Carroll
Co-Supervisor, Sociology

Dr. Alexandra Branzan Albu
INTD Graduate Advisor

CC: GARO

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Appendix 2: Letter of Transfer

Student: Moussa Magassa V00656806

Re: Transfer from Interdisciplinary PhD to Curriculum and Instruction

Supervisor: Jason Price

Required Courses in EDCI

- EDCI 614 – Discourses in Educational Studies

Calendar description

An opportunity for engagement in the research community, advancing the development of student's own capacity for research, and a critical examination of contemporary literature on functional educational concepts, research issues and implications for curriculum and instruction.

- EDCI 681 – Advanced Research Design

Calendar Description

Explores research methodologies appropriate to specific research problems, questions, and contexts. An examination of the purposes of research, the role of literature review, educational theories, and design of a research question considering the relationship between question and research method.

Moussa has taken multiple courses in the LATHE program (Learning and Teaching in Higher Education) that include:

ED-D – 610 Contemporary Issues: Higher Education

He has also agreed to audit EDCI 614 this fall to further his understanding of educational discourse and to become part of the PhD community in EDCI.

I believe that the combination of what he has studied and his willingness to engage in EDCI 614 this fall fulfills the required 614 course.

Additionally Moussa has taken SOCI 511 – Research Design, which fulfills his research methods requirement.

Moussa has EDCI 575 – Global Education included in the list of other courses he has taken, which means that he has an elective course in Curriculum and Instruction in addition to his other electives which will be covered by courses taken in SOCI and as INTD Directed Studies.

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At this point Moussa has completed 5 terms of Candidacy examinations and hopes to continue and complete his candidacy this year.

APPENDIX 3: ORGANIZATION SOLICITATION LETTER

Moussa Magassa

PhD Candidate, UVic Curriculum & Education dept.
PO BOX 1700 STN CSC
UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA
VICTORIA, BC V8W 2Y2, CANADA

Date:

Subject: Request to distribute invitation to members for their participation to a research study on prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community

Dear [contact name]

I am writing to request your assistance with distributing this invitation letter to your members about participating in a research study about prejudice and discrimination on campus. My name is Moussa Magassa, I am a PhD candidate in the UVic department of Curriculum and Instruction. As the principal investigator for this study, you may contact me

Dear prospective research participants,

You are invited to participate in a study entitled “**Muslim students’ experiences of prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community**” that is being conducted by Moussa Magassa, PhD Candidate as principal investigator. You may contact Moussa Magassa.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study is to understand how prejudice on campus affects Muslim students of various ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds. You can participate in the study by attending a focus group session or by meeting the research for a one-one-one interview. The information learned in the focus group session or in the one-on-one semi-structured interview

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meeting will be used to make recommendations to the university administration, contributing to a campus environment that supports equal opportunities, inclusivity, as well as cultural and religious pluralism.

Importance of this Research

This research project is designed to gain a personalized understanding of your experiences, as Muslim students, with prejudice on UVic campus, and to identify the barriers, constraints and opportunities in students' interracial relations. Another goal of this study is to provide practical recommendations to the university's administration for service delivery, policy, programs, and educational curriculum development, all of which can contribute to support healthy relations between students, and welcoming, inclusive learning environments at UVic. Methodological approach—combining qualitative analysis (i.e. integrating focus group methods with semi-structured interviews and document analysis)—will allow me to gather more detailed feedback on your experiences. It will also provide me with a fuller understanding of how minority students in Canada are affected by cultural, ethnic and religious bias and prejudice on campus.

Participant Selection

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a self-identified Muslim undergraduate or graduate student at the University of Victoria.

What Is Involved

If you consent to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include the following:

You will be asked to meet with Moussa Magassa (or his research assistant) for a brief information session explaining the objectives and procedures of either the focus group session or the one-on-one semi-structured interview meeting (10 minutes). The researcher will request you to fill out a consent form, choose a pseudonym and partake in the one-on-one interview or the focus group interview meeting with other self-declared Muslim students.

The focus group session will be scheduled in a small room seating five-eight people at the University of Victoria. The discussion moderator (the researcher) will distribute name tags with the pseudonym you have chosen. He/she will read out a code of conduct requesting your consent to follow these guidelines intended to maintain a safe environment of mutual respect when discussing issues, which can cause emotional discomfort. The moderator will start with introductory questions and then allow for a discussion of your experiences. Both the focus group discussion session and the one-on-one semi-structured interview meeting with the researcher will be recorded. These recordings serve the purpose to identify speaker turns more easily. Once the focus group sessions or one-on-one interviews have been transcribed, these recordings will be deleted (see the section

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below for issues of anonymity and confidentiality). In either the focus group session or the one-on-one interview, the moderator will conclude the discussion with a short debriefing.

Inconvenience

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to you, including a time commitment of 90 minutes (focus group discussion: 60 minutes; filling out consent form: 10-15 minutes; information session and debriefing sessions: 15 minutes each). You are free not to participate, or complete the questionnaire in part, or request that your partial or fully completed questionnaire be discounted and destroyed. Should you experience any discomfort during the focus group session/ semi-structured interview meeting you may leave and at your request your partial or fully completed questionnaire be discounted and destroyed and your video-recorded contributions will be disregarded in the transcription of the focus group session.

Risks

There are some potential risks to you by participating in this research. You may feel uncomfortable and thus experience difficulties participating in the focus group session or the one-on-one semi-structured interview meeting with the research. At no point is it our intention to make you feel embarrassed or uncomfortable. To prevent or to deal with potential risks, we will start the focus group session or the one-on-one semi-structured interview meeting with a short guideline on discussion etiquette and expected code of conduct. We will also give you the opportunity to contact the investigator Moussa Magassa to discuss your concerns in more detail

In addition, free and confidential counseling services are available on campus for all UVic students (Tel.: 250-721 8341). If this study brings up difficult questions for you, we also encourage you to contact the following community-based support services: UVic Muslim Student Association, email: msauvic@gmail.com; Ali Ibrahim (Muslim Chaplain; Tel. 778 679 3010; muslim@uvic.ca).

Benefits

This study is a follow up to a wider Canadian survey research on public opinions and attitudes pertaining to cultural ethnic and religious diversity among selected student populations, reports to university President on the experiences of various minority groups on campus. We plan to present the outcome of this study to UVic university administrators.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you decide to withdraw prior to attending the focus group session or the one-on-one interview, we ask you to return the questionnaire back to us. If you participate in the focus group session or the one-on-one

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interview meeting and decide to withdraw from the study at a later point (but no later than 31 days following these meetings) we ask you to identify yourself by your pseudonym. Your information will then be destroyed and your transcribed data will not be used in the research.

Anonymity & Confidentiality

Your identity will be protected because **you will NOT write** your name on the consent form or the any document. In order to guarantee confidentiality as much as possible, you will choose a pseudonym instead. This way your contribution to the discussion cannot be traced back to you as an individual. However, you should be aware of the fact that though you choose a pseudonym for the discussion, other members of the focus group session might identify you as a participant of the focus group discussion at a later date on campus.

No video-recordings.

The confidentiality of the digitalized survey data (when being transcribed), and the transcripts will be protected by storing all data on a password-protected computer in the respective university offices of the researcher Moussa Magassa. No print questionnaires will be removed from Moussa Magassa's office where it is kept in a locked filing cabinet. Once the transcribed data is stored on the password-protected computer, all notes will be shredded. Once the audio-recordings are transcribed they will be deleted. All data on the password-protected computer will be erased at the end of the study.

No one besides the principal investigator, Moussa Magassa, and the research assistant will have access to the questionnaires and the electronic data.

Dissemination of Results

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared at conference presentations as well as in published articles. If you are interested in the results of the study, please feel free to contact the investigator Moussa Magassa.

Disposal of Data

At the end of this study, data from this study will be disposed of in the following ways: electronic data will be erased. Paper copies will be shredded.

Contacts

Individuals who may be contacted regarding this study include Moussa Magassa. Please feel free to contact me to ask any questions or share concerns regarding this study and the procedures of this study. In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study (Protocol Number: 15-035), or

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raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545), or ethics@uvic.ca.

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study, that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers, and that you consent to participate in this research project.

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

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APPENDIX 4: LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR CONSENT

Moussa Magassa

PO BOX 3045 STN CSC
UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA
VICTORIA, BC V8W 3P4 CANADA

Letter of Information for Consent

Prejudice on Campus: Muslim students' experiences of prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community

Dear prospective participant,

Assalaam alaikum!

I would like to invite you to participate in a study entitled "Muslim students' experiences of prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community". My name is Moussa Magassa. I am a PhD Candidate. I am doing interviews for my dissertation. For further inquiries about my research, you may contact me.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of my study is to understand how prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community affect Muslim students of various ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds; and identify the barriers, constraints and opportunities in students' interracial relations. The information learned from these interviews will be used to provide practical recommendations to the university's administration for service delivery, policy, programs, and educational curriculum development, all of which can contribute to support healthy relations between students, and welcoming, inclusive learning environments at UVic.

Importance of this Research

This research project is designed to gain a personalized understanding of your experiences, as Muslim students, with prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community, and to identify the barriers, constraints and opportunities in students' interracial relations. My study is relevant to knowledge because it explores an area of academic research not well documented in the literature in Canada: Muslim students' experiences of prejudice and discrimination on Canadian university campuses, and the barriers, constraints, and opportunities to support students' interracial

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relations. Currently, most academic research only focus on media representation and stereotypes of Muslims in Canada post 9/11, contributing to a skewed understanding of the wider systemic and institutional issues of Islamophobia and prejudice against Muslim students on Canadian university campuses. This study is also important because I intend to provide practical recommendations to the university's administration for service delivery, policy, programs, and educational curriculum development, all of which can contribute to support healthy relations between students, and welcoming, inclusive learning environments at UVic. Finally, my study is also important because it will provide Muslim students an opportunity to reflect on and share their experiences of the campus and the community, and be able to assign their own interpretations and meaning to these experiences.

Participant Selection

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a self-identified Muslim undergraduate or graduate student at the University of Victoria.

What Is Involved

Your participation should be voluntary. If you consent to participate voluntarily in this research, your participation will include the following:

You will be asked to meet with brother Moussa Magassa (or his research assistant) for a brief information session explaining the objectives and procedures of either the one-on-one interview meeting or the focus group interview session (10 minutes). The researcher will request you to fill out a consent form, choose a pseudonym and partake in the one-on-one interview or the focus group interview meeting with other self-declared Muslim students.

- If you choose to be part of the focus group interview session, you will be brainstorming and discussing with other self-declared Muslim students. The one-on-one interview can be schedule anywhere you feel comfortable to meet with the researcher in person.
- If you choose to be part of the focus group interview session, you will be attending with a group of 5-8 Muslim students, in a comfortable space on campus.

During these interviews, the researcher (Moussa or research assistant) will distribute name tags with the pseudonym you have chosen. He/she will read out a code of conduct requesting your consent to follow the guidelines intended to maintain a safe environment of mutual respect when discussing issues, which can cause emotional discomfort. The researcher/ assistant researcher will start with introductory questions and then allow for you to talk about your experiences. Both the focus group discussion session and the one-on-one semi-structured interview meeting with the researcher will be recorded. These recordings serve the purpose to identify speaker turns more easily. Once the focus group sessions or one-on-one interviews have been transcribed, these recordings will be deleted

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(see the section below for issues of anonymity and confidentiality). In either the focus group session or the one-on-one interview, the moderator will conclude the discussion with a short debriefing.

Inconvenience

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to you, including a time commitment of 90 minutes (discussion: 60 minutes; filling out consent form: 10 minutes; information session and debriefing sessions: 15 minutes each). You are free not to participate, complete the questionnaire in part, or request that your partial or fully completed questionnaire be discounted and destroyed. Should you experience any discomfort during the interview meeting you may leave and at your request your partial or fully completed questionnaire be discounted and destroyed and your recorded contributions will be disregarded in the transcription of the interviews.

Risks

There are some potential risks to you by participating in this research. You may feel uncomfortable and thus experience difficulties participating in the focus group interview or the one-on-one meeting. At no point is it our intention to make you feel embarrassed or uncomfortable. To prevent or to deal with potential risks, we will start the interview meeting with a short guideline on discussion etiquette and expected code of conduct. We will also give you the opportunity to contact the principal research Moussa Magassa to discuss your concerns in more detail. In addition, free and confidential counseling services are available on campus for all UVic students (Tel.: 250-721 8341). If this study brings up difficult questions for you, we also encourage you to contact the following community-based support services: *UVic Muslim Student Association*, email: msauvic@gmail.com; Ali Ibrahim (Muslim Chaplain; Tel. 778 679 3010; muslim@uvic.ca).

Benefits

This study is a follow up to a wider Canadian survey research on public opinions and attitudes pertaining to cultural ethnic and religious diversity among selected student populations, reports to university President on the experiences of various minority groups on campus. We plan to present the outcome of this study to UVic university administrators.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you decide to withdraw prior to attending the focus group session or the one-on-one interview, we ask you to return the questionnaire back to us. If you participate in focus group interview meeting or the one-on-one interview meeting and decide to withdraw from the study at a later point (but no later than 31 days following these meetings) we ask you to identify yourself by your pseudonym. Your information will then be destroyed and your transcribed data will not be used in the research.

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Anonymity & Confidentiality

Your identity will be protected because **you will NOT write** your name on the consent form or on any document. In order to guarantee confidentiality as much as possible, you will choose a pseudonym instead. This way your contribution to the discussion cannot be traced back to you as an individual. However, you should be aware of the fact that though you choose a pseudonym for the discussion, other members of the focus group meeting might identify you as a participant of the focus group discussion at a later date on campus.

No audio-recordings

The confidentiality of the audio-recordings (when being transcribed), and the transcripts will be protected by storing all data on a password-protected computer in the respective university offices of the researcher Moussa Magassa. No print questionnaires will be removed from Moussa Magassa's office where it is kept in a locked filing cabinet. Once the transcribed data is stored on the password-protected computer, all notes will be shredded. Once the audio-recordings are transcribed they will be deleted. All data on the password-protected computer will be erased at the end of the study. No one besides the principal researcher, Moussa Magassa, and the research assistant will have access to the questionnaires and the electronic data.

Dissemination of Results

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared at conference presentations as well as in published articles. If you are interested in the results of the study, please feel free to contact the researcher, Moussa Magassa.

Disposal of Data

At the end of this study, data from this study will be disposed of in the following ways: electronic data will be erased. Paper copies will be shredded.

Contacts

Individuals who may be contacted regarding this study include Moussa Magassa. Please feel free to contact me to ask any questions or share concerns regarding this study and the procedures of this study. In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study (Protocol Number: 15-035), or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545), or ethics@uvic.ca.

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study, that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers, and that you consent to participate in this research project.

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Name of Participant

Signature

Date

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

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Appendix 5: DISCUSSION GUIDE- Questionnaire for focus group and semi-structured interviews

Prejudice on Campus: Muslim students' experiences of prejudice and discrimination on campus

A. INTRODUCTION

Thank you all for coming today. My name is _____ and I am the researcher/ moderator for this discussion/conversation.

During our discussion, I (moderator) will be taking notes [observation protocol]. I would also like to audio-record the discussion so that I don't miss anything that is said and can identify turn-takes more easily. I would like to emphasize that our discussion will stay confidential and only this researcher will be listening to the recording.

B. PURPOSE OF THE FOCUS GROUP

The purpose of this study (through this one-on-one or focus group meeting), as already discussed with you in the information sheet and the consent form, is to understand how prejudice and discrimination on campus and in the community affect Muslim students of various ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds.

These discussion/ conversations (in focus group or in one-on-one interview session) you are attending today is designed to gain a personalized understanding of your experiences, as Muslim students, with prejudice and discrimination on UVic campus and Victoria community at large, and to identify the barriers, constraints and opportunities in students' interracial relations. Another goal of this study is to provide practical recommendations to the university's administration for service delivery, policy, programs, and educational curriculum development, all of which can contribute to support healthy relations between students, and welcoming, inclusive learning environments at UVic.

C. REASONS FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

I hope that you will contribute to a respectful discussion with peers that will provide us with a fuller understanding of how self-declared Muslim students like yourself in Canada are affected by cultural, ethnic and religious bias and prejudice and discrimination on campus. The information I will learn from this study will be used to make recommendations to the university administration contributing to a campus environment that supports equal opportunities, inclusivity, as well as cultural and religious pluralism.

D. RISKS MITIGATION

As stated in the consent form, I would like to remind you that there are some potential risks to participating in this research. You may feel uncomfortable and thus experience difficulties participating in the focus group discussion. To prevent or to deal with potential risks, I will start these discussions/conversations by first reviewing together the code of conduct, ensuring that we all use respectful language. At no point during the discussion will hateful speech be tolerated.

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You also have the following options if at any point, you feel discomforted during the discussions: You can always approach me (the researcher); In case you need a more specialized assistance to deal with any issues these discussions might have triggered for you. As self-declared Muslim students, I have compiled for you a list of other resources on campus and in the wider community in Victoria, if need be. Please help yourself to a handout at the end of our discussion [see our **list of UVic and Victoria community resources**].

FACILITATOR INTRODUCES HIMSELF.

E. DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

Let's now go over the code of conduct and read it together [see **CODE OF CONDUCT**]. Are there any questions before we begin?

Be reminded again that everything that you hear today will be confidential and cannot be shared with people who are not part of this group. The discussion will last about one hour.

Please pick your pseudonym nametags.

[The following are possible questions to ask in a semi-structured focus group discussion.]

C. DISCUSSION TOPICS

Although it is assumed that you are here in this interview (focus group or in this one-on-one interview) because you have self-selected and identify with based on your Muslim minority status (ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds, and others), I would like to hear your experiences (individuals or as a group).

1. What are/ were your **academic and social experiences** at UVic or in the community, as a Muslim student? (5mn)
2. What first or second hand **experiences of prejudice and discrimination** have you experienced at Uvic or in the community? (10mn)
 - a) In what context? (e.g. Academic or social life on campus/community?)
 - b) Were this prejudice based on any aspect of your identity/ethnicity/religion/cultural background? Explain.
3. Or have you **witnessed prejudice directed** towards another Muslim students? (What was the context, and on the basis of which one of their background?) (10mn)
4. What policies, programs, and approaches to education in the classroom do you think will contribute to **support healthy relations** between Muslim students and faculty, staff and the community? (10mn)

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5. What policies, programs, and approaches to education in the classroom do you think will contribute to **Muslim students' academic success and social well-being** at the University of Victoria? (5mn)
6. What **kind of prejudices** have you experienced? (5mn)
 - a) What are the basis of these prejudices?
 - b) Do these relate to any of your ethnic, cultural, social, and religious backgrounds? How? Please explain.
7. How your racial, ethnic, linguistic, social and cultural appearances / outfits **have informed the degree/extent** of prejudice directed to you? (5mn)
8. How does prejudice **affect your learning and social integration** on campus? (5mn)

Closing question (5mn):

- Do you have any other experiences you would like us to know about?
- In your opinion, have we missed any groups in this study?

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APPENDIX 6: CODE OF CONDUCT

- ✓ It is important for us to hear everyone's ideas and opinions. There are no right or wrong answers to questions – just ideas, experiences and opinions, which are all valuable. Criticize the idea, not the person.
- ✓ Please treat one another with respect. All participants need to feel free to express their opinions without fear of being attacked by the group.
- ✓ We hope you can be honest even when your responses may not be in agreement with the rest of the group.
- ✓ The language used by focus group participants should aim to be inclusive and respectful of diversity. Inclusive Language is language that does not stereotype or demean people based on personal characteristics including gender, race, ethnicity, disability, religion, or sexual orientation.
- ✓ As a general rule, personal characteristics, such as race, sexuality and disability, should only be referred to when they are relevant to the communication. Otherwise avoid mentioning them.
- ✓ Avoid using biased or stereotyped terms that may be demeaning or offensive.
- ✓ In respect for each other, we ask that only one individual speaks at a time in the group.
- ✓ Confidentiality is assured. What is being discussed in the room stays in the room. It is safe for you to freely express your opinions without consequence.
- ✓ Please do not discuss details of the content of our discussion once you leave the focus group site.

Points 4-7: *Respectful Language Guideline* (The Law Society of British Columbia);
<https://www.lawsociety.bc.ca/page.cfm?cid=1005&t=Respectful-Language-Guideline>

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APPENDIX ---7: List of all categories, focused codes and codes (out of 718 codes in this study)

| Categories | Focused codes | Codes |
|--|----------------------|--------------|
| Total Codes in Chapter 4 | | |
| a. Stereotyping Muslim students on campus and in the community | 4 | 27 |
| b. Segregating out Muslim students in the classroom | 3 | 23 |
| c. Silencing Muslims in the curriculum and instruction | 7 | 26 |
| d. Gendering Islamophobia | 5 | 24 |
| e. “Tokenizing” Muslim students through the institution’s structures | 4 | 4 |
| f. Rendering Muslim students invisible in the systems | 5 | 17 |
| g. Targeting Muslims in the community | 6 | 59 |
| Total codes (Properties of core category)- Chapter 4 | 34 | 180 |
| Total Codes in Chapter 5 | | |
| a. Becoming aware of ambient Islamophobia | 4 | 19 |
| b. Contextualizing ambient Islamophobia through ideologies | 6 | 69 |
| c. Longing for belonging | 4 | 34 |
| d. Bearing the impacts of ambient Islamophobia | 6 | 58 |
| e. Coping with Islamophobia | 7 | 75 |
| f. Resisting Islamophobia | 6 | 86 |
| Total codes (Dimensions of core category)- Chapter 5 | 33 | 341 |
| TOTAL CODES IN THIS STUDY | 67 | 521 |

CHAPTER 4: Total of Categories – Focused Codes -- Codes

(e) Stereotyping Muslim students on campus and in the community

- *Pigeonholing Muslims in general stereotypes*
 - *accusing Muslims as violent, terrorists, anti-feminist,*
 - *holding stereotypical ideas about them,*
 - *generalizing and labelling Muslims negatively, and*
 - *dismissing Muslims' 'ways of being' and cultures.*
 - *Muslims as violent and terrorists*
 - *discomforting/ making Muslim students uncomfortable.,*
 - *“you can unjustifiably be accused of being anti-feminism”.*
 - *negatively labelling and mistrusting practicing Muslims in general.*
 - *holding stereotypical ideas of others is commonly accepted attitudes and behaviors.*
 - *“they have some ideas in their minds about me”*
 - *“Muslims are not peaceful”;*
 - *policing their clothing.*
 - *labelling the hijab as oppression for Muslim women.*
 - *“teachers are happy because she's Saudi and she didn't wear hijab”.*
 - *being praised for being a 'modernized Muslim'*
 - *stereotyping Muslim men as abusers of their women is another preconceived idea in non-Muslims psyche.*
 - *being failed during English test.*
- *Discriminating against Muslims on campus*
 - *asking me to take off my hijab right there.*
 - *witnessing 'hijabi' Muslim women shouted at.*
 - *being told to go back home if wants to wear the hijab.*
 - *witnessing people abusing Muslim students at UVic or outside campus.*
- *Fearing Muslims as the 'other'*
 - *lack of awareness about Muslims or lack of confidence in themselves,*
 - *fearing Muslims as the 'other'*
 - *discriminating against Muslims students on campus .*

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- *Excluding Muslim students*
 - *avoid altogether mingling*
 - *“you don't get invited to all white gatherings”*
 - *Being marginalized,*
- (f) *Segregating out Muslim students in the classroom***
 - *Being excluded from classroom conversations and segregating Muslims out of class projects*
 - *separating themselves from minority students;*
 - *refusing to be paired with Muslim students in class conversations;*
 - *holding feedback to minority students;*
 - *undervaluing Muslim women's opinion in class; and*
 - *discriminating against Muslims because of their accent.*
 - *worrying to be impeded by international students low English.*
 - *being a native English speaker versus non-native students,*
 - *non-native students are missing language subtleties.*
 - *being laughed at if not getting the joke.*
 - *lacking awareness of the impacts of idioms as a Canadian,*
 - *failing to pick up subtle prejudice (because of limited language),*
 - *using idioms that stifle conversations in class, all contribute to exclude them from the classroom conversations.*
 - *language is of utmost importance in communication with administration.*
 - *avoiding to talk to you because of your accent*
 - *feeling treated by classmates as they do not belonging.*
 - *language barriers impact (Muslim students abilities in) discerning islamophobia in class.*
 - *Excluding Muslims students from socializing events*
 - *“you don't get invited to all white gatherings”.*
 - *being cast out in socializing because of not drinking.*
 - *Bullying students through ethnic jokes)*
 - *making cultural jokes about how graduate students enter class discussions,*
 - *waiting off bad classroom experiences (sic).*
 - *holding stereotypical ideas of others like Muslims.*
 - *lacking awareness about the human rights discrimination policies.*

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- *fear of participating/ talking in class and sharing ideas;*

(g) Silencing Muslims in the curriculum and instruction

- *Denigrating religion in general: Imposing atheistic views*
 - *religious bigotry is an attitude engrained in most faculty and instructors.*
 - *professors imposing their atheistic views on students,*
 - *mocking (the act of) believing in God*
 - *exhibiting a constant ridicule of religion by professors in various classes and levels.*
- *Dismissing Muslim students' worldviews*
 - *Faculty lack of awareness about other views and Lack of awareness about Muslims.*
 - *professors lacking awareness of students' experiences..*
- *Ridiculing Islam and Muslims*
 - *faculty constantly misjudging the very goals of Islam*
 - *lacking sensitivity or lacking discernment about religious diversity.*
 - *older profs who are not used to understand political correctness*
- *Prejudicing against Muslims and other minorities: Open/ direct prejudice*
 - *dismissing Islamophobia research as less serious academic*
 - *accent discrimination.*
 - *displaying general discomfort with non-white students*
 - *faculty showing discomfort with female Muslim students*
- *Labelling Muslims as anti-Semitic*
 - *being perceived anti-Semitic because is a Muslim (Corina).*
 - *faculty directing questions of anti-Semitism to Muslim students only.*
 - *prejudice from professors "limit your learning" (in vivo code).*
- *Refuting university policies on human rights*
 - *dismissing Muslim students and their worldviews,*
 - *ridiculing their religion (Islam) and persons as Muslim,*
 - *prejudicing against Muslims and other minorities,*
 - *labelling Muslims as anti-Semetic*
 - *denigrating their relation in general*
 - *faculty lack awareness about university policies.*
- *Instilling fear in Muslim students*
 - *feeling one's religion ridiculed,*

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- *knowing one's opinions will be stifled by professors*
- *being religious not popular in the academy.*
- *lacking courage to defend one's faith*

(h) Gendering Islamophobia

- *Wearing hijab confers visibility (11)*
 - *wearing hijab as expression of beliefs;*
 - *visibility of the hijab;*
 - *being a 'visible Muslim' (hijabi wearing);*
 - *standing out because wearing a hijab';*
 - *different experiences of hijab wearing women;*
 - *experiences of Muslim women wearing hijab;*
 - *being aware that wearing hijab may invite stigma and prejudice;*
 - *'I feel that the way I dress is the primary origin of this prejudices';*
 - *"not visibly Muslim" because not wearing hijab.*
 - *being not compelled to wear hijab (as they) could choose not to.*
 - *being aware that wearing hijab may invite stigma and prejudice.*
- *Gendered direct discrimination/ Islamophobia*
 - *being treated differently because of her Muslim appearance*
 - *being attacked because of her hijab.*
 - *Muslim women can face more discrimination as a Muslim woman*
 - *marginalization of female Muslims wearing hijab,*
 - *being given the middle finger by a white male because hijab.*
 - *witnessing 'hijabi' Muslim women shouted at*
 - *being treated differently because of her Muslim appearance,*
- *Expressing discomfort towards hijab wearing women*
 - *staring at hijab wearing women*
 - *expressing discomfort towards hijab wearing women.*
- *Non-Muslim feminist warriors for Muslim women*
 - *mindset in the so-called non-Muslim 'feminist' warriors for Muslim women.*
 - *non-Muslims trying to control Muslim women wearing hijab,*

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- professor *assuming hijabi are victims,*
- *Being a Male Muslim*
- *harder to identify male Muslims than females hijabi.*
- (i) “Tokenizing” Muslim students through the institution’s structures**
- *lack of inclusive environment created by faculty.*
- *imposing same expectations on both non-believers and believers,*
- *discriminating minority religions.*
- *being tokenized by some departments for marketing purposes.*
- (f) Rendering Muslim students invisible in the systems**
- *Discounting Muslims diversity*
- *Ignoring the complexity of Muslim traditions,*
- *dismissing the diversity of origins of Muslim students*
- *discounting experiences from an Arab or Middle Eastern context*
- *Misrepresenting Islam and Muslims*
- *misrepresenting Islam as also a way of life*
- *missing a comprehensive learning(opportunity) about Islam (especially in high schools).*
- *‘Othering’ Muslims*
- *feeling being marginalized.*
- *being ask where you are from because being a Muslim.*
- *non-Muslim are “speaking about Muslims like we some sort of alien”*
- *being given ‘a cold shoulder’,*
- *being perceived ‘something else’*
- *Looking for the praiseworthy Muslim*
- *being praised for being a ‘modernized Muslim’*
- *being hypocritically congratulated for your outfit*
- *Rendering Muslim invisible*
- *rendering Muslims invisible,*
- *assuming that women who wear hijab don't speaking English*
- *prejudiced if wear hijab and has an accent.*
- *overlooking the rights to be identifying black.*
- *invisibility of black Muslims*

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(g) Targeting Muslims in the community

- *Blind targeting of Muslim minorities as an ambient reality of Islamophobia*
- *blind targeting of minorities in general and Muslim students in particular in the community.*
- *generalized Islamophobia*
- *generalized Islamophobia against all brown people.*
- *subtle prejudicial comments*
- *mistrusting Muslims*
- *discriminating them (Muslims just)*
- *complains to the BC Transit office are responded with excuses for the drivers.*
- *being Muslim, the stereotype can go against you in conflict as well.*
- *“has experienced much like discrimination here”*
- *“people have stereotypes of you because of who you are (race or religion)”*
- *Perpetrators of Islamophobia in the community*
- *“I think the problem, may be, is Female drivers”.*
- *getting attacked by a women on the bus because of her hijab.*
- *noticing older generation more prejudiced and discriminating.*
- *Targeting hijab and burqa wearing Muslims in the community*
- *wearing hijab confers visibility;*
- *expressing discomfort towards hijab wearing women;*
- *gendered direct discrimination/ Islamophobia.*
- *wearing Muslim outfits draw attention and stereotypes.*
- *being (also) discriminated because of cultural appearance (dress).*
- *being called names because wearing a hijab.*
- *“asking her to take off my hijab right there”.*
- *outing her husband as a Muslim male because of her hijab*
- *people react to Muslim outfits.*
- *expressing discomfort towards hijab wearing women,*
- *being uncomfortable with Muslims Outfit*
- *it is something unfamiliar so makes people uncomfortable.*
- *showing being offended by the presence of Muslims.*

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- *"You should not be allowed to wear" this here.*
- *being told not supposed to wear hijab in Canada.*
- *Canadians have an issue with our accent and are rude about this.*
- *being screamed at because wearing a Niqab at Walmart*
- *Witnessing shouting at Muslim women on the bus*
- *being told to go home or take off her hijab*
- *being thrown slurs on the bus by a guy*
- *being physically assaulted*
- *son being scrutinize/ sniffed by dogs if wearing a beard*
- *having their children yelled at the swimming pool*
- *Children developing Islamophobia from adults*
- *enduring islamophobia through one's children experiences*
- *Surviving heightened Islamophobia after terrorist attacks*
- *exceptional experiences of women in hijab after major terrorist attacks*
- *being Muslim shouldn't mean being responsible of other Muslims' wrongdoings.*
- *"were not expecting" Quebec bombing.*
- *being conscious when traveling to USA because of profiling.*
- *risk (of) being equated to a terrorist as a Muslim women*
- *Discriminating Muslims in employment*
- *being discriminated in employment because of hijab and height*
- *being overlooked for leadership opportunities in employment*
- *discarded as capable of being a leader*
- *being banned to work in certain companies because US ban*
- *realizing white folks are preferred in leadership roles*
- *impact of Muslim names when looking for a job.*
- *been discriminated for employment because of Arabic name*
- *getting less interviews because of name.*
- *discrimination in employment contradicting equity policies.*
- *being resentful against the institutions hiring policies.*
- *Resenting Muslim converts*

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- *being resented by own family because converted to Islam.*
- *getting backlash from family because converted to Islam;*
- *being yelled at by family members.*
- *incivility in the bus*
- *refusing to give up their seat to pregnant Muslim women!*

CHAPTER 5: Categories – Focused Codes -- Codes

(g) *Becoming aware of ambient Islamophobia*

- *Developing awareness of social cues*
 - *developing understanding of the meaning of social cues and hints*
 - *"Academic success means having supportive peers around you"*
 - *social "well-being is achieved when developed healthy good relationship with people"*
- *Distinguishing Islamophobia from other forms of discriminations*
 - *distinguishing Islamophobia from other discriminations,*
 - *distinguishing nature of discrimination based on words used*
 - *being privy to other people's negative experiences*
 - *"sometimes you feel that from peoples' facial expressions they don't like you"*
 - *they have some ideas in their minds about me*
 - *being confused about which identity she is being discriminated against*
 - *discerning Islamophobia from other forms of interactions.*
 - *"sometimes you can feel the undertones of the discrimination".*
 - *noticing how they've been treated differently as time goes*
 - *noticing only obvious discrimination,*
 - *discrimination in Canada is very subtle.*
 - *discerning Islamophobia is dependent on understanding English.*
- *Navigating the subtleness of Islamophobia*
 - *discrimination is not obvious but subtle and temporal*
 - *"positive experiences can blind from noticing negative ones*
 - *those kind of events showed me that Islamophobia can occur in Canada*
 - *Being exposed to the real racism in Canada*

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(h) Contextualizing ambient Islamophobia through ideologies

- *Imposing Eurocentric and Orientalist views on Muslim students*
- *imposing Eurocentric and orientalist views on Muslim students*
- *Xenophobic associations by faculty;*
- *essentializing Eurocentric views;*
- *compelled to ground ideas in Eurocentric views in order to satisfy faculty.*
- *Muslim students have been noticing a Eurocentric environment normalized in class;*
- *forcing atheistic views on (them and) others.*
- *Muslim students are compelled to living in a Eurocentric environment.*
- *Muslim students have to endure teaching of Islam in 'vague and general terms' (as earlier as) in social studies classes.*
- *preferring 'moderate' scholars voices in Western media and conferences is often the policy.*
- *constantly undergoing stereotyping of Muslim men as abusers of their women;*
- *the prioritizing Christian holidays over others*
- *non-Muslims often assume(d) that if you are covered, you are some religious minority:*
- *impose (on them) Eurocentric and orientalist views*
 - *Misrepresenting Muslims in the media and social media*
 - *our reputation was way better than now (media destroyed it)*
 - *media contributes to promoting Islamophobia.*
 - *media is playing a big major part in promoting Islamophobia*
 - *contributes to the good or bad image or groups.*
 - *social media and the media represents Islam negatively.*
 - *social media misrepresentation contribute to demonizing Muslims in general to prospective employers*
 - *Media stereotypes impacts Muslims' freedom*
 - *Muslim students are afraid to wear a traditional outfit, (as) media portrays us as terrorist*
 - *appearance plays a huge role again from media,*
 - *wearing traditional clothing can trigger profiling and stereotyping.*
 - *Muslim students elect to hiding their identity because of media stereotypes of Muslims (see article: 'We had to hide we're Muslim' by Gulson & Webb (2013).*
 - *media's portrayal of Muslims as terrorists and whites as suffering of mental health.*

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- *generalization of Muslims based on one person's misdeeds.*
- *Media and social media don't show the actual Islam, the real.*
- *“I wish the media just be neutral, be objective”*
- *Muslim communities could also have a Muslim leader as role model (who) can change media perceptions.*
 - *Countering the ‘fallacies’ of the Canadian multiculturalism ideologies*
- *“people don’t practice discrimination openly”*
- *the subtle (nature of) discrimination prevents people from intervening in situations of Islamophobia*
- *political correctness stifles the real issues.*
- *“they will act like you fit in, but you are not one them”.*
- *Doesn’t “get that much of direct prejudice and discrimination (is) because the way I look now, because I am modernized Muslim”.*
- *Canada want(s) to maintain a secular face*
- *contradictions are rooted in the issues of inter/ cross-cultural communication in classroom interactions*
- *ways Muslim students assuming Multiculturalism means people are more accepting of difference.*
- *friend’s experiences of racism in other places which, in comparison, makes Canada a safe haven.*
- *being a visible minority (and a Muslim student), amounts to being seen as the ‘other’ and being spoken differently because of race.*
- *fearing Muslims in general because of their reduction into status of ‘visible minorities’, ‘newcomers’, ‘international students’ and so on.*
- *fear also translates into mistrust or distrust and profiling.*
- *came to know that the government watches the Muslim chat rooms and discussion places*
- *whole community being constantly under scrutiny.*
 - *Intersectionality*
- *associating Muslims to Middle Eastern people*
- *“being stereotyped because of place of origin”*
- *race: being discriminated in co-op hiring as black*

HOW MUSLIM STUDENTS ENDURE AMBIENT ISLAMOPHOBIA

- *“not being trusted as black by co-op managers”*
 - *being discriminated by landlords as a black*
 - *struggling to distinguish discrimination based on race or religions*
 - *struggling to differentiate between racism and Islamophobia*
 - *being black*
 - *“because of the colour of my skin”*
 - *race discrimination can override religious discrimination for black males;*
 - *intersections of religion and race*
 - *Race prompting religion*
 - *being discriminated based on other factors (such color, darker skin, Muslim, Arab).*
 - *discrimination based on one's difference such as cultural outfit.*
 - *being portrayed based on your outfit*
 - *start doubting if (whether) you belong here (and just) because of your outfit.*
 - *“will be prejudiced if wear hijab and has an accent”.*
 - *being yelled at because of his 'accent and appearance’.*
 - *the issues of power and privilege relations in the classroom*
 - *essentializing Western perspectives and cultures vs. others.*
 - *prevents people from interviewing in situations of Islamophobia*
 - *Residency status*
 - *being less informed (of Islamophobia) because being new on campus*
 - *came recently as a refugee,*
 - *being born and raised in Canada*
 - *came to Canada in 2011*
 - *“I’ve been here for more than a few years*
- (i) Longing for belonging**
- *Expecting Canada to be a beacon of safety for Muslims*
 - *having a purpose in coming to Canada.*
 - *believing Canada is a country of rule of law.*
 - *expecting Canada to be a beacon of safety for Muslims,*
 - *“the reason I came to here is because of the freedom of religion, freedom of everything”*
 - *hearing negative stereotypes of Westerners back home in Saudi Arabia.*

HOW MUSLIM STUDENTS ENDURE AMBIENT ISLAMOPHOBIA

- *“though Canada is not USA Canada is not Canada anymore”*
- *“didn’t expect personal and character assassination”*
- *expecting younger generation to be less prejudiced;*
- *“expecting them to just think Muslim terrorists king of things”,*
- *expecting to be stigmatized because of prior experiences and*
- *as people always assume the worst from her.*
- *Family’s experiences of prejudice and discrimination,*
- *“in the academic settings people don't really do that openly”:*
 - *Striving to belong*
- *belonging to relevant social networks;*
- *belonging to the student body;*
- *belonging with them.*
- *having others show respect to your religious celebrations*
- *being integrated in the society as a Muslim is success.*
- *“well-being is achieved when you (also) developed healthy good relationship with people*
- *feeling welcomed in classroom*
- *you will think, “I want to fit in”.*
- *“a person should always adjust to where they’re living as long as it doesn’t violate their religion”.*
- *“feeling welcomed in classroom”:*
- *defying other people’s expectations by working hard.*
 - *Being trusted*
- *earning people’s trust from non-Muslim students.*
- *needing trust in order to belong.*
- *trust should be also based on generational acceptance*
 - *Reaching out through volunteering*
- *volunteering in the community,*
- *realizing to being used as a volunteer.*
- *social well-being is to have contact with peers outside class.*
- *Academic success means having supportive people around you;*
- *academic success (also) means having your professors’ support;*

HOW MUSLIM STUDENTS ENDURE AMBIENT ISLAMOPHOBIA

- *academic success means completed degree and can contribute to society*
- *believing healthy relationships and academic success are interrelated,*

(j) Bearing the impacts of ambient Islamophobia

- *Cognitive impacts of ambient Islamophobia*
- *prejudice and discrimination affect cognitively Muslim students.*
- *acting against their own values*
- *renouncing to their own values in order to fit it.*
being perceived "something else"
- *trying to assimilate oneself,*

psychological impacts of acting against own values (identity crisis/ alienation)

- *attacks against Muslims and mosques create fear in the community and erode their trust*
being prevented to practice one's religion can lead to psychological alienation

restraining one's public activities because of fear

- *Muslim parents afraid for their children's safety*
- *ambient Islamophobia (is) creating anxiety in Muslim women*
 - *many Muslim male are feeling bad and powerless about the discrimination against Muslim women*
 - *struggling with identity crisis.*
 - *struggling to find a co-op position because of her name.*
- *Affective impacts of ambient Islamophobia*
 - *compelling you to do things.*
 - *mistrusting of Muslims going around in society.*
 - *fearing for one's life as a Muslim and fearing to be marginalized as a Muslim.*
 - *rationalizing (their) faith,*
 - *being like very ashamed about kind of my religion in general*
 - *worried to speak for fear of becoming emotional*
 - *"afraid when you are going to pray"*
 - *feeling uncomfortable when Muslim women are discriminated*

HOW MUSLIM STUDENTS ENDURE AMBIENT ISLAMOPHOBIA

- *fearing to let daughters wear a hijab*
- *had to stop sending them to prayers*
- *“my mom was terrified and she wanted me to stay home”*
- *parents' reactions to her wearing a hijab*
- *prohibiting daughter from wearing hijab b/c of fear*
- *regretting to not have engaged more in class*
- *wishing to have had opportunity to engage more in classroom discussions*
- *insensitive language can affect students' academic learning*
- *being made uncomfortable by some faculty members:*
- *being hurt by being marginalized in class, hurting inside because of powerlessness*
- *lacking confidence to report Islamophobia as an international student,*
- *noticing the powerlessness of international students in the face of violence and Islamophobia.*
- *not feeling at home (and specially) after mosque attack*
- *feeling upset and saddened because of wearing a hijab.*
- *I felt like the weight of the words on me honestly,*
- *sometimes, I feel negative energy coming from them.*
- *feeling there exist solidarity between hijab wearing Muslim women,*
- *assuming group's attitudes towards her as convert were informed by their systemic experiences.*
- *Impacts of ambient Islamophobia on Muslim students' behaviors*
 - *deflecting the prejudice,*
 - *focusing on most relevant prejudice,*
 - *differentiating between prejudices,*
 - *trying to outperforming others,*
 - *showing no solidarity with topic (of Islam) as a strategy,*
 - *holding back participation because was laughed at in class*
 - *believing that in order to survive in the campus environment, 'you have to hide your identity as a Muslim'*
 - *being a modernized Muslim by wearing colorful clothing.*

HOW MUSLIM STUDENTS ENDURE AMBIENT ISLAMOPHOBIA

- *doubting the integrity of the professor.*
- *Impacts on academic learning*
 - *hesitating to go to counseling because of own cultural biases*
 - *prejudice is very devastating to my education and will put us in isolation.*
- *Impacts on social well-being*
 - *prejudice has severe mental effect on Muslim students*
 - *prejudice make Muslim students miss opportunities.*
 - *Islamophobia "impacts everything".*
 - *Islamophobia has affected our (Muslims) lives;*
 - *Islamophobia undermine other minorities safety;*
 - *Islamophobia is fear that 'affects your social life, your educational life'.*
- *Impacts on Muslims relationships with each other*
 - *stopping to send children to mosque for prayers*
 - *being more welcomed in the Muslim than the larger community*
 - *facing more scrutiny as a convert from other Muslims.*
 - *not being taken seriously as a white Muslim by white people and also by some Muslim.*
 - *particularity of the white Muslims converts' experience*
 - *different experiences of discrimination because power held as White converts,*
 - *being 'otherized' because of appearance (race)*

(k) Coping with Islamophobia

- *Assimilating to social norms and expectations*
 - *compromising own values and assimilating oneself without conditions.*
 - *compromising (their) own values,*
 - *feel they are being "obliged" to distance yourself from your belief*
 - *compelling (them) to do things*
 - *renouncing to own values*
 - *acting against own values*
 - *conforming to others' expectations*
 - *impact of being competed to meet others' expectations such as having to conform to Canadian 'dress code'*

HOW MUSLIM STUDENTS ENDURE AMBIENT ISLAMOPHOBIA

- *“Muslims should accept 'limitations' set forth by host country”.*
- *Snubbing prejudice and discrimination*
 - *Snubbing prejudice*
 - *shaking off prejudice.*
 - *deflecting prejudice*
 - *“just like ignore it and continue”*
 - *deciding to ignore prejudice*
 - *“I train myself just to remember the good things”.*
- *Blending in/ fitting in*
 - *blending in,*
 - *wearing hijab with other trendy clothes*
 - *wearing colourful clothes*
 - *dressing in modesty (is) advised in Islam*
 - *“dress in an appropriate manner”.*
 - *asking her son to remove his goatee because can be misinterpreted;*
 - *avoiding to be part of any faith community;*
 - *behaving carefully around Canadians because of fear.*
 - *fitting in as an outsider/ insider*
 - *acting against their Muslim values.*
 - *"become modernized Muslims"*
 - *shortening or changing Muslim names*
- *Concealing identity*
 - *concealing (their) identity*
 - *fearing to identify as a Muslim*
 - *trying to hide your religion, especially Islam in these recent times*
 - *concealing (one's) identity because of ambient Islamophobia, sometime contingent to how Muslim students want to fit in, belong.*
 - *preferring to keep the religion private sphere*
 - *consciously avoiding/ disengaging in discussions about Islam*
 - *avoiding discussions about religion*
 - *avoiding to speak up because of ambient Islamophobia*

HOW MUSLIM STUDENTS ENDURE AMBIENT ISLAMOPHOBIA

- *not showing no solidarity with topic*
- *holding to talk about religion when making friends*
- *avoiding to dress in Muslim traditional outfits*
- *telling their daughters to remove the hijab*
- *“I don’t allow my daughter to cover her head”*
- *stopping to wear hijab decreased negative comments towards her.*
- *Categorizing the degrees of prejudice and discrimination*
 - *comparing multiculturalism in Africa and Canada*
 - *distinguishing experiences in other settings*
 - *welcoming and liberal campus and welcoming campus compared to others*
 - *comparing UVic small numbers of Muslims to other campus*
 - *feeling of inclusion compared to other places*
 - *“found UVic inclusive and accommodating” compared to others*
 - *worse experiences in other places and worse experiences in other settings*
 - *comparing Canada to other countries and comparing experiences of racism in other countries versus Canada;*
 - *comparing Canada and other countries;*
 - *experiencing prejudice in other countries,*
 - *“big difference between back home in Saudi and here.*
 - *noticing less visible minorities compared to other places,*
 - *“as far as religious practice's concern, UVic and Canada are very open”.*
 - *being treated differently on campus and in the community*
 - *comparing Muslims experiences against Asian students*
 - *comparing Muslim women's experiences with those of men's*
 - *acknowledging a co-existence of multiple faith in Canada,*
 - *being Sunni or Shia is more relevant back home.*
 - *Muslim countries also have behavioral rules as opposed to Western countries.*
 - *failing to respect Islam and its rules.*
- *Rationalizing degree of discrimination/ prejudice*
 - *differentiating between prejudice*

HOW MUSLIM STUDENTS ENDURE AMBIENT ISLAMOPHOBIA

- *differentiating discrimination and Insensitivity*
- *believing these are just subtle prejudice*
- *experiencing subtle prejudice*
- *focusing on most relevant prejudice*
- *price to be paid in rationalizing faith*
- *Avoiding contact*
 - *withdrawing from socializing (because rejected by non-Muslim students)*
 - *minority students they make a one group together*
 - *focusing only on studies as a consequence;*
 - *“always focused on getting results”*
 - *psychological impacts of acting against own values (Mohamed).*
 - *restraining one's public activities because of fear*
 - *avoiding taking the bus*
 - *avoiding speaking to old people*
- (l) Resisting Islamophobia**
 - *Countering Islamophobia*
 - *fighting back against discrimination*
 - *fighting back Islamophobia in order to fulfill one's career goals*
 - *willing to not to give any chance to anyone to point a finger at you*
 - *“If I were there I would stand obviously up”*
 - *speaking back to stereotypes of language stigma*
 - *breaking stereotypes through engaging in dialogue*
 - *emphasizing common similarities through dialogue.*
 - *being cautious when talking to the media as he sees the media one perpetrator of Islamophobia.*
 - *refusing to conceal one's Muslim identity and preferring to openly show Muslim identity;*
 - *showing pride in being Muslim;*
 - *engaging in students association as strategy to maintain identity*
 - *taught to be proud of being black and Muslim,*
 - *wearing Muslim outfit on social media profile.*

HOW MUSLIM STUDENTS ENDURE AMBIENT ISLAMOPHOBIA

- *practicing (one's Muslim) faith openly without fear instead of concealing it.*
- *sticking to faith regardless of Islamophobia.*
- *disclosing one's Muslim faith as a way to not only help*
- *normalizing the Muslims' image in all forums as a strategy against media stereotyping*
- *normalizing the Muslim image in all forums of society*
- *show the community that we're all humans,*
- *Educating non-Muslims about Islam and Muslims*
- *education is always the key to break any barriers.*
- *Muslim students should help educate about Islam.*
- *role of Muslim students is to educate about Muslims and Islam and not convert people.*
- *breaking stereotypes through engaging in dialogue with non-Muslims*
- *teaching non-Muslims about how to respectfully speak to and about Muslims*
- *teaching non-Muslims about Muslim people and their cultures*
- *teaching people about your religion as a responsibility and willing/wanting to share about one's faith with friends.*
- *educating your friends about one's Muslim identity and culture.*
- *need to educate our country or our government to follow true Islam.*
- *(needing) to intervene in certain situations to educate attacker.*
- *education and how Mohamed defined the goal of education in the Western context as an education about and for the promotion and preservations of Eurocentric and neoliberal ideals.*
- *educating non-Muslims, however, will be **needing more time to educate about Islamophobia** because as reported,*
- *Islamophobia is embedded in the socio-cultural, political ideologies and structures of Western societies.*
- *Muslim students are for example needing to educate non-Muslims about the hijab/ head scarf;*
- *wearing hijab as 'noble' and 'modest thing'.*
- *breaking stereotypes of Muslim diversity*
- *show the diversity that is within Islam*

HOW MUSLIM STUDENTS ENDURE AMBIENT ISLAMOPHOBIA

- *the religious diversity among Muslims: Sunni, Shia.*
- *the cultural diversity in Islam*
- *bringing different cultural artifacts of one's culture to share (students)*
- *celebrating the Muslim diversity and cultures*
- *promoting cultural events to showcase diversity*
- *promoting Islamic awareness week as alternative to conference*
- *outreach event through "cookie sales in the engineering building"*
- *"If you want to know about our situation, go there and meet real people".*
- *Educating Muslims about their faith and themselves*
- *distinguishing cultural practice from religious teachings*
- *be clear in defining faith versus belief; and providing credible Islamic guidance*
- *educating Muslims about good behaviors*
- *people teaching international students should be respectful towards them*
- *think we (Muslim students) need education/orientation more than Canadian*
- *Muslims also can hold some biases*
- *getting away from Muslim students' own biases*
- *need to learn about others as well as*
- *look (ing) up things online and reflect on what educating oneself online implies*
- *About radicalization*
- *compensating social rejection and discrimination.*
- *being misguided as they don't have a very rigorous training in Islam*
- *risking co-optation.*
- *radicalizing Muslims (is sometimes a) consequence of rejection.*
- *"going back" to so called "fundamentalist" sources*
- *educating oneself online*
- *Maintaining faith*
- *faith is important*
- *faith is part of personal life*
- *distinguishing between schooling and education*
- *learn how to strike balance between different worldviews*

HOW MUSLIM STUDENTS ENDURE AMBIENT ISLAMOPHOBIA

- *the demographic of young people*
- *considering religion as part of identity*
- *Identity (indeed) is intertwined with religion and ethnicity*
- *different personal conceptions of religion*
- *being a Muslim as cornerstone of identity*
- *“been able to have a base understanding of my religion”*
- *to be a real Muslim*
- *Each one of us is responsible to represent Islam in the right way*
- *being good role model representing Islam to own friends*
- *emulating good Muslim behaviors and attitudes*
- *seeing oneself as ambassador of own country and culture*
- *each person represents his country as well*
- *Muslim woman should be considering hijab as part of her identity*
- *Hijab is very symbolic to Islam*
- *accepting the consequences of wearing hijab as own doing*
- *reason to wear the hijab/ burqa is obeying God*
- *recommending Muslims to not hide identity.*
- *Quran prohibit concealing one’s identity as a Muslim.*
- *Creating solidarity across common experiences*
- *joining the Muslim students’ association*
- *creating solidarity across common experiences.*
- *“you are not scared of anymore”.*