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Articles in this section of the RSS Journal showcase the latest original research from the Institute for Religious and Socio-Political Studies. I-RSS is a non-profit research institute with a mission to produce unique and relevant research and fill gaps within North American academic communities. I-RSS produces policy analyses and provides recommendations around issues concerning Muslims to governments and Islamic organizations. The research presented in this section would not have been possible without the funding and support of the Muslim Association of Canada (MAC), for which it was commissioned in order to inform their strategic planning and national operations. The Muslim Association of Canada (MAC) is a Canadian, independent, national, faith-based, charitable organization, which provides spaces, services and programs for holistic education and personal development for Canadian Muslims.

Muslim Organizations in Canada: A Composite Picture of Service and Diversity

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Abstract

As Canada's Muslim population has grown since the late 19th century, Muslim organizations have been established and developed to respond to the needs of an increasingly diverse population. Muslim organizations are active in numerous spheres of Canadian society, including but not limited to social services, education, religious practice, politics, and mental and physical wellbeing. While existing literature tends to examine Muslim organizations by type of organization, sphere of operations, or a particular phenomenon, this study presents a composite image of Muslim organizations in Canada as a whole, identifying patterns in how Muslim organizations are established and develop over time, in terms of the scope and focus of their activities. The multi-methods study draws on organizational documents and communications, a survey, and qualitative interviews across Canada. A central finding of the study is that Muslim organizations emerge in response to unmet, specific needs within Muslim communities and that these needs are not limited to the realm of religious practice. Muslim organizations are increasingly engaged in what secular society considers "non-religious" areas of life, reflecting a holistic understanding of religious life and Islam as a comprehensive way of life that does not compartmentalise a secular public life from a private religious one.

Keywords: Islam, Muslim, Canada, organizations, non-profit organizations, charity, composite picture, profile, review

With the Canadian Muslim population steadily growing since the late 1800s, Muslim organizations have developed and expanded to cater to the growing needs of an increasingly diversified community. New organizations reflect new needs of the Muslim community, and pre-existing organizations continue to shift to meet those needs as well.

Muslim organizations can be observed engaging in multiple spheres within Canadian society. This includes but is not limited to social services, education, religious practice, politics, and mental and physical wellbeing. Existing literature on Muslim organizations is fragmented; each article analyzes and discusses a particular type of organization, sphere of operation or phenomena observed in Muslim organizations. This research project aims to create a composite picture of Muslim organizations in Canada to serve as an overarching resource that includes information on the types of Muslim organizations, their goals, scope, and processes. Additional data regarding obstacles, developments, and changes experienced by the organizations is also included in order to piece together a larger narrative on Muslim organizations in Canada.

This composite, large scale image of Muslim organizations reveals a pattern of Muslim organizations being created to meet the needs of the Muslim community where those needs are being underserved by the general society. While this was an expected finding in regard to prayer

spaces opening for the large influx of Muslim immigrants in the 1960s, the larger picture shows that these unmet needs extended beyond a simple need for religious practice — Muslims were looking to build a sense of community that they were unable to find elsewhere. A central finding of this study is that in the ensuing decades, Muslim organizations began to understand Muslim needs more holistically, and started catering to every component of human experience, directly religious or not. If a mosque or religious space was unable or unwilling to cater to a particular need, another Muslim organization was formed to fill the gap. As such, Muslim organizations are increasingly engaging in what secular society often deems "non-religious" activities by means of understanding religious experiences holistically. Understanding that mental health, physical health, social relations, and socio-economic status impact personal religious practice and faith became salient to conversations within Muslim organizations and in broader community discourse. With the understanding that Islam is a comprehensive way of life, Muslim organizations began recognizing that there was a benefit in having youth Quran classes, a community basketball team, movie nights, tutoring classes, and other supportive endeavours as long as they are in line with Islamic practices and principles. This approach has become a mantra for most of the Muslim organizations that function as mosques or community centers — a negation of the compartmentalization of an allegedly "secular" public sphere from a private religious practice.

The literature review for this study identifies gaps in the current literature on Muslim organizations in Canada and provides background information on their history and shaping factors and trends. This information is essential to the study as it provides the backdrop against which it is possible to understand why Muslim organizations were deemed necessary, and the community's motivation to establish, maintain and adapt them to evolving needs. The following sections describe the study's methodology and key findings. This article concludes with a discussion of the study's limitations and future research directions.

Methods

Collecting data on such a broad and complex subject poses challenges. A multi-method approach enabled the incorporation of data that would have been excluded by a single-method approach. Using multiple types of data allowed for a more multi-faceted analysis of diverse Muslim organizations. Multi-method approaches also permit the verification findings and support their integration into practice (McKim 2015, 203). The methods used were content analyses of organization documents and communications, surveys and qualitative interviews. Each method contributed to the process of documenting and understanding the diversity between and within Muslim organizations.

Content from the online presence of a diverse selection of Muslim organizations was compiled and analysed. This selection was made from a list of every Muslim organization in Canada that could be found via government registry records, the comprehensive Muslim Link organization directory by region, internet searches, social media posts, pre-existing lists, and through

snowballing of networks. This list became a unique resource that was used throughout the project. It served as a central location for all information on each organization, including official websites and available social media pages such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and details of each organization's location, type, scope, target audience and purpose. The purpose of compiling this document was to paint a surface-level picture of what Muslim organizations in Canada look like. This process was also an opportunity to evaluate the ways in which Canadian Muslim organizations have been categorized, and to create a taxonomic system that would serve the purposes of this particular research project. With a system of categorization in place, it became possible to identify and reach out to a representative sample of organizations for interviews.

A general survey was also distributed across various Muslim networks and organizations to understand the impact that Muslim organizations have on those who patronise them, and to determine the rationales of those who do not. The survey was also circulated on social media pages that were not associated with particular organizations, in order to achieve a more representative sample of a general Muslim response.

Analysis methods for this study entailed observing the patterns regarding the locations and types of Muslim organizations across the provinces in Canada. These patterns were also analyzed alongside demographic trends of Muslims in Canada collected from available statistics. Interviews were transcribed and the themes were collected based on the notes made during the actual interview process and the transcripts that followed. In relation to interviews, survey results and content analysis, key themes were collected and analyzed against the multiple methods of data collection. The patterns uncovered from the collected data were also placed alongside the trends observed in the demographic distribution in order to further understand the data. Finally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a highly selective sample of participants. In choosing interview participants, close attention was paid to representation of the complexities within Muslim communities and the full range of organizations found in Canada. Thirteen interviews were conducted across 10 cities and 5 provinces. The organizations ranged in age from having been established within the past two years, to dating back to the early 1900s. The organizations self-identified as community centres, mosques, social services, and youth groups. Interviewees were all members of their organization's leadership team, who were able to speak to the organization's goals, initiatives, challenges and impact from a high-level perspective.

The interview questions were formulated using grounded theory, a method that specializes in developing theories from real-world situations by creating theories around the collected data rather than collecting the data to support the theory (Oktay 2012, 4). This method is compatible with the research purposes as they are qualitative in nature and look to investigate "lived experience from the perspectives of those who live it and create meaning from it" on topics with little scholarly literature (29). As a research institution, I-RSS strives to achieve research-based objectives for Muslim organizations. The research findings should be actionable and beneficial to the organizations that are the subject of analysis and interviews. This intention fuels the rationale

behind a grounded methodology. Questions would be general enough to initiate conversation on broad-topics and so that interviewees could navigate the conversations into directions they deemed most important, resulting in a form of semi-structured interviews. This constructivist approach allows for the collection of rich data to inductively formulate theories.

Positionality

The positionality of the researcher for this project is essential to the benefit of the research. Being a member of the community being researched and a frequent patron of various Muslim organizations, the researcher foregoes a learning curve in understanding culturally sensitive research etiquette and has shared experiences with research participants. Shared experience between researcher and participants allows for a more comfortable experience for participants, an inclination towards more openness, and greater ease of communication due to not having to explain meanings and choices of particular wordings and concepts. Sharing a familiar epistemology as an insider provides the benefit of rich insights that are generally admired within ethnographies (Punch & Rogers 2021, 278). When a researcher is a member of the community being researched, they are able to "de-center the authority and control of the researcher," (Yeo & Dopson 2018, 335). There are questions and answers that can be produced with an insider researcher that may not be as welcomed if posed by a member of a dominant group (Zinn 1979, 212) due to the vulnerabilities of participants in fieldwork, especially considering the past exploitation of minority groups through research. This is additionally relevant for Muslims, who have come under undue scrutiny and abuses in surveillance and interrogation (Selod 2018, 56; Abu-Laban & Bakan 2012, 320).

One must also consider that that the Muslim population is not a homogenous group. There are differences in ethnicity, sect, class, immigration status, and location. The shared trait, namely being Muslim, does provide some insider benefits but due to the diversity within the Muslim community, one would not completely share position with those being researched. This fragmented position of being partly insider and partly outsider maximizes the benefit of the insider positionality while minimizing the disadvantages. These differences create sufficient distance to allow the researcher to look at the construction of experiences more objectively (Zempi 2016, 73).

An additional benefit of being an active member of the Muslim community in Canada was utilizing warm connections and extrapolating based on these networks to spread word of the survey and recruit interview participants. Warm connections were able to open doors that provided access to more distant survey respondents and interview participants. Organizations mentioned by contacts that were not previously listed were also recorded and added into the content analysis portion of the research.

Terms & Categories

As shown in Table 1, the categorizations created for the purposes of this study were religious space, social services, student/youth-based, education, sister-centred, charity-based and national and mixed-purpose/community facilities.

- Religious Spaces: organizations that facilitate spaces that are used solely for religious practice and events, including daily prayers, breaking fast, meeting spaces for religious education, and celebration of Islamic events.
- Student/Youth-based: organizations in which the target audience are aged between 14-30, typically also facilitated by youth and students.
- Education: full-time or part-time Islamic educational organizations, can take the form of daytime schooling or weekend/evening classes. While occasionally connected to mosques, this is not always the case, therefore necessitating a separate category.
- Sister-Centered: target audience is Muslim women, typically the organization looks to facilitate programs for Muslim women by Muslim women in fulfillment of particular needs that may or may not be accessible in the more general organizations.
- Charity-based/social services: these organizations look to provide aid, social services or general support to Muslim populations in various capacities. Occasionally these organizations may also be charity organizations that are facilitated by Muslim populations for the more general Canadian population. Most of the charity-based and social service organizations work towards one particular cause. As these organizations expand, so might their causes and reach.
- National: National Muslim organizations are concerned with issues of representation and advocacy. Some national organizations may be more concerned with specific issues and overlap with social services.
- Mixed-Purpose Organizations; these groups were labeled as mixed-purpose by fitting in two or more of the previously listed categories.

There are a couple of nuances to take into consideration with this typology. While most mosques would be assumed to fall under religious space, many mosque-organizations have expanded to include numerous other projects and have utilized their mosque spaces for initiatives that are not strictly part of religious practice such as programs related to socialization, physical activity, professionalization, and social services. These organizations have programming such as self-defense classes for Muslim women, tutoring in school subjects, and movie and game nights. The categorization of religious space includes full mosques as well as spaces that only function as prayer spaces. These mosques that function beyond prayer spaces are categorized under mixed purpose/community facilities. Potential overlap must also be acknowledged as many organizations could fit under more than one category. In this case, organizations were labeled as both and interviewed in light of both categorizations.

Finally, there were organizations that did not fit into any particular category yet were not enough in number to warrant their own categorization. These included organizations that were strictly sports-based but unrelated to broader organizations, organizations that looked to promote Islamic art and culture, and organizations that relate to Muslims in specific job fields such as medicine and law.

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	ON	AB	QU	BC	MB	NB	NS	NLD	PEI	SK	North	Org. Totals
Religious Organizations	86	40	15	39	16	6	8	2	2	12	3	229
Community	24	10	2	6	1		1					44
Social Services	10	3	1	3	3		2					22
Education	17	4	9	2			1					33
Youth/ Student	23	11	2	6	3	1	1	1		2		50
Women	6	3		1	1	1						12
National	17											17
Other	7	1										8
Ethnocultural	72			11						2		85
Prov. Totals	262	72	29	68	24	8	13	3	2	16	3	500

Table 1. List of Muslim Organizations Per Province.

Content Analysis/Demographic Findings

The content analysis of the different organizations in Canada was organized by provincial or regional categorization, and by types of organization. While the list of organizations developed accounts for nearly all Muslim organizations that have a social media presence or are listed in publicly available records, it is essential to acknowledge a limitation of assuming "all organizations" were documented. As Muslim organizations exist and develop in various capacities, many may not have a social media presence or are not listed in public records. Some Muslim groups or organizations may also function on a micro-scale or an informal basis. The Muslim organizations that are accounted for, have undergone particular processes for formalizing their initiatives by means of registering, finance processing, and so forth.

Many of the Muslim organizations catered to specific ethno-cultural populations through their language of operation, and were not titled as Islamic/Muslim per se. This study counted eighty-seven organizations that explicitly catered to specific ethno-cultural populations that are usually majority-Muslim. A total of 500 Muslim-specific organizations were counted Canada-wide. The number is expected to be a slight underrepresentation due to the groups that exist outside of formal organizational structures. While these groups may not count as formal organizations, they were mentioned in survey responses from Muslims who did not frequent mainstream Muslim

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organizations. Finally, non-Sunni, Muslim-identifying organizations included denominations such as Twelver Shia, Ismaili, and Ahmadiyya groups.

Each province had a relatively even distribution of the different organization types; mosques, sister-centered organizations, youth-focused organizations, national organizations, social services and mixed-purpose community centres. Provinces with less urban cities and smaller Muslim populations were more likely to have general umbrella-organizations, while large metropolitan cities with larger Muslim populations were more likely to have both general organizations and organizations that catered to specific purposes and causes. A clear example here is the difference between the Yukon and Northwest Territories, which have a handful of Muslim families, and Ontario, which has the largest population of Muslims in Canada. The Yukon and Northwest Territories had one and two Muslim organizations respectively, while Ontario counted a minimum of 165, not including national organizations that may be based out of Ontario. These numbers are demonstrated in Figure 1.

The national-level organizations generally have different goals and purposes than those that function on more local levels, although some goals may be shared. Finally, there are international Muslim organizations that are based in Canada but tend to function as charity organizations that facilitate that processing of donations for specific causes that speak to Muslim sensibilities.

The number of counted organizations by provinces is as follows:
- 68   British Columbia
- 72   Alberta
- 14   Saskatchewan
- 24   Manitoba
- 262   Ontario
- 29   Quebec
- 8   New Brunswick
- 2   Prince Edward Island
- 13   Nova Scotia
- 3   Newfoundland and Labrador
- 1   Nunavut
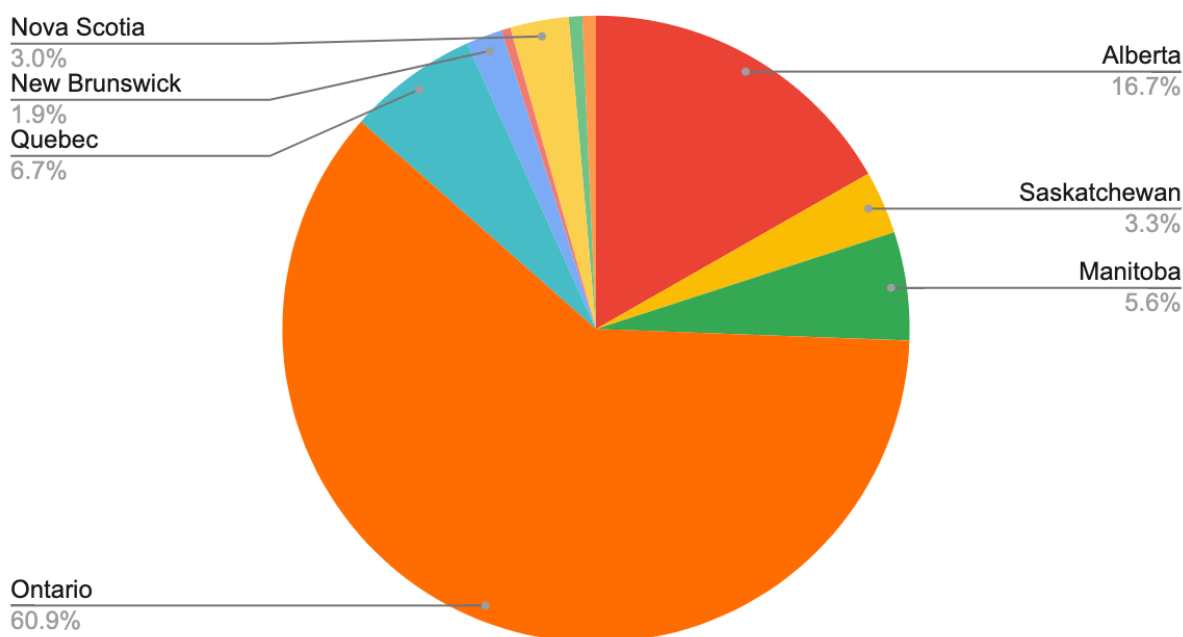- 1   North West Territories
- 1   Yukon

Figure 1: Percentage of Muslim Organizations Per Province.

While many national organizations may be housed in particular provinces, they are counted in a separate category as their audience and volunteers are generally also national. This study counted 21 national Muslim organizations. The organizations that were focused on international endeavours were primarily associated with other organizations that were located in particular provinces.

The number of Muslim organizations per location correlates with the number of Muslims living in that area, with the general trend being that the more Muslims are present, the more organizations exist. In areas that are more densely populated with Muslims, more ethno-culturally based organizations were found. Another observable trend was that the longer there has been a Muslim population in a particular location, the more developed the associated organizations were, and the more widespread their programming was in terms of different purposes. An example of this is that older Muslim mosques/community centers were more likely to have senior programs compared to more recently formed organizations (unless the organization was formed specifically with seniors as the target audience).

An exception to the observed pattern of a sizable Muslim population indicated a higher number of Muslim organizations to service them was in Quebec. Quebec had a disproportionately low number of explicitly Muslim organizations in comparison to other provinces with generally lower populations of Muslims such as Alberta. In the content analysis, other ethno-cultural organizations were found in Quebec that catered to Algerian, Moroccan and Lebanese audiences, however they were much less explicitly Muslim than the other ethno-cultural organizations documented in this study. This may be because of the religious diversity of the listed cultures as well as the frequent

debates and general discourse on secularism in Quebec. There may also be systematic barriers to the creation of Islamic organizations, which may also explain the preferences for ethnocultural centres. Interviewees from Quebec noted a very different culture within Quebec that made Muslims less likely to frequent organizations that were visibly Islamic.

The organizations that had specific target audiences illustrated the diversity within the Muslim population in Canada. Examples include organizations with programming focused on children, youth, and seniors, those that support new immigrants and refugees, and organizations that focus on supporting Muslims in specific occupations such as students, doctors, and lawyers.

Findings

Goals/Purposes of Organizations

The Muslim organizations examined in this study share similar goals and purposes based on their categorization, size, and specific audience served. Organizations classified as religious spaces or community centres often kept their goals and purposes general and flexible, as part of an effort to expand their potential deliverable programming and events. A respondent representing a mosque in Saskatchewan stated that a goal of their organization was establishing Muslim unity by "maintaining people's rituals, like coming to the mosque to practice the religion and pray. We also try to focus on education, which is one of the main goals especially for the youth. We have lots of educational programs. We also try to bring people together. Unity is one of our goals in our community." Similarly, a mosque in Toronto stated that although they began as an ethno-cultural center, as the Muslim community in their neighbourhood grew, they removed ethno-cultural specifications from their title to encourage other Muslims to attend and create unity.

Organizations classified as "student/youth centered" or "sister-centered" also typically had general goals, while specifying a targeted audience. An example of this was a youth group in Ontario that catered specifically to youth-aged Black Muslim girls; as such their goal was to "create a safe space for young Black Muslim girls in the area so they can reach their potential and dreams with less barriers." Similarly, student organizations that catered to Muslims in specific fields, such as those aspiring to be doctors and lawyers, and aimed to generally support their target audiences. While falling more into the social service category, organizations that cater to seniors are increasingly common, and like organizations serving the other end of the age spectrum, tend to share goals that specify the needs of their target demographic. One example is an organization in Ontario "offering services to assist seniors with hospital visits, a hospice program and a variety of exercise programs."

Education, social services, charity-based, and national organizations tend to generally have less purposes and goals and are more strongly tied to a particular cause. For example, one of the social service organizations stated that they focused on "clients fleeing abuse and homelessness, especially women and children." While the religious spaces and community centers were more

likely to list goals relating to "Islam," "practice," and "spirituality," these other types of organizations were more likely to list goals in relation to Muslim identity. As many of these organizations are formally registered, their goals and purposes are listed in their paperwork and as such they must legally function within those parameters.

A unique facet of larger organizations that have been around longer was their expansive goals relating to creating a safe Islamic environment for present and future Muslim generations. These organizations spoke of creating a safe space to build a "foundation" for younger Muslims and provide security and comfort for older generations. There were mentions of "passing the religion to the children" (a Toronto mosque) and specific goals supporting that outcome. An interviewee from a mosque in Alberta explained, "You want children to grow up in a Muslim environment and for them to have Muslim friends. You don't want to isolate them from society, but at the same time you want them to have a strong foundation; that they are Muslim, and this is what the religion looks like and these are safe places. So, investing in education for Muslim kids has been a huge focus for us." Organizations that were not categorized as community centres or religious spaces had goals that were broad enough to cover a wide range of issues but also tailored to specific causes and purposes. Examples include grassroots organizations combating particular issues that Muslim communities face. These organizations typically fell into the social services category and provide resources and support to Muslims facing poverty, abuse, refugee crises, and mental health issues. While many of these organizations specifically listed providing services to counter these types of issues, many also included goals that spoke to creating preventative measures as well.

As organizations expand their breadth, broad goals and purposes remain applicable as they evolve into organizations that serve every element and need of a community. Other organizations felt the need to adjust their goals to encompass their growth. A respondent from Quebec stated that their original mission was "helping the community at achieving their spiritual goals. It is a broad mission that lets us do a lot of activities within that scope." However, their mission has since been revised: "We have reviewed it for the future, and we made it more Canadian and up to date. We emphasized that Muslims are part of the larger Canadian society and the desire to go through the spiritual and daily life of Canadian people with respect to nature and environment." Other organizations emphasized that Muslims are an important part of the fabric of Canadian society as well but did not note this as explicitly as the organization in Quebec.

The organizations that catered to smaller or newer Muslim populations, typically in more remote locations, focused on creating "gathering space" for Islamic practice such as daily prayers, breaking fast, and commemorating Islamic events. These organizations spoke of using their space for whatever purposes were needed by the Muslim community at a particular time, rather than overly structured or rigid programming. These organizations also listed general and adaptable goals and purposes to account for future growth of the community. Finally, there were organizations that address specific niche interests or target an audience that may have been overlooked by mainstream organizations. While these niche organizations can exist as off-shoots

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of larger mosques or community centres, they are just as often free-standing and not affiliated with a particular umbrella organization. Sister-centered and youth-centered organizations, as discussed above, commonly mention their target audience and the ways in which they hope to serve them in their stated goals and purposes. When organizations refer to a specific subgroup of Muslims in their goals, there is often a correlation to how overlooked that group is thought to be within mainstream Muslim circles. Such narrowly targeted organizations often refer to the notion of creating "safe spaces."

While creating community and safe spaces for Muslims is a common purpose among Muslim organizations, it is essential to note that many Muslims feel that Muslim organizations are not necessarily safe spaces, and as such, avoid patronizing them. Many Muslim organizations have a reputation for catering only to "mainstream" Muslims, so unless the organization specifies a particular audience, Muslims existing in the margins may not feel welcome. This issue was identified in the context of most Muslim organizations being dominated by Arab or South Asian men. Black Muslims, Muslims with disabilities, Muslim women, and Muslims who were not part of the organization's ethnic majority were identified as groups that are often marginalized in Muslim communities. Survey respondents indicated that Muslim organizations should engage in more outreach, as well as generally being more welcoming. In the interviews for this study, all the participants from mosque organizations spoke of their regular attendees and made minimal mention of additional outreach. One of the mosques acknowledged that the members who stopped attending for various reasons were particularly difficult to reconnect with. As Muslim organizations continue to expand, many have branched into directions that allow better ways to reach out to community members that previously felt neglected.

Development Over Time

Many Muslim organizations underwent similar processes of establishment, and as such many new Muslim organizations are following similar developmental trajectories to the older organizations. Many organizations, particularly those that were established by new Muslim immigrants settling in Canada, started in the same way: as a group of people with an idea to establish an organization, meeting and praying in borrowed spaces or even people's homes, followed by renting and eventually purchasing physical space while expanding membership and reach of the organization. In these initial stages, many organizations become more formalized. This may include applying for non-profit and/or charity-status, developing an online presence, and officially incorporating. Due to the lengthy process of achieving charity status, many more recently established organizations operate as non-profits until charity status is achieved. Organizations that have been around longer have had the time for this process, while newer ones are still navigating bureaucratic processes.

While having a physical space is not a necessity for formalization for all types of organizations, it is central for mosques, religious spaces, Islamic educational facilities, and community centres. Muslim educational organizations may require a physical space if they are running a day-time

school, but weekend schools and evening classes often utilize borrowed spaces such as the mosque or public schools that are available to rent in these time slots. Other organizations can exist without a physical space, depending on their purpose. For example, an environmental justice organization with the purpose of making the Muslim community more environmentally-conscious did not need a physical location and often worked through existing spaces. National organizations focused on advocacy and social service organizations also often do not have a great need for physical public spaces, although they may still have office space for their employees and volunteers.

Beyond acquisition of physical space, one of the key ways Muslim organizations demonstrated development over time is an increase in scope and reach, in a multitude of ways. As the capacity of organizations increases, they begin to develop curated initiatives for specific audiences as they assess their particular needs. Examples of this are organizations which create sub-groups or sub-committees to focus on creating programming for specific audiences like youth, women, seniors, and children. Another way in which organizations expand their scope is through initiatives that are not directly religious-focused. For example, being part of a community and helping your neighbour are Islamic values, but there is no formally structured practice that exemplifies this value. Therefore, Muslim organizations engage in outreach initiatives serving needs they identify in their area. This is in keeping with Islamic values but is not a religious practice, in the strict sense. The organizations provide funds, volunteers, or donations to existing charities that work towards a mutual goal or cause with the organization. Out of the thirteen organizations interviewed, eleven spoke of having some form of charity or service offered in support of the wellbeing of the broader society. This took the form of coordinating food drives, hosting soup kitchens, community clean-ups, and using their physical space for "out of the cold" programs.

Another indicator of expanded scope within Muslim organizations, specifically the mosques/community centers, is the engagement in elements of people's lives outside of religious and spiritual practice. This comes in the form of hosting events and programs for socializing, physical and mental wellness, professional and academic advancement, and childcare/education. Many mosques host movie nights, sporting events, tutoring, resume editing, networking opportunities, and a multitude of other initiatives that arguably fall outside of the traditional religious sphere. Interview and survey respondents commonly stated that this was the direction in which all Muslim organizations are moving or need to move. This increased the appeal of Muslim organizations to groups that less frequently patronized such organizations, such as Muslims who may not necessarily practice all elements of religious obligation, yet still look for the sense of community. Growing into programming and services that are not directly religious practices also spoke to a growing understanding of the limitations of the services provided by the broader society. The social service organizations interviewed spoke of filling a gap for the Muslim community, and catering to groups underserved by both governmental programming and the programming of other Muslim organizations.

Muslim organizations also reflected on the future needs of Muslim living in Canada. Community organizers and leaders anticipate the needs of the Muslim population as the population grows and changes. This was not only in relation to younger Muslims but anticipating the needs of a growing senior Muslim population within the community. An increase in the number of seniors requires an increase in senior programming, an increase in young children requires programming for children as well as a consideration of childminding during adult programs, and ultimately as children grow into youth, the organization must learn how to grasp and maintain their interest.

Finally, one of the greatest signs of growth and sustainability of an organization is the mobilization of its younger generations. While maintaining the interest of youth-aged members and young adults was an obstacle for Muslim organizations, the organizations that have been able to overcome this challenge are the ones that have active youth participation in their project planning processes. Youth-aged community members become leaders of the organization's youth components and begin coordinating their own initiatives. In having youth take over their own programming, organizations ensure that their youth are gaining the experience necessary to eventually coordinate larger-scale programs, and eventually take over leadership as they transition to adulthood. Handing over the reins to younger leaders is a difficult task for previous organizers who have dedicated their effort and time to creating and sustaining these Muslim organizations. As the leadership in the organizations shifts to younger members, this indicates a sense of trust between the younger leaders, the older organizers, and the organizations. This aligns with prior literature on the topic, which recommends listening to youth, addressing their needs directly, and shifting the organization's perceptions of youth in order to increase youth engagement (Al-Qazzaz & Valerio 2020, 16).

Programming/Events
This study uses the terms "programming" and "events" to describe the offerings of Muslim organizations, reflecting the terminology used by participants. Participants used "programs" for more long term, repetitive, structured offerings and "events" to describe singular occurrences, although there were exceptions to both usages. Although Muslim organizations are quite diverse in a multitude of ways, there are some programs and events that are commonplace amongst many. The most common programs and events found in large Muslim organizations that identified as mosques were the following:
- Prayers: Regular daily prayers were offered at the mosque or religious space, if it was within the organization's staffing and spatial capacity; if the organization did not have this capacity, weekly Friday prayers were offered.
- Ramadan Iftars: Iftar is a daily or weekly offering for the month of Ramadan, depending on capacity. Iftar is also sometimes hosted for target audiences such as youth iftars, sisters' iftars, and even inter-faith iftars.
- Islamic education: Islamic lessons and classes were offered by almost every mosque/religious space in some capacity. This included age-specific classes and lessons,

and a wide breadth of topics such as Quran classes, Arabic classes, theology lessons, and Islamic philosophy lessons.

- Islamic event celebration: The celebration of Islamic events occurred in most religious spaces, but in varying capacities. While some organizations may simply offer Eid prayers and allocate additional time for social interaction, other organizations produced large celebrations that included games, decorations, Islamic lessons, gifts, and other celebratory activities. Islamic events include commemorating historical occurrences, Ramadan events, and celebrating Eid.
- Social events: For smaller organizations, social events may overlap with other happenings such as Ramadan iftars and Islamic event celebrations. Muslim organizations noted the importance of socialization within the Muslim community and as organizational capacity increases, have dedicated additional efforts towards social initiatives. This occurred in various capacities and with a wide range of creativity, such as board game nights, sporting events, movie nights, or doing particular activities.

These types of programs and events were identified as community needs, and in some cases were even cited as reasons for establishing the organization itself. Many organizations stated that they arose out of Muslims looking for communal places to pray, break their fasts, and interact with other Muslims. As the organization's capacity increases, additional programs and events beyond the organization's core activities become commonplace. These secondary programs and events open space for creativity within the overarching goals of the organization. This stage of development typically coincides with an increase in organizational capacity. Increased capacity could come from new members joining and volunteering, receiving funding, or creating a physical space that could accommodate additional programs. Some of the common offerings that emerge with this stage of organizational development are providing services for life events, encouraging physical activity, promoting professional/academic development, facilitating charity opportunities and hosting inter-faith events.

Services for Life Events
Providing marriage and funeral services for community members is a consistent primary goal among recently established mosques and Muslim community organizations. Some mosques even aim to coordinate the Hajj pilgrimage for their members. Providing marriage services is typically easy for these organizations, but funeral services tend to be more difficult as it requires more complex components and facilities. As such, funeral services are usually established as the organization's physical and financial capacity increases.

Encouraging Physical Activity
Physical activity programs for all age groups are common among most Muslim organizations. Some organizations were also dedicated to encouraging particular groups of Muslims to engage in physical activity such as youth, women, or seniors. For the more general organizations, sporting events or physical activity was a way to encourage youth to attend events and programming. In

line with the literature, youth feel that Muslim organizations which build safe spaces for their participation help mitigate their identity crises (Al-Qazzaz & Valerio 2020, 7). Non-religious programming where youth can share space with people in similar situations is considered an attractive feature. Sport tends to be a space in which youth can create bonds of friendship and connect towards mutual goals. Making physical activity more accessible for vulnerable Muslim subgroups was also a driving force for developing these types of programs. A popular concept in this area was creating Mixed Martial Arts classes for Muslim women. While regular gyms have "women's hours" or women's sections to accommodate women who prefer to work out without the presence of men, specialized physical activity programming are not readily available. Muslim organizations felt it important that Muslim women had access to self-defense classes as they are often targets of Islamophobic violence, and as such established MMA/self-defense classes for women. Including time, space, and opportunity for Muslims to engage in physical activity in association with Muslim organizations is also an indicator that the organization has branched out beyond solely engaging with traditional religious practice and are therefore hoping to broaden their appeal.

Promoting Professional/Academic Development
Providing community members with resources, workshops, and opportunities for professional and academic advancement is another common programming purpose.

Facilitating Charity Opportunities
Many Muslim organizations incorporate a form of charitable giving opportunities for their members. This can take the form of simply donating to the organization itself, or the organization can facilitate ways in which their members give back to the communities they live in. Some of these efforts are food drives, volunteering at soup kitchens, clothing drives, providing warm shelter in cold seasons, and hosting blood donation clinics or encouraging blood donation. Charitable opportunities are also offered internationally, in the form of building wells, schools, and providing medical supplies in places that are in need of such donations.

Interfaith Events
As Muslim organizations become more visible in the Canadian landscape, many have begun to engage with other faith-based communities to encourage understanding and companionship. While these types of programs and events are common to mosques, religious spaces, and community centres, many of these programs are also undertaken by particular organizations as their sole purpose. For example, there are organizations that focus on professionalization for youth, socialization and wellness for seniors, and physical health for Muslim women (often coming in the form of Martial Arts classes).

Coordinating programs and events to cater to the growing and developing needs of the Muslim population in Canada is a complex process that requires dedicated volunteers and some level of financial consistency. As an organization, there is also the process of measuring the needs of the

community, evaluating the success of each event and program, and assessing the overall impact the organization is having on the people it intends to serve. Many organizations (but not all) have teams or subcommittees dedicated to carrying out these tasks.

Measuring Community Needs

Muslim organizations cater to diverse audiences in terms of age, ethnicity, language, class, immigration status, and individual lived experience. As such, organizations adopt various strategies to assess the needs of their audience or audiences and maximize community benefit. One such strategy is simply regularly asking community members what the organization could do for them. Surveys and feedback forms are intermittently distributed when deemed appropriate. Annual or biannual town halls were also a popular method to gauge community needs. Some organizations cited that their planning team was easily accessible to the general community, and when community members had ideas or needs, they wanted met, they simply asked the coordinators. Other community organizers stated that they were aware of the needs of their audience, as they shared similar needs, and therefore were able to cater to them. This was particularly true for sister-centered and youth groups as they were led by members of the target audience. More general organizations also similarly cited being a close community and therefore knowing the community's needs. In line with this, a mosque in Alberta stated, "The community is very tight, it's not very hard to figure out what is going on. We do a few needs assessments to get opinions and feedback. We do hold meetings with our community as well. A lot [of our measured needs] is what we are seeing on the ground." For the larger organizations, the community can determine particular needs based on what they currently have too large of a capacity for. This particular organization also stated that their Islamic school project had around 300 kids on their waitlist and acknowledged that future generations would also have this structural limitation to deal with.

Growing religious spaces began assessing the broader needs of their audiences as they began to function as community spaces, dealing with multiple dimensions of the human experience and recognizing the holistic nature of religious practice. Two large mosque/community center organizations in Alberta and Ontario spoke to assessing the needs of the community and recognizing that seniors require their own programming and initiatives through the mosque. Both stated that seniors felt deep connections with the mosques and needed the programming for socialization and religious benefit. Additional services needed by seniors became apparent and were assessed by understanding what the general society provided Muslim seniors, and filling in the shortcomings, included services for which public programs were at capacity, like long-term housing and wellness checks. These centres also stated that research was an important tool for assessing community needs. This included looking at what other Muslim organizations were doing, what general Canadian services are offered, and assessing needs by age group.

Measuring Success

Charities, social services, and education organizations can measure success with quantitative measures. Many have a framework of statistics that are utilized to measure developments in their audience, increase in organizational outreach, and attendance. Depending on the type of event, tracking this information is often embedded in their programming organically by means of sign-up forms or program fees. Religious spaces may also have methods in place that allow for measuring success in a quantitative way. The religious organizations did state that this required extra effort on the part of the organizers, in the form of creating surveys and opportunities to collect audience reviews and ratings of the organization's initiatives. Many of the organizations did track event attendance and noted that while having high numbers of attendees was viewed as a success, so were lower numbers of attendees when they were repeat attendees, as this indicated programs and events were resonating with the community. The mosque in Alberta stated that "People coming back means we left a mark, there was an impact. Seeing some of those attendees wanting to become volunteers is something we look at to see if a recurring program was successful."

Organizations were also able to measure success qualitatively by collecting anecdotes and testimonies from their audiences. Four of the organizations spoke about hosting town hall events in which people could voice their needs, concerns, and offer their compliments for the organization's successes. The other organizations were more likely to rely on surveys and testimonials. Testimonies were collected by checking social media pages. Many organizations had a strong online presence and engagement with their audiences online allowed for further collection of data. Using features such as Google Reviews and Facebook page ratings, community members are able to offer testimonies online whenever they want. Social media also enabled quantitative assessment of general community engagement by keeping track of trends associated with social media comments or "likes." Even if an event had an average attendance, if the social media advertisement of the event had high engagement it could offer insight as to the success of the initiative. Events and programs that were asked to be repeated by audience members were also marked as successful initiatives.

Measuring Impact

The most difficult component of an organization to measure is overall impact. In some capacities, impact was measured quantitatively, but most of the organizations chose to understand their impact through qualitative means. The concept of impact was considered a more valuable component to measure compared to the success of a particular program or event. While an event with high attendance would be considered successful, an event with lower attendance but higher impact would have been considered just as successful by the organizations. The subjectivity of impact meant that it could be measured from multiple perspective including, but not limited to, an increase in an individual's religious practice, mental wellbeing, sense of community, identity as a Muslim, and improvement in social relations. A youth group that catered to young Black sisters noted that "we know at the end of the day we reached our goal if we even have a single girl say that was powerful or impactful or "I'm applying what I learned at that workshop here." This organization

collected data through surveys at the end of each program and event they hosted but also formally and informally collected comments from their audience to gauge their long-term impact.

Organizations that fell outside of the realm of traditional religious spaces noted transformational impacts they had on Muslim organizations as a whole. Typically, this meant they triggered realizations that a particular group or service was going underrepresented. A women-centered social service organization noted that they felt their organization had a "transformational impact on the Islamic non-profit sector as well as the entire Muslim community" due to their highlighting of issues impacting women. Other organizations looked to make their impact through religious organizations by providing tools and resources to be more environmentally conscious. This impact was more readily measured through the success and engagement with their programs and initiatives.

The survey component of this study also gathered data about impact. Muslim organizations were found to have impact by creating a "sense of belonging" and becoming a "second home" for some survey respondents. For particularly devoted attendees, the Muslim organizations they attended became part of their identities and lifestyles and as such, they speak of long-term impacts the organizations have had on their lifestyles.

Although there was no prior literature on measuring the impact of Muslim organizations on the Muslim community, it was a point of interest for many Muslim organizations. The idea of measuring impact appeared abstract upon questioning, but with discussion and thought, became a very tangible feature to assess. This indicated that measuring overall impact was not necessarily part of strategic visions in regard to short-term planning but was relevant to organizations that plan for long-term. While it was easier for organizations in the social services to observe their impact, other forms of Muslim organizations are increasingly witnessing the impact of their programs and services.

Barriers/Obstacles

Financial Obstacles
The most mentioned obstacle to executing programs and events that the organizations felt would benefit their community members was financial barriers. All respondents mentioned depending on community member donations to sustain the organization's functions. Mosques and religious community centres in particular relied on donations to purchase or rent their physical spaces. The Muslim organizations that have a charity status were able to provide their donors with tax receipts for their donations, in an effort to provide an additional benefit for those offering donations. As communities grow, donations can increase as community members have increased capacity to donate. In turn, the organization's programs are able to expand in the directions the community or organization deems necessary via the assessment tools mentioned above.

Many of the non-mosque types of organizations also made use of government grants where eligible, but many of the organizations stated that the process of applying and receiving grants was very complex. Additionally, grants that were issued by government agencies were focused on creating programs and events within minority communities that may not necessarily align with the organization's values or goals. With the use of grants being outlined by the issuing government, the organizations may not find these uses a priority and as such, are discouraged from applying.

Volunteer Shortages

Another consistent obstacle across many of the Muslim organizations was the challenges associated with being volunteer-based organizations. While some Muslim organizations have been able to create an organizational structure with paid staff, mosques and community-based organizations tend to have volunteer-based boards and structural committees. Organizers have stated that this makes it difficult to rely on consistent help. While for most volunteers, giving their time to Islamic organizations is a form of time donation and working towards a noble purpose, this does not mean they are able to provide unlimited amounts of time. Due to not being provided other forms of incentive, if volunteers get discouraged by a particular organization, they can easily invest their time in other places and as such may result in high-turnover rates in volunteers. Having high turnover rates also comes from a cycle of not having enough volunteers to begin with, causing volunteers to overwork themselves, leading to a high burnout rate and more volunteer shortages. Some organizations also cited the benefit to their community members if there could be a space caretaker that could open the space whenever needed by the community. This would require a form of staff position in which the caretaker was financially compensated for their time, but many of the organizations said they simply did not have funds they could allocate for this particular purpose.

Organizational Politics

Muslim organizations are no exception to internal organizational politics and the issues they create within community dynamics. Some of these dynamics impacted larger-scale goals while some caused structural disturbances on a smaller scale. Larger-scale goals are impacted by organization leaders that are "resistant to change." As Muslims continue to grow, the needs of the population change, as does what they look for in the organizations they patronize. As such, some of the Muslim organizations cited resistance to new ideas as a hinderance, particularly as they entered new fields of programming outside the scope of religious worship. Some community organizers relayed the anxieties of their peers in engaging with non-religious programming, as it would be entering completely new territory. Many of the organizations cited this as an issue that occurred at early points in their development. However, in efforts to engage new generations, especially youth-aged community members, the organizations eventually were able to engage in different types of programming within and outside the scope of worship practices.

Smaller-scale issues that were mentioned were disagreements among coordinators when there is no mediation process in place to provide a solution. Of the organizations that cited these types of

issues, the greater frustration was with the lack of mediation and accountability process that was typically associated with volunteering in a Muslim organization's leadership teams. While some organizations did mention finding solutions to such problems, such as rotating or nominating people in leadership roles, other organizations stated that this was not possible due to the shortage of volunteers to begin with. A shortage of volunteers also made mediation processes difficult as organizations were concerned about people associating their personal grievances with the organization and turning away.

Islamophobia

While not every Muslim organization reported that Islamophobia was a major obstacle for their institutional goals, all types of organization mentioned it as an issue that the Muslim community dealt with. Some of the larger, more visible Muslim organizations did state that Islamophobia was a problem for them as institutions as well. Fears of vandalism and hate crimes were high, particularly after other Islamophobic incidents took place.

The extent to which Islamophobia kept Muslims away from Muslim organizations depended on the other factors. One trend pulled from this study was that organizations in Quebec did notice a decrease in attendance in the aftermath of Islamophobic incidents, or when Muslim/Islam-related topics became abundant in the media. The organizations cited that their community members had fears of becoming the victims of hate crimes or that being visibly associated with Muslim organizations would put strain on the relationships they had with their non-Muslim friends, peers, and neighbours. Organizations from other provinces noticed an increase in attendance and rallying support from neighbouring communities following such events. During this type of circumstance, they noted that their patrons needed the reassurance of support from the community. They also took these opportunities to host events and programming regarding these types of complex topics, providing structured support for Muslims who had anxieties related to Islamophobia and doing anti-Islamophobia education and community outreach to the general public.

A notable absence in our study was any mention of forms of structural Islamophobia by the interviewed organizations. While there was mention of difficulties achieving grants and the lengthy processes of achieving charity-status, financial hardships were not attributed to structural inequalities, despite literature suggesting otherwise. In the 2021 NCCM and University of Toronto report entitled *Under Layered Suspicion*, which reviewed CRA audits, findings emerged that suggested Muslim organizations were placed at a disadvantage in comparison to non-Muslim organizations. This was a result of structural bias that formatted "religious" activity in relation to Christian religious activity and the overall "othering" of Muslim organizations (Emon & Hasan 2021, 5). While this was not directly mentioned as Islamophobia by any of the organizations interviewed for this study, there were mentions of applying for grants and not receiving any. One of the social service organizations stated that the only grant they were successful in receiving were COVID-19 related grants. Only four of the thirteen organizations interviewed spoke of successfully receiving grants, and none of those organizations were traditional mosques: three

were social service organizations and the last was a youth group. Additionally, two of the thirteen organizations interviewed explicitly stated they viewed access to grants as an obstacle.

Lack of Physical Space

As many Muslim organizations grow and develop, they find themselves needing particular types of physical spaces to accommodate their particular goals. While some mosques and community centres can make use of any rentable/purchasable space, eventually the community needs particular types of spaces that may require specific adjustments. Some of the organizations simply mentioned needing more space to accommodate larger groups, others mention hoping to expand by creating specific facilities that can be used for specific purposes. Examples of these facilities are banquet halls to facilitate marriage ceremonies, gyms and recreational purpose rooms, and spaces that would allow for taking care of the deceased. Muslim organizations that are not mosques or community centers may have a variety of needs for different types of expanded facilities. For example, Muslim social service organizers look for spaces that could be utilized as women's shelters, homeless shelters, food banks, donation centers and other specialized spaces relevant to their goals. While many organizations cited this as a current barrier that they were facing, most had solutions or long-term plans that would allow them to eventually create the space they needed. Some of the older organizations mentioned this as an issue they once had, and eventually with funding and community organizing, were able to overcome.

Maintaining Audience Interest/Engagement

Many of the organizations had methods to count the number of people that show up to their events and programs. The patterns of attendance were consistent amongst the different organizations that collected attendance, with some events and programs drawing larger crowds than others. This ranged by type of organization, location and size of the organization. A trend that was consistent across many organizations was the need to retain the attention and interest of their youth members. Organizational leaders noted that as children transitioned to youth, they became less interested in the programs the organizations had to offer. A noticeable dip in attendance was described in this age group, and therefore the organizations take special care to cultivate programming that would interest youth aged community members. This did not mean that there were no youth attendees; many youth took active roles in the organization. The lack of youth attendance was based on a discrepancy between the number of youth attending and the number of children who start attending at early ages and eventually the number that attends at an older age. Prior research has shown that youth felt some of the Muslim organizations they attended exacerbated the identity issues they dealt with regarding feeling like a "third culture," particularly regarding judgment from other community members and lack of inclusion in community (Al-Qazzaz & Valerio 2020, 7). The organizations recognized that youth faced challenges in schools and that influenced their identity crises; this was looked to be remedied with providing access to Islamic schools. This idea was reinforced by literature regarding some of the challenges faced by Muslims students attending public schools (NCCM 2017). However, there were still difficulties faced within Islamic schools that have been documented in previous research (Zine 2001; 2006). While Islamic schools were

categorized within the research, they were only discussed in relation to larger Islamic organizations that had daytime Islamic school components. Both organizations that spoke to their Islamic schools stated they were very successful in terms of student enrollment and impact. However, there was little discussion of retaining students as part of the organizations following their graduation from the school or tracking their involvement.

In the focus on retaining the interest of youth aged community members, many organizations did not look at the age group beyond youth to the transition period into early adulthood. The assumption that general programs cater to the new young adults also led to a shortage of attendance in that age group. This group was commonly overlooked as the youth-centered programs no longer catered to their needs but neither did the regular programming. As such, many organizations noticed a shortage not only in their youth ages, but also young adults. This indicates that making programming appealing and accessible to the young adult age group is an area with potential for increasing participation. There are some common needs between youth and young adults, such as majority English programming and programs that cater to the "third culture" identity issues. However, the planning of these programs may overlook that young adults have different limitations on their time than youth and may even have young children that require childcare — not something usually provided at youth events. While the age groups share similarities, their differences often go overlooked and the young adults are either lumped into youth, adults, or neglected altogether.

Deterring Audiences

For some members of the Muslim community, religious organizations are not a place of positive experience. The survey responses indicated a number of reasons as to why some Muslims have chosen to avoid attending Muslim organizations or limit their attendance to particular times and circumstances. Some respondents stated that they avoided patronizing Muslim organizations due to structural disorganization and messy organizational politics. Others mentioned that they were deterred by community members who do frequently attend and that make the organization feel unwelcoming, or by the sense that there was little space for new members or new ideas. This idea of being unwelcome was cited frequently throughout the survey responses as one respondent stated, "They should be more inclusive to diverse Muslims, not all Muslims are the same or are at the level of faith as others and organizations should respect that." This was in relation to the programs being held as well as in community discourse that aimed to "shame" people into engaging more deeply with religious practice. The phenomenon of fear of judgment regarding religious practice or level of faith was corroborated in earlier studies regarding why youth may avoid religious organizations (Al-Qazzaz & Valerio, 9). The idea that one needed to have a certain level of faith was also mentioned in a prior study that found that mosque attendance was higher in those who more strongly identified as Muslim (Environics Study 2016, 17). Survey respondents shared similar reasoning as to why they may not attend mosques, namely stating past experiences of harassment regarding spirituality.

Other survey respondents stated that some Muslim organizations needed to further evaluate the needs of their community members. Survey respondents noted that they wanted to see programs on racial injustice, mental health, financial education, and physical health. Respondents also stated that they would attend Muslim organizations, mosques specifically, if they embedded social services into the organizational structure and implemented environmental justice initiatives in their organization.

Racial injustices and patriarchy were mentioned by survey respondents who both frequently attended Muslim organizations and those that did not. They noted that seeing more women in positions of leadership at the mosques would be helpful to begin amending structural patriarchy within Muslim organizations. Previous research shows that regular mosque attendance is twice as frequent for men than women (Environics Study 2016, 17). The question of racism was spoken of in relation to witnessing or experiencing racist actions within the organization, particularly when a Muslim organization was dominated by one ethnicity. Racism was also spoken of as an issue that needed to be addressed amongst older generations within mosques, by means of countering racist mindsets. An example of this was that Black Muslims experienced anti-Black racism in Muslim organizations that were majority non-black or not explicitly catering to Black Muslims. As such, this was a reason one would choose to not attend a Muslim organization that did not specifically cater to Black Muslims.

Limitations

In the process of carrying out this research, there were a number of limitations that arose and required amending. The most salient limitation that posed a number of difficulties throughout this process was the COVID-19 pandemic. Not only did the pandemic and national reaction to COVID understandably colour many of the answers given by the Muslim organization's leadership teams, but it also impacted the scheduling of interviews. Questions regarding barriers and difficulties endured by Muslim organizations all revolved around COVID. This was amended by re-formulating the question to be dated pre-COVID, or even simply asking for other examples outside of the COVID context. Due to the increased usage of video conferencing in all spheres of people's lives, scheduling research interviews proved difficult in light of the participant's already overbooked schedules and pre-existing "Zoom fatigue." Participants also cited overflowing email inboxes for delays in response to the calls for interviewees. This poses the possibility of limited representativeness of data. As such, outreach and recruitment required additional effort and the exhaustion of warm contacts for snowballing purposes.

A further limitation is that some Muslims go entirely unrepresented due to not patroning any religious organizations; this group is particularly hard to reach when only speaking to organizations. In part, the survey responses were able to speak to a Muslim audience that felt unrepresented by any Muslim organization. While most taking the survey found the survey through their community channels, many came across the survey through internet platforms and as such

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did not associate with a particular organization. This type of respondent provided ample justifications for their reservations in associating with Muslim organizations. This finding requires further elaboration in a study of its own to understand why people may actively avoid Muslim organizations.

Future Directions of Study

As this research project is only a preliminary study, it reveals numerous directions for future study in order to provide deeper understanding of the dynamics, impacts and challenges of Muslim organizations. This study identified six distinct categories for Muslim organizations and provided a schematic breakdown of organization distribution across Canada. Further studies are needed that are both qualitative and quantitative in nature in order to have greater understanding of trends and patterns.

In terms of quantitative approaches, further collection of demographic information regarding Muslim patronage of organizations would provide a reference and framework for future research endeavours. While national data on Muslim organizations is limited, this data can be collected by inquiring from the organizations themselves. Many Muslim organizations do collect data on their community members in order to understand their audience. A separate research project could also study why some Muslims do not patronize any Muslim organizations and seek to understand the alternatives or reasonings behind this deliberate or unconscious decision.

Qualitative methods provide an opportunity to further investigate the trends and concepts found in this preliminary report. While this report investigated Muslim organizations as a whole, executing future studies on individual categories would allow the different types of organizations to provide insight on topics and specificities unique to their categorizations. Organizations that cater to women and youth warrant individual investigation, as do educational organizations, national organizations and the ones that engage in social services. Each category has questions specific to its type that could be answered through a more specific study. A comparative analysis can be done for independent youth and women-specific organizations in relation to the sub-groups within larger organizations that cater to the same demographics.

A number of studies have been done on religious spaces and mosques in North America, however there is still space for further investigation into topics that were uncovered in this preliminary report. An example of this is research regarding local, national, and transnational social justice and charitable causes that Muslim organizations are involved in and the processes these undergo. How Muslim organizations select which areas, and which causes to champion would be beneficial for providing Muslim organizations in general with insight into the processes of their peers. This study collected some data regarding the perspectives of the general Muslim population on the impact they perceived from the organizations they patronize. This in itself requires its own study to understand why and how people select the organizations they patronize. This study was able to

find some answers in shared location, shared ethnicity, and shared language, however further study is needed, especially for provinces with higher Muslim populations. Another comparative analysis could be done looking at the similarities and differences between religious spaces in cities and provinces with low Muslim populations versus high populations. Some studies have already been done on the inter-faith initiatives taken between mosques and other religious institutions, however these studies would also benefit from being contextualized by specific location within Canada. Location plays an impactful role in how Muslim organizations in Canada are created and developed. This also warrants further research, and while a province-by-province analysis would be exciting, such a study could also group together the provinces by proximity/shared culture to find more generalized trends across Canada.

While this list is in no way exhaustive of further research needed regarding Muslim organizations in Canada, it shows that there are a multitude of research possibilities that would benefit both the general Muslim population and the organizations themselves. Muslim organizations also have a lot to offer in terms of insight for marginalized communities dealing with issues such as Islamophobia, poverty, gender violence, and mental health issues. Research done in this regard could inform smaller or newer Muslim organizations on how to combat these issues based on the experience of the larger Muslim organizations.

Conclusion

Muslim organizations have had a visible presence in Canada since the late 1800s and increasingly so since immigration policy changes in the 1960s. Since the initial immigration of large groups of Muslims, the Muslim population has been steadily growing and the organizations catering to their needs have had to grow and develop alongside them. This is observable in the changes to organizations' intents and purposes and their expansion in scope and reach. Of the six mosques interviewed for this study, they all mentioned a form of expansion in their goals. This is also indicated by the various types of unique organizations being formed outside of the scope of religious spaces and mosques. The ability to categorize Muslim organizations beyond "mosques" is also indicative of the changing trends and adaptations Muslim organizations have made.

As one of the first schematic studies of its kind, aimed at developing a composite picture of Muslim organizations in Canada, this research was long overdue. Studies of this scope and depth are able to provide insight into complex community structures and benefit the communities in which the research is focused. With this type of information, Muslim organizations can benefit from seeing the issues being dealt with by other organizations and in turn can find solutions or navigate avoidable issues. By cultivating further research on Muslim organizations in Canada, one can hope that Muslims can utilize an understanding of the dynamics and challenges at play to further progress the goals and purposes of their organizations.

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