AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

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Title: The Bullying Experiences of Muslim-American Youth in U.S Public Schools

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Bullying cultivates insecurity and fear while generating attention for the perpetrator and degrading the student-victim in front of others. The act erodes the self-efficacy and identity of minority students more specifically and produces a hostile climate that undermines the learning and social development to all affected. Despite the pervasive negative consequences of bullying, research on this topic is largely absent in the counseling literature. In the current study, the prevalence of coercive acts such as physical, verbal, and electronic bullying among diverse Muslim-American students in U.S. public schools were statistically compared to the 2013 average national rate. The research project also sought to assess the relationship between comfort level in discussing religious identity and key demographic variables of race/ethnicity, gender, and age.

The first manuscript in this dissertation employed one sample z-test for proportion to ascertain the incidence rate of in-person and in-direct bullying among Muslim students (p > .05). The analysis employed an extant database with de-identified data on Muslim youth bullying experiences from the Council on American and Islamic relations (CAIR). The archive collected data of 471 records from students whose ages ranged from 11 to 18. The results showed that high school students experienced bullying

at a rate of 53%, which demonstrated statistical significance when compared to the 20% national rate of bullying. Another finding showed a prevalence rate in victimization at approximately 49% among Muslim youth in middle school. The preceding finding showed no statistical difference when compared to the national rate proportion. Finally, the percentage of students who reported experiencing cyberbullying stood at 13% for middle school students and 28% for high school students verifying statistically significant results in comparison to the average national rates in electronic bullying, which presents a mean prevalence rate at 23% and 15% for the intermediate and secondary levels respectively. The lack of experience in Internet usage among newcomers is one predictor to the significantly lower percentage rate of cyberbullying among middle school students.

The second study examined the predictive relationship between demographic variables of race/ethnicity, gender, age, and twelve ethnic categories and Muslim students' comfort in discussing Islam inside and outside of the classroom. The study employed multiple regression and ANOVA analyses to predict a relationship ($p > .05$). Data were obtained from the Council on American Islamic Relations' Muslim Youth School Survey (MYSS). The database examined 467 participants with male = 39% and female = 61% in grades 5-12 as demographics. The results revealed that the key demographic variables do not serve as predictors for comfort when discussing Islam.

The findings from this research suggests the need for efforts directed toward developing culturally appropriate counseling interventions, school policies, and staff training on the issues of bullying against Muslim-American students.

The Bullying Experiences of Muslim-American Youth in U.S Public Schools

By

Dalia Baadarani

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I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

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Dalia Baadarani, Author

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Finally, I am grateful for my late grandfather who instilled onto me a love of learning and the pursuit for knowledge as a priority in my life. He died suddenly and unexpectedly during this academic journey and to him I dedicate this dissertation.

CONTRIBUTION OF AUTHORS

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Overview

The purpose of this dissertation was to demonstrate scholarly work by using the manuscript style dissertation format in accordance with Oregon State University (OSU) Graduate School. In this format, Chapter 1 delivers an overview and background for the topic: "The Experience of Bullying Amongst Muslim-American High School Aged Youth" and describes how the two manuscripts in Chapters 2 and 3 are thematically linked. Chapter 2 is a quantitative manuscript titled, "The Prevalence Rate of Verbal, Physical, and Electronic Bullying Toward Muslim American High Scholl Aged Youth" and Chapter 3 is titled "Muslim Students Comfort Level in Expressing Cultural Identity in Public School Settings." Chapter 4 presents general conclusions that developed across the two manuscripts on a common theme.

Both manuscripts utilized a retrospective archival data study design (Hess, 2004; Jansen et al., 2005) with de-identified data acquired from Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR). Specifically, the provision of Chapter 2 sought to measure the occurrence of bullying among Muslim students in public school settings. An exploration of victimization for electronic, physical, verbal, and relational bullying was examined amongst Muslim students from diverse ethnic backgrounds. The study described in Chapter 3 provides an analysis of the predictive relationship between key socio-demographic characteristics and comfort in expressing distinctive cultural and religious identity amongst Muslim-American students attending public schools. This study investigated victim behaviors amid bullying and consequences within the context of school membership. Chapter 4 is a summary that delivers the inclusive conclusion of this dissertation.

Importance to the Profession of Counseling

Despite the evidence of growing numbers of Muslim American in the U.S. (Nadal et al., 2012), empirical studies on Muslim American youth experiences have not been well-represented in the counseling literature. More specifically, bullying incidents of Muslim students in school settings are seldom investigated scholarly risking the provision of culturally competent mental health services. Therefore, counseling professionals must realize the scope of which victimization is taking place in U.S. public schools to facilitate the dialog of competent services.

Bullying which is a subtype of aggression (Bauman & Yoon, 2014) and a health menacing issue affecting 50% of Muslims students in U.S. public schools inflicts psychological and behavioral consequences of those affected (CAIR, 2014). This data suggest that research ought to examine the bullying phenomenon among minority subgroups by using a theoretical base approach (Rigby, 2004, 2012) to further improve counselors' base knowledge. Such direction would improve interventions designed to avert bullying and its adverse effects among Muslim adolescents and positively impact the Muslim youth's comfort in the expression of religious and cultural identities. In order to achieve this goal, both manuscripts uncover details of the experiences and consequences of bullying among the Muslim youth in U.S. public schools, by recounting implications for practice and related interventions regarding the issue of bullying.

The American School Counselor Associative (ASCA) *Code of Ethics* (2014) guiding principles accentuate the importance for school counselors to expand their understanding and effectiveness and develop innovative approaches in working with culturally diverse populations. Similarly, the ASCA *Code of Ethics* (2014) encourages counselors to recognize their biases and

resist allowing their worldviews prevail over those of the client. With the increase of Muslim

immigrants and refugees, the U.S demographics are quickly and diversely changing to include a

greater majority of minority groups than any other country. This growth is changing counselor

education programs. These programs are now obligated to provide experiences that promote the

development of multicultural competent counselors (Cannon, 2008).

For almost three decades, academics have studied bullying to deliver a pragmatic

foundation for bullying prevention programs (Bauman & Yoon, 2014). A noteworthy study by

Ttofi and Farrington (2010), evaluated a collection of data from assessments of anti-bullying

programs from 1983 to 2009. They concluded that while the programs deliver interim results,

the effect falls short to reduce bullying victimization (Bauman & Yoon. 2014). Many programs

enumerate the prevalence of bullying, establishing a persona for the bully and victim, and

identifying the risk and behaviors involved. Such programs and curricula are marketed to satisfy

schools districts that are pressed to find quick solutions (Bauman & Yoon, 2014). It has led to

considerable variation of effects amongst experts who noted a robust lack of impact and

theoretical foundation of programs aimed to reduce the problem (Swearer, Espelage,

Vaillancourt, & Hymel, 2010). Therefore, important that work on mental health advancement

focus on the subtle features of effective interventions that include both general and targeted

approaches for schools to endorse, sustain, and expand.

Current State of Scientific Knowledge

Research regarding the bullying of Muslim youth has not been addressed adequately.

This study reports on the motives behind the rise of bullying amongst Muslim youth in U.S.

public schools, and provides recommendations at the school level and social justice levels to

improve the condition. The data on the number of bullying cases shows very disturbing trend faced by Muslim students. The repeated occurrences confirm a correlation between students' cultural background and bullying experiences (Dupper, 2013). Thus, many youths are apprehensive as they attempt to resolve what seems to them to be conflicting identities (Balsano & Sirin, 2007). One of the earlier studies in this body of work reported the exclusive discrimination incidents most Muslim youth experience in public schools (Sirin & Fine, 2007). Of their sample of students (n=70), nearly 85% reported having experienced discrimination because of their religious or ethnic background. The age was sometimes a detrimental factor in their blatant discrimination experiences due to their demographic backgrounds (Sirin & Fine, 2007).

Following the events of September 11, 2001, there has been an emergence of research on Muslim's multiple cultural, ethnic, and psychological identities. Peek (2011) described that Muslim students' religious identities were significantly influenced by the post-September 11 multiracial microagression. This exploration supports Portes and Rumbaut's (2001) concept of "reactive ethnicity," which is observed as the formation of a behavioral characteristic that seeks to defeat and eliminate bullying. Sirin and Fine (2007) found that despite high incidences of discrimination among Muslim students in New York, most youth in the study denounced discrimination as a way of life. Of the 70 students who participated in the survey, 49 respondents indicated that they try to handle bullying with attentiveness to the enactor, whereas others suffered a global conflict through degradation and ill-treatment as manifested in their increased salience of anxiety (Sirin & Fine, 2007).

Muslim youth in the U.S. public schools have been victims of bullying in numerous ways. Several reports have detailed the prevalence rate of bullying based on demographic differences among Muslim American middle and high school students. In a prominent rise, this victimization, general misconceptions about Islam, social exclusion, and peer rejection has been linked to Muslim's religious and ethnic affiliations (Ali, Liu, & Humedian, 2004). The increase in civil rights complaints was reflected in the 2,652 incidents of hate crimes submitted to the Council on American Islamic Relations to investigate. More concerning is the fact that 63% of the individual accounts were triggered by the victim's psychosocial features such as ethnic and religious background (Ghaffari & Çiftçi, 2010). Thus, this study attempts a knowledge-seeking approach and offers recommendations to school counselors regarding the best practices in serving the Muslim population based on the literature and data presented in both manuscripts.

Description of Research Manuscripts

The first manuscript in this dissertation explored the rates of bullying and the different modes of victimization in a sample (n=467) of Muslim American students who identified as victims of harassment. This data was compared to the national rate of bullying in the U.S. as an attempt to elucidate the magnitude of bullying as an issue among Muslim-American youth. This study informs the counseling literature by examining implications of the rates of direct and indirect forms of bullying amongst Muslim youth in U.S. public schools. The target journal for this study was *Professional School Counseling Journal*; as this journal focuses on the holistic view of wellbeing of a child in order achieve academic and societal success.

The eight research questions examined in the first study were as follows:

1. For Muslim-American students attending public high schools, what is the prevalence rate of in-school bullying?;

2. For Muslim-American students attending public high schools, does the prevalence rate of in-school bullying differ from the overall national rate?;

3. For Muslim-American students attending public high schools, what is the prevalence rate of electronic bullying?; for Muslim-American students attending public high schools, does the prevalence rate of bullying differ from the overall national rate;

4. For Muslim-American students attending public high schools, does the prevalence rate of bullying differ from the overall national rate?;

5. For Muslim-American students attending public middle schools, what is the prevalence rate of in-school bullying?;

6. For Muslim-American students attending public middle schools, does the prevalence rate of in-school bullying differ from the overall national rate?;

7. For Muslim-American students attending public middle schools, what is the prevalence rate of electronic bullying?; and

8. For Muslim-American students attending public middle schools, does the prevalence rate of bullying differ from the overall national rate?

The questions were addressed using quantitative cross sectional observational analysis to help answer the research questions of interest. Aimed to reveal prevalence of a phenomena, cross-sectional studies a subset of a population assessed from a continuum at s specific period in time (Hagan, 1997; Neuman & Robson, 2012; Trochim, 2001).

The second manuscript in this dissertation examined the relationship between the expression of cultural identity and encoded demographic variables among Muslim students. This study explores (a) the experienced discrimination because of religion or ethnicity among young Muslim students in public schools and the developmental consequences and psychological distress due to microagression and religious bullying, and (b) the integration process and the formation and negotiation of cultural identity in the midst of and aftermath of harassment. The target journal for this study was *Journal of Counseling and Development*, since this journal states in its author guidelines that its editorial board aims to represent the full range of social issues faced by children and adolescents and to publish articles pertaining to mental health in a myriad of settings.

The second study addressed four research questions:

1. What is the percentage of Muslim-American students that did not report comfort discussing Islam inside the classroom stood?;

2. What is the percentage of participants that did not report comfort discussing Islam outside the classroom?;

3. For Muslim-American students attending public schools, what is the predictive relationship between key demographic variables (i.e., gender, race/ethnicity, age) and comfort discussing Islam in the classroom?; and

4. For Muslim-American students attending public schools, what is the predictive relationship between key demographic variables (i.e., gender, race/ethnicity, age) and comfort discussing Islam expressing cultural identity outside the classroom?

This inferential study utilized binary logistic regression analysis to determine whether there is a predictive relationship between bullying victimization (i.e., the independent variable) and race, ethnicity, and gender (i.e., the dependent variable) to determine the comparative input of additional independent variables to the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Thematic Link Between Studies

The two manuscripts are thematically tied by their attention to the experiences of bullying victimization in the lives of Muslim students in American public schools. The thematic link between these two studies is that they both involve an exploration of the relationship between the prevalence of bullying and its consequence on the Muslim identity.

Glossary of Specialized Terms

➢ Bullying – A form of acute exploitation by a privileged individual with control intended to harm another person with less power. It is an exposure of aggression that is repeated over time and involves the bully deliberately instigating a plan to damage the victim both emotionally and psychologically (Dupper, Forrest-Bank, & Lowry-Carusillo, 2015).

➢ Cyberbullying – A type of communication that relies on technological devices (Slonje & Smith, 2008; Smith et al., 2008). It is typically used outside of school by bullies who remain anonymous to impose harm onto their victims by sending hateful messages in a public forum (Li, 2006).

➢ Cultural identity - One's own self-perception that is characterized by a national or social character which encompasses a set of qualities that members of a particular community share with one another regardless of their unique individual differences. Defined by its

majority group, such traits almost always include a pattern of shared principles, values, and beliefs among its communities (Bochner, 1973).

➢ Racial Microaggression - Indirect form of discrimination that communicates hostile and demeaning messages to members of marginalized cultural groups. Microaggressions are often unintentional and cataleptic whereby targets suffer morbid emotional reaction, often questioning if race was a motive for the aggression encountered, or what the right course of action to be considered if faced with a similar hostile experience (Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, & Torino, 2007).

➢ Islamophobia – A behavior that projects fear and suspiciousness against Muslims that has no supporting basis and is solely grounded on the group's perceived religious background (Bleich, 2011).

Organization

Given the aforementioned lack of information on the prevalence of the issues of bullying amongst Muslim students in U.S public schools provides a thematic link between the first and second research articles.

Chapter 2 provides a quantitative study that measures the phenomena of bullying among Muslim students in public school settings. This review includes an examination of: (a) the prevalence of bullying amongst Muslim American students in public schools, (b) the role of race, ethnicity, age, and religion in prompting the likelihood of being bullied; (c) and the causes and consequences that contribute to coercive acts in different contexts.

Chapter 3 provides a quantitative study that estimates the association between predictive relationship and key demographic variables (e.g., gender, race, age, & ethnicity) and comfort

discussing Islam in the classroom. In addition, the study attempted to examine the predictive relationship between key demographic variables and student's comfort in discussing Islam expressing cultural identity outside the classroom. The study begins with a review of recent literature that includes (a) the pervasiveness of bullying based on demographic differences among Muslim students, (b) the impact of bullying victimization on the Muslim psychosocial adaption and identity, and the (c) unique psychosocial development difficulties faced by Muslim students. Multiple regression and ANOVA analyses were employed to examine the relationship of comfort in the expression of cultural identity inside and outside the classroom setting. Both manuscripts conclude with the importance for counselors to seek professional and cultural enhancement to address the subject of bullying amongst Muslim youth.

Chapter 4 presents a concise conclusion reached through the analysis of the two manuscripts and links the two manuscripts together. Furthermore, the chapter gives future study recommendations as well as implications to improve counseling practices.

Chapter 2: A Research Manuscript

The Prevalence Rate of Verbal, Physical, and Electronic Bullying

Toward Muslim American High School Aged Youth

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The research contained in this manuscript was conducted under the approval of the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (Study ID 6938) and was part of the first author's dissertation research project.

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Abstract

The Muslim population in the United States has been growing significantly in recent years. With
this growth, understanding the prevalence rate of in-school bullying in comparison to the overall
national rate for Muslim-American students attending public schools has become more urgent for
professional school counselors. However, no baseline knowledge exists about the prevalence
rate of verbal, physical, and electronic bullying in public schools towards Muslim-American
students (grades 5-12) compared to the national rate. This study seeks to address the experiences
of Muslim minorities and the perceived importance of effective bullying-related interventions
serving this population. To address this topic, this study examines the experiences of American
Muslim youth at public schools using an extant database with de-identified data on Muslim
youth experiences. The study showed that bullying and cyberbullying among Muslim students is
more prevalent than it is among ethnic majority groups and that it is predominantly based on
religious differences.

Keywords: Muslims students, bullying, harassment, discrimination, public schools

The Experience of Bullying Amongst Muslim American High School Aged Youth

The Prevalence Rate of Verbal, Physical, and Electronic Bullying

Toward Muslim American High School Aged Youth

Introduction

Bullies target Muslim-American youth. Jibes such as, "terrorist," "Bin Laden," and "your family blows things up," are just a few of the derogatory comments Muslim American students hear on a daily basis in schools. Within the realm of secondary education, such targeting leads to social isolation and psychological pain. It further marginalizes these youths who already are subjected to discrimination because of negative depictions and assumptions of Muslims within American culture. Thus, it creates a negative and painful cycle of rejection and further victimization.

The increasing encounter of Islamophobia toward Muslims have not been limited to individuals perpetrating coercive aggression but a common act by institutions as well (Seward & Khan, 2016). The consequences of this Islamophobia demonstrate harsh stereotypes about Muslims, along with biased interpretations concerning the religion and their followers. The resulting social marginalization has not yet been challenged with empirical evidence established on the attitudes and experiences of these groups. The counseling literature suggest a strong body of literature on discrimination toward Muslim Americans.   But there continues to be a gap in evidence on the experiences of in-person bullying toward Muslim American youth (Aroian, 2011). The findings in the literature specific to Muslim adolescents propose that bullying victimization develops from inside their school; namely from teachers, school administrators, and peers (Aroian, 2011). Negative stereotyping during a troubled political era filled with unsettling coverage of terrorism as carried out in the U.S. media, may have

contributed to a prejudiced view of Muslim students and their families as perceived by school

personnel (Goforth, Oka, Leong, & Denis, 2014; Carter & El Hindi, 1999).

Provoked with perceived prejudice, and ridicule of Islamic practices, Muslims have found that

integration with the majority others while preserving a multidimensional identity has been a

challenging task and a life time mission Jackson, 1995; Carter & Hindi, 1999).

To provide context to the study, a review of the literature is provided. This review

includes an examination of: (1) in-school and electronic bullying amongst Muslim American

students in public schools, (2) the overall national prevalence rates for in-school and electronic

bullying, (3) the extent to which race, ethnicity and religion play a role in the prevalence of

bullying experiences; (4) and the causes and consequences of antagonistic intimidation in a

school context. After this review, the research questions under study will be discussed.

Recent studies of Muslim youth in public schools have identified many Muslim

students whom have suffered a power differential in the form of bullying discrimination. A

study by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR, 2012) found that 50% of Muslim

American students who attended public schools reported being physically and verbally harassed

through in-person and electronic means. Unlike the general population, the bullying experienced

by Muslim American students tends to be based on their racial, ethnic, and religious beliefs

(CAIR, 2012). Incidences of bullying also increase during periods of economic and political

distress (Meyers & Meyers, 2003). A CAIR (2014) study concluded that Muslim American

youth experience bullying at a rate twice that of their peers based on their ethnic and religious

identity. The high rate in victimization is documented through critical retorts as perpetrated by

teachers and peers (CAIR, 2014).

Many Muslim students consider bullying as a thwarting experience in the ten years since the 9/11 attacks. The Washington-based advocacy group Muslim Mothers Against Violence conducted a survey of 57 young Muslim students aged 11 to 18. This survey found that 80% of respondents have been bullied and called "terrorist;" and all fifty-seven participants were harassed during the course on the basis of their religious beliefs (Sacirbey, 2011). However, according to Wang, Iannotti, & Nansel (2009), bullying affects an array of ethnic and cultural identities, and targets middle school students at higher magnitudes than high school aged students (Wang et al., 2009). Having a nationally representative data on bullying among secondary. This discrepancy necessitates the need for a nationally representative data that compares the rate of bullying amongst middle and high school students and one that projects an introspective focus on Muslim as a minority group with demographic differences. The U.S. national estimates of bullying victimization in public schools suggested an approximate of 49% magnitude rate amongst middle and 20% rate high school students in 2013 (CDC, 2013a, 2013b). Whereas in a 2011 study, the School Crime Supplement (SCS) found a prevalence rate of 28% between students at middle and high levels who were exposed to verbal, physical, and psychological forms of abuse. (Robers, Kemp, Truman, & Snyder, 2013).

In another compelling national survey, the Health Behaviors in School-age Children (HBSC) found that students were subjected to peer bullying on a steady basis in the years 2005-2006 as indicated by 11% rate between students in sixth and tenth grades (Iannotti, 2012). Finally, a representative data by the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), a national survey with a focus on of high school students developed to assess the range, magnitude of victimization by considering demographic information as core data elements in capturing the full scope of

bullying found that almost 20% of high school students reported in-person bullying while the frequency rate in electronic bullying showed a prevalence rate of 15% (Hoffman, 2011). Procured from 17 U.S. states, the 2013 YRBS report indicted an average of in-person and in-direct bullying among middle school students of 49% and 23% respectively in the southeastern and northwestern regions (CDC, 2013c). This concludes that less students are bullied electronically than they are in-person. Taken into consideration the bullying among Muslim students as compared to the national level, the disparity in ratings support a very troubling reality.

The number of bullying among Muslim-American youth suggests a correlation between students' religious, ethnic, and racial affiliation and the prevalence of harassment (Dupper, 2013). These patterns of bullying intertwined with little understanding of the daily experiences of many Muslim youth, puts students at a disadvantage as it produces insecurity and confusion about their own multi-identity (Balsano & Sirin, 2007). Sirin and Fine (2007) documented the high encounters of discrimination that Muslim youth face in public schools and one that instigate identity confusion. Approximately, 84% of the respondents reported discrimination incidents tied to their religious and ethnic backgrounds. Age and years lived in the U.S. were two indictors of how strong and consistent discrimination transpired. As such, older students were bullied at a higher frequency rate than younger ones, and students who were presumably new in the U.S., were more prone to getting intimidated than others (Sirin & Fine, 2007). According to Reza (2015), similar incidents were cited by the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights in 2010. The report described multiple bullying incidents against Muslim Somali students

at Minnesota's St. Cloud Technical High School. Victims were targeted based on psychosocial variables such as race, ethnicity, and country of origin (Reza, 2015).

Evidently, for Muslims, religion is the guiding vehicle that facilitates a holistic Muslim identity (Whitley, 2012). This was even strengthened following the 9/11 attacks. Muslims religious identity became a dominant piece that gave meaning and guidance to their composite selves (Peek, 2011). Peek (2011) found that students' religious identities fomented in a way that immunized Muslims from the unduly discrimination and judged to be hurtful and hypothesized as "insignificant" to their lives. This analysis supports Portes and Rumbaut's (2001) concept of "reactive ethnicity" that describes identities are shaped based on perceived external threats to protect the self from hostilities.

Given the aforementioned lack of research and documentation on the prevalence of bullying amongst Muslim students in public schools, this study addressed eight research questions on the topic in public schools' secondary levels. The first question is: For Muslim-American students attending public high schools, what is the prevalence rate of in-school bullying? The second question is: For Muslim-American students attending public high schools, does the prevalence rate of in-school bullying differ from the overall national rate? The thirds question is: For Muslim-American students attending public high schools, what is the prevalence rate of electronic bullying? The fourth question is: For Muslim-American students attending public high schools, does the prevalence rate of bullying differ from the overall national rate? The fifth question is: For or Muslim-American students attending public high schools, does the prevalence rate of bullying differ from the overall national rate? The sixth question is: For Muslim-American students attending public middle schools, what is the prevalence rate of in-

school bullying? The seventh question is: For Muslim-American students attending public middle schools, does the prevalence rate of in-school bullying differ from the overall national rate? The seventh question is: For Muslim-American students attending public middle schools, what is the prevalence rate of electronic bullying? The eight question is: For Muslim-American students attending public middle schools, does the prevalence rate of bullying differ from the overall national rate?

Methods

  Design. This study employed a quantitative cross sectional observational analysis to help answer the research questions of interest. Data was collected from Muslim students who attended public schools between September and November 2012. The study sought to document the prevalence rate of electronic and in-school bullying as compared to the overall national average rate.

  Prior to data examination, a power analysis for the binomial test was conducted using G*Power 3.1 (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). The proper effect size statistic for a one sample test with dichotomous data is Cohen's g (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 2003). The required Cohen's g effect size was drawn from Harris, Rowley, Beck, Robinson, and McColgan (2011). The following input parameters were used: (a) test family: exact, (b) statistical test: proportion: difference from constant (binomial test, one sample case), (c) type of power analysis: a priori: compute require sample size: given α, power, and effect size, (d) g = .14, (e) tail(s) = two, (f) power (1-β err probability) = 0.80, (g) α = .05, and (h) constant proportion = .5. The G*Power 3.1 output included: (a) a sample size = 101, (b) actual α = .0450, and (c) actual power = 0.8053.

Participants. The selected populations for this study were middle and high school Muslim students in public schools. The participating school districts was in the southern region of California and ones that compromise the largest Muslim population in the United States with a population of 420,000 Muslims (Senzai & Bazian, 2013). Analyses were limited to students who completed questions that targeted to examine the prevalence rate of bullying amongst Muslim students in public schools. The respondents comprised of male and female young students from grades 5 to 12. They represented continents in America, Asia, Africa, and Europe.

This database contained 471 records. One record was eliminated because no grade level was reported. Three other records were eliminated because the grade level was 5th. With these four records eliminated the overall demographics of the participants was as follows. Gender was male = 39% and female = 61%. The average age was $\bar{x} = 13.92 \ (SD = 1.93).$ With regard to ethnicity, the participants identified themselves as: (a) African (7.07%), (b) African-America (3.64%), (c) Caucasian (1.07%), Central Asian (.21%), Latin American (.64%), Middle Eastern (25.70%), Indian/Pakistani (4.71), North African (7.28%), Pacific Islander (.43%), South Asian (40.26%), Southeast Asian (2.78%), and No Response (6.21%).

Measures

Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System Survey Questionnaire (YRBSS). The national data referents for Research Questions #2 and #4 were taken from the results of the 2013 administration of the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System Survey Questionnaire (Kann et al., 2014). The survey has a middle school and a high school version (CDC, 2013a; CDC, 2013b). In both versions, the following definition of bullying was presented: "Bullying is when 1 or more students tease, threaten, spread rumors about, hit, shove, or hurt another student over

and over again. It is not bullying when 2 students of about the same strength or power argue or fight or tease each other in a friendly way" (CDC, 2013a, p. 7).

The text of the bullying question for middle school (#13) was: "Have you ever been bullied on school property?" The text of the bullying question for high school (#24) was: "During the past 12 months, have you ever been bullied on school property?" The text of the cyberbullying question for middle school (#14) was: "Have you ever been electronically bullied? (Count being bullied through e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, websites, or texting.)" The text of the cyberbullying question for high school (#25) was: "During the past 12 months, have you ever been electronically bullied? (Count being bullied through e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, websites, or texting.)" The answer format for all four questions was Yes or No. The reliability and the validity is well established (Brener et al., 2002; Brener et al., 2013). Items concerning unintentional injuries and violence had a mean kappa of 59.9% (Brener et al., 2002).

Muslim Youth at School Survey (MYSS). The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) California Chapter created the MYSS to assess the experiences of American Muslim youth at public schools (CAIR, 2012). It surveyed students in middle and high school and yielded participation rate from 21 counties. The survey was comprised of 10 questions and a space for further commenting about their school experience. The data were collected from Muslim American students who attended public schools in California between September and November of 2012 and completed questionnaire to determine target population characteristics of a quantitative nature. The questions were the same for the both middle school and high school level. The questions were developed using the US government's definition and typology of bullying (US Department of Health & Human Services, 2016): "Bullying is unwanted,

aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time" (US Department of Health & Human Services, 2016, p. 1). This definition required that the behavior be aggressive and include: (1) "An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others, Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people" (p. 1), and (2) "Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once" (p. 1). The answer format for these questions was the following Likert scale: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, or Very Often. The following dummy coding was done of the Likert scale results: Never = 0, Rarely = 1, Sometimes = 1, Often = 1, or Very Often = 1. For comparison to the overall national rates, the following labels were used for the dummy codes: 0 = No and 1 = Yes. Item kappas of MYSS have not been examined. However, given the parallel nature of the questions with the YRBSS there is no reason to conclude that such kappas would differ significantly from those encountered with the YRBSS. It should be noted that at the high school level, and in contrast to the YRBSS, no time-frame (i.e., "During the past 12 months, ….") is given as part of the MYSS questions.

Bullying at school questions. While the bullying items of the YRBSS and the MYSS run parallel, these questionnaires differ in that the question on YRBSS for in-school bullying included verbal bullying (i.e., tease, spread rumors about) whereas on the MYSS such bullying was assessed by a different question. To most accurately compare the MYSS results to national data, the responses from questions #5 and #7 were combined. If any participant gave a response other than "Never" on either scale, the response were coded as a "Yes." The text of Question #5

was: "Have you ever been slapped, kicked, punched or hit because someone did not like your religion?" The text of Question #7 was: "Has anyone at school made mean comments to you or spread rumors about you because of your religion? "

Electronic bullying question. The prevalence electronic bullying was determined through the results from MYSS Question #8. If any participant gave a response other than "Never," the response was coded as a "Yes." The text of this question was: "Has anyone from school made mean or offensive comments to you about your religion through e-mail, text message, or on websites like Facebook and Twitter?"

Procedures

To address the research questions, de-identified data from Muslim Youth at School Survey was obtained from the CAIR (2012). Given the de-identified nature of the data, the Oregon State University HSR determined that the study did not fall under human subjects review (Oregon State University Human Subject Review Study #6938).

Data Analysis

Missing data for MYSS questions 5, 7, and 8 was deleted in likewise manner. This procedure left 184 participants at the middle school level (3% deleted for missing data) and 258 participants at the high school level (7% deleted for missing data). To address Research Questions #1 and #3, the percentage reporting Yes will be calculated. To address Research Questions #2 and #4, a one sample z test for a proportion will be employed (Daly & Bourke, 2008). The probability level for statistical significance was drawn from the CDC national data detailed earlier in this paper (Kann et al., 2014). The significance level was set at .05. All analyses were conducted using Excel.

Results

The percentage of middle school students that reported experiencing in-school bullying was 49%. A one sample z test for a proportion was used to ascertain if the number obtained experiencing any form of in-school bullying differed from the average national proportion. The results were not statistically significant (tails = 2, successes = 91, sample size = 184, hypothesized value = .488, z test statistic = .18, $p > .05$). The percentage of middle school students that reported experiencing electronic bullying was 13%. A one sample z test for a proportion was used to ascertain if the number obtained experiencing any form of electronic bullying differed from the average national proportion. The results were statistically significant (tails = 2, successes = 24, sample size = 184, hypothesized value = .233, z test statistic = -3.29, $p < .05$).

The percentage of high school students that reported experiencing in-school bullying was 53%. A one sample z test for a proportion was used to ascertain if the number obtained experiencing any form of in-school bullying differed from the average national proportion. The results were statistically significant (tails = 2, successes = 138, sample size = 258, hypothesized value = .196, z test statistic = 13.71, $p < .05$). The percentage of high school students that reported experiencing electronic bullying was 28%. A one sample z test for a proportion was used to ascertain if the number obtained experiencing any form of electronic bullying differed from the average national proportion. The results were statistically significant (tails = 2, successes = 71 sample size = 258, hypothesized value = .148, z test statistic = 5.73, $p < .05$). For a summary of the results see Table 1.

Discussion

As the prevalence of bullying targeting Muslim in U.S. schools remains indeterminate, this study addresses such gap in the literature. The purpose of this study was to capture and analyze the prevalence of bullying victimization among middle and high school Muslim students. In order to assess the magnitude of bullying victimization among Muslim youth, this study also compared the latter with the national bullying rate in the U.S.

With regard to middle school on campus bullying, there exists two possible reasons for the results encountered. First, prevention programs lack fundamental schemes that aim to deal with religious discrimination. Further, using curriculum-based programs that is less pertinent to the daily and factual experiences of Muslim students limits the understanding of prejudice and discrimination. Instead, teachers who are uncomfortable and apprehensive to teach world religions and educational topics of diversity are avoiding key knowledge. These deliberate actions question the culture and religion of a specific student or group that differs from that of the teacher because the perceptions and assumptions are never addressed and permits students to respond obscurely to their peers. A second possible reason for the results encountered for middle school on campus bullying was the minority status of the participants. In a study on aggression and violent behavior of 66 systematic reviews (Zych, Ortega-Ruiz, & Del Rey, 2015) showed that some ethnic minorities in middle and high school experience heightened victimization levels in comparison to the mainstream cluster (Albdour & Krouse, 2014; Fedewa & Ahn, 2011; van Geel, Vedder, & Tanilon, 2014a as cited in Zych, Ortega-Ruiz, & Del Rey, 2015). Kowalski and Limber (2007) found that 7% of 3,767 middle school students who took a survey on bullying reported electronic victimization in the form of recurrent episodes of harassment. The

underlying results show a statistically significant difference between ethnic minorities who received offensive coercion fairly more than the dominant majorities (Vitoroulis, & Vaillancourt, 2014). This difference in victimization was evident in the study titled *Racial and Ethnic Stereotypes and Bullying Victimization* (Peguero & Williams, 2013). Peguero and Williams (2013) found that there is a contemporary evidence in offensive treatment and social exclusion among multiracial and ethnic minority students once they refuse to comply or confront similar stereotypes.

There are a few considerations to be noted that are deemed to influence the prevalence of bullying. In terms of the middle school cyberbullying results, one possible reason that aligns with the literature is how resistant and decisive are minorities to bullying. This kind of steadiness in refusing to comply and take notice of intimidation serves as a useful method to limit further exposure to harassment (Long, 2011). Because of unique characteristics of indirect bullying, cyberbullying emerges as a weapon to harm others. The absence of school procedures and online disinhibition effect, encourages increased cruelty, resulting in higher level of racism against Muslim students.

With reference to high school on campus bullying, two probable reasons for the results exists. First, Muslim refugees and immigrant students are more vulnerable to bullying than indigenous Muslims as being less habituated to a new culture display them in helpless situations (Fandrem, Strohmeier, & Roland, 2009). They are skeptical to negotiate their identities when they know little about their new society, such as indifference in cultural values, personal proximity, communication style, and boundaries. It is a gradual and slow process for the young refugee to acquire coping skills for responding appropriately in the face of coercions (Bridging

Refugee Youth and Children's Services, 2016). It is not a conscious decision a newcomer can make whereby it is process of integration that facilitates the acquisition of control and awareness. The second possible reason for the high school on campus bullying is related to foreign-born youth who may have habitual and fixed views of U.S. citizens and cultural values that may not necessarily be accurate as understood from certain venues. Some teachers fail to make the transition easy by their lack of understanding about underling psychosocial factors that may be conditioning bullying to transpire in their classrooms (Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services, 2016).

In relation to high school electronic bullying, two likely reasons exist for the findings reported. First, cyberbullying occurs among Muslim students at a high proportion given that some students, more precisely newcomers, lack the experience with Internet and its high risks giving cyberbullies the chance to engage in harmful behaviors towards minority and technology novices. A second possible reason for the high school electronic bullying is related to first generation parents who may know little about internet usage and its guidelines. The lack of familiarity creates an open space and invitation for their off springs to use technological devices more freely with minimal monitoring from parents (National Crime Prevention Council, 2015). Given that parents fail to communicate basic information about the Internet or set appropriate guidelines for their children's use of the online network, cyberbullies seek the opportunity to make regular threats to their victims in an obvious form of power imbalance. According to the results, cyber bullying attest a significant issue among Muslim-American students (Mishna, Cook, Gadalla, Daciuk, & Solomon, 2010). The findings suggest that Muslim-American students in middle school are at a lower risk of online victimization than high school students. This

finding may be influenced by the fact that high school teens who are bullied may be less reluctant to talk to parents or other adults for emotional support and prefer to take matters in their hands. Older students are also more likely to spent more time online to complete homework or connect with friends and family members from their home country. More specifically, some female Muslim American high school students use social network sites to establish and maintain relationships independently of concerns of being identified or with how others may be evaluating their physical appearance. The regular and recurrent accessibility to online activities expose students to further opportunities for cyberbullying to occur.

There are four limitations to this study. First, this study was overpowered. Such results with a large pool of subjects can identify negligible differences as statistically significant (Hochster, 2008; Smith, 2013). However, the results from this study proved statistical significance in bullying prevalence. The second limitation was the sample was drawn from a single (albeit large and diverse) state. Thus, the results may not be theorized as precise on a national level scale. The third limitation was that this study used data from cross-sectional survey. Specifically, the impact of both cohort and period effects on both the Muslim-American and national samples (which were drawn approximately at the same times) is unknown (Baird, Pitzer, Russell, & Bergeman, 2012). The fourth limitation is the use of a national base rate for the proportion. Although, the national sample adequately reflected the demographics of the U.S., however, the range sand cope of under-reporting or over-reporting of bullying episodes and victimization is undocumented given that the national data comprised of only youth enrolled in schools. Therefore, the national base rate for the proportion is not representative of all individuals in the middle and high school age group.

This study suggests a number of inferences for counselor practitioners specifically and the psychological literature in general terms. Implications from this study may lay the foundation toward addressing a range of integral experiences of Muslim youth in the U.S. (Ghaffari, & Citi, 2010). First, future studies could extend this research by assessing the degree to which adolescents' experience bullying at a religious homogenous as compared to a diverse school. A second implication, it would be stimulating to employ a longitudinal design, utilizing a larger sample, and including additional coercing variables that might be of importance to the religious identity of young Muslims. A third implication, longitudinal research could further explore how societal influences can have an adverse effect on Muslim youth mental health (Driscoll & Wierzbicki, 2012). A fourth implication, research needs to explore Muslims youth and their religious restrictions and meanings that are created in response to internal struggles and external forces and how this enable or disable the formation of identity (Hammond 1988; Warner 1998).

Future research needs to investigate the relationship of cultural identity of young Muslims to mental health to determine effective counseling interventions. Finally, counselors can utilize qualitative methods to study the importance of presenting scholastic content about the religious and cultural systems and its positive effect on students from diverse backgrounds (Olweus, Limber, & Mihalic, 1997). It seems important to examine more diligently the nature of religious bullying, why, and which aspects of the school context has a substantial impact on Muslim adolescents' religious attitudes and orientation from ethnic minorities.

Findings from the study highlight the ongoing need of restoring effective bullying-related intervention and prevention efforts based on the growing religious and ethnic diversity across the

US. First, due to the lack of understanding of ethnic minorities experiences in public schools,

study findings strongly point to the importance of raising conscious awareness of religious and

ethnic differences among school officials and subsequently. Second, the growing number of

religious and ethnic minorities across the U.S. demands that public schools promote unity among

its students by instilling a sense of acceptance to all members (Forrest-Bank & Dupper, 2016).

Third, reducing bullying and victimization entails having trainings aimed at enhancing

knowledge of bullying in a culturally inclusive environment. An ecological system approach for

prevention can be executed by developing strategies directed at helping school officials feel

more efficient in reducing the rates of bullying by initiating an open dialogue about the issue

(Forrest-Bank & Dupper, 2016). Cognitive-behavioral interventions that support students from

the dominant and marginal culture to change obstructive thinking and behavior may prove to be

a successful method to overcome victimization (Forrest-Bank & Dupper, 2016).

These findings prove that bullying and cyberbullying among Muslim students is

prevalent, thus, school counselors need to recognize the importance for religion and ethnicity

inclusion into their counseling practices (Schlosser, Saba, Ackerman, & Dewey, 2009). There

needs an evolutionary action in place that encompasses the creation of a proposal plan that stops

offensive behavior toward Muslims by spreading awareness of biased school policies and the

understanding of tolerance to diversity (Martin, 2002; Stone & Clark, 2001). This base

knowledge is particularly important for those professionals who are Muslims and will, therefore,

not be recognized as out spoken against such prejudice (Schlosser, Saba, Ackerman, & Dewey,

2009). A perceived inadequacy in implementing approaches comprises presenting accurate and

up-to date educational curriculum about the diversity of world religions (Dupper, Forrest-Bank,

& Lowry-Carusillo, 2015). Such timely and applicable interventions may strengthen students'

emotional intelligence in defeating and overcoming prejudice behaviors which in return would

ensure increased levels of institutional safety (Vitoroulis & Vaillancourt, 2014).

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Table 1

Prevalence Differences Between the Muslim-American (M-A) and National (NAT) Samples by

Bullying Type and School Level

Level	In-School	Electronic
Middle	M-A (49.4 %) > NAT (48.8%)	M-A (13%) < NAT (23%)*
High	M-A (53%) > NAT (20%)*	M-A (28%) > NAT (15%)*

*one sample z test for a proportion, $p < .05$

Chapter 3: A Research Manuscript

Muslim Students Comfort in Expressing Cultural Identity in Public Schools

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Abstract

In light of the growing interconnectivity of the world and the emergent number of Muslim students from various nations experiencing bullying victimization in the United States, it is imperative that school counseling support services grow and adapt in order to fit the needs of diverse minority groups. As a distinct cultural and religious group, Muslims students in public schools experience bullying at high rates, which necessitate an understanding of prejudice and the predictive relationship between key demographic variables (i.e., gender, race/ethnicity) and comfort in expressing cultural identity on school grounds. To address this topic, this study examines the experiences of American Muslim youth at school by using an extant database with de-identified data on Muslim youth experiences in public schools.

The Muslim-American youth who did not report comfort discussing Islam inside the classroom stood at 19%. The same youth who did not report comfort discussing Islam outside the classroom stood at 16%. There was no predictive relationship between key demographic variables such as gender, race, ethnicity and comfort discussing Islam in either school or non-school settings.

Keywords: Muslims students, bullying, microagression, Islamophobia, public schools, discrimination

Muslim Students Comfort in Expressing Cultural Identity in Public Schools

A common concern amongst teenagers is what their peers think about them. Nevertheless, Muslim youth is one ethnic group that is endogenous of such fear. Muslim youth often worry about being judged or misunderstood for their religious practices, such as fulfilling the obligation of fasting during the holy month of Ramadan, securing a discreet space to pray on school ground, or for girls choosing to wear the hijab after puberty (Nasir & Amin, 2006). The implication that one realizes is that the practice of Islam in a school setting is a public affair despite its private and holy nature. It is often trailed with a continuum of prejudice references (Nasir & Amin, 2010). It leaves young Muslim students vulnerable to frequent bullying by classmates and one that is often driven by multiple variables: religion, ethnicity, language, and racial differences (Zeman & Bressan, 2006).

Religion is one subtype and constituent of cultural identity that permits the formation of characteristics based on differences which in return, lays a systemic and institutional equilibria in the common ground (Eck, 2002 as cited in Dupper, Forrest-Bank & Lowry-Carusillo, 2015). Surely, the United States has progressively become a distinctively diverse nation more so a leading country in religious diversity (Dupper, Forrest-Bank, & Lowry-Carusillo, 2015). To illustrate, the non-immigrant Muslim community in the U.S. is comprised of African Americans (40%), Asian (10%) and (10%) as Hispanic; while (18%) identify as white (Pew Research Science, 2011). Moreover, a progressively growing number of Latinos, Native Americans, and Caucasians have converted to Islam over the past several decades (Schlosser, Saba, Ackerman, & Dewey, 2009). Thus, the followers of the Islamic faith characterize an inclusive range of ethnicities, cultures, nationalities, and Islamic ideologies.

To contextualize this study, a review of recent literature was conducted on the research topic. This review reveals four key points. These four points were: (1) the prevalence of bullying based on demographic differences among Muslim students, (2) the impact of bullying victimization on the Muslim psychosocial adaption and identity, and (3) the unique psychosocial development difficulties faced by Muslim students. After addressing these topics, the research questions will be presented.

Many Muslim youth experience a certain degree of prejudice grounded on their ethnic, racial, or cultural background (Nadal, Griffin, Hamit, Leon, Tobia, & Rivera, 2012). For example, ethnic discrimination is echoed through behaviors including relational (Lee & Koro-Ljungberg, 2007; Liang, Grossman, & Deguchi, 2007), verbal, and physical harassment based on ethnic background or language (Liang & Deguchi, 2007; Qin, Way, & Mukherjee, 2008). While these aforementioned problems are well known and universal, gaps in the research on this topic still exist. In particular, the experience of Muslim youth and their religious identity formation in public schools is not well known. Therefore, greater knowledge about this community would benefit school counselors and school administrators that interact with the Muslim community.

Recent literature in public schools has identified diverse disparities among individuals who identify as, immigrant and refugee minorities. These differences include higher rates of microaggression and religious bullying among young Muslim students in public schools (Nadal, Griffin, Hamit, Leon, Tobia, & Rivera, 2012; Olweus & Limber, 2010). However, existing articles are limited by (a) sampling issues, including small sample sizes; (b) an overall lack of racial and ethnic diversity; and (c) a subgroup of Muslim youth rather than a member of the major division of the religion (Dupper, Forrest-Bank, & Lowry-Carusillo, 2015). In spite of findings showing that Muslims, particularly women, display developmental consequences and

psychological distress due to environmental stressors (Berry, 1997; Gerges, 2003; Hassouneh & Kulwicki, 2007; Nesdale, Rooney, & Smith, 1997; Rao & Walton, 2004), counselors and counselor educators have not examined these disparities as it is associated with religious discrimination (Al-Adawi et al., 2002; Sarfraz & Castle, 2002 as cited in Amri & Bemak, 2013). Given that there are nearly seven million Muslims in the U.S. (CAIR, 2010), counselors are likely to encounter these individuals as clients and, for this reason, should examine mental health data through a multicultural lens, acknowledging the importance of identity with an aim to promote wellness while contributing to the existing research base. Once a decisive empirical foundation of knowledge has been established, treatment recommendations can be featured to address the unique needs of Muslim youth who seek counseling.

Recent research efforts have detailed the prevalence rate of bullying based on demographic differences among Muslim American middle and high school students. In a notable rise, this victimization, general misconceptions about Islam, social exclusion, and peer rejection has been linked to Muslim's religious and ethnic affiliations (Ali, Liu, & Humedian, 2004 as cited in Ghaffari & Cifti, 2010). To understand the intensity of discrimination, one must browse at the evolution of incidents against Muslims over the decade. Noted as a large-scale increase in hate crimes in U.S. history, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (2008) responded to over 1700 grievances after the 9/11 events. The episode reports involved prejudiced and offensive conducts against Muslims that were triggered by demographic variables such as the person's ethnicity and religious background (Ghaffari & Cifti, 2010). In 2007, an experimental, mixed method study by Sirin and Fine (2007) examined how Muslim American adolescents express their identities post 9/11 impact. The study found that roughly 84% of the survey participants ages 12 to 18, have been a target of discrimination as it pertains to religion or

ethnicity affiliation that is different than the perpetrator's conviction or background (Sirin &

Fine, 2007). In another representative data on the issue, Muslim Mothers Against Violence

(MMAV) measured coercive experiences in in Northern Virginia public schools (Islamic

Networks Group, 2014). The 2010 study, found that 80% of the 78 adolescent students ages 12

to 18 had been exposed to prejudiced insults and harassment because of their ethnic, racial and

religious backgrounds (Islamic Networks Group, 2014). This reflects comparable figures as

alluded in a San Francisco Chronicle dating back to March 2011, whereby 80 Muslim Boy

Scouts from a community mosque reported being called a terrorist based on their religious

background (Islamic Networks Group, 2014) Perhaps the most alarming of the incidents is a

recent study by the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) that was conducted in

California. The survey found that 50% of the 472 Muslim students surveyed recounted bullying

reports that proved that their Muslim faith was a key cause for the verbal and physical abuse.

Based on the results of several reports, Muslim adolescents experience prevalent misperceptions

from their peers that provoke the psychosocial adaption and identity (Islamic Networks Group,

2014).

Perpetrated by negative stereotypical reports in the media, the post 9/11 milieu has

enforced the more radical notion of Islam as characteristic of the Muslim youth identity, forcing

them to deal with a prejudicial encompassing concept (Peek, 2011). Hence, Muslim American

youth negotiate their identity in diverse ways. Some have strived to integrate their Muslim and

American identities positively, others have chosen to separate them into congruent realms, and

still others perceive a degree of disparity between these identities (Sirin & Fine, 2007). As such,

the impact of bullying victimization on the Muslim students' psychosocial adaption and identity

is multivariate. More recently, the implication and relationship of perceived discrimination and

self-esteem as it distressing influence for the mental health has been addressed theoretically in studies examining Muslim American samples (Moradi & Hasan, 2004; Rippy & Newman, 2006 as cited in Ghaffari & Cifti, 2010). Most studies have found that self-esteem is negatively associated with perceived discrimination as it is believed to disturb the emotional and psychological state of an individual.

As religion is one of the most central characteristics defining Muslims ethnicity, it has influenced the victimization on the core Muslim psychosocial adaption and identity (Shah, 2006). Sirin and Fine (2007) examined how Muslim youth negotiate their identities post the events of September 11. A notable number of Muslim students distinguished their religious preference and being an American as two opposing parts of their selves. Perhaps most notable are the students who have experienced less discrimination, their integration level was reported as lacking and a feeling of alienation between assimilating in the overriding culture and preserving their own heritage (Sirin & Fine, 2007). Many factors are likely to impact the perceived effectiveness of psychosocial adaption of Muslim students. A number of studies suggest that a hostile school environment has an adverse effect on student's emotion well-being. It makes students want to detach themselves from instances which results in academic and campus community disengagement (Steele, 1997 as cited in Nasir & Amin, 2006). Steele documents that a student's intellectual inferiority is linked to how students are perceived in an academic setting which may affect the academic achievement adversely. Supported by Stanford Integrated Schools Project in 2003, accelerated student performance and the freedom to express cultural identity in an unrestricted environment was deemed integral for student success (Cohn-Vargas, 2015). However, for many Muslim students, marginalization comes at the expense of successful

integration due to psychosocial development difficulties, and Islamic principles and expectations that are inconsistent of their religious and ethnic communities and those of the dominant culture.

The issue of preserving a cultural identity and/or submerging into another culture is an internal struggle that most Muslims face. Curtis (2009) reports that Muslim youth feel vulnerable and highly visible feeling uncomfortable with others seeing them pray, and judging them as terrorists or as oppressed. Despite the evidence that show robust division in preference, such as when Barazinji (1993) offered the case of a Muslim adolescent who felt a sense of belonging in the majority culture than the one she originally represented, there are cases where perceived peer pressure and racial discrimination to adapt to mainstream principles, inspire some students to vigorously counter distortion about Islam (Amri & Bemak, 2013). However, in justifying themselves all the time rather than being subdued, they feel the pressure of being accountable for key issues related to Muslims or Islam (Nasir & Amin, 2006). For illustration, research by Barazinji (1993) was comprised of twelve girls and ten boys, a series of semi-structured discussions piloted with sixteen-year-old Muslim Arab youth, half of whom attended public school and nearly all of whom were American citizens, disclosed unique information about their experiences (Amri & Bemak, 2013). The girls revealed subtle internal conflict. They did not offer a counter interpretation to being called discriminatory names since this would only confirm the gibe, yet they felt that their calm meant that they were somehow degrading their people. According to them, this internal struggle was causing them to shift the provenance of the guilt internally.

These situations are likely predictors of depression and both boys and girls recall that sustained taunting and bullying are leading causes to detaching themselves from other kids at school. In a 2007 study on hyphenated selves of Muslim youth, 28 participants of the young

women respondents interpreted their comfort in being a Muslim and being an American by an identity map that echoed fluid movement between both spheres (Sirin & Fine, 2007). In comparison, 26 out of the 38 young men who participated, depicted a representation of what they see as sustained systemic discrimination and perceived injustice and favoritism in different societal unions (Sirin & Fine, 2007). Some of the Muslim students described their tire effort to conform with other members from the dominant culture, thus compromising their cultural or religious identity (Sirin & Fine, 2007). Some girls reported feeling confused if whether not wearing hijab would portray them as less 'Muslim' than girls who did. Others stated a degree of humiliation when their Muslim peers attending the same school were disruptive in class or had manners that contradicted Islamic manners and conduct. This verifies the many ways Muslim American youth display and convey their identity. Some have succeeded to integrate their Muslim and American identities, others have somehow divided them into mutually disjointed worlds, and still others perceive a degree of discord between these identities (Sirin & Fine, 2007).

This study was guided by four research questions. The first question was: What is the percentage of Muslim-American students that did not report comfort discussing Islam inside the classroom stood? The second question was: What is the percentage of participants that did not report comfort discussing Islam outside the classroom? The third question was: For Muslim-American students attending public schools, what is the predictive relationship between key demographic variables (i.e., gender, race/ethnicity, age) and comfort discussing Islam in the classroom? The final question was: For Muslim-American students attending public schools, what is the predictive relationship between key demographic variables (i.e., gender,

race/ethnicity, age) and comfort discussing Islam expressing cultural identity outside the

classroom?

Method

Design

This study describes a retrospective, cross sectional observational analysis to determine

prevalence (Mann, 2003). Data was collected in 2012 from American Muslim Youth across

California who attended public schools. The study was designed to estimate predictive

relationship between key demographic variables such as gender, race/ethnicity and age and

comfort discussing Islam. For both research questions the predictor variables were: gender,

race/ethnicity and age. For the first research question, the criterion variable was comfort

discussing Islam in the classroom. For the second research question, the criterion variable was

comfort discussing Islam outside of the classroom.

G*Power 3.1.9.2 was employed for power analysis (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang

2009). The test family was: F tests. The statistical test was linear multiple regression: fixed

model, R2 deviation from zero. The type of power analysis was a priori: compute required

sample size, given α, power, and effect size. The population effect size was drawn a from

communication anxiety variable reported by Peng (2014). The Cohen's (1992) f^2 reported in

Peng was f2 = .49. The following input parameters were employed: (a) $f^2 = 0.49$, (b) power (1-β

err probability) = 0.95, (c) α = .05, and (d) number of predictors = 3. The G*Power 3.1.9.2

output included a sample size of 40 and an actual power of 0.954.

Participants

Analyses were limited to students who completed questions that were designed to

examine Muslim students comfort level in participating in class discussions about Islam, and

whether they felt inhibited letting other students know about their faith. The study also examines students' openness in carrying out discussions about Islam outside of the classroom. Data were obtained from CAIR-CA's Muslim at Youth School Survey for the period between September and November of 2012. The sample students ranged in age from 11 to 18 from grades 5 to 12. Participants were sampled from public schools in 21 counties across California.

The database held 471 records. Participant demographics were as follows: Gender was male = 39% and female = 61%. The average age was $\bar{x} = 13.91 \ (SD = 1.93)$. With regard to ethnicity, the participants indemnified themselves as: (a) African (7.01%), (b) African-America (3.61%), (c) Caucasian (1.06%), Central Asian (.21%), Latin American (.64%), Middle Eastern (25.69%), Multiethnic (4.67%), North African (7.22%), Pacific Islander (.42%), South Asian (40.13%), Southeast Asian (2.76%), and No Response (6.58%).

Measures

Muslim Youth at School Survey (MYSS). The Muslim Youth at School Survey (MYSS), inquired information about Muslim students' trust in deliberating about religious explorations. They survey included students in middle and high school and yielded participation rate from 21 counties. The 10-question survey inquired about students' experience on a five-point Likert scale (Likert, 1932), which emerges from responses for subjects to identify their level of comfort or discomfort on a symmetric agree-disagree scale for a sequence of statements. For the purpose of this survey, only two inquiries were examined and further analyzed as potential gauges of the level of comfort in participating in class discussions about Islam inside and outside the classroom. The statements as follows: "I am comfortable participating in class discussions about Islam or countries where Muslims live" and "I feel comfortable letting students know that I am Muslim and talking about Islam outside of the classroom." In order to

ensure an average test-retest reliability, MYSS survey data collected responses from a pool of large sample size in 2012. The survey was administered yet again in 2014 as a follow-up to the 2012 review and yielded the same results.

The questions were written by three writers with attention given to vocabulary and topics that are both fitting to the constructs being measured and applicable to the events experienced by students. The survey comprised of questions that collected information about student demographics, as well as questions about the school's environment and individual situation. The first half of the survey inquired about the school environment using answer choices ranged from one extreme to another where SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, U = Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree. The second half assessed whether a student had encountered bullying by identifying the intensity of aggression, the method used, along with outlining a particular alternative the student had pursued and whether he/she considered it to be successful. In the rating of encountered bullying, the survey used answer choices where N = Never, R = Rarely, S = Sometimes, O = Often, VO = Very Often.

The questions were modeled of the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS), a screening tool that measures key school climate, and student physical and mental influences that are linked to academic performance, including academic achievement and constructive youth development (Regional Educational Laboratory West, 2007). An examination of the psychometric properties was obtained by comparing results from two systematic samples collected from 2003 and 2005 respectively (Regional Educational Laboratory West, 2007). To test for internal consistency, the Cronbach's α reliability coefficient for demographic variables was considered with Nunnaly's (1978) criterion of 0.70 as the determination cutoff point (Regional Educational Laboratory West, 2007).

The self-report questionnaire is valid, since anonymity has been established to mark a critical impact in safeguarding valid responses from adolescents on self-report surveys (Williams, Eng, Botvin, Hill & Ernst, 1979). The Muslim Youth at School Survey meets the anonymity criterion, as well as other validity criteria such as practice of alternate forms of questions to determine the degree of honesty each respondent has been.

In-class comfort. In-class comfort was assessed using Question #1 from Muslim Youth at School Survey (CAIR, 2012). The text of this question is: "I am comfortable participating in class discussions about Islam or countries where Muslims live." Participants are asked to respond using the following Likert format: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, U = Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree. For descriptive analysis, the responses were dummy coded as follow: SD = 0, D = 0, U = 0, A = 1, SA = 1. Specifically, the two different codes meant: 0 = Not Comfortable, 1 = Comfortable. For inferential analysis, the responses were dummy coded as follow: SD = 1, D = 2, U = 3, A = 4, SA = 5.

Out-of-class comfort. Out-of-class comfort was assessed using Question #2 from Muslim Youth at School Survey (CAIR, 2012). The text of this question is: "I feel comfortable letting students know that I am Muslim and talking about Islam outside of the classroom" Participants are asked to respond using the following Likert format: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, U = Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree. For descriptive analysis, the responses were dummy coded as follow: SD = 0, D = 0, U = 0, A = 1, SA = 1. Specifically, the two different codes meant: 0 = Not Comfortable, 1 = Comfortable. For inferential analysis, the responses were dummy coded as follow: SD = 1, D = 2, U = 3, A = 4, SA = 5.

Ethnicity/Race. There were 12 response categories. These were: African, African-America, Caucasian, Central Asian, Latin American, Middle Eastern, Multiethnic, North

African, Pacific Islander, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and No Response. Respondents in the no response were not included in the analyses. Any ethnicity category with a count below 10 was collapsed into a single category entitled "Other." For regression analyses, this multinomial variable had to be divided into a series of dichotomous dummy variables (Leech, Barrett, & Morgan, 2014). These dichotomous dummy variables were: (1) African, (2) African American, (3) Middle Eastern, (4) Multiethnic, North African (5), South Asian (6), and (7) Southeast Asian. For each dummy variable, a member of that ethnicity/race was coded 1 and all others 0.

Age. Age was reported by participants as a continuous variable.

Gender. For analysis, gender was dummy coded as follows: 0 = Female and 1 = Male.

Procedures

De-identified data and results from the Council on American-Islamic Relations-California original survey was shared with the researcher for the purpose of identifying further evidence of internal bullying occurrences among Muslim youth. Original data were collected from Muslim American students who attended public schools in California between September and November of 2012 and completed a pre-coded questionnaire. In order to attain internal validity and objectivity, participants came from geographically broader Muslim populations in California. A subset of that data was extracted for the current study (CAIR, 2012).

The OSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) Office reviewed the study and determined that the project did fall under the classification of research but did not include human subjects under the regulations defined by the Department of Health and Human Services. The role of the present study was to address a set of observed events by confirming the collected data with analytical explanation (Marsland, Wilson, Abesyasekra, & Kleih, 2001). The questions were a representation of a real-world situation about bullying modeled from the California Healthy

Schools Survey and finalized by three writers. With respect to data collection, the survey was administered in-person and online via Survey Monkey. Community centers, local mosques, student associations clubs at schools were recruited to administer the survey to young Muslims who agreed to take part in the study (CAIR, 2012).

Data Analysis

The data analyses have four parts. First, the descriptive statistics for Research Questions #1 and #2 will be produced (i.e., percentage of students that feel comfortable). Second, the descriptive statistics for Research Questions #3 and #4 will be produced (means for age, in-school comfort, out of school comfort as well as percentages for each gender and ethnicity categories). Third, a multiple linear regression was performed with (a) ethnicity, (b) gender, and (c) race as predicator variables and in-class comfort as the criterion variable. Fourth, a multiple linear regression was performed with the predicator variables as Research Question #3 and out of class comfort as the criterion variable. Given the absence of literature supporting a particular entry order, the standard simultaneous multiple regression method (Enter) was employed to determine if the ethnicity, gender, and race/ethnicity variables could predict the criterion variables (Leech et al., 2014). With this method, all the variables will entered/considered at the same time (Leech et al., 2014). The significance level was set at .05. All analyses were conducted using Excel.

Results

In terms of Research Question #1, 19% of participants reported lack of comfort discussing Islam inside the classroom. In terms of Research Question #2, 16% of participants reported comfort discussing Islam outside the classroom. In terms of Research Question #3, no predictive relationship was found between level of the comfort of Muslim students in discussing

Islam inside the classroom and the demographic variables such as gender, race, and ethnicity, R^2 = .034, $F(9, 423) = 1.656$, $p > .05$. In terms of Research Question #4, no predictive relationship was found between the level of comfort of Muslim students in discussing Islam outside the classroom and the demographic variables of gender, race, and ethnicity, $R^2 = .02$, $F(9, 421) = .951$, $p > .05$.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine four research questions related to Muslim-American students' comfort discussing Islam in different settings. First, it was found that approximately one in five of the participants did not express comfort with discussing Islam in class. Second, approximately one in six did not express comfort with discussing Islam outside of class. Third, none of the demographic variables were found to affect student comfort in discussing Islam in class. Finally, none of the demographic variables showed a statistical significance to comfort discussing Islam outside of class.

In terms of the first research question (one in five in class), three possible reasons for the results encountered should be considered. First, teachers were perceived as perpetrators of microaggression in the context of the classroom. Dupper, Forrest-Bank, and Lowry-Carusillo (2015) found that teachers sometimes ridiculed or degraded Muslim students in a public manner on the basis of their religious affiliation, with the students having almost no control to preserve their dignity (Twemlow & Fonagy, 2005 as cited in Dupper, Forrest-Bank, & Lowry-Carusillo, 2015). The bullying incidents seem to be positively linked to how much a student pious beliefs did not intersect with the dominant and common religion (Dupper, Forrest-Bank, & Lowry-Carusillo, 2015). The lack in commonality along with the Muslim minority status created a gap in interaction, compassion, and cohesiveness creating a room for the manifestation of bullying.

A second possible reason for the in-class discomfort of some Muslim students concerns religious attire or appearances that declares some students as Muslims. Hopkins' (2004) study of young Muslims in Scotland supports this possible reason. Hopkins reported that "young Muslims who visibly display markers of 'Muslimness', whether this be through dress, through having a beard or simply through skin colour, are more likely to be marginalized through everyday racism and lack of access to employment than Muslims who do not visibly display their 'Muslimness'" (p. 269). As such, the results of the present suggest that a segment non-Muslim students may project hostile intentions upon neutral visual differences such as attire (cf. Ziv, Leibovich, & Shechtman, 2013).

A third possible reason for the results pertains to cultural privilege of the majority. Accordingly, Tindongan (2011) reported that Muslim students encounter distinct experiences that only a Muslim would come across and that are perpetrated to confirm a sense of dislike to their minority and religious status. The study reported Muslim youth aged 12 to 18 affected by the implicit supposition that everyone in school is Christian. The lack of recognition of students who represented other religious faiths was viewed as a failure to establish tolerance and respect among students (Dupper, Forrest-Bank, & Lowry-Carusillo, 2015). A number of Muslim students stated that they were denied accommodations to and disregarded when they requested the freedom to observe their Islamic holidays because they were not as significant. The young adolescents felt that they often had no choice but to take part in the majority religious event or be ostracized for not participating in Christian events at school (Dupper, Forrest-Bank, & Lowry-Carusillo, 2015).

Concerning the second research question (one in six outside class), an overwhelmingly body of research points to trust as an evolving factor of resistance to confiding about religious

matters. It is a conscious decision on the part of Muslim students to exclude the discussion of faith as it strengthen the constituents of discrimination toward them. As they become acquainted of their peers and teachers' interpretations of religion and religious diversity, the impact is profound is on the emotional self of young Muslims. Many become intentionally reserved and less absorbed in likely discussions to avoid being labeled or misconstrued.

With regard to the third research question, two possible reasons for the results should be considered. First, the Muslim experiences is conductive to the evolution of Islamophobia, as a different form of racism. The belief structure of Islamophobia is discriminatory and one that is based on unexplained anxiety of Islam that is embodied in suspicious and unsettling behavior (van Driel, 2004a, 2004b as cited in Bigelow, 2008). That holds true when school textbooks outline Islamic history in an inaccurate, obsolete, and distorted fashion. Such misleading explanation of the faith, can have adverse emotional effects on Muslim students and their academic success (Shah, 2006). The second possibility is related to classroom discussions on Islam. When topics such as the Middle East or terrorism and Islam arise, many American Muslim students feel social marginalization as they struggle to defend or counter any argument against or negative to the faith (Tindongan, 2011). It creates a volatile tension and frustration amongst all participating or observing students and often divides the students rather than uniting students to improve and restore a culturally diverse democracy.

In connection to the fourth research question (predictive variables for outside class comfort), one possible reason for the results stands out for consideration. Although protected under the constitutional right for freedom of religion, most female students who wear hijab are ostracized. They are stereotyped by peers as uneducated or oppressed in an apparent form of rejection (Sirin & Fine 2007). The consequences are reflective of most school climates that deny

religious accommodation which leads to susceptibility and incremental consequences (Tindongan, 2011 as cited in CAIR, 2014). Adverse perceptions and attitudes such as the renunciation of religious freedom can make young Muslim women feel less enthusiastic in asserting their Muslim identity.

While the findings of the current study are cited as consistent with other published results, two limitations should be noted. First, the survey was conducted in only one state making the scope to which the results can be generalized beyond the population under consideration uncertain. Further, the study utilized a survey instrument that restricted the participant's opportunity to provide explicit information in regard to their experiences in public schools. Another point to note is that participants, located in 21 counties out of 115 total counties in California, represented a specific subset of the population. Consequently, there is a question of whether the results elicited through the current study accurately echo the experiences of Muslim students across other regions in the state or the nation. Findings from the present study could have generated different results if the geographical location was different. A second limitation involves the complex underlying features of generational and socioeconomic statuses and how these experiences strengthened the evolving beliefs of Muslim-Americans and the overall expression of cultural and religious identity (Nadal, Griffin, Hamit, Leon, Tobio, & Rivera, 2012). It would be integral to examine these variables and their dynamic consequences of cultural expression stimulus or otherwise (Eaton, 2015). Furthermore, cross-sectional data restricts the understanding of experiences over a limited period of time. Longitudinal research could be utilized to study the bullying phenomena in order to establish a mature and well theorized explanations (Driscoll & Wierzbicki, 2012).

The present study was designed to add to the nomothetic net on the psychology of Muslim-American students. Future studies could extend this research by employing a longitudinal design, utilizing a larger sample, and including additional variables for young Muslim students of both genders. Therefore, further exploration is necessary on students' experiences, personal accounts, religious practices, ethnic and gender differences, and cultural identity formation when working with the Muslim youth in public schools.

The results of the present study have implications for school counselors and counselor educators. There is an ethical obligation to recognize racial microaggressions as a catalyst for religious bias and discrimination, thus, necessitating the need for communicating religious tolerance in schools' guidance programs (Ali, Liu, & Humedian 2004; Dwairy, 2006). Mental health professionals should disrupt the status quo and stop derogatory behaviors on school premises by raising awareness on the subject amongst teachers, administrators, and students. Bridging the gap of respect and acceptance points to the importance for school counselors to be culturally and religiously competence when addressing the topic of bullying and to be intentionally open in student responsiveness to incidents. This includes the involvement of students in the solution and decision-making process in order to amplify student voice, increase confidence, and self-empowerment.

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Chapter 4: Summary

General Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the finding from the two research manuscripts. It aligns to the purpose of the study offered in Chapter 1 as well as demonstrates the importance of the overall study. The findings connect to the conceptual framework and provide a discussion that links the results to the relevant literature. Finally, the thematic link between the two manuscripts will be detailed.

Findings from First Study

In the first study, The Prevalence of Bullying Amongst Muslim American Students in Public School Settings, the following results were found, as conducted by CAIR-CA's Muslim Youth at School Survey: (a) a significant existence of perceived in-person bullying among middle and high school Muslim students that is higher in comparison to the national rate of bullying, (b) a significant existence of perceived indirect bullying among high school students that is higher in comparison to the national rate of bullying. In the binomial test analysis conducted between middle school Muslim students and the national rate, which contained 185 student records, the association between these two measures was found to have statistical significance at the .05 alpha level, $\chi2(2) = 0.054$, $p = 1.00$. In the binomial test analysis conducted between high school Muslim students and the general bullying rate in U.S schools, which contained 269 student records, the association between these two measures was found to have statistical significance at the .05 alpha level, $\chi2(2) = 0.048$, $p = 1.00$. In the binomial test analysis conducted between high school Muslim students and the general rate in cyberbullying, which contained 264 student records, the association between these two measures was found to reach statistical significance at the .05 alpha level, $\chi2(2) = 0.044$, $p = 1.00$. For a lack of national sample rates in electronic bullying amongst middle school students, the researcher used Los

Angeles school district as a representative of the largest California rate in cyberbullying. In comparison, the lowest percentage of bullying was found among Muslim middle school students in San Francisco with a statistical significance at the .05 alpha level, $\chi2(2) = 0.054$, $p = 0.1164$.

Limitations of First Study

 A few limitations must be considered within this study. As a cross-sectional design with an exposure effect over a short and defined timeframe, its results lead to sequential bias and ambiguity. Outcomes are not considered sustainable in this case and are subject to change over time.   Another limitation perceived in cross-sectional design is the latent of error in answering survey questions. Some students may not necessarily be able to conceptualize the meaning of a question and what exactly it is inquiring about making responses inaccurate and not representative of their experiences (Neuman, 1997). The topic of bullying among minority groups holds weight in terms of its complexity. Therefore, a refined conclusion should come after an exploration of this phenomenon should be accomplished by having a more national data to surplus ambiguity (Eaton, 2015).

 While the present research study collected data from a number of respondents who represented their districts, not having a representative a larger pool that consists of subjects from different parts of the nation makes it difficult to draw a general conclusion about the results (Delfabro et al., 2006; Mynard & Joseph, 1997). Additionally, repeated observations in the form of longitudinal study is central to ensure less bias in data collection which may lead to a more objective counseling practices. (Driscoll & Wierzbicki, 2012). Lastly, this was an overpowered study with a large sample size to identify an effect of applied significance, but not enough to accurately reflect the complexity of the research project (Coladarci, Cobb, Minium, & Clarke, 2007; Stevens, 2007).

Discussion of Results of First Study

The findings of this study align with research on the topic of Muslim bullying and discrimination. Such indication is highlighted was highlighted in the work of Sirin and Fine (2007) who concluded that Muslim students experience higher discrimination and exclusion rates in public schools than the general national rate (Sirin & Fine, 2007; CAIR, 2014). One possible explanation for the results conceptualizes Nadal's (2011) racial microaggressions, which addresses the influence of religious bias and discrimination. Racial microaggressions or the ratification of religious stereotypes suggests false, presuming, and unfitting views of certain religious groups (Nadal, 2011).

Another explanation is reflected in the intensity of Islamophobia and how it manifests as irrational fear and suspiciousness based on the group's religious background (Bigelow, 2008). There are well documented reports illustrating the increase in coercive acts toward Muslim Americans as attributed in large by the 9/11 attacks (CAIR, 2003, 2008; Rippy & Newman, 2006). This is cultivated by much obliviousness and driven by the media that depicts all Muslims as radicals and fundamentalists. This sends a negative and demeaning understanding of marginalized racial groups (Nadal, 2011).

Recommendations Based on First Study

The findings of this study point to a few avenues for future research. When school counselors and counselor trainees learn from research in school counseling and culturally appropriate interventions that Muslim students may be experiencing discrimination because of reasons related to their faith and mental health concerns like anxiety, those counselors become more attuned to areas where students of minority groups could benefit from structured comprehensive guidance programs. These programs need to provide more awareness of the

challenges facing Muslim students and constructive interventions targeted to preserve their spiritual, social, and civil rights.

This study explored the prevalence of in-person and in-direct bullying among Muslim American students in public school settings. It also identified the ability of Muslim youth to prevail amid challenges and complex environment that sometimes disturb their identity formation development (Sirin & Fine, 2007). Therefore, students of minority status would benefit from culturally appropriate mental health assessments that gauge students' presenting issues and those that inform our biases and assumptions. Acknowledging and accepting differences and possible conflicts between one's various identities and other's diverse personalities is a critical coping strategy for the freedom of expression (Giddens, 1991).

Findings from Second Study

Multiple regression analysis was employed to examine the relationship of comfort in discussing Islam inside and outside the classroom and various potential predictors (a) race/ethnicity, (b) gender, and (c) race. The results of the regression study for Hypothesis 1, the comfort of Muslim students in discussing Islam inside the classroom is affected by psychosocial predictors, indicated that there was no predictive relationship between key demographic variables such as gender, race/ethnicity and age and comfort discussing Islam in the classroom. The results of the regression study for Hypothesis 2, the comfort of Muslim students in discussing Islam outside the classroom is affected by psychosocial predictors, proved that there was no predictive relationship between key demographic variables such as gender, race/ethnicity and age and comfort discussing Islam outside the classroom. None of the variables helped predict the two hypotheses.

Limitations of Second Study

There were several identified limitations within this study that coincided with the limitations of the first study since both studies utilized similar set of archival data. Still, the findings of the study lay a foundation for counselor professional development and may provide insight into the utility of comprehensive school guidance programs targeting bullying more dynamically. One necessarily challenging limitation was the difficulty in gathering data on the topic of bullying amongst Muslim adolescent students. The body of research on the issue is scarce and investigated primarily amongst Muslim adults. However, there were no other elements that contributed to the occurrence of school bullying, which is beyond the scope of this study. Very little is known about religious intergroup relations (Harris & Koenig, 2006), which may mean that there is an increased opportunity to examine the focus of bullying incidents as correlated with explicit variables and its impact on student identity and expression. The sample adequately reflected the demographics of California Southern and Northern area, as the sample contained considerable racial and ethnic diversity. However, the sample would not likely represent the ethnic or racial composition of smaller or more rural cities in the United States as well as the diversity in gender identity reflected the school population overall.

Discussion of the Results of the Second Study

The study was designed to assess the correlation between predictive relationship and key demographic variables such as gender, race/ethnicity and age and comfort in discussing Islam inside the classroom setting. In addition, the study attempted to examine the predictive relationship between key demographic variables and student's comfort in expressing cultural identity outside the classroom. The study demonstrated religion as a predictor variable and an external pressure of harassment that hinders Muslim students' cultural identity development.

Most incidents in public schools appear to be inconspicuous, and consistent with the notion of microaggression, verbal, behavioral, or environmental humiliations that are discriminatory in nature and that are based on social factors (Dupper et al., 2015; Kuusisto, 2010; Sue, et al., 2007). The brutality of prejudiced incidents is determined by the degree of their religious preference. The more a student's religious background is different than the majority others the more degrading the behavior is toward the bully victim (Dupper et al., 2015). The exploration of victimization against Muslim youth in U.S. public schools remains relatively little in the counseling literature. One study in Britain specifically examined microaggressions amongst 800 students who embrace a minority status. The results showed that 25% of students are harassed because of the way they carry out their religious ritual including their cultural costumes (Dupper et al., 2015). This encompasses a Muslim youth who perhaps may endure verbal and physical threats based on the way a Muslim embraces their religious and cultural identity (Dupper et al., 2015; Marcus, 2011).

Some cases of bullying are explicit and consistent with teachers being perpetrators and influencing the overall classroom environment in the routes of Islamophobia (Bigelow, 2008). This finding supports Dupper, Forrest-Bank and Lowry-Carusillo's (2015) study who showed that the nature of discrimination starts inside the classroom. Muslim participants reported teachers as agents of prejudice in many occurrences often degrading towards students in a public manner on the basis of their religious affiliation, with the students dealing with a loss of integrity and suffering psychological harm (Twemlow & Fonagy, 2005).

Recommendations Based on Second Study

Results from the study demonstrate several avenues to protect student welfare on and off a school setting. First, it starts with an opportunity to engage all voices in a deeper culture and

ethics of democracy in pursue of a safer school environment. As a community-wide issue,

parents should also be involved as allies in bullying prevention strategies, by cultivating their

awareness on the signs of bullying and ways to stop it. The discussion should incorporate the

voices of students, teachers, administrators, and parents to moderate bullying for the religious

minority. Second, schools need to utilize research based-evidence on the pervasiveness of

religious bullying in order to enhance awareness on the topic victimization (Dupper et al., 2015).

Third, school officials should seek to cultural development and understanding to increase

cultural awareness and competency. It involves openness on behalf of the stake holders to

discuss their own biases and presumed assumptions about others who differ from them. It also

encompasses a conversation on ethnicity, religion, culture and how these influences could

promote the existence of bullying (Orpinas, Horne, & Staniszewski, 2003).

Thematic Link Between Studies and Contribution to the Knowledge Base

The thematic link between the two studies is that they both address bullying in school

settings against Muslim students and the relationship of discrimination on the expression of

religious identity. The first study examines the prevalence of bullying among Muslim students

and the dominance of religious discrimination in many of the cases presented. The second study

evaluates how racial, ethnic, and gender origins stir in tension for others. The study examines

the psychological processes underlying the identity.

Future Research

On the issue of discrimination, Sue (2004) has indicated "that the greatest test society and

the mental health professions face is "making the 'invisible' visible." The negative attitudes and

intolerance of many students towards Muslims may contribute to high levels of ethnic identity

crisis among Muslim youth (Simmons, 2008). In that respect, the shift in research should stress

on the education of mental health professionals and the integration of issues of culture and bullying. Another area of likely research interest would be examining counselors' attitudes and biases toward discussing their own cultural identity with Muslim students, as well as the dynamics that facilitate student's comfort discussing these themes.

Recent research validates the notion that the development of a religious identity is an active rather than static process and that cultural identities are actively defined and tested by other individuals, environments, systems, and institutions (Peek, 2005). The development of a robust cultural identity involves keen consciousness grounded on the affirmation from within and onward (Freire, 1970). Additional research necessitates the examination between the relationship of cultural identity of young Muslims and mental health in order to determine effective counseling interventions. On this topic, research needs to explore the multifaceted Muslims youth within the realm of religion that are constructed in response to internal struggles and external (Peek, 2005).

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Appendices

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Appendix A:

Copy of IRB Approval Documents

Institutional Review Board	**DETERMINATION**

Office of Research Integrity | Oregon State University
B308 Kerr Administration Building, Corvallis, OR 97331-2140
Telephone (541) 737-8008
irb@oregonstate.edu | http://research.oregonstate.edu/irb

Date of Notification	07/06/2015		
Study ID	6938		
Study Title	The experience of Muslim-American youth in US public schools		
Person Submitting Form	Dr. Cass Dykeman		
Principal Investigator	Dr. Cass Dykeman		
Study Team Members	Dalia Baadarani		
Funding Source	None	Proposal #	N/A
PI on Grant or Contract	N/A	Cayuse #	N/A

DETERMINATION: RESEARCH, BUT NO HUMAN SUBJECTS

The above referenced submission was reviewed by the OSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) Office. The IRB has determined that your project, as submitted, does meet the definition of research but **does not** involve human subjects under the regulations set forth by the Department of Health and Human Services 45 CFR 46.

OSU IRB review is not required for this study.

Please do not include IRB contact information on any of your study materials.

Note that amendments to this project may impact this determination.