Islamophobia in Public Schools: A Mixed Methods Look at the Effectiveness of Parental Ethnic-Racial Strategies in Promoting Resilience Among Muslim Children

Lallia Allali
University of San Diego, allali@sandiego.edu

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ISLAMOPHOBIA IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS: A MIXED METHODS LOOK AT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PARENTAL ETHNIC-RACIAL STRATEGIES IN PROMOTING RESILIENCE AMONG MUSLIM CHILDREN

by

Lallia Allali

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

May 2024

Dissertation Committee

Fred J. Galloway, EdD, Chair
Leslie Boozer, EdD, JD, Member
Antonio Jiménez-Luque, PhD, Member

University of San Diego
CANDIDATE’S NAME: Lallia Allali

TITLE OF DISSERTATION: ISLAMOPHOBIA IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS: A MIXED METHODS LOOK AT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PARENTAL ETHNIC-RACIAL STRATEGIES IN PROMOTING RESILIENCE AMONG MUSLIM CHILDREN

APPROVAL:

______________________________________, Chair
Fred J. Galloway, EdD

______________________________________, Member
Leslie Boozer, EdD, JD

______________________________________, Member
Antonio Jiménez-Luque, PhD

DATE: April 15, 2024
ABSTRACT

The ongoing Islamophobic ideology in the United States has magnified discriminatory practices, exclusion, and increased violence toward Muslims (Esposito & Kalin, 2011; Trudo, 2021), and Islamophobia has further disadvantaged Muslim American adolescents through various forms of discrimination against them in schools. In fact, Muslim American students report the highest rate of discrimination across all religious groups, and researchers have found that active family ethnic-racial socialization can often mitigate the negative impacts of discrimination (Hughes et al., 2006; Hugly et al., 2019).

To test this hypothesis, this study was designed to focus on Muslim families’ ethnic-racial socialization practices and the implications on their children’s adjustment to school-based Islamophobia. It further aimed to understand the extent of perceived religious discrimination reported by students. This was accomplished using an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design that used surveys, regression analysis, and focus groups. In the quantitative phase, three survey instruments were administered to 235 participants between 11 and 18 years of age. Results revealed that Muslim students exhibited significant resilience, regardless of being subjected to overt and covert forms of Islamophobia. However, female students demonstrated a lower level of resilience as compared to their male counterparts. Furthermore, findings indicated that spirituality, cultural socialization, and egalitarianism played an important role in the resilience of Muslim students.

The qualitative phase involved two focus groups of 17 Muslim Arab American students and six key themes were identified: (a) the unjust educational content in U.S. schools hinders students’ voices and perspectives, leading to occurrences of discrimination; (b) genetic factors and parenting approaches focused on protection diminished the resilience of female students;
(c) Muslim parents were actively involved in transmitting cultural and egalitarian knowledge, spiritual messages, and sometimes moral socialization; (d) Muslim parents involved in social justice matters, and those who experienced discrimination in schools, actively educated their children about Islamophobia; (e) Muslim parents often encouraged their children to form friendships with students from diverse backgrounds; and (f) social media was essential for creating a sense of safety, belonging, and freedom of expression for Muslim students. Taken together, the results of this explanatory sequential mixed-methods design may provide educators, parents, and students with the knowledge and strategies needed to help combat the scourge of Islamophobia.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Since the publication of Said’s influential work *Orientalism* in 1979, the Western world has consistently linked Islam with negative depictions, stereotypes, and the endorsement of violent extremist actions (Bleich, 2011). The process of “othering” Muslims was further intensified following 9/11 attacks (Shukri, 2019), with Islam being thrust into the forefront of the political landscape, leading to the Muslim community experiencing a surge in backlash violence and hate crimes (Amer & Bagasra, 2013; Mansson McGinty, 2020).

As a result, the term “Islamophobia” was coined in contemporary times, broadly defined as fear, hatred, or prejudice toward Islam and Muslims. Islamophobia has been appallingly on the rise (Musa, 2019). In recent years, Muslim Americans have experienced high rates of prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination (Peek, 2011), and are often perceived as potential threats (Ali, 2014), despite evidence that Muslim Americans have either similar or greater socioeconomic status and levels of education than average U.S. citizens and are active in civil and political society (Pew Research Center, 2007). Prejudice and stereotyping are also both growing in U.S. classrooms, making it difficult for Muslim students to learn and thrive. Islamophobia has a strong and disturbing potential to negatively impact Muslim students attending public schools, and the consequences of encountering discrimination have been even greater and more substantive (Aroian, 2012; Zine, 2008). Discrimination during adolescence is particularly damaging; it is the time when youth begin to explore their self-identity, ethnic and racial identity, and the sense of minority status (Fenton, 2011; Helms, 2003). Previous research has shown evidence that Muslim American adolescents experience persistent challenges in school, including physical assaults, death threats from peers, overt ethnic and religious bigotry,
and harassment from teachers, school administrators, and peers (El-Haj, 2007; Khanlou et al., 2008). In California, 47.1% of Muslim students between 11–18 years old reported being bullied for their religious identity (CAIR, 2021), and Muslim students are twice as likely to be bullied in school than other students (CAIR, 2021).

Given significant racial and economic disparities in the U.S. school system where injustice is prevalent, resilience serves as a crucial asset for Muslim students facing discrimination from teachers, school administrators, and peers. In the context of marginalized adolescents, literature noted the more positively Muslim students feel about their ethnicity or race, the more resilient they are. Significant research has posited that the ability to exhibit resilience in the face of adversity is closely linked to the familial practice of ethnic-racial socialization, which serves to mitigate the detrimental effects of discrimination (D. L. Brown & Tylka, 2011; Burt et al., 2012, 2017), foster a positive mindset in the intragroup, and develop essential abilities to combat discrimination and racism (Burt et al., 2012).

Thus, using the framework of ethnic-racial socialization, resilience, and religious discrimination, the purpose of this study was to evaluate the perceived religious discrimination faced by Muslim adolescents in educational settings, as Muslim identity has become more salient than other identities for Muslims in the United States (Sirin & Fine, 2007). The study further explored Muslim adolescents’ resilience, as an important part of adolescent development, aiding in the cultivation of a positive self-identity, efficacy, and well-being. Specifically, the study focused on examining the content of ethnic-racial socialization messages that Muslim parents convey to their children and investigating potential correlation between parental ethnic-racial socialization and the resilience of Muslim adolescents in the United States.
The current study contributed to the existing body of literature in multiple ways. First, it gathered quantitative and qualitative data on the content of ethnic-racial socialization messages that Muslim parents convey to their children, and the more effective ethnic-racial socialization practices in mitigating the negative impact of discrimination and fostering resilient behavior, as limited information is known about whether and how Muslim parents transmit ethnic-racial socialization messages to their children and how these messages impact Muslim youths’ development (Dunbar et al., 2017). Second, the study investigated the relationship of ethnic-racial socialization and resilience among Muslim adolescents and identifying resilience strategies to survive school-based Islamophobic experiences. Finally, it examined the level of religious discrimination Muslim American students experience and elucidated the connection between Islamophobia and the religious identity of Muslim American students. The following sections present the background, problem statement, purpose of the study, and research questions.

**Background**

This section presents an overview of Muslim Americans and Muslim American student experiences in educational settings. Next, the literature review positions the concept of Islamophobia, the importance of religiosity and spirituality to Muslim Americans, resilience, and ethnic-racial socialization.

**Muslims in the United States**

Although exact numbers of Muslim Americans are difficult to establish, the 2017 Pew research poll, estimated 3.5 million Muslims live in the United States. Muslim Americans comprise the second most racially and ethnically diverse religious demographic in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2015). However, conventional race metrics may provide inaccurate information when assessing this particular demographic (Mohamed, 2020). The ethnic groups
among Muslim Americans are diverse. About 20% of Muslim Americans identify as Black, and 28% identify as South Asians. The largest racial group of Muslim Americans, about 41%, identify with many of them identifying as Middle Easterners, or Persians (Ewing, 2008; Lipka, 2017; Pew Research Center, 2017). Lastly, 8% of Muslim Americans identify as Hispanic, and 3% identify as other (Diamant, 2017). The United States is home to a Muslim community with the most youthful adherents compared to any other religious community in the nation. A significant proportion of adult Muslims, exceeding 35%, fall within the age range of 18–29 (Chouhoud & Mogahed, 2018). Unlike previous generations, the millennial Muslims in the United States have had the privilege of growing up in an environment that provided them with easy access to Islamic institutions like mosques, and abundant sources of knowledge about Islam, such as satellite television and the internet. More than 75% of mosques in the United States have been constructed since 1980 (Bagby, 2011).

According to the European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC, 2006), Muslims in the United States have achieved better traditional outcomes of success, as they frequently achieve high socioeconomic status, and they graduate from college at a greater rate than the national average (EUMC, 2006). Mosque-goers in the United States appear to do even better (Kosmin & Keysar, 2006). According to statistics, the typical mosque goer in the United States is a married man with children who has either a bachelor’s degree or a higher degree, such as a master’s or doctorate and earns $74,000 a year (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006).

Following the 9/11 attacks, the “war on terror” was declared, and Congress rapidly passed the USA Patriot Act to protect national security (Sisemore & Elsheikh, 2022). The aforementioned policy used surveillance tactics on Muslim Americans, including wiretapping and bank record inspections, alongside the initiation of a targeted registration
program to gather information on Muslims and oversee their actions and standing (Chishti & Bergeron, 2011; Lind, 2015), as the Federal Bureau of Investigation commenced the deployment of more than 15,000 compensated informants (Aaronson, 2013). Muslim Americans have been socially represented as a racially and religiously suspect group, often portrayed in the media as Arab, South Asian, or brown (Jamal & Naber, 2008; Sirin & Fine, 2007).

With the rise of anti-Islam sentiment, Muslim Americans have been reported to confront multilayered experiences of discrimination, institutional racism, hate crimes, frequent microaggressions, and the media’s negative scrutiny of Muslims (Abu-Ras & Suarez, 2009; Rippy & Newman, 2006; Shaheen, 2003; Zaal et al., 2007). According to Howell (2011), federal and local law enforcement monitored and continue to monitor Muslim individuals and Muslim organizations. Additionally, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, police, and immigration officials detained thousands of Muslims, Middle Easterners, and South Asians (Howell & Jamal, 2011; Mathur, 2006). The Department of Justice reported the number of anti-Muslim hate crimes during 2011 may have reached as high as 3,000–5,000. In 2015, negative attitudes toward Muslim Americans reached the highest point; 67% of the people surveyed had negative thoughts and feelings toward Muslim Americans (Arab American Institute, 2015). The Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) reported an increase in threats, violence, and discriminatory practices including workplace discrimination, denial of services and employment, incidents of hate and bias, and immigration and travel targeting Muslim Americans (CAIR, 2015; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2017). Between 2010–2020, more than 232 anti-Sharia bills were proposed in 44 states across the United States (Sisemore & Elsheikh, 2022). The anti-Sharia bills sought to ban the code for living that Muslims adhere to, which includes prayers and fasting in the month of Ramadan.
In 2023, CAIR documented an unprecedented surge in anti-Muslim discrimination with a total of 8,061 complaints. The most prevalent issues reported to CAIR included immigration and asylum, making up 20% of all complaints. This was followed by employment discrimination at 15%, education discrimination at 8.5%, and hate crimes and incidents at 7.5% (El-Bawab, 2024). This rise in anti-Muslim discrimination has been a national trend, partly due to policies and statements of politicians and mainstream media in reaction to the Israeli war on Gaza (CAIR, 2024).

One of the most important sites of institutionalized Islamophobia is Guantánamo Bay, where all the prisoners detained since 9/11 attacks have been Muslims (Hilal, 2021). Guantánamo Bay is seen as a symbol of religious and racial injustice, abuse, and nonobservance of the rule of law (American Civil Liberties Union, 2022). It has served as a location for severe acts of torture, wherein the U.S. military imposed forced standing, sleep deprivation, sexual humiliation, and religious abuse upon individuals held captive, alongside various other strategies (Hilal, 2021). As Islamophobia has emerged as a prominent sociopolitical and legal issue, there has been a corresponding surge in scholarly research focused on the Muslim community (Amer & Bagasra, 2013). To this day, scholars have extensively examined the empirical and conceptual implications of Islamophobia, as articulated by Muslims from diverse ethnic, racial, and regional backgrounds (Farooqui & Kaushik, 2020; Finlay & Hopkins, 2020) and adolescents in educational settings.

**Muslim Americans’ Educational Experiences**

Muslim American students of all ethnicities, backgrounds, and ages have been experiencing prejudice and discrimination in schools. A qualitative study conducted by Aroian (2012) disclosed experiences of anti-Muslim discrimination of both peers and leadership in the
educational setting; it revealed that 7 out of 9 anti-Islam discrimination incidents reported by Muslim adolescent participants occurred in school settings, perpetrated by teachers and classmates. The study also suggested Muslim American girls who wear headscarves or other traditional clothing often experienced indiscriminate acts of harassment against them (Aroian, 2012). Zine (2003) and CAIR (2021) further confirmed peers and school leaders hold negative views of their Muslim students, and Muslim girls who wear the hijab, or headscarf, struggle with their teachers and counselors’ misconceptions. Specifically, the headscarf is perceived as a marker of oppression, positioning Muslim girls as foreigners, and excluding them from the social fabric (Zine, 2008). In California, 30% of Muslim girls who wear the hijab, or headscarf, reported having their hijab offensively touched or pulled in schools (CAIR, 2021). Moreover, nearly 1 in 4 Muslim students reported a teacher, staff member, or adult at their school making offensive comments about Muslims or Islam (CAIR, 2021). Zine (2008) added that discrimination is further intensified if students are English learners or have limited English proficiency to confront these misconceptions.

Bullying of Muslim students is a widespread problem in the United States. In a national study by the Ansary (2021), 42% of Muslim parents and guardians with children in K–12 schools said their children had been bullied for their religious beliefs. Evolving research findings supported Muslim American students report a higher bullying rate than the national average. Although the national average bullying level is 20%, 51% of Muslim students reported being bullied (Basile et al., 2016; Mogahed & Ikramullah, 2020). Furthermore, the report published by CAIR in 2021, found 55% of Muslim students in California between 11–18 years of age feel unsafe, unwelcome, or uncomfortable in public schools because of their religious identity.
Since the beginning of Israel’s military campaign in Gaza on October 7, 2023, Islamophobia and discrimination against Muslim, Arab, and Palestinian students reached a record high in the United States with a total of 8,061 incidents (Chavez, 2024). In the past 3 months alone, close to 50% of the reported incidents of Islamophobia have been documented after the Israeli war on Gaza (Chavez, 2024). Among the alleged hate incidents documented in 2023 was the murder of 6-year-old Palestinian American Wadea Al-Fayoume in Chicago, and a teacher in Georgia who made threats to beat and behead a seventh grade Muslim student who asked about the teacher’s Israeli flag (El-Bawab, 2024).

Emerging evidence suggested discrimination-based harassment, intimidation, and bullying have a particularly harmful impact on young people’s psychological well-being (Hong et al., 2022; Russell et al., 2012). Even minor repeated experiences of microaggressions toward minority groups have been associated with higher levels of mental health afflictions (Hong et al., 2022; Huynh, 2012). Research further examined the impact of Islamophobia on Muslim Americans and found Islamophobia was linked to detrimental mental health conditions, and other indicators of health in the United States, Europe, and Australia (Samari et al., 2018). A study conducted by Abu-Ras and Abu-Badr (2008) found Arab Americans in New York City reported feeling anxiety about the future, fear of hate crimes, and isolation from the larger community. Muslim American adolescents who faced Islamophobic experiences may lead to disengagement in classrooms, lower test performance, nonparticipation in study groups, and disinclination to seek support (Johnson-Ahorlu, 2013). Rippy and Newman (2006) assessed the relationship between perceived religious discrimination for Muslim Americans and mental health outcomes and found subclinical paranoia among male participants was prevalent. The same
study on Muslim Australians found religious prejudice and discrimination predicted lower self-esteem among participants.

**Islamophobia**

Islamophobia refers to the systematic marginalization, discrimination, and exclusion of Muslim Americans in political, legal, and social spheres, it is deeply ingrained in the structural inequalities and violence rooted in the history of the United States (Sisemore & Elsheikh, 2022). According to the literature, the term was initially used by a French author in 1910, then in 1925 by Etienne Dinet, a French painter who embraced Islam and Sliman Ben Ibrahim in their book *Acces de delire Islamophobe* about Prophet Mohamed (Cesari, 2009). Their book *L’Orient vu de l’Occident* dedicated to the critique of some orientalists’ opinions on Islam and prophet Mohamed (Lopez, 2010). The term Islamophobia was introduced publicly as a notion in a 1997 inside a Runnymede Trust Report, wherein a report was published on pluralism and multiculturalism, titled *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All* (Allen, 2010). Domestically, Islamophobia was used in U.S. mass media when Time Magazine titled a cover story asking, *Is America Islamophobic?* (Esposito, 2014).

Although Islamophobia is not new in Western culture (Sajid, 2005), because Islam was an aspect of early U.S. racism toward the enslaved Africans who were forcefully brought to the United States (Love, 2009; Tehranian, 2009), research recognized that U.S. media coverage of Muslims supported the stereotypes against Muslims and fed Islamophobia (Allen & Nielsen, 2002). The research suggested that after the tragic 9/11 attacks, the media has increased the negative representation of Muslims and Arabs, portraying them as terrorists, rapists, and barbaric people (Shaheen, 2003). In a study, Powell (2011) found when Muslims were involved in a
crime, the media associates the incident to the religion, which is different from how the media
coverage has been portrayed when a non-Muslim is involved in a crime.

Because Islamophobic discourses have intensified following the 9/11 attacks,
discrimination increased, and Muslim Americans became victims of more violence and hate
studies explored the effects of Islamophobia (Farooqui & Kaushik, 2020; Finlay & Hopkins,
2020), and recent studies have focused on examining the multilayered forms of Islamophobia, its
indicators, and impacts among the young Muslim population (Collet-Sabé, 2020; Harris &
Hussein, 2020; Wheatley, 2019). Accordingly, there is a critical need for studies to further detect
and identify coping strategies to navigate through school related Islamophobic incidents. The
current study highlighted the necessity of investigating the educational experiences of Muslim
students, and identifying various channels that can offer the necessary support to promote
resilience and mitigate the adverse effects of Islamophobia.

**Is Anti-Muslim Discrimination Ethnic-Racial or Religious Discrimination?**

Although the previously mentioned studies presented evidence of high rates of
discrimination toward Muslim American students, it remains unclear if discrimination occurred
based on an individual’s ethnic, racial, or religious background. Studies on Muslim youth and
young adults found Muslim Americans reported perceiving different forms of stereotypes
because of their multiple identities (Ali, 2014; Ellis et al., 2010; Haffejee, 2015). Qualitative
studies post-9/11 attacks found Muslim youth perceived high levels of religious discrimination
and less ethnic discrimination (Ali, 2014; Ghaffar-Kucher, 2012), as they described being called
or treated as a “terrorist.” A study exploring perceptions of religious discrimination among the
Muslim population in the United States revealed that Asian Muslims reported the lowest
prevalence of religious discrimination and Hispanic/Latinx Muslims reported the highest prevalence of discrimination (Zainiddinov, 2016). The same study suggested White Muslim men experienced higher levels of discrimination compared to White, Black, and Asian Muslim women (Zainiddinov, 2016). Muslim African or African American youth have reported encountering racial discrimination that Black youth encounter in addition to religious discrimination (Ellis et al., 2010). Muslim South Asian youth may encounter stereotypes of being Muslims while also being affected by Asian minority stereotypes (Gee et al., 2009).

In fact, Islamophobia encompasses several kinds of discrimination (Samari et al., 2018) because belonging to multiple social groups means that individuals can concurrently face multiple forms of discrimination (Collins, 2000). Samari et al. (2018) further noted the majority of studies have not adequately differentiated between these types of discrimination because religious and ethnic identities often overlap for Muslim Americans, which makes it strenuous for individuals to recognize the source of their experience of discrimination. Moreover, growing up in an intense Islamophobic atmosphere, Muslim American adolescents may perceive more religious discrimination than ethnic or racial discrimination. Subsequently, Muslim American adolescents have been most likely to identify with their religious identity and attribute school based Islamophobic experiences to their religion, rather than their ethnic background (Sheridan, 2006). Therefore, the current study aimed to gain in-depth understanding into the level of religious discrimination Muslim American students experience to elucidate the connection between Islamophobia and religious identity of Muslim American students.

The Importance of Religiosity and Spirituality for Muslim Americans

Though spirituality and religiosity are distinct academic concepts (Lunn, 2009), many scholars contend the concepts themselves are interconnected (Marler & Hadaway, 2002; Scott et
al., 2018). Religion and spirituality are commonly employed simultaneously (i.e., religion and spirituality) or as alternatives (i.e., religion or spirituality) in academic studies. A. B. Cohen and Hill (2007) believed religion is a belief system and a culture that unites people over time and place. These cultural values and beliefs impact individuals’ perception and interpretation of the distressing events, and their reaction to them when faced with discrimination (Ho et al., 2014). Research further suggested the importance of religiosity and spirituality during adolescence; it promotes resilient behaviors and reduces symptoms of distress in the face of adversity against negative outcomes (Cotton et al., 2006). Religiosity and spirituality provide great psychological benefits which help children cope with anxiety and understand the purpose of life, and they also provide answers to social and ecological challenges faced by communities (Shariff et al., 2014). Younis (2015) revealed 42% of Muslim Americans attended weekly religious services, and 79% categorized their religion as an important factor in their lives.

When assessing the impact of religiosity on Muslim youth, research suggested identifying with a religiosity and exhibiting spirituality have been associated with fewer negative psychological impacts (S. R. Ahmed et al., 2011). Abu-Ras and Abu-Bader (2008) found religiosity was an important factor for Muslim Arab Americans in New York to cope with post-9/11 stress. Sallquist et al. (2010) assessed the impact of spirituality on Indonesian Muslim adolescents and found positive adaptability and behavior at school were related to spirituality. The most recent study conducted by Veronese et al. (2021) found spirituality is an important protective factor among Muslim Palestinian aid workers in the Gaza Strip in the face of traumatic experiences. This current study measured and assessed the spirituality and religiosity of Muslim American students as two different constructs, (a) defining spirituality to encompass
belief systems and (b) a connection with Allah, and religiosity in terms of rituals, practices, or behaviors.

**Resilience**

Defining resilience has been controversial; still, there is not enough consensus regarding a unified description of the construct (Lee et al., 2013). Initially, resilience was perceived as an internal function (Masten, 2007), where individuals are responsible for recovering, maintaining, and improving their psychological well-being when faced with stressful events. The approach expanded from the individual level to include protective factors as moderators and mediators of positive outcomes such as the family, community, and school (Griffiths & Mena-Cormenzana, 2015). Subsequently, the third wave focused on developing an individual’s capabilities to cope and overcome adversity and testing interventions (Masten, 2011). Currently, the concept is defined through a comprehensive understanding of resilience as a multilevel, contextualized, and dynamic nature (Kassis et al., 2015). Although there has been an increase of resilience research, this has been associated by growing concern regarding the lucidity and utility of the term (Windle, 2011). The lack of lucidity in how resilience is conceptualized appears to have resulted in an abundance of potential meanings in children and adolescent’s resilience literature (Friborg et al., 2009; Larm et al., 2010; Zamirinejad et al., 2014).

A deep examination of literature was conducted to identify a common definition of resilience among marginalized groups. The articles reviewed offered a different perspective on the term resilience. Many studies combined the concept of resilience with ethnic-racial and cultural socialization with no reference to a resilience definition (D. L. Brown & Tylka., 2011; Burt et al., 2012, 2017; Iruka et al., 2014; Spence et al., 2016) or defined it as an outcome of
ethnic-racial identity pride (M. Kodama, 2021). Additionally, resilience was found to be connected to a favorable outlook and confidence in one’s ethnic and racial background (K. F. Jackson et al., 2013). This finding highlighted the more positively individuals from marginalized groups view their ethnicity or race, the greater their resilience (D. L. Brown & Tylka, 2011; Burt et al., 2012, 2017).

Numerous researchers have adopted resilience as a framework to guide the direction of their research (D. L. Brown & Tylka, 2011; Burt et al., 2012, 2017; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015). Resilience as a theory has helped researchers in examining and comprehending the various connections between resilience and social occurrences associated with discrimination (C. M. Kodama & Dugan, 2020). Most studies did not use the traditional tools to measure resilience among marginalized adolescents; only a limited number of studies incorporating various iterations of the Connor-Davidson Scale (D. L. Brown & Tylka, 2011; C. M. Kodama & Dugan, 2020; Lee et al., 2020). In the present study, the resilience of Muslim American students was evaluated using the Connor-Davidson Scale, which delineates resilience into nine distinct attributes, each of which can be discerned through quantifiable indicators.

**Ethnic-Racial Socialization**

Given the persistence of racism and discrimination, to protect and prepare Black, Indigenous, and people of color from the harsh reality of living in a racist society, the studies found that families play a vital role in reducing the negative effects of discrimination by socializing their children to better understand their race, ethnicity, and culture and help them construct a prideful identity (Hughly et al., 2019). The socialization also includes families’ efforts to teach their children about potential ethnicity- and race-based discrimination and how to cope with these experiences (Hughes et al., 2006). Ethnic-racial socialization is a multifaceted
construct that consists of different types of parental activities, behaviors, and messages (Hughes et al., 2006). Ethnic-racial socialization’s link to positive psychosocial outcomes is dependent on four practices: (a) cultural socialization, (b) preparation for bias, (c) promotion of mistrust, and (d) egalitarianism (Hughes et al., 2016).

Cultural socialization has been defined as a process through which parents teach children about their racial or ethnic heritage, it promotes knowledge about cultural customs and traditions, and it increases the sense of belonging to a group (Hughes et al., 2006). Preparation for bias is a critical component of parenting marginalized adolescents, anticipating discrimination, and considering responses on how to cope with ethnic-racial prejudice and discrimination (T. L. Brown & Krishnakumar, 2007; Hughes et al., 2006). Promotion of mistrust consists of parental messages that promote cautions about intergroup relations and interracial interactions (Hughes et al., 2006). Socialization of egalitarianism includes parental practices that encourage their children to value personal qualities over racial and ethnic group membership (Hughes et al., 2006), emphasizing how people must be accorded exactly equal rights.

Family ethnic-racial socialization provides children with protective practices that promote their pride and esteem in their racial and ethnic group, and provide them with competencies to cope with discrimination, and thus build resilience in the face of discrimination (Wang & Huguley, 2012). Studies revealed that ethnic-racial socialization plays a direct role in promoting the adjustment of youth and serving as an indirect protective factor by mitigating the adverse impact of discrimination (D. L. Brown & Tylka, 2011; K. F. Jackson et al., 2013; Neblett et al., 2013). Ethnic-racial socialization was also found to be an important resilience factor for African American youth (Burt et al., 2017) and Asian adolescents (Iruka et al., 2014), as it ensured that adolescents connected with their culture and instilled pride in their cultural
heritage (Burt et al., 2012, 2017; Iruka et al., 2014). Ethnic-racial socialization has also been shown to promote adaptive psychological outcomes, such as high academic self-efficacy and motivation (Cooper & McLoyd, 2011).

Taken together, parental support in conveying ethnic-racial socialization messages can effectively mitigate discrimination faced by marginalized adolescents (D. L. Brown & Tylka, 2011; Burt et al. 2012, 2017; K. F. Jackson et al., 2013). Additionally, this study expanded upon this notion and delved into the ethnic-racial socialization strategies of Muslim families and their impact on the capacity of Muslim American adolescents to navigate instances of Islamophobia in educational environments.

**Problem Statement**

Muslims in the United States experience high rates of discrimination and Islamophobic backlash post-9/11 attacks (Rippy & Newman, 2006; Sirin et al., 2008). Islamophobia has further put Muslim American adolescents at a disadvantage through various forms of discrimination against them in schools’ context. With the lack of educational practices to combat Islamophobia, it is crucial to consistently search for solutions to the persistent struggle for equity in education. Studies suggested messages related to ethnic-racial socialization have the potential to act as a protective factor in the face of racial and ethnic discrimination (Evans et al., 2012). Educating and fostering social interactions among adolescents regarding group affiliation, social disparities, and a sense of ethnic-racial pride contributed to cultivating their awareness of ethnic-racial issues and preparing them to confront discrimination in schools (Peters, 2002). This strategy will additionally help them construct identities that promote a sense of confidence, pride, academic achievement, and most importantly positive adaptability despite the discrimination (Neblett et al., 2008).
Research suggested teaching ethnic and racial socialization is essential in empowering marginalized adolescents to better cope with discrimination (Neblett et al., 2008). To date, there is limited knowledge regarding the extent and manner to which Muslim parents convey ethnic-racial socialization messages to their children, and the subsequent effects of these messages on the development of Muslim adolescents (Dunbar et al., 2017). Addressing this gap was a primary contribution of the current study. This study employed existing literature to explore the possible correlation between ethnic-racial socialization, which includes cultural socialization, preparation for bias, promotion of mistrust, and egalitarianism, and the ability to successfully navigate negative school related Islamophobic experiences, while assessing the Muslim students’ perspective on the nature of Islamophobia. The study also sought to understand the extent to which religious discrimination is experienced by Muslim American students, as it is not yet clear on what basis the Islamophobia occurs, along with their reactions and resilience to Islamophobic incidents that may occur in the school setting.

**Purpose of the Study**

Islam is the second largest religion in the world behind Christianity (Lipka, 2017). In the United States, Islam has grown speedily because of high rates of births, immigration, and conversions (Lipka, 2017; Mohamed, 2016). Regrettably, the increase in the number of Muslim Americans has been paralleled by an increase in Islamophobia (Bleich, 2011). Racial profiling has occurred at airports and elsewhere, mosques have been vandalized, and Muslim students have been harassed and bullied in schools and college campuses (Allen, 2010; Federal Bureau of Investigation., 2017). The marginalization of Muslim Americans challenges educational equity and the well-being of students in schools.
In the context of discrimination toward marginalized adolescents, literature suggested families play a vital role in reducing the negative effects of discrimination by socializing their children to better understand their race, ethnicity, and culture and help them construct a prideful identity (Hughly et al., 2019). Recent studies of ethnic-racial socialization have mostly focused on cultural socialization and preparation for bias practices and have revealed that such practices are positively correlated with a stronger ethnic identity and higher self-esteem (Lee et al., 2018; Seol et al., 2016) among marginalized adolescents.

Thus, using the framework of ethnic-racial socialization, the aim of this study was to examine parental ethnic-racial socialization practices among Muslim families in the United States and their implications for adolescents’ adjustment to school-based Islamophobic situations. The study also aimed to gain insights into the level of religious discrimination perceived by Muslim American students, along with their reactions to instances of Islamophobia they may come across in the school environment. To achieve these goals, this study employed an explanatory sequential design, which is a two-phase design that involves collecting and analyzing quantitative data first, followed by collecting and analyzing qualitative data based on the quantitative results (Creswell & Plano Clarck, 2017).

**Research Questions**

Subsequently, the research answered the following questions:

1. What extent of perceived religious discrimination do middle and high school Muslim American students report?
2. How do Muslim American students respond to experiences of discrimination?
3. What type and frequency of ethnic-racial socialization messages do Muslim American adolescents receive from their parents? And to what extent does ethnic-
racial socialization affect Muslim students’ resilience when experiencing school-based Islamophobic situations?

4. Which practice of ethnic-racial socialization is more effective at mitigating the negative impact of Islamophobia?
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review is divided into four sections. First, a review of the literature on Islamophobia is presented. The review provides an insight into Islamophobia, the underlying causes of its increase with a specific focus on media and political discourse, its presence in the field of U.S. education, and the multilayered damage that it inflicts on Muslim American students. Second, educational leadership is addressed. The review presents a thorough framework for understanding Islamophobia in educational context, highlighting the diverse elements that contribute to racism in the U.S. education system. This section underscores the significance of power and privilege in perpetuating systemic inequities. Furthermore, the review delves into leadership theories that strive to combat Islamophobia and foster equity and social justice in educational institutions.

Third, the review of the literature offers an examination of the concept of resilience when confronted with discrimination, how marginalized adolescents experience resilience, and the protective factors in the context of racism and discrimination for marginalized adolescents.

Fourth, ethnic-racial socialization is presented. The definition of ethnic-racial socialization and the characteristics of this concept are outlined. Additionally, empirical studies dealing with the protective power of ethnic-racial socialization are reviewed.

Islamophobia

Academic discussions on Orientalism have presented the notion that in Western societies Islam has been consistently portrayed as the “other” religion throughout history (Said, 2003). The Western perception of Islam has often been associated with negative portrayals in the media, stereotypes, and violence. The process of “othering” Muslims intensified further in the aftermath
of the 9/11 tragedy (Shukri, 2019). The period following the 9/11 attacks brought Islam to the forefront of the political landscape, resulting in the Muslim community as a whole experiencing a surge in backlash violence and hate crimes (Amer & Bagasra, 2013; Mansson McGinty, 2020).

Consequently, the term “Islamophobia” emerged as a result, denoting the presence of unselective negative emotions and apprehension toward Islam and Muslims (Hassan & Martin, 2015). Since 2001, political activists, nongovernmental agencies, public commentators, and international organizations have often employed this term to highlight detrimental rhetoric and actions targeting Islam and Muslims in Western liberal democracies (Shukri, 2019). For that, contemporary research discerns Islamophobia on a global scope, as a continuation to the U.S. empire, settler colonialism, and Western civilization (Bakali & Hafez, 2022; Massoumi et al., 2017; Sayyid & Vakil, 2010). Although tropes of “Western Islamophobia” are prevailing (Ejiofor, 2023), the strategies employed to express prejudice and discrimination toward Muslims cannot be solely attributed to post 9/11 order.

Stroup (2021) examined the manifestation of Islamophobia in China through the racialization of Hui and Uyghur Muslim minorities in Weibo discussions. Meanwhile, Menon (2020) examined how Hindu nationalist users in India reveled in their triumph over the Babri Mosque by employing Islamophobic humor (Ganesh et al., 2024). Frydenlund (2023) studied anti-Muslim Buddhist nationalists and how they are not solely influenced by local circumstances. Conversely, anti-Muslim Buddhist nationalists have been greatly influenced by global discussions and apprehensions. Frydenlund (2023) further examined the mass atrocities committed against the Rohingya population in Myanmar, which resulted in the displacement of 650,000 individuals who sought refuge in Bangladesh, and the Sri Lanka systemic attacks on Muslim life and properties in the years 2014, 2018, and 2019. With that, research and discourse
surrounding Islamophobia have also experienced substantial growth since 2001 “not only for political reasons, but also because it attempts to label a social reality that Islam and Muslims have emerged as objects of aversion, fear, and hostility in contemporary liberal democracies” (Bleich, 2011, p. 181), and the term “Islamophobia” continues to be a topic of debate.

The present-day interpretation of Islamophobia is linked to the notion of Orientalism, a term introduced by Palestinian scholar Edward Said, the pioneer of Postcolonial Studies (Poynting & Mason, 2007; Said, 1979). The term Islamophobia appeared in the late 20th century and was initially employed to describe the prejudice and discrimination Muslims faced in Europe and the United Kingdom (Samari, 2016). It appeared in a report produced by the 1997 Runnymede Trust (Elahi & Khan, 2017) describing Islamophobia as “an unfounded hostility toward Islam and a fear or dislike of all or most Muslims” (Conway, 1997, p. 5). Other studies traced back the use of the term to 1910, indicating the term Islamophobia originated from the French word Islamophobie coined by Alain Quellien to condemn the actions of French colonial administrators toward Muslim individuals in France (Richardson, 2012). Bordbar et al. (2020) stated Islamophobia has persisted in Western countries since the encounter between Muslims and European Christians during the Crusades in Asia Minor in the 11th century.

The Runnymede Trust report outlined Islamophobia as a narrow-minded perspective that can be categorized into four main areas: (a) discrimination against Muslims in employment practices, the provision of health care and education; (b) exclusion of Muslims from government, politics, and employment (including management and positions of responsibility); (c) violence toward Muslims including physical assaults, verbal abuse and vandalizing of property; and (d) prejudice against Muslims in the media and in “everyday conversation.”
These areas encompassed bias manifested in everyday discussions and portrayed in media depictions; marginalization in the workplace and leadership roles; exclusion from political and governmental spheres; discrimination in employment procedures and the delivery of essential services (e.g., healthcare, education); and instances of verbal abuse, property damage, and physical harm (Inayat, 2007). In 2017, the Runnymede Trust Institute updated the definition and provided an all-encompassing and expanded explanation of Islamophobia, linking it to the issue of racism. Elahi and Khan (2017) explained:

Any distinction, exclusion, or restriction towards, or preference against, Muslims (or those perceived to be Muslims) that has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life. (p. 1)

Overall, Islamophobia is widely recognized as encompassing the prejudiced treatment and unjust exploitation faced by Muslims across various aspects of society (Sufi & Yasmin, 2022).

**Racialization and Securitization of Muslims**

Past and current discussions surrounding Islamophobia revolve around the question of whether it refers to bias directed toward “not Islam as a religion, but Muslims as individuals, with a particular emphasis on immigrants” (Halliday, 1999, p. 898), where the focus is not on criticizing a faith or culture, but rather on targeting a specific group of people; or how Islamophobia relies on the recognition of distinguishing features signifying an individual as visibly Muslim, which are directly associated with instances of hate crimes, prejudice, discrimination, and abuse (Allen, 2020; Meer & Modood, 2009; Moosavi, 2015; Zempi & Chakraborti, 2014).
In *Islamophobia Studies Journal*, believed to be a pioneer in its kind in theoretically mapping the field of Islamophobia studies, Hafez (2018) stated “the most prominent strand in academic Islamophobia studies literature today” is “racism studies informed by the central assumptions of postcolonial theory, such as othering and power-relations” (p. 216). In this particular strand of literature, Islamophobia is interpreted as a discourse that enables the portrayal of Muslims as individuals possessing unfavorable and threatening characteristics solely based on their association with Islam. Consequently, this leads to their marginalization and unfair treatment.

When discussed, Islamophobia enables the racialization of Muslims. A diverse array of literature covering various aspects of Islamophobia consistently highlighted this concept as a pivotal element that unified extensive research on Islamophobia and the discrimination faced by Muslims (Abbas, 2020; Meer & Modood, 2019; Najib, 2022; Younis & Jadhav, 2020), arguing that race is a product of social construction that arises from the significance assigned to bodily, physical, behavioral, and cultural attributes, leading to the categorization of individuals into distinct social groups (Garner & Selod, 2015; Meer & Modood, 2009). Frequently, race serves as a substitute for religion, as the blending and simplifying discussions obscure the distinction between race and religion, ultimately transforming race into a symbol for religion (Joshi, 2006; Murji & Solomos, 2005).

The convergence of assumed identities leads to the racialization of religion, whereby an individual’s race gives rise to assumptions about their religious affiliation (Joshi, 2006). Additionally, the process of racializing religion intensifies the process of othering and the oppression faced by the religious group, causing their marginalization and exclusion from the broader society (Joshi, 2006). For Garner and Selod (2015), “using racialization as a key
analytical concept allows us to make sense of the fact that regardless of physical appearance, country of origin and economic situation, Muslims are homogenized and degraded by Islamophobic discourse and practices in their everyday lives” (p. 17). The primary emphasis in these processes is on macrolevel realities, rather than microlevel ones (Kozaric, 2023).

In addition to racialization, the concept of Islam’s securitization pertains to the development of a security-focused agenda following the events of 9/11, wherein Islam is perceived as a threat to the Western societies. This perception is then translated into various political discourses, institutions, and governmental policies (J. Fox & Akbaba, 2015). However, because racialization and securitization are experienced differentially, research conducted in the Western context revealed the examination of lived experiences of Islamophobia and coping mechanisms highlighted the need to modify the prevailing “grand narratives” (Kozaric, 2023, p. 909) of “omnipresent exclusion,” (Kozaric, 2023, p. 930) and acknowledged the complex and interconnected nature in which individuals experience Islamophobia, indicating the intricate connections among social categories such as class, gender, ethnicity, and the level of visibility of being Muslim (Garner & Selod, 2015).

However, research on Islamophobia continues to concentrate on a Western perspective, perceiving it as exclusively inherent to systems of power and racial hierarchy in European and settler colonial communities (Ganesh et al., 2024). Despite the inclusion of global perspectives in various volumes (Sayyid & Vakil, 2010), the conceptualization of Islamophobia still revolves around a Western-Islam dichotomy and the notion of “whiteness.” Bakali and Hafez (2022) emphasized the paradigm of the “war on terror” pushed a new era of anti-Muslim discrimination, racism globally, and Islamophobia “exists as an extension of a global colonial expansion rooted in a colonial heritage of classifying people” (p. 6). The second assertion, however, presents a
greater challenge as it overlooks the nonwestern subjugation of marginalized groups by focusing solely on western colonial and Orientalist perspectives when theorizing Islamophobia. Paradoxically, this approach only strengthens the dominance of western-centric theories (Frydenlund, 2023). Frydenlund and Jerryson (2020) highlighted there exist significant distinctions between the anti-Muslim sentiments during the colonial era and the present-day anti-Muslim campaigns. The essentialization of Muslim religious identity, which overlooks the diverse ethnic backgrounds in the Muslim community, lies at the heart of all manifestations of Islamophobia (Frydenlund & Jerryson, 2020). Still, the global dimensions of islamophobia are yet to be explored.

Islamophobia is not only evident at an individual level, but it also spreads through social, structural, and political settings (Kozaric, 2023). Some instances of Islamophobia are less overt, as demonstrated through the targeting of Muslims based on their ethnic background, the prohibition of religious practices, the enforcement of discriminatory immigration policies, and heightened surveillance (Naderi, 2018). Similarly, the war on terror encompassed military warfare, the use of torture, global drone strikes, the existence of black sites, and the operation of the Guantanamo Bay military prison have all been used against Muslims (Bridge Initiative Team, 2023).

The United States was able to intervene, kill, and destroy under the guise of being free, enlightened, and freedom seeking, thanks to an Islamophobic discourse. This discourse framed terrorism as the primary national security concern, leveraging the public’s perception of danger, risk, and fear (Altheide, 2009) to garner backing for policy initiatives like denying Muslim and Arabs’ civil liberties through U.S. Patriot Act, demonizing Saddam Hussein through false allegations of possessing nuclear weapons for invading Iraq, declaring a “war on terror” to rally
Western countries against the Muslim enemy, and invading Afghanistan to liberate women from oppressive Muslim men (Altheide, 2006, 2009, 2017). The word “terrorism” has been predominantly linked to Islamic radicals in political discourse, media portrayals, and popular sentiment (Altheide 2006, 2009, 2017; Nagar, 2010; Papacharissi & Oliveira, 2008; Powell, 2011; Woods, 2011).

**Emerging Anti-Muslim Ideology by “Othering” Islam and Muslims**

There has been a consensus among scholars: in recent years, there has been a noticeable rise in negative portrayals of Muslims (El-Kassem et al., 2018; S. J. Smith, 2020). As a result, Muslims were depicted as a possible menace to the Western society, subjected to discrimination, and constructed as “others” through specific methods of communication. For instance, in his policy speech at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, Donald Trump portrayed Muslims in an unfavorable light by employing radical labeling techniques (Khan et al., 2020). In his speech, Muslims were depicted as the source of anguish and devastation, and he portrayed himself as the rescuer of the United States. Trump’s objective was to marginalize Islam and Muslims by asserting the dominance of neoliberalism. He aimed to “otherize” Islam and Muslims, creating the political “us” versus “them” division (Khan et al., 2021; Waikar, 2018), and he linked terrorism with radical Islam by portraying it as a threat to the United States (Waikar, 2018).

Sharifi et al. (2017) critically analyzed CNN’s talk show, Global Public Square, and discovered that CNN exhibited bias and perpetuated negative stereotypes against Muslims across various platforms. In various media platforms, Muslims were consistently linked to acts of “terrorism, injustice, backwardness, insecurity and alienation” (Eckert et al., 2021, p. 6). Eckert
et al. (2021) revealed each Muslim internet user in the United States has experienced various instances of hyper differential public encounters.

The significance of the media in the propagation of terrorism through the amplification of fear and an unpredictable future was underscored by Altheide (2006) in the digital age where spreading news and information occurs at an unprecedented speed using various platforms such as news channels, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter serve as effective means to spread information. Altheide (2006) placed additional emphasis on the association between terrorism, Iraq, and the Islamic faith through the ideologies of the Project for the New American Century. His conclusion asserted the mass media tactically fosters fear by capitalizing on the audience’s perception of danger, risk, and fear to accomplish specific objectives such as enhancing domestic control and garnering support for the U.S.’s new global leadership role (Altheide, 2006). Muslim Americans, regardless of their diverse ethnic backgrounds, were often grouped together and perceived as a homogenous group under the broad label of “Muslim.” This categorization is frequently employed to distinguish them as “the other” (Casey, 2018; Nadal et al., 2012). Muslim identity has been unfairly linked to notions of being outdated, oppressive, endorsing extremist ideologies, promoting terrorism, and holding anti-Western perspectives (El-Kassem et al., 2018; S. J. Smith, 2020). Several Muslims found Western media consistently portraying Muslims as “fundamentalists,” “extremists,” “conservative,” “fanatical,” “violent,” and “terrorists” (Kassem et al., 2018). Furthermore, individuals who can be recognized as Muslims through their attire such as headscarves, veils, or names that reflect their identity are more likely to be associated with extensive negative stereotypes (Casey, 2018). A research study suggested that acts of terrorism committed by Muslims received more than 300% media coverage compared to similar attacks perpetrated by individuals of other religious affiliations (Kearns et
al., 2019). For that, Muslims expressed significant challenges in overcoming the influence of these unfavorable and negative media depictions of Muslims and Islam (Haque et al., 2019). Based on these studies, scholars and practitioners must address the “othering,” the effects encountered by Muslims, and its influence on their well-being.

**The Impact of Mediatized Islamophobia**

The rise of Islamophobia since 2001 has become a significant social issue in Western societies, characterized by the growing racialization, prejudice, and discrimination against Muslims, which has had detrimental effects on both individuals and communities belonging to the Muslim faith (Esposito, 2014). Islamophobic narratives in Western media can directly harm the sense of belonging, safety, psychological well-being, and overall welfare of Muslims (Brown et al., 2015; Bull & Rane, 2018; Hargreaves, 2016; Kunst et al., 2012, 2013; Samari et al., 2018). In a study conducted across various contexts, the mere exposure to Islamophobic discourses in the media was found to be associated with elevated levels of psychological distress among Muslim participants (Kunst et al., 2013).

Recent studies revealed that media Islamophobic discourses can have detrimental effects on vulnerable young individuals, leading to their increased marginalization, discrimination, and susceptibility to extremist propaganda (Kabir, 2019). Discrimination can have a significant impact on the emotional struggles faced by Muslims who are targeted socially and culturally (Mir & Sarroub, 2019). The repercussions of the discrimination have led to a significant erosion of the sense of identity among Muslim American youth. This loss of identity is intriguing because it is not solely tied to their Muslim identity, but rather their U.S. citizenship identity (Abu-Ras et al., 2013).
In U.S. public schools, Hossain (2017) argued Islamophobia not only impacts the social and emotional growth of Muslim students but also hinders their academic advancement. Studies suggested that young Muslim students in the United States experienced significant stress and were more likely to face discrimination and bullying due to their religious beliefs (Winegar, 2016). Studies indicated when young individuals from diverse marginalized communities encounter ethnic-racial or religious discrimination, it has adverse effects on their academic involvement, attitudes toward education, perseverance in academics, establishment of connections with their educational institution, and overall academic achievements (Alfaro et al., 2009; C. S. Brown & Chu, 2012; Dotterer Aryan et al., 2009; Eccles et al., 2006; McWhirter et al., 2018; Smalls et al., 2007; Unnever et al., 2016; Unnever & Gabbidon, 2011; Verkuyten et al., 2019).

The discriminatory experiences rooted in ethnic, racial, or religious differences during adolescence pose a risk to the overall growth and progress of adolescents. This can lead to their disengagement from educational institutions, as they may feel disheartened and demoralized due to the detrimental impact of discrimination on their self-worth (Neblett et al., 2006). Discrimination hinders their ability to establish connections with teachers and adults at their schools (Unnever et al., 2016; Unnever & Gabbidon, 2011) due to their rejection of mainstream institutions, which they see as hostile (Agnew, 2002; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001).

In the United States, one notable aspect of research conducted on elementary and high school education is the concept of generalization regarding Islam and Muslims encountered by Muslim students in school settings (Al-Fartousi, 2016; Amjad, 2018; Collet-Sabe, 2020; Housee, 2010; Jaffe-Walter, 2013; Merchant, 2016). They experienced a feeling of being excluded or being different because of their perceived adherence to the Muslim faith (Hauser, 2021; Jaffe-
Walter, 2013; Kayaalp, 2014; Leo, 2020), and members of the Muslim Students Association in a U.S. high school reported being surveilled (Shirazi, 2018). CAIR (2021) conducted research in California that involved 558 Muslim students enrolled in public schools, revealed these students frequently encountered verbal attacks, particularly those making references to bombs or labeling Muslim American students as terrorists. The study also found 56% of Muslim students feel unsafe at schools, 47% had been bullied, 30% of hijab-wearing students experienced offensive touching or pulling of their hijab, and 30% of the respondents reported experiencing cyberbullying because of their religion (CAIR, 2021). One in four Muslim students reported being discriminated against by an adult, teacher, or school staff (CAIR, 2021).

A study examined the implicit discriminatory behaviors directed toward Arab and Muslim American students in educational institutions. The research shed light on the distressing experiences students endured such as mistreatment, humiliation, racial insults (e.g., being labeled a traitor or little Laden), and even threats of physical violence if the United States engaged in conflict with Iraq (Wingfield, 2006). A study conducted with 14 Muslim American students unveiled they frequently encountered unfavorable conduct and verbal abuse. Nevertheless, most students refrained from reporting these experiences, either due to the fear of facing retaliation or because they had become accustomed to Islamophobic encounters as a regular part of their everyday existence (Aroian, 2012). Abu El-Haj and Bonet (2011) found 99 Arab students from public schools in the Midwest participated in a cross-sectional study, where they shared their experiences of feeling alienated, labeled “enemy within” and “ultimate other.”

Amid the escalating Israeli violence in Gaza, recognized as one of the deadliest in the history of the region (United Nations, 2023), Arab and Muslim students have been encountering a rise in discrimination and mistreatment from their peers and teachers. Between October 7–24,
2023, CAIR reported a total of 774 complaints regarding incidents driven by Islamophobia and prejudice against Palestinians, Arabs, and Muslims. Although 312 incidents of antisemitism were reported by Anti Defamation League, about 190 of those were directly linked to the war on Gaza (Singh, 2023), including Palestinian chants on campus. Yet, the secretary of education spearheaded the Antisemitism Awareness Campaign, embarking on a mission to engage with communities that have been facing antisemitic discrimination. In 2023, Biden’s administration implemented a nationwide plan to combat the increasing prevalence of antisemitism by providing schools with valuable guidance to address this issue effectively (DeCuir, 2023) with a blatant disregard of the suffering of Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim students. The actions of the U.S. leaders can be solely attributed to the concept of power and privilege.

A comparable initiative should be aimed at engaging Muslim and Arab communities who are confronted with increased prejudice and discrimination in educational institutions. Educational institutions need to foster an environment where students and their families are encouraged to express their apprehensions pertaining to discrimination, and the suppression of their opinions on matters affecting their communities is of utmost importance. Reports revealed students of Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim backgrounds encountered instances of harassment, intimidation, and discrimination in educational institutions when they expressed their support for a ceasefire and the safeguarding of humanitarian interventions in Gaza, including unrestricted availability of water, food, shelter, fuel, and medical assistance (DeCuir, 2023). Furthermore, as the level of violence in Gaza escalated to unimaginable horrors, Arab and Muslim students face a heightened vulnerability of encountering hateful backlash when they voiced their opposition against the oppression of Palestinians and human rights violations (DeCuir, 2023). For instance, a student attending Corona del Mar High School in Newport Beach, California was suspended
for making the statement, “Free Palestine” to another student because it was considered threatening (Vives, 2023).

Through the review of the literature on Islamophobia and its impact on Muslim American students in schools, school administrators must lead schools toward equity and justice for all. Educational leaders must not hide behind divisive politics and ignore the fear and suffering affecting Arab and Muslim communities. They must show empathy and understanding toward those who are facing discrimination and prejudice due to their Muslim identity and acknowledge the fear and grief experienced as they grapple with the devastation inflicted upon their loved ones and mere brothers and sisters of their faith community. Education leaders must demonstrate inclusive leadership in schools and take a strong stance in protecting Muslim American students from hate and racism.

**Educational Leadership**

As instances of prejudice and exclusion against Muslim American students have spiked in the U.S. educational environments, scholars in the field of education have endeavored to address this issue from various perspectives (Abu El-Haj, 2015). The study of Islamophobia in U.S. education offered a mounting apprehension regarding the approach taken to combat Islamophobia and its effects on Muslim American students.

The lack of lucidity in how Islamophobia is conceptualized appears to have resulted in an abundance of potential approaches in Islamophobia literature. The initial perspective conveyed unease with using the term “Islamophobia” due to its broad generalizations and the underlying assumption that it stems from fear (Abu El-Haj, 2015; Mir & Sarroub, 2019). Certainly, some scholars in the field of education have opposed the use of the term “Islamophobia” when discussing and describing patterns of discrimination in U.S. schools (Mir & Sarroub, 2019).
They have emphasized the importance of recognizing Islamophobia toward Muslim Americans should be addressed in a wider context of racism, rather than solely considering it as a form of prejudice (Abu El-Haj, 2015; Mir & Sarroub, 2019).

The second perspective acknowledges the necessity to comprehend the fundamental principles that form the basis of the U.S. education system. The notions of institutionalized power and privilege hold an important significance in the educational journey of every student including Muslim American students. The third perspective regards educational leadership that explicitly addresses the needs of historically underserved and marginalized students. Social justice and transformative leadership are fundamental aspects of educational leadership, as the efforts to address inequities in schools lean to discount the underlying beliefs that maintain injustices and center their approach on short-lived policies and practices (Francis & Mills, 2012), leading to the replication of inequality. Therefore, this requires transforming the fundamental beliefs and actions that created the inequitable outcomes students experience. Consequently, educational leaders need to engage in broader discussion and ideas about changing the lives of Muslim American students who face experiences of marginalization, exclusion, and othering in U.S. schools indicating the existence of prevalent perpetuation of discrimination on the basis of religion, race, and ethnic background. Educational leaders need to understand their position through the prism of leadership for social justice and equity.

Reconceptualizing Islamophobia in U.S. Education

In U.S. public schools, there has been an increased lack of awareness and need to recognize and respond adequately to Islamophobic incidents when they occur on schools’ premises (Mir & Sarroub, 2019). These incidents are further taking a psychological toll on Muslim American students. Discrimination during adolescence is particularly damaging; it is a
crucial time in youth identity development. Adolescence is when they begin to explore their ethnic and racial identities and develop a sense of minority status (Fenton, 2011; Irshad, 2015).

Although limited studies foreground Muslim American students’ experiences, there is evidence they experience persistent challenges in school, including physical assaults and death threats from peers; overt ethnic and religious bigotry; and harassment from teachers, school administrators, and peers (El-Haj, 2007; Khanlou et al., 2008). Furthermore, they are suffering from persistent trauma leading to increased cases of depression, low self-esteem, anxiety, paranoia, and substance abuse (Irshad, 2015). In light of this, there is a pressing need for educational research to address Islamophobia beyond mere prejudice and fear. The term Islamophobia, in its limited scope, restricts the potential for educational leadership by solely emphasizing on the culture of fear directed toward Muslim American students. However, it is crucial for educational leaders to thoroughly examine the origins of fears directed toward Muslim students in school environments and develop strategies to effectively tackle this issue by implementing transformative curriculum and pedagogy (Abu El-Haj, 2015).

Considering Islamophobia as a prejudice frequently results in involvement with discussions on multiculturalism that prioritizes educating individuals about Islam. Education leaders may actively participate in imparting fundamental knowledge about Islam as a faith, religious customs, celebrations, and its core principles (Mir & Sarroub, 2019). Addressing Islamophobia in schools by adopting a multiculturalism approach presents the most critical problem of not acknowledging the deeply ingrained systemic racism that targets Muslim American students and their communities (Abu El-Haj, 2015; Mir & Sarroub, 2019).

Moreover, Islamophobia requires analyzing the relationship between global and local events; racism is both perpetuated and influenced by U.S.’s economic, political, and military
policies (Abu El-Haj, 2015). For instance, as Israel declared the war on Gaza with unprecedented acts of brutality and mass extermination against Palestinians with U.S. support, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) reported an unprecedented surge in anti-Muslim, anti-Arabs, and anti-Palestinians hate incidents in the United States. The Islamophobic and anti-Palestinian discourse has been employed as a justification for violence. Israel’s brutal policies toward Palestinians in Gaza and the silencing of advocates for the human rights of Palestinians in the United States has fueled this unparalleled rise in discrimination. Between October 7–November 4, 2023, CAIR received a total of 1,283 complaints and reports of discrimination, marking a 216% surge in comparison with the average monthly complaints the organization receives (Czachor, 2023). Islamophobia is a widespread concern that is interconnected with various occurrences taking place in the Muslim and Arab regions worldwide.

The core of opposing Islamophobia or anti-Muslim racism lies in the examination and understanding of historical events, specifically the various manifestations of social power dynamics like white supremacy, slavery, and settler colonialism. These factors have contributed to the creation of exclusionary practices and the establishment of racist systems (Mir & Sarroub, 2019).

In general, in the examination and understanding of historical events, strategy has encouraged educational leaders to view Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism as a worldwide endeavor that intersects and links with the marginalization of various other groups, including Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and immigrant communities (Abu El-Haj, 2015). Additionally, the examination of historical events intersects with the narratives of various marginalized and underrepresented factions and communities in the United States. These include racism against
Muslims, racism against Black individuals, racism against Latinx individuals, racism against Arab individuals, and racism against South Asian individuals (Abdul Khabeer et al., 2018).

Thinking of Islamophobia in terms of anti-Muslim racism leads to critical educational practices aligned with social justice and equity education. The responsibility to combat Islamophobia in schools falls, in part, on educators (Hossain, 2017). Although the objective may appear beyond the school, educators are expected to educate students and staff to make a difference in the lives of Muslim American students (Hossain, 2017). The educational practices can incorporate climate surveys to gather information about the experiences of Muslim American students in educational settings. These surveys can help identify any discriminatory patterns that may exist in relation to academics and discipline (Abu El-Haj, 2015; Mir & Sarroub, 2019).

Furthermore, it is crucial to participate in professional growth and training programs for educators. Equally important is the incorporation of educational tools and resources that address the issue of racism against Muslim communities (Abu El-Haj, 2015). Educators must engage in crucial discussions regarding the notion of terrorism, the media’s involvement in linking Muslims with acts of violence and malevolence (Bleich et al., 2018; Powell, 2011), and U.S. policies aimed at Muslim communities. These discussions should include the Patriot Act, which infringes upon the privacy of U.S. citizens, the war on terror, the implementation of no-fly lists, the detention of individuals in Guantanamo Bay without trial, the programs addressing counter violence extremism, and the travel ban imposed on countries with Muslim majorities. These policies that promote Islamophobia must be incorporated into educational materials, as they infringe upon the civil rights of Muslim American citizens and impact the lives of Muslims in the country and worldwide (Bajaj et al., 2016; Esposito & Kalin, 2011).
In teaching about Islam and Muslims, educators must approach these topics with a critical understanding of Muslim Americans. The use of common-sense knowledge in U.S. schools to educate students about the Muslims and Arabs poses a problem as it frequently perpetuates notions of exoticness or oversimplified understanding of the region (Sensoy et al., 2010). This approach is evidently detrimental to the critical comprehensive comprehension of complex global matters as mainstream conversations regarding the Arabs and Muslims frequently undergo a filtration process, wherein dominant frameworks solely concentrate on topics like violence, women’s oppression, and tragedies (Subedi & Subreenduth, 2018). Noddings (2008) specifically focused on religion and emphasized the significance of schools in equipping students with essential knowledge about various religions. Noddings (2008) highlighted the necessity for young individuals to actively participate in critical conversations regarding religion to “understand other cultures, to comprehend the many allusions to biblical names and stories that appear in literature, and to better understand their own positions on religion” (p. 370).

In recapitulation, Zaal (2012) summarized these educational practices by saying, “we have a responsibility as educators to expand our students’ understanding of the world by engaging them critically in analyzing the social, political, and historical contexts in which they live” (p. 557). Such comprehension can provide valuable insights for structured systematic reconstruction aimed at creating more inclusive, responsive, and socially equitable educational institutions for students with Muslim American backgrounds.

**Institutionalized Power and Privilege**

Schools serve as miniature representations of larger societal structures that perpetuate inequality and oppression (McLaren, 2017). In the school system, all individuals, be it teachers, students, or staff, actively participate in and experience various forms of power dynamics,
privilege, and acts of oppression (McLaren, 2017). According to Lenski (1984), privilege is predominantly a consequence of power in a system. Privilege is bestowed upon individuals belonging to a specific social group due to the belief they possess a distinct set of characteristics and values, irrespective of the accuracy of these beliefs. Privilege is perpetually gained by taking away opportunities from others and every action taken to acquire or preserve it, regardless of how unintentional or unaware, leads to the suffering and oppression of others (Johnson, 2006).

Systems of oppression can operate at various levels, including personal, institutional, and societal, through both deliberate and subconscious beliefs and behaviors (Edwards, 2006). These systems affect education institutions and play a role in upholding and perpetuating oppressive systems (Kivel, 2002). Educational institutions exhibit a continuous pattern of power through instructional methods and regulations that are concealed and evident (Foucault, 1980; Freire, 1970). However, in numerous academic environments, a variant of the banking approach to education as proposed by Freire (1970) is still prevalent. In this model, the teacher takes on a paternalistic role, treating students as passive recipients and simply depositing information into their minds (Cho & Lewis, 2005; McInerney, 2009). The myth of the U.S. educational system functioning as a means for social mobility is challenged by these authoritarian practices, and schools serve to maintain social hierarchy and strengthen the presence of social inequality (DeSena & Ansalone, 2009). Regrettably, students who belong to marginalized groups due to their race, ethnicity, religion, social class, ability, linguistic background, gender identity, or any combination of these factors, consistently face educational policies and practices that predominantly undermine, deprecate, and erode elements of their individuality (Irizarry, 2011; Mayo, 2013).
Scholars have shed light on the responsibility of institutions in promoting unfair educational outcomes by questioning ideologies, policies, and practices that are rooted in deficit thinking (Valencia, 2012), color-blindness (i.e., the disregard for race or racial differences; Bonilla-Silva, 2006), and meritocracy (i.e., the belief that success is solely based on individual merit; Au, 2013, 2016). Numerous practices continue to uphold oppression and racism in the field of education, even though they may not be apparent and flagrant discriminatory practices and policies of the past. Instead, they have been replaced by less obvious, indistinct, and more nuanced beliefs and behaviors enduring the widespread presence of the persistent and pervasive nature of racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). Cross (2005) stated, “White privilege is maintained through invisible, insidious operations of power that foster whiteness and racism. This power is no longer enacted primarily through physical violence but is mostly achieved through more symbolic power” (p. 267).

Today, tools that perpetuate the existing inequality are personalized assessments of underperformance (K. D. Brown & A. L. Brown, 2012), and the lack of academic success has often been attributed to students of color and their families, implying that a change in their behavior is the key solution instead of proposing changes to structures or policies that consistently disadvantage students of color (Malagon & Alvarez, 2010). Policies such as multiculturalism serve as a means to avoid addressing power dynamics or inequality in the realm of education policy and practice (Berry, 2014). The amalgamation of multiculturalism and colorblind ideology leads to the resurgence of racism and the reinforcement of racist hierarchies (Berry, 2014).

In the realm of literature, significant research has scrutinized the effectiveness of well-intentioned approaches like “antibias” teaching and “culturally responsive pedagogy.” When a
clear analysis of racism is absent, the education of students of color can inadvertently reinforce Whiteness (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008; Epstein et al., 2011; Lindsay, 2007). There exists a collection of literature that sheds light on the dominance of White supremacy in language policies and practices, which undermine the worth of dual language learners, often labeled as English learners, and their families. The dominance of English in educational establishments is indeed a phenomenon that racializes and diminishes the capabilities and accomplishments of students who speak other languages (Pimentel, 2011), especially those identified as long-term English learners (Flores et al., 2015).

In addition to feeling ashamed of their home language, students are also conditioned to perceive themselves as outsiders in the United States, irrespective of their immigration status or duration of stay (Perez Huber, 2011; Perez Huber & Cueva, 2012). Furthermore, scholars have raised concerns about the notion of establishing a “safe space” for learning, arguing that these spaces may not effectively support marginalized students. Instead, they argue such spaces often perpetuate systems of White supremacy and patriarchy by prioritizing the comfort of the most privileged students (Barrett, 2010; Leonardo & Porter, 2010).

The combined examination of these studies compels us to comprehend a manifestation of educational racism which is concealed by the language of equity and social justice and propelled by capitalist, market-oriented objectives (Kohli et al., 2017). This body of literature uncovers the manner in which the discourse on equity and justice is employed to advance educational laws, policies, and institutions driven by neoliberal ideologies, which ultimately safeguard and intensify racial disparities in K–12 schools.

The primary objective of this section is to provide a basis for educational leaders who are dedicated to actively promoting social justice and equity in educational settings. This section
emphasizes conversations on social justice and equity, which fail to acknowledge power dynamics, privilege, and the structural aspects of racism, inadvertently maintain the systematic oppression faced by students from marginalized communities (Abu El-Haj, 2015; Kohli et al., 2017). From that critical consciousness, enhancing the application of this concept in educational contexts seeks to foster social justice and equity in K–12 education as an ideological concept and a process that works to challenge ingrained systemic racism through transformation of the role of educational leadership that promotes advancement of both learning and empowerment for marginalized students.

**Theoretical Framework of Educational Leadership**

When searching the literature relevant to the importance of education leadership to achieving equity and inclusion of Muslim American students, there was a paucity of research on Muslim American students in today’s context of rapidly increasing Islamophobia. Measures undertaken by education leadership are lacking to support Muslim American students in their experiences and feelings of marginalization like those revealed in the present study. Muslim American students warrant special consideration, particularly given the ongoing discourse in the United States regarding the urgent need for reform in educational institutions at school and district levels.

In this segment, I examine various forms of educational leadership that explicitly addresses the needs of historically underserved and marginalized students. Additionally, I explore the significance of incorporating students’ perspectives into educational leadership to gain a comprehensive understanding of enhancing leadership practices. Moreover, I emphasize the importance of infusing parents and community leadership to effectively cater to the needs of Muslim American students in educational institutions. I start by looking at social justice
leadership, followed by transformative leadership, and then expanding the conception of transformative leadership through the inclusion of students, parents, and community voices leadership.

**Social Justice Educational Leadership**

Education leadership theories and studies often focus on the challenges leaders face, such as students’ funding, state, and federal legislative changes and students’ safety in educational settings (Dugan et al., 2017; Gonzalez et al., 2018). Nevertheless, the task of proficient leadership entails formulating a vision, guiding teams of individuals, establishing a conducive environment, executing transformations, and successfully maneuvering through both technical and adaptive obstacles (Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Gonzalez et al., 2018; Heifetz et al., 2009). It is important, therefore, to foresee that leaders may establish social justice and equity as a goal (Blackmore, 2006; Bogotch, 2014; Furman, 2012; Shields, 2010) designating support and professional development to build a positive classroom culture through culturally responsive teaching and create equitable and socially just schools (Shields, 2010; Theoharis, 2007).

Social justice is recognized as an essential concept in the field of educational leadership (Brooks et al., 2017), and literature on social justice educational leadership has significantly advanced the field of educational leadership (Dantley & Tillman, 2010; Furman, 2012). Educational leaders recognize social justice as a practice to create equitable schools (Horsford, 2011; Ishimaru et al., 2016; Larson & Murtadha, 2002), eradicating exclusion and marginalization based on race and/or ethnicity (Brooks & Witherspoon Arnold, 2013; Méndez-Morse et al., 2015; Rivera-McCutchen, 2021), and promoting equity in various domains such as gender (Fuller et al., 2019), faith (Ezzani & Brooks, 2020; Marshall & Marsh, 2021; Arnold, 2014), social class (Barnett & Stevenson, 2015; Marshall & Oliva, 2006), and language (Heiman
A comprehensive examination of literature characterizes social justice leaders as individuals who understand the systemic and structural racism, inequities, and diligently oppose these practices in schools (Dantley & Tilman, 2010; DeMatthews & Mawhinney, 2014; Furman, 2012; Furman & Shields, 2005; Marshall & Olivia, 2006; Theoharis, 2007).

Social justice and equity help teachers develop suitable teaching strategies and cultivate classroom and school environments that better support all students, especially those who have been disadvantaged in schools and outside society. Social justice and equity hold immense significance for Muslim American students as they foster inclusive educational opportunities, enabling them to acquire profound learning abilities and empowering them to pursue independent lifelong learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2014). Such work is attained through leadership that “investigates and poses solutions for issues that generate and reproduce societal inequities” (Dantley & Tillman, 2010, p. 20).

Research on social justice educational leadership applied both quantitative and qualitative analyses to prospect topics linked to social justice policies, practices, and programs (Capper & Young, 2014; Dantley & Green, 2015; Lac & Cumings Mansfield, 2018; Mavrogordato & White, 2020). Research has additionally formulated frameworks to comprehend and establish the capabilities of leaders at the district and school levels (Furman, 2012; Jean-Marie et al., 2009; Marshall & Oliva, 2006; Rodela & Bertrand, 2018). Literature has further indicated how leadership without an understanding of systemic inequity can reconstruct oppression, a concept that has been the base of guidance and direction to educational leadership practices and programs (K. M. Brown, 2006; Furman, 2012; Jean-Marie et al., 2009). Nevertheless, the existing body of
social justice leadership literature fails to offer educators with sufficient tools to use social justice as a desired outcome and a method to attain it (Rodela & Bertrand, 2018).

When faced with the task of leading in the absence of clear actions and adequate tools and resources, education leaders encounter a significant challenge (Anyon, 2005). With incompetent and ineffective educators (Adamson & Darling-Hammond, 2012), their problems become onerous. More obstacles constrain social justice leaders in schools, including the discrimination and the exclusion of marginalized groups (Berkovich, 2014), privileged parents’ expectations, and deficit thinking about marginalized groups (Furman, 2012; Theoharis, 2007). Moreover, educational administrators collaborate with individuals who possess their own convictions, identities, and predispositions that can influence the overall atmosphere of the educational institution (Osman & Atamturk, 2018). On the other hand, U.S. Department of Education (n.d.) and K–5 Social and Office of Governor Gavin Newsom (2023), among other accountability and legislative policies, pose a difficulty in establishing fair learning environments (Gaetane & Cumings Mansfield, 2013; Hanushek & Raymond, 2005; Ooghe & Schokkaert, 2016). Given the intricate nature of school leadership in achieving social justice, there has been a demand for educational leaders to adopt a transformative approach (Furman, 2012; Rodela & Bertrand, 2018; Shields, 2010; Theoharis, 2007).

Transformative Leadership

Transformative leadership “begins with questions of justice and democracy” (Shields, 2011, p. 2). It is grounded in Freire’s (1998) argument “that education is not the ultimate lever for social transformation, but without it, transformation cannot occur” (p. 37). Between 1970–1980, Freire used the terms transform, transformation, and transformative to describe the changes that may occur as a result of education. Freire (1970) called for personal, dialogic
relationships to restore educational practices, because education in the absence of relationships
tends to deform rather than bring about transformation.

Transformative leadership emphasizes the necessity for education to prioritize academic
excellence and social transformation. It helps disrupt systemic racism by recognizing the
inequitable practices and ensuring the well-being of students in schools and the larger social
context (Shields, 2018). In consideration that education and educational leadership are inevitably
related to the broader social context, transformative leadership and leadership for inclusive and
socially just learning environments are completely related as well (Shields, 2011, 2018).

Transformative leadership also builds on other critical leadership concepts and theories including
leadership for social justice (Brooks et al., 2017; McKenzie et al., 2008; Theoharis, 2007) and
culturally relevant leadership (Khalifa, 2018). Transformative leadership theory (Shields, 2011,
2016) comprises eight supporting tenets (see Figure 1). The following tenets (Shields, 2016) are
basic to transformative leadership:

1. A mandate for deep and equitable change;

2. The need to deconstruct knowledge frameworks that perpetuate inequity and
injustice and to reconstruct them in more equitable ways;

3. The need to address the inequitable distribution of power;

4. An emphasis on both private and public (individual and collective) good;

5. A focus on emancipation, democracy, equity, and justice;

6. An emphasis on interconnectedness, interdependence, and global awareness;

7. The necessity of balancing critique with promise; and
8. The call to exhibit moral courage. (Shields, 2016, p. 24)

![Model of transformative leadership theory](image)

*Figure 1. Model of transformative leadership theory.*

**A Foundation for Social Justice: Tenets 1, 2, and 3**

The initial three principles of Shields’s (2010) transformative leadership theory encompass (a) a requirement for profound and fair transformation, (b) the necessity to dismantle and rebuild knowledge structures to guarantee equity, and (c) the imperative to tackle the unjust distribution of power. These principles establish a solid groundwork for promoting equity and social justice in educational institutions. The theory commences by acknowledging the social, economic, and political disparities both in and beyond educational environments and actively fostering a continuous dedication to eradicating deficit thinking and power dynamics deeply ingrained in the historically racist and marginalizing educational system (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Khalifa, 2018). To achieve this goal, instructional leadership must be firmly rooted in
coaching critical pedagogy, questioning educators’ assumptions, and fostering cultural knowledge and culturally responsive pedagogical practice (Khalifa, 2018).

**Beyond Self and Building: Tenets 4, 5, and 6**

Tenet 4 emphasizes the public good of education. Tenets five and six focus on pedagogical changes, including an emphasis on democracy, emancipation, equity, and justice and ensures that students learn about the global community through understanding interconnectedness, interdependence, and becoming globally aware beyond schools’ premises. With the goal to ensure that students become critical thinkers and community contributors, then culturally responsive leadership and liberatory consciousness recommend educators to see themselves as connected and agents to strengthen the community beyond schools (Khalifa, 2018). Contemporary educational leadership embraces culturally responsive teaching and liberatory consciousness as critical strategies to promote equity, inclusiveness in schools, and engage in social justice initiatives.

**Culturally Responsive Teaching**

Culturally relevant teaching has proven to be an effective pedagogy for students of various racial and ethnic backgrounds (White et al., 2014). Culturally relevant teaching ensures learning for all students because it is relevant to the students’ experiences. It is a pedagogy that allows students to build a critical social consciousness to acknowledge, comprehend, and confront inequitable social norms and practices (Freire, 1980; Gay, 2010). McCray and Samson (2013) argued culturally relevant leadership is effective in all educational contexts, and it helps students develop a critical social consciousness or the ability to construct “reflectively for action rather than passivity” (Freire, 1980, p. 82). Moreover, Jean-Marie et al. (2009), in their proposal for leadership preparation programs, emphasized the importance of authentic, collective
participation through programs to “develop critical pedagogy related to issues of ethics, inclusion, democratic schooling, and social justice” (pp. 19‒20). Dantley and Tillman (2010) suggested a commitment to democratic principles, and Furman (2012) proposed a framework that included a communal element implying the value of a shared decision making.

**Liberatory Consciousness**

Grounded in the philosophy of Freire’s critical pedagogy, the framework of liberatory consciousness promotes the active involvement of educational leaders in self-examination, challenging their core beliefs, and acquiring a genuine understanding and acceptance of the dynamics in schools and society (McCray & Beachum, 2014). The ability to openly engage in a critical state of awareness regarding societal limitations, stemming from instances of oppression and discrimination, is what defines this capacity (Freire, 1970, 1973; McCray & Beachum, 2014). Education, therefore, has a fundamentally political nature, and only through critical education can teachers and students engage in authentic dialogues that acknowledge and aim to challenge prevailing dominant social hierarchies (Alabi & Alabi, 2010; Theoharis & Brooks, 2012).

**School Vision and Courage: Tenets 7 and 8**

Finally, Tenet 7 reinforces a commitment to action as education leaders balance the critique, analysis, and discussion with promise, acknowledging that leadership is a collective effort, and fulfilling promised outcomes requires leaders to create communities (Shields, 2016). Tenet 8 is a call for education leaders to exhibit moral courage as parts of the framework which speaks to the advocacy and activism required to create schools where impactful change can flourish (Shields, 2016). Advocacy in the school and community is vital, as transformative leadership encourages teachers and students to achieve beyond self-interest for a higher ideal
Activism in schools is essential to disrupt systemic oppression in education through leadership that embodies and builds inclusive spaces (Khalifa, 2018). Displaying values and ensuring educators are held accountable for social justice and equity requires moral courage. This task is intricate and necessitates every educator to embrace the responsibility to foster an alternative political and social vision “rooted in radical democratic struggle” (Weiner, 2003, p. 97). Simultaneously, he acknowledges the predicament in which educational leaders are ensnared with “one foot in the dominant structures of power and authority” (Weiner, 2003, p. 102).

Transformative leadership theory unpacks and addresses the importance of mind-sets and knowledge frameworks, and it emphasizes the need to change to promote and build culturally responsive teaching as a form of advocacy and activism with the potential to disrupt historical systems of oppression and racism in schools (Shields, 2011, 2016). Van Oord (2013) stated the way leadership is understood and modeled can “determine the success of the transformation it instigates among its students and members of staff” (p. 420). Additionally, Johnson (2006) explained, “What separates successful leaders from unsuccessful ones is their mental models or meaning structures, not their knowledge, information, training, or experience per se” (p. 85).

In light of the formidable challenges facing the U.S. education system, it is crucial to acknowledge the need for transformative measures that address the concerns of marginalized communities. This necessitates active involvement in educational endeavors. These endeavors should be rooted in the collective vision and values established by leaders, driven by an antiracist approach, and nurtured through genuine and brave dialogues about marginalized groups in our educational institutions. However, Dinh (2018) revealed that Shields (2011) failed to acknowledge the significance of engaging stakeholders in the process through effective
communication of the need for change and having faith in their active participation. This could be achieved through storytelling with relevant data and eliciting feedback from various constituents such as youth, parents, and community (Dinh, 2018). Students, parents, and the community must actively participate in the learning process throughout a transformative journey (C. D. Williams, 2012).

**Expanding Conceptions of Transformative Leadership**

Literature emphasized the importance of actively including students, parents, and the community in the learning process when educators engage in a transformative process, which is presented in this section.

**Student-Centered Leadership**

The examination of active student roles in education has been explored in the field of educational leadership and beyond. Scholarly research has emphasized the importance of student-centered leadership, using various approaches such as youth participatory action research (YPAR), youth voice, and youth organizing and activism. The primary objective of YPAR is to broaden the generation of knowledge by including young individuals in critical investigations aimed at challenging social and economic disparities in their schools and communities and striving for social justice (Cahill, 2007; Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Fine et al., 2005; Kirshner, 2007; Morrell, 2006; Torre, 2009; E. Tuck, 2009). YPAR is firmly grounded in decolonial theories, critical race theory, and/or other critical theories, and investigates local instances of systemic injustice, such as racism and Islamophobia (Cammarota et al., 2016; Guishard & Tuck, 2013). YPAR projects have been used across various educational domains including pedagogy, the effectiveness of teaching, service learning, student engagement, school counseling, school safety, student–teacher relationships, and school climate (Akom, 2009; Berg et al., 2008; P.
Krueger, 2010; Ozer, 2016; Schensul & Berg, 2004; L. Smith et al., 2010) and showed promising outcomes (Cammarota, 2017). YPAR is a form of educational leadership, grounded in the belief that students hold significant knowledge about their social conditions and can lead a social change (M. Fox et al., 2009). Creating opportunities for students to explore the enduring impact of historic and current systemic structural forces, such as racism and Islamophobia, that perpetuate inequities and emphasizing the significance of comprehending the historical context of social justice is crucial for this analysis to help students develop a “systematic perspective on their life circumstances and current events” (Watts et al., 2003, p. 188). Lac and Mansfield (2018) emphasized youth leadership and promoted the concept of principal orientations for critical youth educational leadership, creating a structure of how leaders and principals can foster youth educational leadership in schools.

Equivalent to YPAR are youth voice and youth activism. The construct “youth voice” is employed in educational environments to ascertain methods through which youth can actively participate in decision-making processes. These methods include but are not limited to completing surveys, engaging in decision-making discussions with education leaders, and assuming official positions of power (Mitra & Gross, 2009). The construct is also used in relation to projects involving YPAR (Bertrand, 2014; C. A. Warren & Marciano, 2018). Youth voice research has explored youth voice connection to teachers’ effectiveness, program rigor, and educational experiences (Mansfield, 2014). Additionally, youth activism and organizing is a construct that often overlaps with youth voice and YPAR (Conner & Rosen, 2015; Dalton et al., 2015; Fox et al., 2009).

Challenging traditional epistemologies in which knowledge is equated with university-based researchers and expanding leadership circle to educators and students in schools to gather
together experience, knowledge, expertise, and lines of social inquiry was initially developed by the Brazilian educator Freire (1993), known as critical consciousness, or conscientização in Portuguese. Critical consciousness is defined as the ability to acquire an in-depth understanding of the student’s world, systems, and structures that produce and sustain inequity and the commitment to challenge the oppressive elements in student’s life. This is a tool of liberation for marginalized students (Freire, 1993; Horton & Freire, 1990). Liberation ensures that marginalized students have opportunities to express their experiences, needs, and opinions and fully participate in schools, community practices, and activities in policy and decision making as inclusion is essential in promoting social justice and equity.

**Parent and Community Leadership**

Contemporary educational leadership embraces a broader concept of inclusion that encompasses democratic participation in decision making and policy formation to ensure all voices are heard and valued (Rodela, 2013). In schools where racism, marginalization, and Islamophobia deprive people of their right to fully participate in school, community practices, and activities inclusion of stakeholders such as students, parents, and community in decision making is considered central to social justice (Green, 2017). Research has highlighted the significance of community and parent-led initiatives in addressing the passive roles of parent involvement in education (Green, 2017). This viewpoint advocates for a transformation toward actively involving parents and the community in education (Rodela, 2013) because parents and community members are guided by education leaders and their roles continue to range between involvement or engagement, not educational leadership.

Nevertheless, parents and community members play an important role as educational leaders possessing both political autonomy and determination (Fernández, 2016; Fernandez &
Lopez, 2017; Vélez, 2016). Parent and community leadership are exemplified through numerous processes such as community organizing for school reform, which allows parents, community organizations, religious leaders, and other community members’ participation (Gold et al., 2002; Oakes & Rogers, 2006; Shirley, 2009; M. R. Warren, 2014). Parent-led organizing initiatives are dedicated endeavors focused on addressing local issues that impact schools (Fernández, 2016) communal educational programs and parent leadership trainings (Beckett et al., 2012; Rodela, 2016; Vélez, 2016). In the realm of challenging inequities in education, researchers recognized the important role of parents and community leaders in advancing social justice initiatives by examining parental spaces and interaction (Rodela, 2016).

Parents engaged in workshops to identify, name, and speak against inequities and injustices (Vélez, 2016). Research conducted on Latina mothers unveiled these mothers possessed the ability to acknowledge the power they held to educate their children and effectively engage with them in schools as advocates (Rodela, 2016). Research emphasized the importance of recognizing the strengths that diverse students bring to the classroom and the critical framing of family and community engagement, where education leaders were introduced to the complex micropolitical relationships in schools and their connections to racism (Fernández & Paredes Scribner, 2018).

Community leadership has a rich and enduring legacy in promoting fairness and societal equality in the realm of education. Welton and Freelon (2018) carried out a study in Chicago and examined the leadership dynamics in communities of color. They discovered the relationships between community leaders, parents, and grandparents and the willingness of community members to prioritize the collective interest played a crucial role in driving educational reform (Welton & Freelon, 2018).
Taken as a whole, a growing number of leadership research highlights social justice educational leadership through the lens of collective transformative agency involving not only education leaders but also students, parents, and community leadership (Rodela, 2013). Social inequities and injustices facing schools can be dismantled through collective participation in decision making, transformative agency to disrupt oppressive structures, inclusive practices in regard to pluralism, and critical awareness in leadership practice to ensure all voices are heard and valued (Wang, 2018). This particular model encompasses students, parents, and marginalized community members. It recognizes the significance of student, parent, and community leadership as integral components of educational leadership. Nevertheless, it has been acknowledged through research the achievement of equity and social justice for marginalized students has been hindered by contradictory policies and practices. It is crucial to acknowledge the differentiation between improvement, enhancement, and fundamental change in organizational structure (i.e., transformation; Holmes, 2018). Frequently, schools aim for mere improvement to dismantle the deeply ingrained structural inequities rather than true transformation despite the widespread use of the term transformation (Holmes, 2018). Consequently, the current study also delves into resilience as an alternative and valuable approach.

**Resilience**

The construct of resilience has earned substantial attention in recent decades when academic research discerned that children and adolescents could use resilience to adapt positively in the face of adversity (Zimmerman, 2013). However, there is a lack of research on the resilience of Muslim American students when confronted with Islamophobic encounters. Drawing on stigma, discrimination, and resilience, the literature review aims to broaden the
conversation from Islamophobic discrimination against adolescents to an exploration of the resilience displayed by marginalized adolescents in the face of discrimination.

Resilience theory is distinguished by its emphasis on the assets and resources that empower adolescents to flourish despite being exposed to risks (Zimmerman, 2013). Recent research has revealed that individuals who face discrimination, racism, and racial attacks, particularly Black, Indigenous, and people of color encounter intricate psychological hurdles. In this context, resilience emerges as a precious asset that aids in surmounting adversity (Sue & Spanierman, 2020). Nevertheless, there exists a scarcity of research on the resilience of marginalized communities and individuals belonging to people of color, specifically in relation to their encounters with discrimination. To address this, there is a need for resilience research to evaluate the coping mechanisms employed by marginalized communities in navigating their racial and ethnic identities, their surrounding environment, and discriminatory experiences.

Despite the scarcity of research, literature has extensively emphasized the role of resilience to overcome discrimination. A deep analysis of literature was carried out to ascertain a shared understanding of resilience in marginalized communities. The examined articles offered different perspectives on the term resilience. Some articles combined the concept of resilience with ethnic-racial and cultural socialization with no reference to specific definition of resilience (D. L. Brown & Tylka., 2011; Burt et al., 2012, 2017; Iruka et al., 2014; Spence et al., 2016) or viewed as an expression of a prideful racial and ethnic identity (M. Kodama, 2021). Racial and ethnic identity pertains to an individual’s connection to their ethnic or racial background, their self-concept, and self-expression toward their ethnicity and race (Syed et al., 2007; C. D. Williams et al., 2020).
Ethnic-racial and cultural socialization in the aforementioned studies referred to the process by which parents socialize with their children on issues of race, ethnicity, racism, and discrimination. For marginalized communities, research has confirmed that young individuals can cultivate resilience and adaptive approaches to effectively combat discrimination through the development of a strong racial and ethnic identity. Some studies introduced resilience as a protective factor in the face of ethnic and racial discrimination (Burt et al., 2017; C. M. Kodama & Dugad, 2020; Kubišiene et al., 2015). The resilience model based on protective factors suggests that a protective factor acts as a shield against the adverse consequences of risk, thereby diminishing the negative outcomes linked to risk exposure (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). K. F. Jackson et al. (2013) defined resilience as a dynamic process in constant interaction with the ecological system to overcome discrimination and provide desirable outcomes. Other studies used the concept of resilience as a theoretical framework in combination with other concepts, such as racial and ethnic attitudes, to shape its findings (Burt et al., 2017). Similarly, a study centered on Latinx teenagers delineated resilience as the means employed by Latinx adolescents to safeguard themselves against the adverse consequences of ethnic discrimination (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015). Other studies highlighted the value of external factors that contributed to finding healthy ways to cope with discrimination, and foster resilient behaviors (Lee et al., 2020). The most pertinent explanation pertains to resilience as a complex phenomenon characterized by the interplay between the individual and the ecological system to effectively handle discrimination (K. F. Jackson et al., 2013). Overall, the review of literature revealed a valuable connection among the studies, recognizing resilience as a protective factor in the context of ethnic and racial discrimination (Romero et al., 2016).
Resilience Among Marginalized Adolescents

The examination of the literature in relation to ethnic and racial discrimination unveiled that resilience is encountered in various manners, and scholarly articles presented diverse viewpoints on the resilience experienced by marginalized adolescents. However, most of the research linked resilience to cultural and ethnic-racial socialization, which helps adolescents overcome the adverse effects of discrimination. This procedure nurtures a constructive outlook among the community and empowers individuals with the necessary skills to counteract discrimination and racism (D. L. Brown & Tylka, 2011; Burt et al., 2012, 2017; Iruka et al., 2014). Researchers primarily concentrated on the role of parents in assisting their children in constructing a positive self-perception and fostering their ethnic-racial and cultural identity to counterbalance the adverse impact of racism and discrimination (Hughes et al., 2006; Burt et al., 2012, 2017). Ethnic-racial and cultural socialization encompasses the transmission of messages that emphasize the significance of ethnic-racial pride, ethnic-racial heritage, and familial and cultural history. Numerous studies have consistently shown that ethnic-racial socialization serves as a safeguarding element for adolescents of African American (Burt et al., 2012, 2017), and the correlation between racial and ethnic identity and resilience is also interpreted as a protective factor that marginalized adolescents use to construct a strong and an unshakable identity to cope with discrimination (Burt et al., 2012). Umaña-Taylor et al. (2015) found resilience among Latinx youth is also related to positive attitudes and beliefs about the participants’ ethnic identity. When marginalized adolescents feel positively about their ethnicity or race, the more resilient they are around ethnic and racial discrimination.

Furthermore, Iruka et al. (2014) emphasized the importance of ethnic-racial socialization by referring to it as cultural socialization. This highlights the role of cultural socialization in
nurturing adolescents’ bond with their culture and instilling a deep sense of pride in their cultural heritage (Iruka et al., 2014). In another study Spence et al. (2016) underscored the importance of cultural socialization in fostering a sense of pride among marginalized adolescents. This was characterized as a practice of ethnic-racial socialization, along with the preparation for bias, the promotion of mistrust, and egalitarianism (Hughes et al., 2016). In this context, cultural socialization is a process by which parents communicate cultural values and history to address ethnic and racial issues. Furthermore, Hughes et al. (2016) found that adolescents who do not engage in ethnic-racial socialization with their parents reported moderate preparation for bias and discrimination and a low self-esteem.

More studies revealed that marginalized adolescents experience resilience as an external support, interpersonal skills, and the ability to adapt to different environments (Kubiliene et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2020; Romero et al., 2016). Overall, the review of the literature showed resilience is experienced in various ways among marginalized adolescents; however, the common themes are positive ethnic-racial identity and external support. The review suggested an interesting correlation between resilience and the importance of holding a positive racial and ethnic identity among marginalized adolescents (D. L. Brown & Tylka, 2011; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015). Additionally, having a social support system was helpful for marginalized adolescents to reduce discrimination stress and improve their emotional well-being (Lee et al., 2020; Romero et al., 2016). It is important to note these findings were relevant in the studies that focused on marginalized individuals aged 18 and up. Based on a comprehensive literature review, racial and ethnic identity pride, along with external support, possesses significant potential to counteract the negative impact of ethnic and racial discrimination on marginalized adults.
The Impact of Protective Factors

Studies have found the difference between adolescents who adapt very well in the face of adversity and adolescents who struggle with maladaptation is the existence of protective factors. A major achievement of resilience research has been identifying consistent protective factors that support resilience on multiple levels including individual, family, community, and society (Masten, 2013; Windle, 2011). To identify and categorize protective factors in the context of racism and discrimination toward marginalized groups, 14 articles were reviewed and synthesized. Only two studies focused on the resilience of Muslim adolescents and young people in the face of adversity, though the rest of the articles focused on discrimination of marginalized young people in general. The examination of the literature revealed the protective factors which aided marginalized young individuals in fostering resilience.

The factors related to beliefs and perceptions demonstrating a level of protective associations with adaptability and well-being are (a) self-esteem, (b) religiosity, and (c) ethnic-racial identity pride. In a cross-sectional study, Romero et al. (2016) found self-esteem mitigated depression caused by high levels of race-based stress. Umaña-Taylor et al. (2015) recognized the interconnectedness between ethnic identity and self-esteem, emphasizing that under high discrimination stress ethnic affirmation helped Latinx adolescents enhance their self-esteem, and therefore, foster their resilience. All the articles suggested that resilience is related to positive attitudes and beliefs about one’s racial and ethnic identity (Burt et al., 2012; K. F. Jackson et al., 2013; C. M. Kodama & Dugan, 2020).

Quantitative articles highlighted that discrimination stress continues to be common and stressful for marginalized adolescents and has the potential to lead to depression and low self-esteem (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015). However, the authors indicated that feeling positive about
one’s ethnic and racial group has a protective effect on depression and enhancing adolescents’ resilience (Burt et al., 2012; Hughes et al., 2016; C. M. Kodama & Dugan, 2020; Spence et al., 2016; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015). Burt et al. (2012) identified the association between resilience and racial and ethnic identity pride of African Americans in the study and found racial and ethnic identity helped promote a positive mindset in the intragroup and build necessary skills to overcome discrimination and racism. Similarly, C. M. Kodama and Dugan (2020) highlighted the importance of racial and ethnic identity for resilience development for Asian Americans.

Cultural values and beliefs impact individuals’ perception and interpretation of distressing events and their reaction to it (Ho et al., 2014). Religion can provide great psychological benefits to help children cope with anxiety and understand the purpose of life; it also provides answers to social and ecological challenges faced by communities (Shariff et al., 2014). For instance, by entrusting their life circumstances to God (i.e., depending on God’s plan and patiently awaiting its fulfillment) they can attain a sense of control through passive religious submission (Ahmadi et al., 2020). Research revealed that religious adolescents reported relying on and benefiting from their religion when facing discrimination (Kubiliene et al., 2015).

Moreover, religious practices have the potential to enhance resilience through the provision of social support from local communities or families (Pargament et al., 2011). A study assessed the impact of spirituality on Indonesian Muslim adolescents and found that positive adaptability and behavior at school were related to spirituality (Sallquist et al., 2010). Another study unveiled Muslim adolescents can cultivate cultural identity and find solace in their faith, which offers a stable environment and a supportive religious community (Güngör et al., 2012). In this way, religiosity has the potential to safeguard Muslim adolescents from marginalization and discrimination, while also nurturing a resilient growth (Ní Raghallaigh, 2011). The most
recent study conducted by Veronese et al. (2021) found spirituality is an important protective factor among Muslim Palestinian aid workers in the Gaza Strip in the face of traumatic experiences.

Recent studies suggested young individuals from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds shape their racial and ethnic identity through the process of socialization by which parents transmit messages about the meaning of ethnicity, race, and racism intergenerationally (Hughes et al., 2016). Ethnic-Racial and Cultural Socialization Ethnic-racist socialization is one of the most visible forms of socialization among marginalized communities. Parents communicate or transmit cultural heritage, beliefs, customs, and behaviors to their children and help them embrace cultural values and expectations and promote cultural identity and pride (Iruka et al., 2014; Spence et al., 2016). Extended family members were also found to play a critical role in cultural socialization. They helped marginalized adolescents learn about their heritage by sharing family histories and stories and exposing adolescents to their cultural heritage. The elders further helped adolescents preserve their religious identities, and even religious communities played a key role in fostering a positive sense of cultural identity and pride (Iruka et al., 2014). Burt et al. (2017) considered cultural socialization and preparation for bias as protective factors of the African American community, adding that cultural socialization compensates for the harmful effects of racial discrimination by enhancing resilience. The qualitative study that examined Mexican Americans’ experiences of discrimination and resilience endorsed the notion that cultural socialization is a protective factor that helped adolescents navigate stressors associated with discrimination (K. F. Jackson et al., 2013). Findings from the study offered additional understanding of the dynamic interplay of culture and context in resilient processes among marginalized communities. Additionally, a qualitative study of marginalized Canadian
adolescents who had experienced discrimination based on their skin color or ethnicity revealed that interpersonal relationships and relational communication had a positive impact on ethnic and racial discriminatory experiences (K. F. Jackson et al., 2013; Kubiliene et al., 2015). Relational communication included interactions and communication processes in personal relationships with parents, family members, friends, and caring adults. Similarly, Lee et al. (2020) considered social support—like having a network of family, friends, and caring adults that marginalized adolescents can turn to in times of need—a strategy to resist and cope with harmful experiences. The review found that racial and ethnic identity pride fostered through ethnic-racial socialization was an important factor in cultivating resilience among marginalized adolescents along with social support. In summary, the presence of heightened ethnic-racial socialization fosters the cultivation of a robust racial and ethnic identity, which has been associated with favorable outcomes (Reynolds et al., 2017), ultimately, resulting in a heightened level of resilience.

**Ethnic-Racial Socialization**

The concept of ethnic-racial socialization originated from the study of Black/African American parenting conducted by Boykin and Toms in 1985. Throughout history, the concept of racial socialization has been employed to encompass the process of socializing individuals about race. This includes providing information about racial discrimination and systemic bias that target specific racial or ethnic groups. Additionally, it involves ethnic and/or cultural socialization, which entails exposing individuals to cultural practices, fostering cultural or racial pride, and imparting knowledge about culture and history (Hughes et al., 2006). Winkler (2012) employed the concept of comprehensive racial learning to express the child’s proactive involvement in parent–child exchanges regarding race and to encompass the diverse array of subjects encompassed in ethnic-racial socialization. Previously the terms “racial socialization”
and “ethnic socialization” have been used to describe similar processes in different groups. Given the increasingly interchangeable use of race and ethnicity as concepts (Brubaker, 2009), the term ethnic-racial socialization has also been employed as a comprehensive phrase as described by Hughes et al. (2008).

To date, the central emphasis of research on ethnic-racial socialization has primarily been on diverse ethnic-racial groups in the United States, such as African American (Boykin & Toms, 1985; Lesane-Brown, 2006) and immigrant Latino and Asian populations (Brown et al., 2015; Hughes et al., 2009). The field has recently expanded to include other minority groups such as Asian Americans (Moua & Lamborn, 2010), Latinx American youth (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015), Native American (Tynes, 2007), and transracially adopted youth (Berbery & O´Brien, 2011; Johnston et al., 2007; Mohanty, 2010). Very few studies have specifically examined ethnic-racial socialization among White Anglo/European children and their families (Hamm, 2000; Priest et al., 2014). There is a lack of research on ethnic-racial socialization among Muslim American children; however, research indicates the adverse environment faced by Muslims in the United States has fostered a sense of isolation, hindered their process of identity negotiation, and posed challenges in navigating their lives in U.S. society (Abu-Raiya et al., 2011; Rippy & Newman, 2006; Sirin & Fine, 2007; Sirin et al., 2008; Sirin & Katsiaficas, 2011; Tindongan, 2011). As a result, their ethnic-racial or religious backgrounds become prominent and clash with their sense of national identity, causing them to feel less connected to U.S. society (Hakim et al., 2018; Pew Research Center, 2007; Sirin & Katsiaficas, 2011) leading particularly the younger generation to develop a profound connection with their faith and culture while having a less strong connection with the United States (Rippy & Newman, 2006; Sirin & Fine, 2007; Sirin et al., 2008). Furthermore, Muslim parents, who prioritize their children’s development and
progress are inclined to actively prepare them for a future in which they may face marginalization based on their ethnic and racial background (Hrapczynski & Leslie, 2018; McNeil Smith et al., 2016). Ethnic-racial socialization has not been studied in Muslim families (Dunbar et al., 2017); however, studies conducted on socialization and development in diverse families of color predict that ethnic-racial socialization will play a significant role in shaping the outcomes of Muslim American adolescents (Dunbar et al., 2017).

Ethnic-racial socialization refers to the process by which parents transmit messages about the meaning of ethnicity, race, and racism intergenerationally (Hughes et al., 2016). Studies showed that such socialization was an important component of parenting in ethnic-racial families. It shaped the meaning adolescents attribute to their racial and ethnic identity, their knowledge about the familial values, their sense of group belonging and ethnic-racial identity pride, and their status in the system (Hughes et al., 2016).

The review of literature further showed that parents used varied messages to teach their children about ethnicity and race. Some parents focused on group differences, discrimination, racism, and disadvantage. Others taught history, culture, and traditions, and others emphasized on the value of diversity and equality. Hughes et al. (2016) summarized the messages’ content that promoted positive outcomes for marginalized adolescents (a) messages that foster the ethnic and racial identity and teach about the cultural historical heritage, (b) messages that prepare adolescents to cope with discrimination and navigate in a racially and ethnically stratified society, (c) messages highlighting diversity and equality, and (d) messages including vigilance and advice about other groups.

The ethnic and racial socialization of parents is intricately intertwined with the everyday aspects of their families’ lives (Hughes et al., 2016). It can take various forms, including verbal
or nonverbal communication, intentional or unintentional actions, with a wider child rearing plan and/or parental beliefs, and can be either proactive or reactive in response to particular circumstances (Hughes et al., 2008; Smith-Bynum et al., 2016). Parents differ in the substance of the ethnic-racial messages they convey and the frequency at which they convey them. These variations can be attributed to factors such as the parents’ racial identity and their encounters with racial discrimination (Cooper et al., 2015; Hagelskamp & Hughes, 2014; White-Johnson et al., 2010). Moreover, the degree to which families belonging to the same ethnic group participate in ethnic-racial socialization practices might vary depending on the societal environment in which they are immersed (Bornstein, 2017). Additionally, in accordance with the ecological theory, which highlights the significance of proximal and distal processes in the development of children across various environmental levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1989), studies indicated that ethnic-racial socialization differs depending on the child (e.g., gender, age), parent (e.g., socioeconomic status, age, parent-child relations, geographic location), and contextual factors (e.g., school type, racial composition; Hughes et al., 2006).

Minoritized children need to comprehend their own racial and ethnic identity (i.e., self-concept) and cultivate favorable attitudes toward individuals belonging to different racial/ethnic groups (Priest et al., 2014). Likewise, most children need to comprehend their own sense of self alongside gaining knowledge about diverse ethnic and racial communities. Ethnic-racial socialization plays a crucial role during the initial stage of adolescence, a period when young individuals encounter a rise in discriminatory encounters (Hughly et al., 2019). Parents increase the quantity of messages (Wang et al., 2020), and teenagers’ ethnic-racial identities can be easily shaped and influenced (Aboud, 1988).
Hughes et al. (2008) conducted a mixed-methods study to assess parents regarding the significance of different forms of socialization and their corresponding parenting practices. In the sample, African American parents exhibited a higher tendency compared to Chinese, Latino, and White parents to emphasize the significance of ethnic socialization in the upbringing of their children. Parents expressed their beliefs and aspirations in a manner that aligned with their methods of socializing their children. For instance, a Chinese mother who held her Chinese heritage in high regard prepared Chinese cuisine for her family and enrolled her children in Chinese school (Hughes et al., 2008). There is a growing body of evidence indicating the way families socialize their children about their ethnic and racial backgrounds can influence how interpersonal ethnic-racial discrimination affects the behavior of young individuals (Burt et al., 2012; Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020). Overall, ethnic-racial socialization was linked with positive youth outcomes. For instance, African Americans who were exposed to racial socialization messages demonstrated a higher tendency to employ approach coping strategies. Approach coping entails directly confronting and endeavoring to resolve problems, which is associated with positive adjustment and adaptation outcomes (Scott, 2003). Furthermore, racial socialization enhances resilience by equipping African Americans with the necessary tools to effectively manage the stress resulting from racial discrimination (Belgrave et al., 2000; McCreary et al., 2006).

Hughes et al. (2006) established four key components of ethnic-racial socialization that have been used as a conceptual framework for comprehending ethnic-racial socialization. These components include (a) cultural socialization, which involves the transmission of cultural values, customs, traditions, history, and pride; (b) preparation for bias, which entails equipping young individuals to handle discrimination and its effects; (c) promotion of mistrust, which emphasizes
the importance of caution and distrust toward other ethnic-racial groups; and (d) egalitarianism, which highlights the significance of equality among different ethnic-racial groups. Further evidence of the prevalence of these four themes in literature was provided by a recent meta-analysis on parental ethnic-racial socialization and racial and ethnic identity (Hughly et al., 2019).

The cultural socialization aspect of family ethnic-racial socialization has been the primary focus of most studies conducted on this topic. On the contrary, only a limited number of studies have delved into the topics of preparation for bias, promotion of mistrust, and egalitarianism. Maybe this can be attributed to the more reliable results found in previous studies regarding cultural socialization, which indicated a correlation with favorable adaptation (Hughes et al., 2006). Cultural socialization may have a wider scope of relevance throughout multiple phases of development and among families from different ethnic-racial backgrounds.

**Cultural Socialization**

Cultural socialization primarily focuses on fostering a sense of cultural pride, imparting cultural knowledge, and engaging in cultural traditions (Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020). In families belonging to racial and ethnic marginalized groups, parents actively and consciously participate in cultural socialization, imparting knowledge about their heritage culture to their children. This includes teaching them about cultural traditions, values, and customs, and instilling a sense of respect for their cultural roots (Hughes et al., 2006; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004). This practice is also known as overt cultural socialization. Parents also implicitly teach cultural values by engaging their children in daily activities associated with their cultural heritage, which includes participating in cultural events, cooking traditional dishes, interacting with their heritage group (Hughes et al., 2006; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004), and decorating their homes with ethnic and
racial artifacts (Csizmadia et al., 2013; Hrapczynski & Leslie, 2018). This practice is known as covert cultural socialization. The primary form of cultural socialization that was commonly reported is encouraging children to speak their parents’ native language (Hughes et al., 2006).

Findings for this practice of ethnic-racial socialization overwhelmingly supported cultural socialization as a protective factor owing to its favorable correlations with multiple indicators of youths’ adjustment such as ethnic-racial identity (Brittian et al., 2013; Hernández et al., 2014), self-esteem (Gonzales-Backen et al., 2018), academic adjustment (Banerjee et al., 2011; Bravo et al., 2014; Rivas-Drake & Marchand, 2016), adaptive coping (Blackman et al., 2016; McDermott et al., 2018), and psychological well-being (Nguyen et al., 2015). More studies confirmed marginalized youth who have been exposed to a higher level of family cultural socialization regarding their heritage culture exhibit lower levels of loneliness and depressive symptoms (McHale et al., 2006; Polo & Lopez, 2009). They also demonstrate enhanced adaptation in the school environment, including increased levels of active participation, a sense of belonging, and stronger connections with their peers (Dotterer Aryan et al., 2009; A. G. T. T. Tran & Lee, 2011; Wang & Huguley, 2012). For example, parental cultural socialization was correlated with greater ethnic-racial identity exploration and resolution among biracial youth (Britton & Goldsmith, 2013).

Among Asian Americans, parental cultural socialization was found to be a significant predictor of a stronger racial and ethnic identity (C. M. Brown & Ling, 2012). Similarly, greater composite ethnic-racial identity was predicted by parental cultural socialization among Mexican youth (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). A qualitative study examined Mexican Americans’ experiences of discrimination, and K. F. Jackson et al. (2013) and Umaña-Taylor et al. (2015) endorsed resilience as the notion that cultural socialization is a protective factor that helps
adolescents navigate stressors associated with ethnic-racial. Further, African American youth exhibited greater resilience and adjustment when exposed to cultural messages promoting ethnic-racial pride (K. M. Brown, 2006; Kyere & Huguley, 2020). They were also found to be protective, mitigating the impact of prejudice on educational attainment (Banerjee et al., 2018). Burt et al. (2017) considered cultural socialization as an adaptive factor of the African American youth finding cultural socialization compensated for the harmful effects of racial discrimination by enhancing their resilience.

Nevertheless, Priest et al. (2014) asserted the majority of our understanding regarding ethnic-racial socialization is derived from research conducted on African American young people. Furthermore, it has been discovered that parents and caregivers play a pivotal role in facilitating ethnic-racial socialization, followed by the extended family, teachers, friends, and the school and home environment (Degner & Dalege, 2013; Priest et al., 2014). There has been limited knowledge regarding Muslim families and their potential transmission of these messages to their children (Dunbar et al., 2017). Although not necessarily using the term, 150 Arab Muslim American youths’ cultural identity was examined by Britto and Amer (2007). Their study revealed the individuals who displayed a strong Arab cultural identity had been exposed to Arabic language and television programming in their household, indicating the influence of cultural socialization.

**Preparation for Bias**

Preparation for bias entails educating young individuals about the existence of ethnic-racial bias and engaging in conversations about effective approaches to handle such encounters in the future (Hughes et al., 2016). To illustrate, parents can aid young individuals in recognizing instances of ethnic-racial discrimination and provide guidance on developing strategies to
effectively address them. Preparation for bias has frequently been associated with fostering positive adaptation in marginalized young individuals. This approach aimed to equip youth with the necessary tools to handle potential discrimination and also offer strategies to effectively cope with such challenges (Atkin et al., 2018). Such coping strategies were hypothesized to be advantageous for the adaptation of young individuals (Kiang et al., 2018; Neblett et al., 2012). The results, nevertheless, were significantly varied, posing a challenge in establishing definite conclusions regarding the connections between bias preparation and adolescent adaptation.

Some studies have reported null associations when examining the preparation for bias and youth adjustment (Atkin et al., 2018; Else-Quest & Morse, 2015; Ferrari et al., 2015; French et al., 2013; A. G. T. T. Tran & Lee, 2010). A few reported favorable and unfavorable effects (Kyere & Huguley, 2020) and some discovered that preparing for bias was linked to a higher level of risk (Daga & Raval, 2018; van Bergen et al., 2016), such as higher depressive symptoms (Liu & Lau, 2013; Nelson et al., 2018). On the contrary, other research has discovered preparation for bias can actually have a positive impact on young individuals (Hughes et al., 2016). This is due to its direct correlation with positive indicators of youth development (D’hondt et al., 2016; Joseph & Hunter, 2011; Sanchez et al., 2018). It reduced the negative effects of risk on youth adjustment (Schires et al., 2018), or it enhanced the positive effects of other promotive factors on youth adjustment (A. G. T. T. Tran & Lee, 2011).

Although several studies conducted with adolescents revealed the impact of preparation for bias differs depending on the level of communication and trust in the parents–adolescents’ bond, family context, and neighborhood characteristics (Arnold et al., 2016; Burt et al., 2012; Dunbar et al., 2017; Hehir et al., 2016; Kiang et al., 2018; Lambert et al., 2015; Tang et al., 2016; N. Tran et al., 2018; Wang & Huguley, 2012). For example, higher preparation for bias
was associated with heightened levels of depressive symptoms, especially in households where the mother–adolescent relationship was poor; however, in families with high level of trust and communication in the mother–adolescent relationship, no association was found between preparation for bias and depressive symptoms (Lambert et al., 2015). For example, Saleem et al. (2016) found Black parents’ experiences of ethnic-racial discrimination have been associated with the way parents communicate preparation for bias messages along with cultural socialization messages to young individuals.

Furthermore, parents’ experiences of racial discrimination also shape how Black parents racially socialize their young children (Holloway & Varner, 2021; McNeil Smith et al., 2016). These findings provided evidence of how the context can bring about considerable variations in these findings and potentially account for the large number of studies that yielded null association or mixed outcomes. The results as a whole indicated the connections between preparation for bias and measures of adolescent adaptation vary depending on the context, and a thorough comprehension of the significance of this specific practice of ethnic-racial socialization in the lives of young, marginalized individuals and their families can only be attained by gaining a more systematic understanding of contextual factors.

Promotion of Mistrust

Promoting mistrust entails fostering a sense of wariness and caution among young individuals toward individuals belonging to diverse racial or ethnic backgrounds. This encompasses advising youngsters to maintain a certain distance from children of different races and informing them about negative attributes associated with individuals from other racial groups (Hughes et al., 2006; Saleem et al., 2016). The prevailing finding indicated that fostering mistrust posed a significant risk to adolescents’ adaptation and their well-being (Dunbar et al.,
Several studies reported null associations (Huynh & Fuligni, 2010), and a few of them found promotion of mistrust is associated with positive adjustment (Nelson et al., 2018; Thai et al., 2017). Moreover, the relationship between the promotion of mistrust strategy and adaptation might rely on contextual factors, as suggested by two studies. This connection was found to differ depending on whether the promotion of mistrust was employed alongside other strategies (Kiang et al., 2018), or if individuals’ personal values aligned with this socialization strategy (N. Tran et al., 2018).

In the literature review, there was limited evidence supporting the notion that employing a practice of promoting mistrust leads to positive outcomes. On the contrary, the most reliable evidence indicated that increased involvement in promoting mistrust as a form of socialization was linked to greater maladjustment among young, marginalized individuals. Researchers argued the endorsement of distrust as a behavior is associated with adverse outcomes and exacerbates the detrimental effects of cultural stressors (Daga & Raval, 2018). This is because when parents convey negative messages without offering guidance on effective coping mechanisms to their children, it ultimately fosters intergroup hostility and stress (Daga & Raval, 2018), and marginalized youth become isolated from their peers (Atkin et al., 2018).

**Egalitarianism**

Egalitarianism emphasizes the shared qualities among racial and ethnic communities and emphasizes the importance of cultivating constructive connections between these communities by minimizing differences and concentrating on the unique qualities and skills required to succeed in mainstream society (Hughes et al., 2006). Egalitarianism messages have the potential to adopt a distributive justice perspective, acknowledging and incorporating diversity (Walton et al., 2014). They are sometimes viewed as a form of racemute (Pahlke et al., 2021) socialization
Herman et al. (2020); however, Hughes et al. (2006) made a distinction between egalitarianism and racemute socialization, linking the latter to the notion of color blindness. A useful alternative concept to color blindness in this context is “colormuteness” (Pollock, 2004). In discussions about “colormuteness,” individuals tend to focus more on highlighting similarities rather than acknowledging racial differences (Pollock, 2004). Various implicit and explicit methods are employed to avoid directly addressing race. For that, “colormuteness” bears resemblance to racemute socialization in this manner (Hughes et al., 2006).

Egalitarian messages emphasize the significance of race and color in shaping individuals’ identities and advocating for fair treatment and unbiased outcomes (Hughes et al., 2006; Neblett et al., 2013). Egalitarianism messages convey the idea that race should not be a determining factor and emphasize the importance of valuing diversity (Hughes et al., 2016). In their own research involving diverse ethnic-racial groups, Hughes et al. (2016) observed that messages promoting egalitarianism were commonly reported during socialization. However, the review indicated this particular type of socialization has received the least amount of empirical research (Hughes et al., 2016). As a result, there is an inadequate body of literature to draw definitive conclusions about its potential impact on youth adjustment. Despite the limited amount of literature available on egalitarianism, it is possible to infer positive associations with youth adjustment based on the findings of a small number of studies. Egalitarianism messages frequently emphasize the idea of fairness, such as the belief that individuals are equal regardless of their race. The concepts of fairness and unfairness play a significant role in children’s comprehension of racial bias (Hughes et al., 2006; Priest et al., 2014). Studies indicated White parents tend to prioritize egalitarian practices in their approach to ethnic-racial socialization, often avoiding direct conversations about race, ethnicity, or ethnic/racial groups (Hughes et al.,
The same study found that White parents exhibited the lowest level of involvement in ethnic-racial socialization practices; however, when they do engage in such practices, they are more inclined to discuss egalitarian messages.

In Hagerman’s (2017) research, an examination was conducted on White fathers who actively assumed instrumental roles in influencing their children’s ethnic and racial perspectives in a constructive manner. These fathers were driven by antiracist principles, which encompassed their desire for their children to engage in empathetic interactions with individuals from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds. Another study reported, White parents tended to avoid discussing race directly with their children (Zucker & Patterson, 2018), which unfortunately allowed the subtle existence of racism and discrimination to persist by not addressing the reality of these issues. The severe impact they have on marginalized populations is dismissed (Loyd & Gaither, 2018; Vittrup, 2018). However, a study conducted by A. D. Williams and Banerjee (2021) revealed that Latinx parents exhibited a higher tendency compared to White parents in engaging their children in conversations about egalitarian values. Latinx parents may convey these messages to motivate their children to assimilate into society, aiming to evade instances of discrimination. Considering this information was gathered during a period when the political discourse was harmful toward Latinx individuals, the context has likely played a role in the increase of racist acts of violence (Chavez-Dueñas et al., 2019).

According to Ayón et al. (2019), it has been discovered that parents of marginalized adolescents occasionally employed egalitarian messages in their ethnic-racial socialization practices. In a study, 73 mothers in Maryland were interviewed to gain insight into their conversations with their biracial (i.e., White/Black) children about racial stratification, racism, and discrimination in the United States. The mothers’ responses shed light on their approaches to
socialization that included egalitarian messages along with cultural socialization and preparation for bias and avoided any discussion about race (Rollins & Hunter, 2013). The Trump administration’s disparaging remarks regarding immigrants has given rise to “anti-immigrant sentiments and hostile environments for immigrants and their children” (Ayón et al., 2019, p. 246). As a result, Latinx parents engage in discussions with their children, imparting messages of egalitarianism and preparation for bias, along with cultural socialization (Ayón et al., 2019). Egalitarianism as an ethnic-racial socialization practice is rarely investigated in the literature leading to a dearth of information in the existing literature (Wang et al., 2020). Further research is required to examine egalitarianism among marginalized adolescents in a more relevant and comprehensive manner.

Summary

In summary, there is substantial evidence indicating a consistent positive association between cultural socialization and the development of racial and ethnic identity pride among marginalized adolescents. This, in turn, plays a crucial role in nurturing resilience. Nevertheless, researchers have not been able to come to a unanimous agreement regarding the correlation between preparation for bias, promotion of mistrust, egalitarianism, and racial ethnic identity (Neblett et al., 2013). Scholars have been prompted to suggest the contextual factors surrounding adolescents can play a significant role in strengthening development of racial and ethnic identity (Grindal & Nieri, 2015; Hughes et al., 2009), which was the most recognized protective factor in literature due to its significant contribution to fostering a positive adaptation among marginalized adolescents who encounter prejudice and discrimination (Neblett et al., 2013).
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study used a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, consisting of two distinct phases (Creswell, 2002; Creswell et al., 2003; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017) to examine Muslim Americans’ perceptions on several objectives among youth between the ages of 11–18 attending public schools in San Diego, California. I employed a mixed-method design, which involved the integration of both quantitative and qualitative data at some stage of the research process, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Creswell, 2002; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). The rationale for mixing is to broaden and reinforce the findings of the study, such as the complex issue of how ethnic-racial socialization influences the resilience of marginalized Muslim students when confronted with Islamophobic situations in educational settings.

The purpose of this design was to thoroughly examine and clarify the research problem in depth. To achieve this, the initial phase employed a quantitative design to measure the attributes or properties of the problem. The quantitative objectives were to examine (a) if the Islamophobic incidents are perceived to be a result of religious discrimination, (b) determine the adolescents’ responses to those incidents, (c) explore the parental messages and their impact on children, and (d) determine which practices of ethnic-racial socialization are more effective at mitigating the negative impact of Islamophobia. The data were gathered through questionnaires, and subsequently underwent statistical examination. In addition, the goal of the quantitative phase was also to identify potential predictive correlations among the selected variables on the impact of ethnic-racial socialization in cultivating the resilience of marginalized Muslim students facing school-based Islamophobic situations and to purposefully discern key informants for the second
phase. In the second phase, a qualitative approach was used to seek an in-depth understanding of the interesting issues that emerged from the two surveys. Through focus groups, the study aimed to best capture the narratives of Muslim students and explain why some practices, tested in the first phase, were significant predictors to mitigate the negative impact of Islamophobia. The reasoning behind this approach is that the quantitative data provided a general view of the research problem (i.e., to what extent would ethnic-racial socialization preserve Muslim students’ resilience when experiencing school-based Islamophobic situations), and the qualitative data and its analysis refined and explained those statistical results, which allowed for in-depth insights from the participants and generated new ideas for the study. Therefore, the study was an example of combining both fixed and emergent elements (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). The two phases were initially planned as a fixed design, first a quantitative phase and then a qualitative phase. However, the recent Israeli war on Gaza demanded significant attention, given its profound implications on Muslims and Arabs in the United States (DeCuir, 2023). Consequently, a modification was implemented in the qualitative phase of design to include extra data, resulting in the use of an emerging mixed methods design. In the qualitative research, Muslim Arab American students were asked about their perceptions, feelings, and experiences related to the situation in Palestine.

The visual model of the procedures for the sequential explanatory mixed methods design of this study is presented in Figure 2.
Figure 2. Explanatory sequential mixed methods design of the present study.

Quantitative Method

Research instruments used in the quantitative phase involved surveys to collect and analyze data.

Instrumentation

The study used three scales to measure religious discrimination, resilience, and ethnic-racial socialization practices.
Religious Discrimination

In the quantitative phase, the initial research question addressed was: What is the level of perceived religious discrimination reported by Muslim American students? Participants completed a questionnaire about their basic demographics for age, school of attendance, gender, ethnic background, languages spoken at home, parents’ education, parents’ employment, and religious discrimination (see Appendix A). K. Allen et al. (2018) developed the religious discrimination scale (RDS) used in the study. It consisted of measuring three constructs (a) perceived prejudice, (b) closet symptoms, and (c) negative labels. Eleven items measured whether Muslim American adolescents perceive Islamophobia as a religious discrimination. Some of the questions included: (a) “I felt disrespected because I am Muslim,” and (b) “have heard people make negative remarks about my religion.” The scale used a 5-point Likert scale, with higher scores reflecting more frequent religious-based discrimination (1 = Not at all and 5 = Always).

Reliability and Validity of the RDS

In the study conducted by K. Allen et al. (2018), the psychometric assessments of the RDS showed a high and comprehensible factor structure and a good internal consistency reliability. The statistical test also revealed the RDS is equally relevant to be employed with both men and women. In a study conducted by K. Allen et al. (2018), the generalizability coefficient was .80 (Mushquash & O’Connor, 2006).

Resilience

The second research question in the quantitative phase, “How do Muslim American students respond to experiences of discrimination?” was assessed using the 10 item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) developed by Drs. Campbell-Sills and Stein at the
University of California, San Diego (see Appendix B). It is designed to assess Muslim students’ level of resilience in the face of discrimination. This measure was chosen based on its ability to measure skills needed for effective problem solving, strength that can emerge from detrimental situations such as discrimination, and directly and consciously face the stress rather than acquiring strategies to avoid it. However, the item “I tend to bounce back” was not included in the survey because that idea has generated disapproval in the resilience literature (Folke, 2006).

The concept of “bouncing back” applies solely to a behavior that takes place in a linear system, or a behavior in a nonlinear system that is near a stable equilibrium where a linear approximation can be justified (Bellwood et al., 2004). Research has highlighted that every recovery journey is distinct as a result of adversity events, system complexity, and system heterogeneity combined with unforeseen consequences. This introduces an element of unpredictability to the recovery paths (Bellwood et al., 2004; Folke, 2006).

Resilience was measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Not true at all and 5 = True nearly all the time) and a higher score reflects a greater resilience. Scoring of the scale was based on summing the total of all items, each of which was scored from 1–5. The total score ranges from 9–45, with higher scores reflecting greater resilience. Some of the questions included: (a) “I can deal with whatever comes my way;” (b) “I believe I can achieve my goals, even if there are obstacles;” and (c) “I think of myself as a strong person when dealing with life’s challenges and difficulties.”

**Reliability and Validity of the CD-RISC**

A study conducted by González et al. (2015) examined the validity and reliability of the 10-item Connor-Davidson Resilience found the scale was psychometrically superior when compared to the original 25-item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale. The finding was obtained
using the statistical technique of confirmatory factor and item-level analysis (González et al., 2015). Another study assessing women’s resilience using the scale revealed a high level of internal consistency, reliability, and convergent and divergent validity (Scali et al., 2012). A Danish study examining hospital employees’ resilience reported a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.87 (Lauridsen et al., 2017).

**Familial Ethnic-Racial Socialization**

The third survey in this study evaluated the type and frequency of ethnic-racial socialization messages that Muslim American parents convey to their adolescent children. The questionnaire (see Appendix C) included the familial ethnic socialization measure (FESM) with additional items that fit the participants’ multiple identities (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004). The FESM assessed the degree to which Muslim American students perceive their families socialized with them about their ethnicity and discuss and learn about discrimination and diversity. The scale consists of 22 items and four constructs: (a) cultural socialization (e.g., my family celebrates holidays that are specific to my ethnic, cultural background), (b) the preparation for bias (e.g., my parents told me that I will be treated unfairly because of my religious beliefs), (c) promotion of mistrust (e.g., my parents told me to keep away from other groups because they may have discrimination against you), and (d) egalitarianism (e.g., my parents taught me that people should get the same rights and must be treated equally). The cultural socialization construct consists of two subscales: overt and covert familial ethnic socialization. The overt subscale assessed the extent to which Muslim family members intentionally socialize with their adolescents about their ethnic background, such as “My family teaches me about my ethnic, cultural background.” The covert subscale assesses the extent to which family members unintentionally socialize with their adolescents about their ethnicity, such as “Our home is
decorated with things that reflect my ethnic/cultural background.” The scale included items to assess the second practice of ethnic socialization: preparation for bias to examine if families are preparing their children for discrimination. This was measured with survey items such as, “My parents told me that I will be treated unfairly because of my religious beliefs.” The third practice known as promotion of mistrust involved the use of items such as, “My parents told me to keep away from other groups because they may discriminate against you.” The evaluation of egalitarianism, the fourth practice, included the assessment of items such as, “My parents taught me that people should get the same rights and must be treated equally.” All the items are scored on a 5-point Likert scale, with endpoints of not at all (1) and very much (5). Responses were coded so that higher scores signified greater levels of familial ethnic-racial socialization. The total of items was calculated, and a composite score was used to assess the level of ethnic-racial socialization.

Based on the religious background of the participants, a subscale was added to measure religiosity and spirituality using the Likert scale. In this study, religiosity and spirituality were assessed separately. Religiosity pertained to the observance of religious practices and rituals, whereas spirituality encompassed the belief and individual’s sense of higher purpose. Notably, in the questionnaire, the word “God” was replaced with the Arabic term for God, “Allah,” to ameliorate the validity of the measure for Muslim student participants. The items were evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale, with endpoints of not at all (1) and very much (5). Examples of religiosity consisted of statements like “I participate in religious and community gatherings at the Mosque,” whereas examples of spirituality included statements like “I have faith that Allah can protect and help me overcome difficulties in my life.”
The responses were encoded in a manner such that higher scores signified greater levels of religiosity and spirituality. An aggregate score was formulated to assess the level of religiosity and spirituality in individuals. The estimated time required to complete the three surveys was approximately 15–20 minutes. Table 1 summarizes the variables measured in the study, and an example of the item aligned with each variable.

Table 1

*Survey Instruments, Their Constructs, and Sample Statements*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey instrument</th>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>Statement (example)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious Discrimination Scale</td>
<td>Perceived prejudice</td>
<td>I felt disrespected because of my religious view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Closet symptoms</td>
<td>I felt inclined to keep my religious affiliation private.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative labels</td>
<td>I have heard people make unfriendly remarks about my religion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD-RISC</td>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>I think of myself as a strong person when dealing with life’s challenges and difficulties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I am able to handle unpleasant or painful feelings like sadness, fear, and anger.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familial Ethnic Socialization Measure</td>
<td>Cultural socialization</td>
<td>My family listens to music sung or played by artists from my ethnic/cultural background.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overt cultural socialization</td>
<td>My family teaches me about my ethnic/cultural background.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Covert cultural socialization</td>
<td>Our home is decorated with things that reflect my ethnic/cultural background.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Religiosity</td>
<td>I attend religious and community events at the Mosque.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td>I have faith that Allah can protect and help me overcome difficulties in my life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preparation for bias</td>
<td>My parents told me that I will be treated unfairly because of my religious beliefs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promotion of mistrust</td>
<td>My parents told me to keep away from other groups because they may discriminate against you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Egalitarianism</td>
<td>My parents taught me that people should get the same rights and must be treated equally.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Reliability and Validity of the FESM**

Several studies used the familial ethnic-racial scale and the assessments demonstrated high reliability and support for its validity in prior work with Latino youth (Supple et al., 2006; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2009). Similar results were found in the study conducted by Umaña-Taylor et al. (2014) where Cronbach’s alphas were consecutively .93 and .91 showing higher reliability and internal consistency.

**Procedures and Recruitment**

After receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board at the University of San Diego (see Appendix D), a total of 235 students who were born and raised in the United States and identified themselves as Muslim Americans were recruited for this study. These participants, ranging in age from 11–18 years, came from various ethnic and racial backgrounds. Those who reported moving to the United States before the age of 5 were also included in the analysis. The inclusion criterion of age 5 was established due to the fact that this is the age at which children begin kindergarten and initiate their journey of interacting with individuals beyond their immediate family and caregivers. This may involve socializing with individuals from diverse ethnicities, races, and religions. The questionnaires were filled out by Muslim students enrolled in public schools in San Diego.

Participants were recruited from the Muslim community in San Diego. To draw in a wide range of participants, I reached out to mosques, religious, social, and cultural organizations. Additional participants were recruited from prominent Muslim parents’ mailing lists and social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp groups. Participants were instructed to access a link that included an informed consent statement, a demographics page, and the scales.
Data Collection

In the current study, three questionnaires were used to measure religious discrimination, resilience, and family ethnic–racial socialization. The questionnaires were available in digital and hard copy to participants who agreed to be part of the study. I distributed and collected the hard copies of the questionnaires. Prior to the questionnaires’ distribution, all participants received an introductory letter from me describing the research and its importance. After the initial delivery, a follow-up email was sent to either thank those who completed the forms or to remind those who have not yet completed the questionnaires. When fewer participants completed the questionnaires than desired, the random sampling and distribution process persisted until an appropriate number of completed questionnaires was achieved. The data collection endeavors were successfully concluded in a span of around 3 months. After acquiring a total of 235 participants, the study was deemed sufficient in terms of gender, age, ethnic background, languages spoken at home, parents’ education, and parents’ employment.

Data Analysis

Each of the research questions in the current study focused on quantitative measurements. The plan for data analysis related to each question follows.

RQ1: What Extent of Perceived Religious Discrimination Do Muslim American Students Report?

Survey items that represented the RDS were examined to determine the extent of perceived religious discrimination reported by students. To elaborate on the level of discrimination, RDS scores were analyzed in relation to demographic variables. To offer an overview of the participants from whom data were gathered, information on age, gender, school
attended, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, parents’ educational background were provided, along with the averages, means, and standard deviations for religious discrimination.

**RQ2: How Do Muslim American Students Respond to Experiences of Discrimination?**

To examine how participants in the study responded to school-based Islamophobic incidents, the examination focused on the scale that assesses resilience using SD-RISC. The initial step involved the computation of the total score ranges. Subsequently, an in-depth analysis of the resilience of Muslim American students was conducted by examining variables including age, gender, school of attendance, ethnic background, languages spoken at home, and parents’ education through regression analysis to determine the potential influence of these factors on resilience levels.

**RQ3: What Type and Frequency of Ethnic-Racial Socialization Messages Do Muslim American Adolescents Receive From Their Parents? And to What Extent Would Ethnic-Racial Socialization Affect Muslim Students’ Resilience When Experiencing School-Based Islamophobic Situations?**

**RQ4: Which Practice of Ethnic-Racial Socialization Is More Effective at Mitigating the Negative Impact of Islamophobia?**

The survey questions pertaining to the FESM were analyzed to assess the type and how often do Muslim American adolescents received ethnic-racial socialization messages from their parents. The research questions were addressed by employing descriptive statistics and multiple regression analyses in this study. Furthermore, to determine the correlation between resilience and ethnic-racial socialization, resilience was the dependent variable used in the analysis coupled with the independent variables related to ethnic-racial socialization practices. Regression analysis using different models were used to identify an estimate of the association between the
independent variables of cultural socialization, preparation for bias, promotion of mistrust, and egalitarianism with the dependent variable of the respondents’ resilience. More models were added to determine statistical significance with all the variables included in the study.

Qualitative Method

Mixed methods was initially designed as fixed, the use of quantitative and qualitative methods were predetermined and organized at the start of the research procedure (Creswell, 2012). However, the escalating Israel’s aerial and ground offensives on Gaza, labeled as the most devastating military offensives in recent history by the United Nations (2023) demanded attention, as it profoundly affected the Muslims and Arabs in the United States.

Palestinians have been living under systematic oppression, crime against humanity of persecution, deprivation, restriction, forced isolation, oppression, and the Israeli blockade on Gaza since 2007 (Human Rights Watch, 2021). Hamas from the Gaza Strip, a Palestinian political party (United Nations, 2023), and listed as a terrorist organization in 1997 by the U.S. State Department (El-Deeb, 2023) had launched an attack on October 7, 2023, resulting in the deaths of more than 1,200 people according to Israeli authorities (Human Rights Watch, 2024). Soon after, the Israeli government ceased the provision of vital services, such as water and electricity, to the people of Gaza. They restricted the entry of fuel and crucial humanitarian aid (Human Rights Watch, 2024). Additionally, the relentless bombardment of Gaza by Israeli air and ground forces resulted in the tragic loss of over 30,000 people, most of them women and children (Marsi et al., 2024). Consequently, an adjustment was made in the design to incorporate additional data, leading to the use of emergent mixed methods designs, offering an opportunity to cultivate a deeper and more credible knowledge generation (Creswell, 2012).
The quantitative data and statistical findings offered a general comprehension of the various facets of Islamophobic occurrences encountered by Muslim American students in educational environments. Additionally, it shed light on the extent of their resilient behaviors in the face of discrimination and the influence of ethnic-racial socialization along with spirituality and religiosity. The qualitative data in the present study were essential for gaining profound insights into the findings that arose from the quantitative research phase. Qualitative research excels in its capacity to offer a more profound examination of the phenomenon. Yin (2014) highlighted the advantages of qualitative research as the “portrayals of holistic settings and impacts is that greater attention can be given to nuance, setting, interdependencies, complexities, idiosyncrasies, and context” (p. 60). Furthermore, the emergent nature of qualitative research design is one of its key attributes, as it necessitates an open and adaptable approach to facilitate exploration.

In the realm of social science research, focus groups are widely recognized as a qualitative research method. This is primarily due to their ability to gather comprehensive and detailed data, which offered a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied. A focus group interview is a carefully structured discussion designed to collect valuable perspectives on a particular topic of interest in a welcoming and nonthreatening environment (R. A. Krueger & Casey, 2009). By using focus groups, researchers can efficiently obtain a significant volume of data pertaining to a specific topic in a relatively condensed time frame (Adler et al., 2019). Focus groups are strongly advised, especially when working with vulnerable populations (e.g., Muslim American students). Participants experience a sense of empowerment when they actively participate in group discussions in the same physical space and connect with their fellow participants. The participants find it more convenient to disclose personal and sensitive
information due to this level of anonymity (Stover, 2012). Focus groups have the potential to establish a secure peer setting for young individuals facing challenges (Adler et al., 2019), including Muslim American students.

**Participants Selection**

Due to the fact that Muslim Arab American students in the quantitative phase exhibited a greater inclination toward expressing their religious identity compared to any other group examined in the current study, the qualitative data concentrated solely on Muslim Arab American students.

Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals who are knowledgeable about or experienced the phenomenon (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). To recruit research participants, an email was sent out to Muslim Arab parents from diverse national backgrounds hoping that participants would respond in the days to come. I was taken aback when parents and students showed their willingness to participate in a matter of days. A total of 18 students, nine girls and nine boys, were selected. They all attended public schools in various districts of the county of San Diego and differed in their adherence to Islamic tenets to effectively represent a wide range of perspectives. After a few email exchanges, the girls’ focus group took place on January 8, 2023, and the boys’ focus group took place on January 15, 2023. A formal email was sent to all participants about the date, the location, and the time agreed on. The email also included the parental consent and the child assent forms.
Two focus group interviews were conducted, involving a total of 17 Arab students, out of which nine were girls. Unfortunately, one of the boys fell ill, resulting in the study consisting of only eight boys who were actively engaged in this study.

The girls’ focus group included three Palestinian Americans in Grades 8, 9, and 11, two Syrian Americans in Grades 11 and 12, one Iraqi American in Grade 10, one Lebanese American in Grade 9, one Egyptian American in Grade 7, and one Algerian American in Grade 10. Three among the participants were easily identifiable as Muslim due to their choice of wearing the hijab or headscarf commonly seen in schools. The boys’ focus group included eight boys, three Palestinian Americans in Grades 8, 10 and 11, one Egyptian American in Grade 9, one Syrian American in Grade 10, one Syrian-Palestinian American in Grade 7, one Iraqi American in Grade 9, and one Lebanese American in Grade 12.

Data Collection

The research topics sought to investigate the following: (a) Muslim students’ experiences of Islamophobia in schools; (b) Muslim students’ perspectives on Islamophobic experiences prior to and subsequent to the Israeli war in Gaza; (c) how experiences of Islamophobia made Muslim students feel; (d) what are the reasons behind the lower resilience levels observed in Muslim girls compared to Muslim boys, and why spirituality has a more profound influence on the resilience of Muslim American students, unlike religion?; (e) Muslim parents prioritizing two specific practices of ethnic racial socialization: cultural socialization and egalitarianism; and (f) Muslim students’ experiences with parental preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust socialization.

I designed the focus group and applied a deductive and an inductive conceptual framework. The objective of the focus groups was to generate further insights into Muslim
students’ experiences in the school context and the parents’ socialization practices that help them cultivate resilience and academic focus. This approach served as an ideal data collection method, as I was investigating sensitive and underresearched subject (i.e., perceptions of Muslim American students). This phenomenon needed to be investigated thoroughly because there has been a scarcity of empirical research available. The viewpoints of Muslim students are of utmost significant because the focus groups are not strictly structured; they provide flexibility to allow a range of information to emerge from the interactions of the participants.

I conducted 1 hour of an unstructured in-depth focus group with the participants, and the group interview setting took place in a place recommended by the participants. The selected location is devoid of any background noise and interruptions. I first introduced the topic to the students who in turn carried out the conversation and as this conversation progressed, new topics emerged. It allowed the students to truly reflect on their perceptions, feelings, and emotions in their own words. I also guaranteed that every participant actively contributed to the group discussion without any one person overpowering it.

The participants were asked to arrive 15 minutes before the start of the group conversation to build familiarity as not all the participants knew each other. During the focus group, participants appeared relaxed, sitting more comfortably in the chair, engaged in the conversation, and seemed to forget about the audio recording. The tool for recording audio interviews came as standard on the phone, the Voice Memo function. Once the meeting had finished and the recording had processed, the recording folder was labeled and saved. Subsequently, once transcribing was completed using the Otter application and condensing process, coding, and assigning an evocative attribute for each portion of the transcript was an important step.
Data Analysis

The data analysis was a multistep process that intended to balance inductive and deductive reasoning (Erickson & Murphy, 2008). I used inductive reasoning from literature on emerging themes such as ethnic-racial socialization (Burt et al., 2012, 2017; Hughes et al., 2016; Spence et al., 2016) and cultural socialization (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015) to create descriptors of family ethnic-racial socialization practices that were anticipated to find in the analysis (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Examples of descriptors drawn from the literature on familial ethnic-racial socialization included “eating cultural dishes” and “belonging to a group” (Hughes et al., 2016). Deductive reasoning started with a general statement, or hypothesis, and examined the possibilities to reach a specific, logical conclusion (Keating et al., 2019). The focus group transcripts were analyzed using six-phase thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), including listening to the audio recording until becoming familiar with the words and gaining a comprehensive meaning (Saldaña, 2016), defining units of meaning, clustering of units of meaning to form themes, reexamining potential themes, extracting general and unique themes from all the focus groups, and producing a fused summary.

Ethical Consideration

To conduct ethical research, I used an informed consent and child assent form to help the participants gain an understanding of the research process and voluntarily agree or drop from participation. Participants were made aware of their participation in the research study, the purpose of the research, the procedure of the research, the risk and benefits involved in the research, the voluntary nature of research participation, and finally, the procedures used to protect confidentiality. The informed consent and child assent documents were explained to the
participants before starting the study. All those involved in the study were in agreement with the document’s content, and they signed it.

**Positionality**

Many advantages of being an insider researcher have been discussed in the literature. These advantages include having a greater understanding of what is being studied (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), understanding the social dynamic in the community and successfully navigating differences or factionalism, and understanding the changing relationships in the community (J. Cohen, 2000; Lessenich, 2018). J. Cohen (2000) and Lessenich (2018) further stated the researcher’s emotional attachment to the topic research does not destroy the validity of the research process.

Moving halfway around the world to an unfamiliar country, the United States, my experience was compounded in the 9/11 attacks’ aftermath. The fear, discrimination, and marginalization I experienced turned into a passion for academic excellence on my daughter’s 1st day of preschool. I immersed myself as a Muslim immigrant woman and a concerned mother in the U.S. educational system; I quickly educated myself on the school processes, policies, and various parent-involvement committees. My visibility at several school sites made many Muslim students approach me and share their negative experiences of discrimination. Since then, I have been a staunch advocate for educational excellence and parental engagement in the school system and became deeply committed to the education of the whole child in a safe and nurturing environment. In 2020, I was awarded the equity champion award by the San Diego County Office of Education.

For this study, I made good use of these advantages in gathering the data such as gathering the research data in a short period because participants voluntarily accommodated the
research’s purpose. The continuity of data collection made it possible to collect more detailed and more versatile, and thus, more trustworthy research data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). My insider status enabled me to easily recruit participants and create a sense of trust because it was regarded as a safeguard against the possibility of being misunderstood or misrepresented (Clingerman, 2007) and connected myself consciously to better understand the perspectives of the participants. My consciousness of ethics was highly observed during the phases of the study, and I observed specificity where students were encouraged to talk about specific accounts and experiences, related to the topics researched (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014). Furthermore, to avoid ambiguity during the qualitative phase of the research, I constantly engaged in clarifying students’ statements to gain accurate information (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014).
CHAPTER 4
QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study was to gain a comprehensive insight into the perceived religious discrimination faced by Muslim students in educational settings, assess their resilience in response to such incidents, analyze the common types and frequency of ethnic-racial socialization, and understand the practices employed by Muslim parents in this regard. The quantitative results originating from survey questionnaires were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 26.0, to initially calculate descriptive statistics, such as means and standard deviations of study variables. Additionally, multiple regression analysis using different models was used to determine an estimate of the association between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

Sample Demographics

The full sample of Muslim American students consisted of 235 (115 male students and 120 female students) participants. Most participants were Arabs, which included 44 North African students and 94 South West Asian students, forming a group of 138 Arabs (59%). Additionally, there were 54 Southeast Asian students (23%), 32 Black individuals (13.61%), 18 East African students, 10 West African students, and four African Americans; 10 of the students (4.25%) were multiracial and Hispanic combined in the “others” group. In the study, 85% of the participants were native-born and raised in the United States, and 15% were immigrants who moved to the country between the ages of 1–5 years old. However, 95% of the parents of Muslim American students in the study were immigrants and only 5% were born and raised in the United States. The mean age of participants was 13.97 (SD = 2.259). Ages varied with 67.5% of female students between ages 11–14, 32.5% of female students were between ages 15–18, and 40% of
male students were between ages 11–14 and 60% of male students were between ages 15–18 years old. There were 35 (14.89%) students in fifth grade, 86 (36.59%) students in middle school, and 114 (48.51%) students in high school. The collected data indicated 89 (38%) Muslim American students in the study attended public schools located the central city, 69 (29.36%) participants attended public schools located north of the city, 46 (19.57%) participants attended charter schools, 14 (5.95%) participants were enrolled in public schools located east of the city, 12 (5.10%) participants were in public schools located south of the city, and four (1.70%) participants attended private schools. All the schools are part of the largest public school system in California in terms of number of students and one of the largest public-school districts in Southern California. Additional findings have been outlined in the quantitative research phase.

**Religious Discrimination**

The first research question in the study was: What extent of perceived religious discrimination do middle and high school Muslim American students report? Table 2 shows the proportions of respondents who reported religious discrimination scores. People held negative stereotypes around Muslim students’ religious identity and hearing negatives remarks about their religion stand with a high means, 4.06 ($SD = 0.83$) and 3.84 ($SD = 0.87$), followed with sensing hostility from others because of the religious identity with a mean of 3.08 and standard deviation of 1.18. Muslim American students reported the lowest mean response to the item, “I was ignored by adults and students at school because I am Muslim,” with a mean of 1.96. The rest of the items had a mean that varied between 2.05 ($SD = 1.04$) for the item, “I was afraid of others finding out that I am Muslim,” and 2.66 ($SD = 1.13$) for the item, “People at my school assume things about me because I am Muslim.”
Table 2

Perceived Religious Discrimination Descriptive Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I was ignored by adults and students because I am Muslim</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was afraid of others finding out that I am Muslim</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often keep my religious identity private</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At school, I often feel alone because I am Muslim</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I lost involvement’s opportunities because I am Muslim</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt disrespected because I am Muslim</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At school, I do not feel free to express my religion</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People assume things about me because of my religion</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I sense hostility from others because I am Muslim</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have heard people make negative remarks about my religion</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People hold negative stereotypes about Muslims</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Multiple regression analyses were also conducted to grasp a better understanding of Muslim American students’ experiences in schools. The findings of the study highlighted being a female student was a significant predictor of feeling disrespected (β = 2.40, t = 1.79, p < 0.05). The item of the scale, people making assumptions because of Muslim American students’ religious identity, was positively associated with mothers’ education (β = 0.08, t = 2.22, p < 0.05). Mothers’ education was also positively associated with feeling afraid of others finding out about Muslim students’ religious identity (β = 0, t = 1.81, p < 0.00). Southeast Asian origin was found to be a significant predictor of the third item of the scale, keeping the religious identity private (β = 0.40, t = 2.51, p < 0.05). Conversely, southeast Asian origin was negatively associated with people holding negative stereotypes about Muslims (β = -0.36, t = -2.92, p < 0.00). Moreover, birth order was found to be a significant predictor of feeling alone because of Muslim students’ faith (β = 0.11, t = 2.11, p < 0.05) and sensing hostility (β = 0.13, t = 2.41, p < 0.05). Age reported a negative relationship with Muslim American students losing involvement
opportunities because of their religious identity ($\beta = -0.1, t = -2.1, p < 0.05$). In other words, as students got older, they were more likely to lose involvement opportunities in schools. The negative association was also reported by Arab students, with Muslim American students not feeling free to express their religious identity at schools ($\beta = -0.12, t = -3.1, p < 0.00$), which indicated Arab Muslim American students tended to make their religious identity visible.

The 11-item instruments of religious discrimination scale (RDS) identified three constructs that generally described discrimination in the forms of: (a) perceived prejudice, (b) closet symptoms, and (c) negative labels based on the experiences of Muslim American students attending public schools as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

**Religious Discrimination Constructs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived prejudice</td>
<td>1. I felt disrespected because I am Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. I was ignored by adults and students at school because I am Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. At school, I often feel alone because I am Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. I lost involvement’s opportunities at school because I am Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. I sense hostility from others because I am Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closet symptoms</td>
<td>4. I often keep my religious identity private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. I was afraid of others finding out that I am Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. At school, I do not feel free to express my religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative labels</td>
<td>3. People assume things about me because of my religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. I have heard people make negative remarks about my religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. People hold negative stereotypes of people with my religion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Descriptive analysis of the three constructs was conducted in the sample, the subscale of negative labels displayed a mean of 3.52 and standard deviation of 0.65, suggesting that the participants experienced this form of discrimination with a frequency ranging from *sometimes* to *frequently*. This finding indicated most of the Muslim American students agreed with the statement, and the lowest standard deviation indicated there was a fairly strong relative
consensus about the negative labels. Participants may have been conscious of the negative labels linked to their religious identity, either through external sources or media portrayal. Moreover, the minimum score for negative labels was 1.67, whereas the minimum score for the remaining constructs was 1. The negative labels construct is followed by perceived prejudice with 2.23 mean and a standard deviation of 0.76, and closet symptoms had a mean of 2.12 and standard deviation of 0.88 (see Table 4). The participants reported encountering these forms of discrimination at different intervals, spanning from infrequent to occasional incidents.

Table 4

*Perceived Religious Discrimination Constructs Descriptive Analysis*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closet Symptoms</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Prejudice</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Labels</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using multiple regression analyses, the three constructs were consecutively examined. The findings suggested religiosity played a significant role in attributing negative labels to Muslim American students ($\beta = 0.16, \ t = 3.23, p < 0.00$). In other words, the greater the display of religious beliefs, the higher the likelihood of receiving negative labels. The presence of negative labels was shown to be significantly associated with perceived prejudice ($\beta = 0.33, \ t = 6.70, p < 0.00$), suggesting that exposure to perceived prejudice may result in the attribution of negative labels. In the same vein, Muslim American students reported a positive correlation between their preparation for bias and the perception of negative labels, experienced and witnessed ($\beta = 0.082, \ t = 2.55, p < 0.05$).
The second construct, closet symptoms, exhibited a positive association with the perceived prejudice ($\beta = 0.50$, $t = 7.51$, $p < 0.00$) and mothers’ education ($\beta = 0.06$, $t = 2.42$, $p < 0.05$). An increase of one unit in perceived prejudice resulted in a 50% surge in the concealment of Muslim students’ identity, whereas a rise of one unit in mothers’ education was associated with a 6% escalation in the concealment of Muslim students’ identity. However, the results indicated an inverse correlation between closet symptoms and spirituality ($\beta = -0.25$, $t = -2.99$, $p < 0.00$) and the level of Muslim American students’ resilience ($\beta = -0.21$, $t = -2.15$, $p < 0.05$). Increasing spirituality by one unit led to a 25% reduction in symptoms related to closet symptoms, and enhancing resilience by one unit was linked to a 21% decrease in the closet symptoms.

The third construct, which related to the perceived prejudice encountered by Muslim American students exhibited a noteworthy and favorable correlation with negative labels ($\beta = 0.43$, $t = 6.89$, $p < 0.00$) and closet symptoms ($\beta = 0.34$, $t = 7.39$, $p < 0.00$). A rise of one unit in negative labels was associated with a 43% upsurge in symptoms associated with perceived prejudice, whereas a one unit increase in closet symptoms was associated with a 34% rise in perceived prejudice. Similarly, the study found a positive correlation between perceived prejudice and resilience, and birth order with perceived prejudice ($\beta = 0.02$, $t = 3.32$, $p < 0.00$; $\beta = 0.07$, $t = 2.5$, $p < 0.05$, respectively). Additionally, birth order demonstrated a significant correlation with perceived prejudice ($\beta = 0.71$, $t = 2.50$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting the sequence of child placement in a family influenced the level of perceived prejudice encountered. However, the presence of egalitarianism was found to have an adverse correlation with the perceived prejudice ($\beta = -0.15$, $t = -3.19$, $p < 0.00$) in the said sample, suggesting that a one unit increase in egalitarianism was associated with a 15% decrease in perceived prejudice (see Table 5).
Table 5

*Estimated Coefficients and Levels of Significance for Variables in the Final Regression Models*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent/ independent variables</th>
<th>Estimated coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative labels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity</td>
<td>0.16***</td>
<td>3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived prejudice</td>
<td>0.33 ***</td>
<td>6.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation for bias</td>
<td>0.82*</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closet symptoms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td>-0.25**</td>
<td>-2.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>-0.21*</td>
<td>-2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers’ education</td>
<td>0.06*</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived prejudice</td>
<td>0.50***</td>
<td>7.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived prejudice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egalitarianism</td>
<td>-0.15**</td>
<td>-3.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>0.24***</td>
<td>3.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closet symptoms</td>
<td>0.33***</td>
<td>7.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative labels</td>
<td>0.42***</td>
<td>6.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth order</td>
<td>0.71*</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. R^2 = 0.40; r^2 = 0.43; \( r^2 = 0.40 \); p < 0.001 ***; p < 0.005 **; p < 0.05 *. Only statistically significant estimated coefficients for religious discrimination shown.*

**Resilience**

To measure resilience, the 10-item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) was used to assess Muslim students’ level of resilience in the face of discrimination. Measuring Muslim American students’ resilience answered the second research question: “How do Muslim American students respond to experiences of discrimination?” In this study, all the CD-RISC items had a mean that varies between 3.31 and 3.81 and standard deviation between 0.95 and 1.13 as shown in Table 6. The fourth statement “Under pressure, I stay focused and think clearly” had the highest mean at 3.81 (SD = 0.98), followed with the statement “I think of myself as a strong person when dealing with life’s challenges,” with a mean of 3.70 (SD = 0.95). Then the first statement, “I am able to handle painful feelings like sadness, fear, and anger” had a
mean 3.64 ($SD = 1.11$). The lowest mean reported in the study was 3.31 ($SD = 1.10$) for the statement “I try to see the positive side of things when I am faced with problems” (see Table 6).

Table 6

**Resilience Descriptive Statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>$SD$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I try to see the positive side of things when I am faced with problems</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having to cope with stress can make me stronger</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe I can achieve my goals, even if I face obstacles</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not easily discouraged by problems</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can deal with whatever comes my way</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to adapt when changes happen</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to handle painful feelings like sadness, fear, and anger</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think of myself as a strong person when dealing with life’s challenges</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under pressure, I stay focused and think clearly</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The resilience of Muslim American students was evaluated by consolidating the various items into a single variable, thereby capturing the collective value of all items. Resilience was the variable result of the combination. The resilience score varied between 9 and 45, with 9 representing the lowest score and 45 indicating the highest score, which signifies a higher level of resilience. Overall, among all participants, the highest level of resilience was displayed by one female student and eight male students, which amounted to 45. Out of the total of nine students, three were from middle school and the remaining six were from high school.

Among them, five students were of Arab descent, two were Black students, and two were Southeast Asian students, and they all achieved the highest score. Moreover, eight were native-born citizens of the United States and attended a charter school. The only female student who showed a high score in resilience was an immigrant and attended public school; she was born in Iraq and relocated to the United States when she was 5 years old. A Black high school student,
who was born and raised in the United States, had the lowest resilience score of 9. This student lived with divorced parents and attended a charter school.

In terms of parental marital status, the participants with the highest resilience scores predominantly came from households where both parents were married. Nevertheless, there was a single participant who resided with divorced parents. The educational background of the mothers of students with the highest resilience scores varied from undergraduate to graduate school, and the fathers’ education ranged from completing some high school (i.e., 10th grade) to graduate school.

To gain a more comprehensive understanding of the resilience exhibited by Muslim American students, regression analysis was conducted to examine the potential influence of various variables. The variables encompassed age, gender, grade, birth order, ethnicity, students’ birthplace, and parents’ birthplace, father’s education, mother’s education, father’s employment status, and mother’s employment.

**Dependent and Independent Variables**

This study employed 12 demographic variables. The resilience measure served as the dependent variable, and the age of the Muslim American students, grade, birth order, father’s education, and mother’s education were considered the independent variables (see Table 7). Other independent variables such as gender, ethnicity, father’s employment status, mother’s employment status, students’ birthplace, fathers’ birthplace, and mothers’ birthplace were recorded to a dummy variable as shown in Table 8.
Table 7

*Categorical Variables Coding*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>11–18 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>5–12 grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth order</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father’s education</td>
<td>10–18 (10, refers to some high school; 18 refers to graduate school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s education</td>
<td>10–18 (10, refers to some high school; 18 refers to graduate school)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8

*Dummy Variables Recoding*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Dummy variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Gender (female = 1, male = 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arab (Arab = 1, other = 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black (Black = 1, other = 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>South East Asian (SEA = 1, other = 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>FatherFullTimeEmployed (FFTE = 1, other = 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FatherSelfEmployed (FSE = 1, other = 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FatherPartTimeEmployed (FPTE = 1, other = 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FatherNotEmployed (FNE = 1, other = 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father’s employment</td>
<td>MotherFullTimeEmployed (MFTE = 1, other = 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MotherSelfEmployed (MSE = 1, other = 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MotherPartTimeEmployed (MPTE = 1, other = 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MotherNotEmployed (MNE = 1, other = 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student’s birthplace</td>
<td>Students born in the United States (USBor = 1, other = 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father’s birthplace</td>
<td>Fathers born in the United States (FUSBor = 1, other = 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s birthplace</td>
<td>Mothers born in the United States (MUSBor = 1, other = 0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Relationships Between Demographic Variables and Resilience Using Regression Analysis

The resilience of Muslim American students was found to be significantly influenced by gender, as indicated by the results of the multiple regression analyses (see Tables 9 and 10). Muslim American female students exhibited a diminished level of resilience, as indicated by the regression equation’s female coefficient of -2.40. This coefficient represented a decrease of resilience by nearly 2.5 units for every Muslim American female student. Conversely, the analysis revealed a positive correlation between male participants and resilience ($\beta = 2.41, t = 3.13, p < 0.00$). Mothers’ education was positively correlated with American Muslim students’ resilience. The mothers’ education coefficient was 0.58 and represented a slightly more than a half point increase for every additional year of education in resilience for every Muslim American student. In other words, every 2 additional years of education of Muslim American students’ mothers would be equivalent to slightly more than a point on the resilience scale. Table 9 shows there is a negative correlation between age and resilience. As a Muslim American student ages, their resilience decreased by 0.28 units for every one unit increase in age. However, Table 10 shows a positive association between male Muslim American students and resilience. The resilience of Muslim American male students has experienced a significant increase of around 2.5 units per male student.

Table 9

*Estimated Coefficients and Levels of Significance for Variables in the Final Regression Models*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variables</th>
<th>Estimated coefficients</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-2.40***</td>
<td>-3.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.39*</td>
<td>-2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s education</td>
<td>0.55**</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. $R^2 = 0.45; p < 0.01$***; $p < 0.005$ **; $p < 0.05$ *. Only statistically significant estimated coefficients shown.*
Table 10

Estimated Coefficients and Levels of Significance for Male Variable in the Regression Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variable</th>
<th>Estimated coefficient</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2.41**</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. $r^2 = 0.60; p < 0.005$ **

Ethnic-Racial Socialization Practices

Family ethnic and racial socialization was assessed by the original FESM, which includes four practices: (a) cultural socialization that includes items assessing families’ overt efforts to teach their children about their cultural heritage (e.g., “My family teaches me about our family’s ethnic/cultural background”) and items assessing families’ covert efforts to do so (e.g., “My family participates in activities that are specific to my ethnic group”), (b) preparation for bias to help, (c) promotion for mistrust, and (d) egalitarianism. The items of the FESM were combined into five variables and represent overt cultural socialization, covert cultural socialization, preparation for bias, promotion of mistrust, and egalitarianism. Descriptive analysis of each item of FESM presented in Table 11.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics of Ethnic-Racial Socialization Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>$SD$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overt Cultural Socialization</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taught about the history of my ethnic/cultural background</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taught about my ethnic/cultural background</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taught about my cultural values and beliefs background</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talked about the importance of my ethnic/cultural background</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged to respect the cultural values and beliefs</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covert Cultural Socialization</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended festivals/events representing my ethnic background</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our home is decorated with things from my ethnic background</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variables</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in activities that are specific to my ethnic group</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listened to music from my ethnic background</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanged out with people from the same ethnic background</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrated cultural holidays</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation for Bias</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taught that people might limit you</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Told that I will be treated unfairly as a Muslim</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of Mistrust</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Told to keep away from other groups</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egalitarianism</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Told me about differences in rights based on status</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Told that skin’s color does not define status</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taught that people should be treated equally</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ethnic-racial socialization practices were combined into one variable, effectively representing the average values of each individual practice. It indicated overt cultural socialization \((M = 4.28, SD = 0.73)\) occurred more often than covert cultural socialization \((M = 4.06, SD = 0.75)\); however, both forms of cultural socialization showed a frequency ranging from *often* to *very much*. Additionally, overt cultural socialization occurred more often than egalitarianism \((M = 3.90, SD = 0.87)\), preparation for bias \((M = 2.38, SD = 1.18)\), and promotion of mistrust \((M = 2.207, SD = 1.31)\). Thus, parents of Muslim American students engaged in cultural socialization practices more than egalitarianism, warnings about discrimination, or promotion of mistrust.

**Relationships Between Variables and Overt Cultural Socialization Using Regression Analysis**

To assess possible relationships between all the independent variables available in the study and overt socialization, multiple regression analyses were used. The findings revealed that Muslim American students of Arab origin showed a positive moderate correlation to overt cultural socialization, and was statistically significant \((\beta = 0.36, t = 3.68, p < 0.00)\). The
statistical significance was also observed in participants whose fathers were self-employed, as they reported lower levels of overt cultural socialization ($\beta = -0.43, t = -3.56, p < 0.00$). It indicated the cultural socialization of every Muslim student whose father was self-employed decreased by almost half a unit. Similarly, self-employed mothers and mothers’ education were two variables negatively correlated to overt cultural socialization with ($\beta = -0.32, t = -1.73; \beta = -0.35, t = -2.37$, respectively). The cultural socialization of Muslim students with self-employed mothers or highly educated mothers was associated with a decrease of 0.32 and 0.35 units, respectively. Similarly, grade level showed a negative correlation with overt cultural socialization ($\beta = -0.27, t = -2.13$). Other variables such as spirituality ($\beta = 0.16, t = 3.11$), covert cultural socialization ($\beta = 0.70, t = 16.95$), and egalitarianism ($\beta = 0.10, t = 2.70$) showed a positive correlation with overt cultural socialization, indicating statistical significance, suggesting that a unit increase in spiritually, covert cultural socialization, and egalitarianism was linked to a rise in overt cultural socialization by an estimated 0.16, 0.70, and 0.10 units, respectively. Students who observed closet symptoms by hiding their religious identity reported had lower levels of overt cultural socialization ($\beta = -0.06, t = -1.93$) as shown in Table 12.
Table 12

*Estimated Coefficients and Levels of Significance for Variables in the Final Regression Models*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variables</th>
<th>Estimated coefficient</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fathers self-employed</td>
<td>-0.43***</td>
<td>-3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers’ education</td>
<td>-0.35*</td>
<td>-2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers self-employed</td>
<td>-0.32**</td>
<td>-1.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>-0.27*</td>
<td>-2.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of mistrust</td>
<td>-0.17**</td>
<td>-3.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closet symptoms</td>
<td>-0.06**</td>
<td>-1.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egalitarianism</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td>0.16***</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab students</td>
<td>0.36***</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covert cultural socialization</td>
<td>0.70***</td>
<td>16.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. R² = 0.67; p < 0.001***; p < 0.005**; p < 0.05*. Only statistically significant estimated coefficients for overt socialization shown.*

**Relationships Between Variables and Covert Cultural Socialization Using Regression**

**Analysis**

The current study also used multiple regression analyses to assess potential connections between all the available independent variables and covert socialization. The results indicated overt cultural socialization demonstrated the highest coefficient (β = 0.67, t = 15.25), showing a positive correlation with covert cultural socialization when overt cultural association increased. Muslim American students of Southeast Asian origin showed a negative, moderate correlation to covert cultural socialization and was statistically significant (β = -0.39, t = -2.67), suggesting that the covert cultural socialization of each Muslim American from the Southeastern region decreased by 0.39 units. However, the Arab students in the study showed a positive correlation with a coefficient (β = 0.31, t = 2.40), which indicated the covert cultural socialization of every Muslim American from the Arab region increased by 0.31 units. The participants whose parents were self-employed reported having lower levels of covert cultural socialization, and the
association was statistically significant ($\beta = -0.37, t = -3.05$). Covert cultural socialization of Muslim American students was higher when students were exposed to parental promotion of mistrust ($\beta = 0.50, t = 2.24$), when they hid their religious identity also known as closet symptoms ($\beta = 0.10, t = 3.00$), and when they observed religious practices with the following coefficients ($\beta = 0.22, t = 5.14$). An increment of one unit in the promotion of mistrust, closet symptoms, and religiosity is linked to a rise in covert cultural socialization by 0.50, 0.10, and 0.22 units, respectively; see Table 13.

Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variables</th>
<th>Estimated coefficient</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asian Students</td>
<td>-0.39*</td>
<td>-2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers Self-Employed</td>
<td>-0.37**</td>
<td>-3.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closet Symptoms</td>
<td>0.10*</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity</td>
<td>0.22***</td>
<td>5.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab Students</td>
<td>0.31*</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of Mistrust</td>
<td>0.50*</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overt cultural socialization</td>
<td>0.67***</td>
<td>15.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. $R^2 = 0.7; p < 0.001***, p < 0.005***, p < 0.05*. Only statistically significant estimated coefficients for covert socialization shown.

Relationships Between Variables and Preparation for Bias Using Regression Analysis

The assessment of preparation for bias level involved the use of multiple regression analyses to explore the connections among the independent variables included in the current study. The statistical significance of the positive association between grade and preparation for bias was evident among Muslim American students ($\beta = 0.13, t = 4.00$), a unit increase in the Muslim American students’ grade students was linked to a corresponding rise in their readiness to confront bias, with a magnitude of 0.34 units. Participants whose mothers worked full time also indicated a favorable association with preparation for bias ($\beta = 0.36, t = 2.02$). However,
there was a noteworthy and inverse association discovered between the educational attainment of mothers and the students’ readiness to confront bias ($\beta = -0.10, t = -2.65$); an increase in the educational level of Muslim American students’ mothers was associated with a proportional reduction in their preparedness to bias, with a magnitude of 0.20 units. Similarly, students of Southeast Asian origin reported a negative correlation with the preparation for bias ($\beta = -0.40, t = -2.31$), indicating the readiness of students with Southeast Asian heritage to bias was correlated with a decrease of 0.40 units per student. Preparation for bias among Muslim students demonstrated a strong and positive correlation with covert cultural socialization ($\beta = 0.17, t = 2.12$), egalitarian values ($\beta = 0.18, t = 2.47$), promotion of mistrust ($\beta = 0.43, t = 9.11$), and negative labels ($\beta = 0.22, t = 2.41$; see Table 14).

Table 14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variables</th>
<th>Estimated coefficient</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asian Students</td>
<td>-0.40*</td>
<td>-2.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers Education</td>
<td>-0.10*</td>
<td>-2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>0.13***</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covert Cultural Socialization</td>
<td>0.17*</td>
<td>2.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egalitarianism</td>
<td>0.18*</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Labels</td>
<td>0.22*</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers Full Time Employed</td>
<td>0.36*</td>
<td>2.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of Mistrust</td>
<td>0.43***</td>
<td>9.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $R^2 = 0.4$; $p < 0.001***$; $p < 0.05*$. Only statistically significant estimated coefficients for preparation for bias shown.

Relationships Between Variables and Promotion of Mistrust Using Regression Analysis

Regression analyses were conducted to ascertain the independent variables associated with the promotion of mistrust practice among Muslim families. The findings indicated parental promotion of mistrust was significantly and positively correlated with Muslim American male students ($\beta = 0.47, t = 2.80$), and significantly negatively correlated with female Muslim
American students ($\beta = -0.48, t = -2.84$). Participants whose fathers were employed part time reported a positive correlation with the promotion of mistrust ($\beta = 0.70, t = 2.11$), an increase of 0.70 units in the promotion of mistrust had been observed among Muslim students whose fathers were engaged in part-time employment. Two practices from the ethnic and racial socialization showed positive relationships with promotion of mistrust: preparation for bias ($\beta = 0.60, t = 9.19$), and egalitarianism ($\beta = 0.33, t = 3.70$). Another practice from ethnic and racial socialization, overt cultural socialization, was found negatively correlated to promotion of mistrust ($\beta = -0.24, t = -2.38$), as shown in Table 15.

Table 15

*Estimated Coefficients and Levels of Significance for Variables in the Final Regression Models*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variables</th>
<th>Estimated coefficient</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female Muslim Student</td>
<td>-0.48**</td>
<td>-2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overt Cultural Socialization</td>
<td>-0.24*</td>
<td>-2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egalitarianism</td>
<td>0.33***</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Muslim Student</td>
<td>0.47*</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation For Bias</td>
<td>0.60***</td>
<td>9.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers Part Time Employee</td>
<td>0.70*</td>
<td>2.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. $R^2 = 0.39$; $p < 0.001$***; $p < 0.005$**; $p < 0.05$*. Only statistically significant estimated coefficients for promotion of mistrust shown.*

**Relationships Between Variables and Egalitarianism Using Regression Analysis**

The examination of independent variables linked to egalitarianism in Muslim families entailed the use of several regression analyses. Regression analysis indicated a significant positive association between egalitarianism and parental overt cultural socialization ($\beta = 0.31, t = 4.50$), the provision of promotion of mistrust ($\beta = 0.17, t = 3.83$), and preparation for bias ($\beta = 0.12, t = 2.44$). These interactions demonstrated an incremental unit rise in overt cultural socialization, promotion of mistrust, and preparation for bias is linked to 0.31, 0.17, and 0.12 units increase of egalitarianism, respectively. Similarly, the level of education of the fathers of
Muslim American students was positively correlated with egalitarianism ($\beta = 0.53, t = 2.30$). The results indicated spirituality demonstrated a statistical significance ($\beta = 0.28, t = 3.45$), showing a positive correlation with egalitarianism. Moreover, the link between mothers of Muslim American students who were self-employed, and egalitarianism was negative and statistically significant ($\beta = -1.123, t = -3.16$), and perceived prejudice with a coefficient ($\beta = -1.40; t = -2.30$; see Table 16).

Table 16

Estimated Coefficients and Levels of Significance for Variables in the Final Regression Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variables</th>
<th>Estimated coefficient</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Prejudice</td>
<td>-1.40*</td>
<td>-2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers Self-Employed</td>
<td>-1.03***</td>
<td>-3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation For Bias</td>
<td>0.12*</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of Mistrust</td>
<td>0.17***</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td>0.28***</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overt Cultural Socialization</td>
<td>0.31***</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers’ Education</td>
<td>0.53*</td>
<td>2.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $R^2 = 0.48; p < 0.001***; p < 0.05*$. Only statistically significant estimated coefficients for egalitarianism shown.

Effects of Ethnic-Racial Socialization Practices on Resilience

Several regression analyses were performed to address the primary inquiries, “To what extent does ethnic-racial socialization affect Muslim students’ resilience when experiencing school-based Islamophobic situations?” and “Which practice of ethnic-racial socialization is more effective at mitigating the negative impact of Islamophobia?” The analysis showed covert cultural socialization in the study was positively associated with resilience, indicating a statistical significance ($\beta = 1.74, t = 3.76$). The impact was significant as each additional unit of covert cultural socialization was linked to an increase of almost two units in resilience. A notable statistical association between resilience and overt cultural socialization was evident in the study
(β = 2.03, t = 4.32), highlighting the immense significance of all forms of cultural socialization in fostering the resilience of Muslim American students. Thus, parents engaged in cultural socialization practices more than preparing their children for discrimination and bias or promotion of mistrust. Preparation for bias and the promotion of mistrust were not statistically significant in the present study, suggesting when Muslim families engage in preparing their children for bias and discrimination or teaching their children to mistrust or be attentive of other groups or people from a different cultural background or race, it does not seem to have any effect on the other cultural socialization and egalitarianism. However, resilience exhibited a positive correlation with statistical significance to egalitarianism (β = 1.52, t = 3.86). The impact holds great importance, given that each additional unit of egalitarianism is linked to a 1.5 unit rise in resilience (see Table 17).

Table 17

Estimated Coefficients and Levels of Significance for Ethnic Racial Socialization and Resilience in the Final Regression Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variables</th>
<th>Estimated coefficient</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Egalitarianism</td>
<td>1.52***</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covert Cultural Socialization</td>
<td>1.74***</td>
<td>3.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overt Cultural Socialization</td>
<td>2.03***</td>
<td>4.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $R^2 = 0.58$; $p < 0.001***$. Only statistically significant estimated coefficients shown.

Religiosity and Spirituality

To measure religiosity and spirituality, a subscale was added to FESM. This subscale consists of five items and was designed to assess Muslim students’ level of religiosity and spirituality in the face of discrimination. Regression analyses were performed to identify the significant factors that predict religiosity and spirituality. The study found the two items that
assessed the Muslim students’ spirituality had the highest mean that varied between 4.59 and 4.40 with a standard deviation between 0.71 and 0.95. The item “I have faith that Allah can protect and help me overcome difficulties in my life” had the highest mean of 4.59 (SD = 0.71), followed by the item “My belief in Allah helps me deal with life struggles,” with a mean of 4.40 (SD = 0.95). The three items designed to assess Muslim students’ religiosity had the lowest means. The items “I observe the Islamic rituals such as daily prayers and fasting” and “I attend religious and community events at the Mosque” scored the means of 4.24 (SD = 1.04) and 4.01 (SD = 1.13), respectively. The item “It is important for my family to go to the mosque” scored the lowest mean of 3.37 (SD = 1.40; see Table 18).

Table 18  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is important for my family to go to the mosque</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I attend religious and community events at the Mosque</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I observe the Islamic rituals such as daily prayers and fasting</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have faith that Allah protect and help me overcome difficulties</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My belief in Allah helps me deal with life struggle</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two variables were created by combining the items used to evaluate the religiosity and spirituality of Muslim American students. Religiosity and spirituality were the combined variables. The quantitative data analysis revealed higher scores in spirituality ($M = 4.44$, $SD = 0.66$) and slightly lower religiosity scores ($M = 3.80$, $SD = 0.93$). The statistical technique of regression analysis was employed to investigate the association between spirituality, religiosity, and resilience among Muslim American students. Spirituality showed a positive, moderate correlation to resilience and was statistically significant ($r = .225$, $p < .001$) indicating that participants who reported having higher levels of spirituality also reported higher levels of
resilience (see Table 19). Unlike religiosity, no significant correlation was found between the dependent variable of resilience and the independent variable of religiosity.

Table 19

Estimated Coefficients and Levels of Significance for Spirituality and Resilience in the Final Regression Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variable</th>
<th>Estimated coefficient</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td>1.96***</td>
<td>3.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. R² = 0.58; p < 0.001***.*

Relationships Between Variables and Spirituality Using Regression Analysis

To calculate the interaction effect of main variables on spirituality, additional regression analyses were performed. The findings indicated that spirituality of Muslim students was correlated with religiosity (β = 0.44, t = 8.48, p < 0.00), grades (β = 0.44, t = 3.18, p < 0.00), and the overt cultural socialization (β = 0.36, t = 3.26, p < 0.00), highlighting higher spirituality. An increase of one unit in religiosity, grade, and overt cultural socialization is associated with an approximate increase of between one third and a half a unit in spirituality. The spirituality of Muslim students was also correlated with egalitarianism (β = 0.11, t = 2.93, p < 0.001). Lower spirituality was associated with Muslim students of Arab origin (β = -0.26, t = -3.34, p < 0.001) and students whose mothers are full-time employees (β = -0.23, t = -2.22, p < 0.001). However, mothers of Muslim American students who were not employed showed a positive correlation with spirituality (β = 0.21, t = 2.4, p < 0.001), indicating that spirituality of Muslim students experienced a 0.21 unit increase for each mother who stayed at home and did not work. Moreover, the second construct of the religious discrimination scale, closet symptoms, reported a negative correlation with spirituality (β = -0.21, t = -4.44, p < 0.001; see Table 20).
Table 20

*Estimated Coefficients and Levels of Significance for Variables in the Final Regression Models*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variables</th>
<th>Estimated coefficient</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mothers Full Time Employed</td>
<td>-0.23***</td>
<td>3.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab Students</td>
<td>-0.21**</td>
<td>-3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closet Symptoms</td>
<td>-0.15***</td>
<td>-3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egalitarianism</td>
<td>0.11**</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers Not Employed</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overt Cultural Socialization</td>
<td>0.36***</td>
<td>3.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity</td>
<td>0.44***</td>
<td>8.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>0.44***</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. \( R^2 = 0.48; p < 0.001***; p < 0.005**. Only statistically significant estimated coefficients for spirituality shown.*

**Relationships Between Variables and Religiosity Using Regression Analysis**

Table 21 summarizes the findings of the regression analyses used to examine the relationship between religiosity among Muslim American students and the variables in the study.

Muslim American students of Arab origin reported positive levels of religiosity \( (\beta = 0.40, t = 2.92) \). Similarly, Muslim students of Southeast Asian origin showed a high level of religiosity, with a coefficient equal to the Arab students \( (\beta = 0.40, t = 2.57) \), indicating for every Muslim American of Arab or Southeast Asian descent, the religiosity of Muslim students increased by 0.40 units. Male students in the study reported a low level of religiosity \( (\beta = -0.22, t = -2.50) \), and students whose fathers were employed full time also reported a low level of religiosity \( (\beta = -0.34, t = -2.89) \).
Table 21

*Estimated Coefficients and Levels of Significance for Variables in the Final Regression Models*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variables</th>
<th>Estimated coefficient</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fathers Full Time Employed</td>
<td>-0.34*</td>
<td>-2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Students</td>
<td>-0.22**</td>
<td>-2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Labels</td>
<td>0.25***</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab Students</td>
<td>0.40**</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asian Students</td>
<td>0.40*</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covert Cultural Socialization</td>
<td>0.70***</td>
<td>9.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. $R^2 = 0.48; p < 0.001^{***}; p < 0.005^{**}; p < 0.05^*$. Only statistically significant estimated coefficients for religiosity shown.*

Additional analysis revealed covert cultural socialization, a construct of the family cultural socialization, was positively correlated with the religiosity of Muslim American students ($\beta = 0.70, t = 9.83$). The religiosity of Muslim students underwent a nearly one unit rise with each unit increase in covert cultural socialization. Moreover, negative labels, a construct of the religious discrimination scale, was positively correlated with religiosity ($\beta = 0.25, t = 3.27$). To put it differently, the greater number of negative stereotypes that Muslim American students encountered, the stronger their connection became to their religious faith.

**Discussion**

The changing religious makeup of the United States, along with the growing political discussions that specifically target religious minorities, particularly Muslim Americans, has sparked concerns about the prevalence of Islamophobia and bias among individuals. Given the increasing climate of Islamophobia and its correlation with the adverse effects on Muslim American students, the goal of this study was to address the existing research gap by comprehending the level of religious discrimination perceived by Muslim American students, assessing the resilience of Muslim American students in school settings in response to
Islamophobic incidents and the elements that contributed significantly to the cultivation of resilient behaviors among Muslim American students. Furthermore, the present study is among the initial ones to examine the implementation of ethnic-racial socialization, which encompasses a wide range of practices and manifests in diverse forms in the Muslim American student population.

**Religious Discrimination**

The traditional categorizations for challenging prejudice and discrimination against Muslims are no longer relevant to Muslims as a group, as categorizations of Muslims surpass race, ethnicity, skin color, nationality, and ethnicity because anyone can choose to become Muslim (Cheng et al., 2015). Muslims are targeted as a community with specific social identities in Islamophobic experiences (Cheng et al., 2015; Taras, 2012), and Islamophobia has become a complex issue that can manifest in various forms. Identifying the type(s) of discrimination is crucial to combating them effectively. Studies of discriminatory experiences faced by Muslim Americans in education often consider Islamophobia as a combination of religious and appearance-based discrimination (Padela & Curlin, 2013). Islamophobia is a form of discrimination that encompasses various categories of race, nationality, religion, and physical appearance. Consequently, Islamophobia is both a product of and a contributor to the creation of race or social construction of categories based on individuals’ physical characteristics in the United States (Harawa & Ford, 2009; Love, 2009).

In the present study, one of the main findings derived from the data were that Muslim American students experienced religious discrimination in educational settings because of their religious identity. The construct, negative labels, received a higher mean score from Muslim American students, indicating agreement with negative labels. Muslim American students in the
study reported being subjected to derogatory remarks regarding their religious identity, feeling hostility from others due to their religious identity, and that individuals in educational settings commonly hold negative stereotypes about Muslims. This finding was supported by Basford’s (2010) study analyzing instances of religious and cultural discrimination encountered by young Muslim immigrants from East Africa in a mainstream school in the United States. The experiences of Islamophobia in the school environment included feelings of being unwelcome and unsafe and the tendency to stereotype all students as anti-Muslim. Additionally, the curriculum lacked any discussion of their religion, and the immigrant experience was trivialized in U.S. public schools. Teachers and students displayed a lack of interest in East African Muslim culture. The Muslim students also experienced fear, shame, and embarrassment when it came to speaking their native language and wearing their traditional Islamic attire (Basford, 2010).

The findings derived from the current study indicated a distinction between masculinity and femininity in the expression of perceived Islamophobia resulted in a gender role consistent pattern of emotion expression, with female Muslim American students tending to experience more disrespectful behaviors than male students in school contexts because of their religion. The portrayal of Muslim women who wear the headscarf as oppressed has been exploited to legitimize Western colonialism for a long time (Zine, 2008). This has led to the justification of a supposed need for Muslim women to be rescued from their cultural and religious practices by Western European powers, with debates often centered around the hijab (Fernandez, 2010). Such discourse lies at the heart of gendered Islamophobia. Other characteristics in the current study (e.g., mothers’ education level) tended to broaden Muslim American students’ awareness about the Islamophobic social context leading to experiencing increasing negative assumptions and expressing fear when individuals find out about Muslim American students’ religious identity.
This result was supported by studies confirming that maternal education is strongly associated with children’s cognitive development and other important developmental resources in the family (Harding et al., 2015; Reardon, 2011) and had broader effects on children’s positive emotional well-being, skills, and practices in schools.

The findings presented here provided evidence that ethnicity was an important predictor of Muslim American students’ religious discrimination. Southeast Asians were most likely to keep their religious identity private, and as a result, experienced less discriminatory events in the school setting. On the contrary, Arab Muslim American students tend to make their religious identity visible. This finding supported the study conducted by Zainiddinov (2016) to explore the perceived religious discrimination among various racial and ethnic groups of the Muslim communities in the United States, revealing that Asian Muslim Americans reported the lowest prevalence of religious discrimination, and White Muslim men reported higher rates of discrimination compared to other groups, such as Black people, White women, and Asian women. Moreover, another study provided support for that particular discovery, revealing that South Asian Muslims were comparatively free from stereotypes in U.S. political circles (Leonard, 2003). Arab Muslims, for the most part, have adopted firm positions against U.S. policy in the Middle East and are currently facing mistreatment and discrimination because of the events of 9/11 (Leonard, 2003).

On one hand, birth order was highly associated with isolation and feeling alone in a school environment. This finding was surprising and opposing to many studies that showed children with siblings are found to be happier and spend more time with other adolescents (Wikle et al., 2019), as sibling interactions help children gain interpersonal skills, self-confidence, and socialization benefits with the external world (Downey et al., 2015). On the
other hand, in the present study, a positive significant relationship between losing involvement opportunities in schools was found with age. The older Muslim American students get less opportunities offered to them. Studies on the value of extracurricular activities recognized schools’ lack of inclusion, the need to boost extracurricular opportunities for all students, and contend with uneven participation and financial resources (Bradley, 2018; Jayanthi et al., 2014). Research has emphasized the importance of participation in extracurricular programs on students’ emotional development, academic benefits (Broh, 2002; Mahoney et al., 2006; Marsh & Kleitman, 2002), and foster social connectedness (Zaccoletti et al., 2020), especially students from marginalized communities.

**Resilience**

Further, the study examined how Muslim American students responded to Islamophobic experiences by assessing their resilience. The resilience strategies Muslim American students have used play a critical role in how well they managed ongoing Islamophobic experiences in schools. When analyzing resilience items, the results showed all Muslim American students were resilient; however, its levels of measurement varied from very low to high. This result was congruent with the findings of two studies where very few adolescents were found to have high levels of resilience (Barnsley, 2011; Bloger & Patterson, 2003). However, this result was incongruent with the results of some studies (Daining & DePanfilis, 2007; Shpiegel, 2012), perhaps due to the social and cultural differences, the different characteristics of the Muslim American student population, and more specifically, due to the different instruments and methods used to determine the level of resilience.

This study set out to discover how Muslim American students enacted resilience despite the emotional pain and stress associated with their experiences of discrimination and
marginalization. Two resilience strategies emerged from the data: (a) spirituality, (b) practices of ethnic-racial socialization such as cultural socialization which include overt cultural socialization and covert cultural socialization, and (c) egalitarianism.

**Spirituality**

The current study investigated the role of spirituality and religiosity as possible resilience strategies for Muslim American students. Spirituality and resilience were strongly correlated. The findings presented here provided evidence that spirituality was a more relevant construct for Muslim American students of varying levels of religiosity (e.g., two individuals of varying levels of religious practices may report feeling close to Allah and their faith). Further, spirituality is more about seizing the thoughts and feelings related to faith in everyday life instead of measuring the participants’ responses on their religious attendance and rituals (Underwood & Teresi, 2002).

This finding was consistent with the findings of previous studies. Muslim American youth reported that spirituality provided positive resources to the participants, such as adaptation (Goforth et al., 2014; Kumar, 2015), connecting with a higher power and making meaning of the experiences (Abu-Raiya et al., 2011), and experiencing minor negative psychological outcomes (S. R. Ahmed et al., 2011). The centrality of spirituality as a protective factor was previously supported by the literature, as it found spirituality promotes positive outcomes for individuals especially the marginalized communities such as Muslim youth (Kumar, 2015). Surprisingly, religion did not appear to be a significant factor to resilience, although 66% of Muslim American youth rated religion as a very important element in their lives, and 44% attend the weekly religious service (Pew Research Center, 2017).
Ethnic-Racial Socialization

Research has examined ethnic-racial socialization consisting of messages parents transmit to children about their ethnic-racial group, including those related to discrimination, racism and racial inequality, and the impact of those experiences on children’s resilient behaviors (Simon, 2021; Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020). In the current study, ethnic-racial socialization and resilience among Muslim American students were analyzed with emphasis on the four socialization practices: (a) cultural socialization, (b) preparation for bias, (c) promotion of mistrust, and (d) egalitarianism. Among the four practices, only two were significant and positively correlated with resilience: (a) cultural socialization and (b) egalitarianism.

Cultural Socialization

Studies suggested resilience is associated with parents’ cultural socialization and may promote ethnic pride among marginalized youth (Knight et al., 2011) and help them overcome the negative impacts of discrimination and racism (D. L. Brown & Tylka, 2011; Burt et al., 2012, 2017; Iruka et al., 2014). Repeated research has shown cultural socialization to be a protective factor for African American adolescents (Burt et al., 2012, 2017), Latinx youth (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015), and Asian Americans (C. M. Kodama & Dugan, 2020) against discrimination and racism. Cultural socialization includes both intentional parents’ messages, known as overt cultural socialization, and unintentional messages, known as covert cultural socialization. In the current study, overt and covert cultural socialization were found to be important processes that helped Muslim American students develop resilient behaviors in the face of Islamophobic discriminatory experiences. Resilience is associated with cultural socialization; the more parental messages Muslim American students received, the more resilient they become against Islamophobic discriminatory events.
Additionally, with relation to the demographic variables included in the analyses, the current study found Arab Muslim American students reported positive effects on overt and covert cultural socialization, indicating that cultural socialization occurs commonly and frequently in Arab families more than any ethnic or racial group included in the current study. This finding is consistent with previous studies. Arab American women put the preservation of Arab culture as a priority in the United States (Aboulhassan & Brumley, 2019). Arab American women, particularly immigrants, are frequently responsible for domestic responsibilities and have less possibilities to adapt into U.S. culture (Amer, 2014). Research indicated that women are more extensively categorized in terms of culture compared to men, as they possess a stronger sense of responsibility in passing down their cultural legacy to their families and descendants (Aboulhassan & Brumley, 2019), including Arab American women. These results were confirmed in this study. Mothers’ education is inversely connected to cultural socialization because it is highly likely that mothers will pursue employment opportunities when they attain a higher level of education. Likewise, those with self-employed fathers exhibited a negative correlation with both types of cultural socialization, which may be because of the demanding workload and the absence of social interaction with children regarding their culture.

Southeast Asian students’ negative association with covert cultural socialization came as a surprise in the current study. This finding lacks substantial support from a number of studies, as prior research has documented the efforts made by parents of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds to educate their children about their cultural heritage across many marginalized groups, including Asian Americans, the umbrella under which Southeast Asians fall (Hughes et al., 2006; Rivas-Drake et al., 2009; A. G. T. T. Tran & Lee, 2010; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2009). Research has consistently replicated the patterns associated with cultural strengths among Asian
Americans (Yip et al., 2008; Yoo & Lee, 2008). Nevertheless, a study conducted on Indian American children, a few of whom were involved in the present study, revealed Indian children as ethnic minorities reside in predominantly White suburban communities (Bhatia, 2007; Purkayastha, 2005). As a result, they must navigate the preservation of their cultural traditions and practices with greater awareness and deliberation (Bhatia, 2007; Purkayastha, 2005).

**Egalitarianism**

The process of fostering egalitarianism in society involves promoting any activity that instills in children and young individuals the importance of valuing personal attributes rather than racial or ethnic affiliations. Neblett et al. (2006) revealed African American adolescents in middle and high school who were exposed to messages promoting interracial equality exhibited higher levels of classroom engagement. Instilling universal principles and promoting mutual understanding among diverse racial communities can play a pivotal role in cultivating a robust ethnic identity, which in turn fosters resilient behaviors in educational institutions. The current study provided evidence to support the finding that there was a correlation between the resilience of Muslim American students and their belief in egalitarian messages transmitted by Muslim parents.

**Preparation for Bias and Promotion of Mistrust**

In the present study, there was no direct correlation between readiness for bias and discrimination and resilience among Muslim American students. Furthermore, Muslim parents refrained from employing this method to assist their children in navigating the challenges of Islamophobia and discrimination in U.S. educational institutions. Additionally, research indicated that readiness for prejudice offers individuals the ability to withstand the negative impacts of racial discrimination, and various parents from marginalized communities have used
this practice to prepare their children for possible discriminatory experiences (Cooper et al., 2015; Hughes et al., 2006; Scott, 2003). Preparation for bias has the potential to mitigate the harmful effects of discrimination in multiple ways. First, it serves as a warning to young individuals, ensuring they are not taken by surprise when faced with discrimination (Cooper et al., 2015). This knowledge helps them avoid blaming themselves or feeling isolated in situations where discrimination occurs. Additionally, preparation equips them with the necessary skills to effectively manage all forms of discrimination, empowering them to navigate such challenges with resilience (Cooper et al., 2015; Hughes et al., 2006; Scott, 2003).

On the other hand, the current study found no association between promotion of mistrust and resilience among Muslim American students. Contemporary research indicated the dissemination of messages that foster mistrust could potentially lead children to anticipate mistreatment from individuals belonging to different ethnic backgrounds and interpret their interactions in manners that validate this anticipation (Huynh & Fuligni, 2008; A. G. T. T. Tran & Lee, 2010). Despite being less extensively studied in the existing literature, recent research on second-generation Haitians indicated that negative socialization messages, specifically those that promote mistrust and caution toward other ethnicities, could impede the exploration of ethnic identity. Consequently, this may intentionally or unintentionally isolate individuals from their own ethnicities and hinder their subsequent identity development (Joseph & Hunter, 2011).

Research investigating the correlation between the preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust messages and resilience, particularly among Muslim Americans, remains inconclusive. Nevertheless, drawing from previous studies conducted on different cohorts, preparation for bias would have a positive association with resilience, and the propagation of mistrust would have an adverse impact on resilience among Muslim American students. For that information, the
qualitative phase delves deeper into the examination of both preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust. This data provides a better understanding of the reasons behind the lack of engagement from Muslim parents in these two practices.
CHAPTER 5
QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

The findings in this chapter stem from an examination of two qualitative focus groups carried out with Muslim American students. The students responded to a series of structured prompts about Islamophobia, resilience, and ethnic-racial socialization. The prompts included the following topics: (a) Muslim students’ experiences of Islamophobia in schools; (b) Muslim students’ perspectives on Islamophobic experiences prior to and subsequent to the Israeli war in Gaza; (c) how experiences of Islamophobia made Muslim students feel; (d) what are the reasons behind the lower resilience levels observed in Muslim girls compared to Muslim boys, and why spirituality has a more profound influence on the resilience of Muslim American students, unlike religion?; (e) Muslim parents prioritizing two specific practices of ethnic racial socialization: cultural socialization and egalitarianism; (f) Muslim students’ experiences with parental preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust socialization.

A thorough examination of every focus group was carried out in relation to relevant literature to explore the narratives of students and identify emerging themes from their responses. This chapter presents major themes and related subthemes that emerged from the students’ accounts.

Findings

The data revealed the predominant theme that emerged was the act of “othering.” The perpetuation of negative stereotypes against Muslims and Islam, particularly through media outlets, has played a significant role in fueling the increase of Islamophobia. The prevailing stereotypes have the tendency to dehumanize Muslims and further solidify the perception of Muslims as the others, a threat to be feared (Casey, 2018). The perpetuation of these negative
stereotypes in the western media reinforces the dichotomy between “us” and “them” (Bishop, 2003, p. 68). Individuals who can be recognized as Muslims (e.g., those who wear headscarves or have names that reflect their identity) are more likely to be associated with these negative stereotypes. Regrettably, the situation has not shown any signs of improvement as Muslim students continue to face marginalization and incidents of hatred in educational institutions.

Additional themes arose from the discussions, with a particular focus on the resilience of Muslim students with an emphasis on few variables such as (a) gender and spirituality; (b) cultural-spiritual and moral socialization among Muslim families, as cultural socialization is consistently accompanied by spiritual and moral elements; (c) Islamic teachings on justice and equality serve as a basis for egalitarianism; and finally, (d) preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust. The unexpected theme that surfaced was the prominence of social media.

Theme 1: Islamophobic Hate Incidents in Schools

Regardless of the setting or location, existing literature indicated hate incidents related to Islamophobia, which are more visible and tangible, have generally been categorized as verbal harassment (Allen, 2010, 2020; Allen & Nielsen, 2002; Zempi & Awan, 2016; Zempi & Chakraborti, 2014). All participants in the current study reported experiencing verbal abuse, name calling, or the use of derogatory slurs. According to their explanation, the most prevalent variations consisted of terms such as “terrorist,” “bomb boy,” “Osama bin Laden,” and “extremist.” They have also been told “go back to your country.” Those who encountered this form of Islamophobia shared their experiences of it occurring in various settings and locations in the school’s premises. As Ahmad put it, “They often joke about it, they call me bad names even during classroom discussions.” Sara also explained, “Sometimes students tend to whisper and make negative comments as they walk past me.”
Unsurprisingly, hate incidents were most commonly experienced by female students who were easily identifiable as Muslim. Sereen, a student who wears a hijab, alleged she had encountered verbal harassment “at least 20–30 times.” During the focus group session, a few female students raised an important point. They highlighted their visibility had made them “easy targets” and inadvertently provided a platform for individuals to express their Islamophobic views. Nadia, a female student, recollected encountering three White students in her high school who consistently made Islamophobic jokes whenever their paths crossed. Nadia was asked, “How is the bomb you are working on?” and “What’s this thing on your head? . . . What happens if you take it off?” Even in the absence of wearing a hijab, if students choose to wear modest clothing that did not align with the current western fashion trends for female students, or if students openly identify themselves as a Muslim, they encountered similar hate incidents. For example, Mariam said, “At my school, they know that I am Muslim so they would often make Islamophobic comments . . . like, your uncle Bin Laden.” Malak added, “I experienced so many racist incidents, and they always bring up 9/11, because the whole school knows I am Muslim” and Isra shared, “I witnessed times when it got racist and really offended.”

**Islamophobia in the Global Context**

For Allen (2020), Islamophobia is entirely dependent on the context and influenced by various factors such as social, political, cultural, religious, theological, national, and geographical elements. It is a responsive phenomenon that has been shaped by the specific setting in which it occurs. Islamophobia, in its entirety, is a contemporary discriminatory phenomenon that occasionally relies on history and historical events to validate, rationalize, and legitimize acts of discrimination, prejudice, and hate in the here and now (Allen, 2020). The political climate after October 7, 2023, has completely shattered the initial assumption that
Islamophobia was in decline, and has shown how Islamophobia makes possible the justification of genocidal violence in Palestine. Since the escalation of Israeli violence against Palestinians, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) has documented a total of 1,283 bias incidents targeting Muslims between October 7–November 4, 2023. The recent increase in Islamophobia and anti-Arab sentiment across the United States marks a 216% increase over the previous year. In an average 29-day period in 2022, CAIR received 406 complaints (CAIR, 2024). The brutal murder of a 6-year-old Muslim child on October 14, 2023, in Illinois, who was mercilessly stabbed multiple times, stands as one of the most appalling hate crimes driven by Islamophobia (Yan et al., 2023). In addition, three Palestinian college students who were shot in Vermont on November 25, 2023 while walking, speaking Arabic, and wearing the Palestinian scarf known as *keffiyeh* again shows the violence depicted toward young Muslims (Reed, 2023). Moreover, the anti-Palestinian racism and Islamophobia was further noted across U.S. college campuses, as university administrators frequently cancel lectures, classes, professorships, and even student organizations simply because they publicly supported human rights for Palestinians (Iftikhar, 2023).

Participants in this research study have also reported a rise in Islamophobic occurrences since the Israeli war in Gaza, experiencing excessive verbal abuse, name calling, the use of derogatory slurs, and silencing. As one male student Amir put it:

> We have seen something similar during the war in Iraq, and now Palestine . . . we always experience an extra load of pain and suffering if anything happens in an Arab or Muslim country . . . since the war on Gaza, I was called a “terrorist” so many times.

Mohamed, a male student explained, “My friend is part of the school newspaper, he was one of the students who decided to publish a cartoon condemning the Palestinian genocide, and he was
severely attacked and threatened.” Zack, another male student added, “My cousin wore ‘free Palestine’ shirt, and he faced offensive comments.” Jana, a female student said, “I was walking with my friends and then a student came up to me and said with a rude voice, do you stand with Israel or Palestine? . . . I was scared and could not speak.” Although few students explicitly articulated these experiences as microaggressions, others alluded to them being premised on the basis of discrimination, Islamophobia, and most importantly, silencing and censorship. Muslim students’ experiences took place during a period when the U.S. Department of Education asserted that social justice has been integrated into the U.S. education system, emphasizing the importance of fairness in how instruction is delivered, the results, acknowledgment of marginalized communities and their perspectives, and the complete and equal involvement of all groups (Hyland & Heuschkel, 2010). However, research conducted by Briscoe (2005) and Maliepaard (2012) indicated ethnic and religious marginalization is prevalent in U.S. school systems, leading to detrimental effects on students’ mental health and academic performance.

All the students have expressed, since October 7, 2023, schools exhibited a biased approach by solely focusing on Israel while blatantly disregarding Palestine. This bias is evident in the principals’ messages, classroom discussions, curriculum, and the perspectives held by individuals in the school community. They further stated they were not only facing a continuous stream of verbal abuse, but they were also silenced, as they were unable to openly articulate their perspective on Palestine in schools. As Sara put it:

In my history class we were learning about Israel and origin, and one of the chapters says that one of their enemies are Palestinians. I felt very upset and annoyed because Palestinians are the indigenous people. Palestinians are me, my family, my grandparents, and my ancestors.
Mariam also added her experience, saying, “So many times I felt misrepresented as a Palestinian, or in a sense attacked indirectly, and I wanted to speak up but out of fear I haven’t spoken up,” because the teacher is seen as an authoritative figure in the classroom and has the power to determine their grades (Ali & Begheri, 2009). Similar experience and feelings were expressed by a male student Ramy:

In history we are learning about world news and it’s mostly focused on the U.S. . . . It’s annoying and uncomfortable when you see teachers and students siding with Israel, just because I am Muslim and Arab, my side of the story is not respected, and my feelings are completely ignored.

This finding supported DeSena and Ansalone’s (2009) study that confirmed the prevalent notion of power and privilege, and it challenged the notion the U.S. educational system functions as a means for social mobility. It showed how schools have been serving to maintain social hierarchy and strengthen the presence of social inequality.

**Nonverbal Interactions**

Several participants mentioned instances of unpleasant public encounters, in which no verbal words were exchanged, yet the other person appeared intentionally rude through their nonverbal cues, such as their facial expressions and looks. Male and female students spoke about nonverbal interactions, but female students tended to experience them more frequently. One female participant, Assia explained, “They’re just giving you a weird look,” and Isra added, “Nothing to pinpoint on but the energy you feel, the vibes, and the looks you get.” Although participants were unable to conclusively determine whether the interaction was driven by anti-Islam prejudice, they questioned why they would openly stare at them and intentionally not greet them. One example shared by a male student, Nabil, was as follows: “Another incident where
you feel mistreated by people you know in school, they do not tell you anything negative but how they look at you, it makes you really uncomfortable.”

Others spoke about the diverse consequences arising from their experiences with hate incidents in schools. Although one male student Youcef expressed, “I don’t really care at this point . . . although it does affect you,” the majority of participants—both male and female—shared their stories about how their experiences had negatively impacted their mental health and emotional well-being. Female students in particular expressed feelings of being anxious, scared, and having a sense of insecurity. For some participants, they were left with a sense of anger and a desire for revenge because of the hate incidents, and others felt a sense of isolation and exclusion. This led to some feeling scared and unsafe in schools.

Students dedicated a large portion of their active hours in schools; thus, the emphasis on education and intellectual growth has taken a parallel road to that of identity development (Jilani, 2015). Schools play an important role in providing students with the opportunity to understand themselves in relation to the context of their greater community (Rich & Schachter, 2012). Muslim students in this study negotiated between their Muslim identity and the identity imposed by the school’s culture. Participants reported they felt more like “themselves” when outside the United States. Yasmine, a female student explained:

I do not feel that the United States is my home or my country. I do not feel a connection to America or the society here because I am a Muslim. For example, I was recently in Amman, I am not Jordanian, but once there I felt that . . . oh my God . . . these are my people, I felt at home.

Ahmed further added, “When I went to Turkey, hearing the call to prayer, so it signals the whole world it is the time to pray. You feel good, and you cannot feel shy to do it.”
Given the school and social climate of the United States and widespread Islamophobia, Muslim American identity formation has been difficult for students. A sense of self-concept is what enables students to possess the confidence required to acculturate to the U.S. societal norms. Therefore, as Gaddis (2013) suggested, Muslim Americans must make a choice between relinquishing their identity and conforming to societal norms or embracing their identity and facing the possibility of exclusion from social norms, which may result in isolation (Stoll, 2011). More studies asserted students can be better equipped to navigate identity-challenging situations when educators demonstrate genuine concern for students, serve as role models, and educational institutions implement comprehensive programs focusing on students’ well-being rather than solely on academic performance (Kaplan & Flum, 2012; Rich & Schachter, 2012).

Approximately two thirds of the participants reported their experiences in schools had a negative effect on their interactions with non-Muslim students. As Jana explained, “I am now nervous around my non-Muslim friends in schools. I’m always watching my words and behavior.” As a result, when attending public school, Muslim students experienced external pressures to conform and integrate, and internal conflicts in maintaining their Islamic faith. However, students who received Islamic education or had a nurturing home environment displayed a strong sense of confidence in their Muslim identity during their school years. They clarified that being exposed to Islamic knowledge in their household, at the mosque, or in Islamic weekend schools, and being raised by devout parents and in a religious household consistently served as a reminder of their religious responsibilities. For that, they did not conform to the social pressures of public school. They abstained from engaging in school activities that implicitly or explicitly challenged her religious beliefs, and Amir noted they felt “like the exact same person in terms of . . . at home and at school.”
Theme 2: To Be Muslim Is to Be Ignored, Unseen, and Unheard

Enhancing the emotional well-being of Muslim students in public schools must be grounded in accurate knowledge about Islam, Muslims, and Muslims’ culture. In numerous instances, Muslim children are enrolled in schools where the entire school community, including students, their parents, teachers, principals, and school counselors have unquestionably embraced the biased and often incorrect messages that have been conveyed overtly and covertly through the media. As Seward and Khan (2016) noted, “Muslim adolescents reported difficulties ranging from interacting with prejudiced school professionals to managing peer pressure to engage in activities incongruent with their religious beliefs” (p. 3). Chen et al. (2019) also found that Muslim students were often ignored by teachers and peers, and they never participated in classroom discussions or group activities because of their Muslim religious identity.

Throughout the focus group, the participants dedicated a significant amount of time discussing issues linked to the previously mentioned studies. Most of the participants asserted there was a notable lack of student–teacher interaction in their classrooms, they were even often ignored, and they claimed they rarely engaged in classroom discussions because of their Muslim religious identity. Ramy summarized his experience in school, saying, “To be Muslim is to be ignored, unseen, and unheard in schools.” At times, teachers subjected the Muslim students to unfair treatment due to their limited knowledge about their students’ cultural and religious background. Frequently, teachers made remarks in front of students, without realizing the potential harm it may have caused their Muslim students, who inherently seek respect from their peers. According to Assia, “I raised my hand in class to talk, I was ignored; and after class I went to talk to the teacher, but he completely ignored me. He didn’t care about my perspective and my feelings.” Another male student, Youcef added, “Not only that we are not seen by teachers, on
any school papers and tests when you have to pick your race and ethnicity, you don’t find
yourself,” and all students said, “Right.” Akram added to this sentiment by asking, “Why do we
have to put White if we are not White?”

In the current study, the counselors were discovered to have faltered in adequately
providing support for Muslim students. Middle school and high school students involved in this
study, who were diligently preparing to graduate and secure admission into reputable
universities, were also being ignored by school counselors. Sereen explained her experience with
the school’s counselor, saying:

For example, at my school when I go to see the counselor because I have questions, I feel
that she is not giving me all the information I am looking for. I don’t know . . . I feel that
I am not supported, but I have seen her fully supporting other students.

The findings of my study supported the conclusions drawn by Zine (2008), who also denounced
public schools and many teachers for negatively impacting the self-esteem of Muslim students
and identities by displaying discriminatory behaviors toward their Muslim students. Thangaraj
(2017) additionally noted Muslim students are being subjected to unequal and unjust treatment in
school settings. The findings of this study endorsed the prior study, indicating an increased lack
of awareness and urgency to recognize and address instances of Islamophobia when it took place
in public schools. Furthermore, the absence of an inclusive framework, curriculum, and
pedagogy, and a supportive environment in schools are all factors leading to the negative
experiences of Muslim students in this study.

Theme 3: Teachers’ Biased Approaches to Curriculum Topics

Although a few teachers have played a significant role in equipping students with a
comprehensive understanding of the present global situations, others completely disregarded the
presence of Muslim students in their classrooms who could be hurt by some of the topics discussed. Teachers occasionally overlooked the significance of providing detailed information when teaching such topics in their classes. When asked about their perceptions about the course material covering topics related to Islam and Muslims, students in this study elucidated that teachers placed heavy reliance on the stereotypes fueled by media misrepresentations of Muslims and textbooks that can be culturally deficient educational tools. All students in the study raised concerns regarding teachers using problematic and inappropriate materials that presented a singular perspective without considering the feelings or experiences of Muslim students. Malak shared the following experience from her class discussions:

Honestly, I would do anything to not attend classroom discussion on 9/11 events or discussions on the Middle East region. In the 9/11 discussion, students and teachers in the class openly blamed and criticized Muslims, and how Islam teaches terrorism.

Mohamed added:

The curriculum about Islam and the Middle East is always the last thing taught. It is always the smallest part, and is mainly about Sunnis and ShIAS, and how Arabs are violent. We need a unit about discrimination toward Arabs and Muslim Americans especially now with the Israeli war on Gaza.

Suleiman (1996) predicted schools will persist in neglecting the recognition of Arab culture and history or even endeavor to combat the perpetuation of Arab stereotypes, and this was indeed confirmed in research almost 25 years later by Rowe (2019) and Mir and Sarroub (2019). Carpentier and Lall (2005) also found a “one size fits all” approach continues to be widespread in different educational institutions. Furthermore, all participants in this study believed their schools, similar to others across the United States, not only fall short to teach
accurate, nuanced history and provide unbiased context about Israel war on Palestine, but also contribute to the perpetuation of divisive anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiment in the United States. Students also spoke about the absence of references to the historical context, which encompasses 75 years of Israeli expulsion, colonization, and occupation of Palestine. The students raised concerns about how Arabs and Muslims face a grave threat to their safety, in and outside of schools, as they become targets due to baseless allegations of accurate instruction on Islam, the Middle East, Palestinians, and being labeled antisemitic. The conflation between antisemitism and criticism of Israeli crimes against Palestinian civilians is dangerous and leads to the silencing of Palestinian voices. As Ahmad explained, “You know what makes me hate this country is western media and politicians...keep talking about 150 hostages forgetting more than 28,000 Palestinians who have been killed and 67,000 others injured in Israeli strikes on Gaza.” Isra questioned:

Why my family members who were killed in Gaza are not seen as humans, and why my other family members who have no home, no water, no food do not get any attention...My family in Gaza told us that the nights are very cold and extremely terrifying.”

All students in this study agreed that many Muslims have made significant contributions in the domains of mathematics, science, physics, literature, and other subjects. However, regrettably, these contributions often go unnoticed or have been deliberately overlooked, resulting in an erroneous depiction of Muslims and their valuable contributions to the collective knowledge. Furthermore, students emphasized the importance of going beyond superficial recognition of cultural festivals in public schools. They argued it is crucial to impart a deeper understanding, construct new knowledge, and encourage the sharing of multiple perspectives to truly teach diversity. This finding was consistent with a previous study, and by adequately
incorporating Muslim civilizations, their contributions, and their influence on the world, U.S. public schools can enable students to understand the deep connections between different cultures (Vasquez Heilig et al., 2012). In this study, Muslim students concluded they wanted to be given the opportunity to establish connections to the current social structure and observe the valuable contributions made by Muslims to culture and society. They displayed a strong sense of enthusiasm to see how their presence influences citizenship, not just in schools, but also in the broader U.S. society.

**Theme 4: Resilience of Muslim American Students**

When asked about the factors they believe contributed to the perceived difference in resilience between Muslim female and male students, a number of participants indicated that parents hold distinct expectations for their sons and daughters. Parents, especially fathers, tend to perceive and handle girls and boys in distinct ways. On one hand, boys are thought to be stronger, are often subjected to rougher treatment, and engaged in more active play. On the other hand, girls are physically and emotionally protected and allowed less autonomy than boys.

Yasmine spoke about how she perceives her dad, saying:

> He is very protective over me. If I ask to hang out with my friend, he would ask me:

> “Who is your friend? Where are you going? Do you have enough money? When are you leaving? When are you planning to be back?”

Taking this into consideration, previous research has shown that parents are generally more worried about their daughters than about their sons, and it has been contended this is a fundamental factor contributing to the increased parental control over girls as well (Junger-Tas et al., 2004; Svensson, 2004). Girls, as a result of this, often exhibit lower levels of resilience (Boardman et al., 2012). For another of the female students, regularly and repeatedly attending
schools, and being in the company of the same individuals necessitates making compromises. As explained by Malak, “If everyone else sees certain things, you often feel the need to be with them and not have your separate views because you are already considered as different, you don’t want to be seen as more different.” Mariam also noted, “At school, I am always scared to share my perspective. I do not want teachers and students to have a bad image of me and my community because we are already perceived as ‘different’ from the rest.” For some of the female students, they were unequivocal in their belief that as students in their schools, they felt hesitation and a sense of silencing when it came to sharing their experiences or thoughts on several issues. Moreover, female students’ comfort levels in schools were significantly lower as a result of the disparity in values they encountered when attending public schools. In their schools, female students often felt reservations about participating responsively because it became “us” versus “them.” Moreover, going to public schools means living as out-group Muslims; female students added feeling apprehensive about joining in the popular culture of their schools because that would require compromising on religious beliefs and values. Assia explained:

There are so many aspects to Muslim girls’ lives. It is not only the hijab, it’s the way we dress, if we wear makeup, tight and revealing clothes. The boys don’t have to go through that, they don’t need to decide to wear makeup to feel less judged, not wear a hijab, even if I want to, because I want to feel accepted at school.

This finding aligned with the fact that female students socialize to be relationship-oriented, and male students socialize to be independent (Maciejewski et al., 2001). Under the “cost of caring” hypothesis, it is believed that females exhibit a higher level of sensitivity toward the problems and issues experienced by their friends and family members (Maciejewski et al.,
2001). For that, females seem to exhibit lower resilience toward stressors related to friends, family, and familiar environment owing to their societal responsibilities as caregivers (Boardman et al., 2012). For instance, Kendler et al. (2001) provided evidence that, when compared to male students, female students did not display a greater susceptibility to stressful life events in general, leading to low resilience.

In this study, male participants observed that boys are commonly perceived as having greater physical and emotional strength, and as a result, they often experience rougher treatment and engage in more vigorous play. Conversely, girls are typically provided with physical and emotional protection and are granted less independence compared to boys. As Nabil put it:

As boys we are created differently . . . physically and emotionally but I also think about how parents treat boys. I always feel that my parents are more protective of my sisters than me because I need to be strong.

In other words, the interaction between gender socialization and genetic factors can have varying effects on resilience. For women, it may potentially diminish their resilience, and for men, it can help in the realization of certain genetic potential that enhances resilience (Boardman et al., 2012).

However, few students explained the times they felt resilient was when they recalled their connection with Allah and reflected on how this connection has strengthened and uplifted them throughout their lives. They experienced the comforting presence of Allah, felt heard and connected to him, and found their spiritual connection with Allah had a profound impact on their lives. Students explained experiencing increased resilience when they pray to Allah and go to the mosque. Sereen noted, “I feel strong, and confident and nothing else matters in this life when I pray, but when I am disconnected from my faith, I feel that lack in my life and that is what
makes me resilient.” Numerous studies have provided evidence for the significance of spirituality in achieving positive long-term results (Bryant-Davis & Wong, 2013; Campbell & Bauer, 2021; I. Tuck & Anderson, 2014).

Spirituality appears to play a crucial role in navigating life’s obstacles and acts as a conduit to resilience and overall wellness (Manning, 2014). Research has linked spirituality to happiness, well-being, and satisfaction with life (Paik et al., 2017). Spirituality has also been recognized by individuals who have experienced trauma as an important factor that contributes to positivity, optimism, security, and a sense of purpose (Bryant-Davis & Wong, 2013; Milner et al., 2020). Collectively, these findings indicated that spirituality plays a crucial role in enhancing resilience when individuals encounter challenges in various aspects of life.

**Theme 5: Ethnic-Racial Socialization**

Muslim families need to ensure their children are well-prepared to thrive in U.S. society. This includes educating them on their cultures, values, societal norms, and expected conduct in the future. Next are the main practices of ethnic-racial socialization that emerged from the Muslim students’ conversations.

**Cultural-Spiritual and Moral Socialization Among Muslim Families**

The need to teach younger generations about their ethnic-racial heritage, cultural customs and traditions, and foster a sense of ethnic-racial pride has been recognized by Muslim families (Zeitouni, 2022). The processes encompass verbal and nonverbal communication regarding the interpretation and importance of ethnicity, religion, membership and identity in their ethnic groups, and interactions between different groups and in the same group (Hughes et al., 2006; Lesane-Brown, 2006; Neblett et al., 2008). In terms of the students who participated in this study, all participants reported receiving parental verbal messages that occurred through face-to-
face interactions about their ethnic and cultural heritage, and through parental discussions they have witnessed. These messages are frequently explicit, making them easily remembered in the self-reports of students. As Akram put it, “I enjoy listening to my parents teaching us about the history of our country and telling us stories of cultural figures.”

Students in this study, for instance, indicated that children and their parents are equally likely to initiate conversations about cultural heritage. As Jana explained, “I am always asking questions to my grandma about our history, food, and small things in our culture like ‘tatriz,’ and she is now teaching me Palestinian embroidery.” Learning about Arabs’ culture was typically acquired through implicit socialization in the household, leading to a natural process of learning. However, according to this study, many Muslim Arab students reported their parents actively engaged in cultural socialization, which involves the intentional transmission of specific ethnic knowledge and values intertwined with spiritual messages.

Parental spiritual socialization may not always occur alongside cultural socialization, but cultural socialization is consistently accompanied by spiritual elements. As Malak noted, “My family always talks about our culture, our history, our people who made history, they were faithful, and worked hard to serve and worship Allah, and that makes me very connected to my culture.” Isra provided an illustration of a statement their parents had made, saying, “You have to be proud as . . . Algerian, your ancestors fought courageously the French occupation to save our country and our culture. Our history was written because of the faith and belief of your ancestors.” According to five students, three males and two females, sharing emphasized interweaving between culture and spirituality, even if the discussion solely revolves around culture. Parents have a tendency to link the subject to spirituality through the expressions such as “Alhamdullah” expressing gratitude and thankfulness to Allah, Inshaallah “God willing,” and
Bismillah, “in the name of Allah.” Mohamed explained, “My parents would say, ‘Alhamdullah, our culture is rich and unique: the food, the history, the people. Inshaallah we will be able to visit this summer.’”

Additionally, Muslim Arab parents in the current study were found to play a formative role in reminding their children about their moral campus. As children grow older, students noted their parents set higher standards for proper conduct and a good representation of their ethnic and religious identity. Moral socialization occurred when necessary, in conjunction with cultural and spiritual socialization. For instance, if Muslim parents become aware of their children or other Muslim students engaging in misconduct or behaving inappropriately, they feel compelled to reinforce the importance of Islamic moral values to their children. As Amir noted, “My parents talk about being good and represent well Muslims and Arabs in the United States . . . well they also talk about faith and culture.”

For the students, their experiences with cultural socialization demonstrated not just overt communication, but also the covert aspects of the culture. Parents engage in nonverbal socialization to preserve their cultural heritage by upholding their ethnic customs and adorning their homes with corresponding artifacts (Csizmadia et al., 2013; Hrapczynski & Leslie, 2018). Examples of parental practices study participants noted included cooking ethnic food, discussing important cultural icons, narrating cultural stories to children, playing ethnic and racial music, owning cultural books, and the most frequently reported form of cultural socialization was found to be encouraging children to speak their native language. This finding aligned with previous studies—nonverbal messages can manifest in various ways. This includes the demonstration of cultural or ethnic practices, such as preparing traditional dishes or engaging in culturally appropriate interactions; shaping the environment for children, such as displaying culturally
influenced art or literature at home; or raising children in multicultural neighborhoods (Coard et al., 2004; Caughy et al., 2002; Park, 2004).

In this study, covert cultural socialization was reported to often integrate elements of religiosity and spirituality. As Sara explained:

Our house is decorated with many objects that represent our culture, paintings, artifacts, we have many of those at home. We also have Arabic calligraphy, it takes from both the culture and religion, both aspects smooshed together. You walk to my house you will see culture and Islam and there is no way you can escape it.

With a smile, Sereen added, “I know . . . we have the 99 names of Allah painting and aspects of the culture such as pictures, keffiyeh, and map of Palestine all hung up on the wall.”

Some students, however, spoke about engaging in discussions with their parents, about the Arab identity, and embracing the vibrant array of their diverse ethnic backgrounds. Students understood the Arab population living in the United States is diverse; however, they believed they are unified by speaking the same language and sharing the same culture. According to the students, the situation in Palestine has caused them to express concerns, encounter a decrease in morale, and experience emotional exhaustion. As Nadia explained:

My parents always talk about our country, Syria, and they talk a lot about many aspects of our culture, but they never forget about Palestine every single day. Because of that, it makes me aware of it and it makes me not ashamed to say I am Arab.

Akram added, “What my brothers and my sisters are experiencing in Gaza makes me sad, in pain, and feeling hopeless for not being able to provide any support for them.” This finding aligned with Britto and Amer’s (2007) study, wherein the participants who scored high on the Arab cultural identity reported being exposed to parents’ socialization and Arabic TV channels at
home, particularly their sense of public regard. Even in challenging times such as the 9/11 event, Arab Americans in the United States consistently maintained pride in their Arab identity. A survey carried out by Zogby International in 2002 revealed 73% of Arab Americans who were born in the United States and participated in the study reported following the September 11 attacks, their sense of ethnic pride had not wavered; 15% reported an increase in pride and only 8% reported less pride in their ethnic background (Arab American Institute, 2002). However, the percentage of those surveyed who were proud of their ethnic heritage was almost 90% in both 2001 and 2002. In addition, 73% reported having strong emotional ties with their family’s countries of origin (Arab American Institute, 2002).

**Egalitarian Socialization**

Egalitarian socialization was prevalent among Muslim Arab parents in the study. Other research has noted it promoted values centered on shared similarities rather than racial, ethnic, or cultural differences. This ideology can also result in color blindness, which emphasizes the belief that race, ethnicity, and culture are insignificant and should not be emphasized in discussions related to intercultural interactions (R. Smith et al., 2011; Stevenson et al., 1997). In the current study, students conveyed their parents use egalitarianism in their day-to-day parenting by expressing their gratitude for diversity and their aspiration for their children to steadfastly uphold their rights as U.S. citizens. As Yasmine explained:

> I used to feel embarrassed because of my mom wearing a hijab, but as I was growing up, she taught me that I am equal to anyone here in the U.S. And I deserve to be treated with the same respect and dignity.

Nadia confirmed Muslim students “have the same right as any other student and it shouldn’t be different just because we dress differently and have a different religion or different values.”
However, students indicated their parents exhibited a decreased tendency to use this practice when dealing with younger children. This is primarily because such practices necessitate a deep understanding of complex concepts like discrimination and intergroup relations. In instances such as the recent surge in Islamophobia following the Israeli war on Gaza, parents often opt to communicate in a straightforward manner to avoid alarming their younger children. As Zack explained, “When my parents heard about the increased Islamophobic experiences, they asked my little siblings to report any incident that makes them feel uncomfortable. They also said that maybe this would never happen but just in case.” Zack further added:

   That is not what they told me. For me they were talking about the large cases of hate against Arab and Muslims, they did not hide their fear and worry, and they asked me to report and stay strong if someone harasses me.

   Interestingly, students reported certain occurrences of cultural-spiritual socialization took place in conjunction with egalitarian messages in the families. As Mariam put it:

   We were talking about the situation in Palestine, and my parents emphasized on the faith and resilience of the Palestinians, and how they pray despite the pain and suffering. They are observing their cultural preparation for the month of Ramadan by planning to decorate their tents, sharing food with neighbors, as they are also fighting for justice. Mariam further explained, “My parents then said these are lessons for us to keep our culture, stay faithful regardless of the challenges we face, and never give up our rights.”

   This finding aligned with other scholarly works that documented the widespread and occasionally concurrent adoption of these two socialization practices by parents (Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Hughes et al., 2008). The parenting approach of egalitarianism was discovered to
have various aspects, which were examined through four primary lenses: (a) openness, (b) proactive conversation based, (c) reactive conversation based, and (d) celebrating diversity.

**Openness.** The concept of openness was central to the conversations parents engaged in when it came to overlooking differences between various groups and the avoidance of using race or ethnicity as a foundation for decision making. This socialization was based on embracing diversity and included people who frequently formed friendships, established connections in the community, resided in diverse neighborhoods, and worked in multicultural environments. This was the most frequently discussed type of egalitarianism principle. Youcef spoke of it being wrong to “be unkind to someone because of the way they look or because they speak a different language.” Ramy believed individuals are “all human beings created by Allah” and “equal.” A number of students discussed how their parents encouraged them to have friends from different races, ethnic backgrounds, and faiths.

Several students discussed the necessity of upholding egalitarian beliefs in accordance with their religious faith, emphasizing the importance of instilling such values in their daily life. Moreover, some discussed using religion to elucidate egalitarianism to circumvent engaging in complex conversations regarding race and ethnicity. As Assia noted, “Allah made everybody, and everybody in sight of Allah is equal. We are not here to judge anybody’ . . . be good to other people. Allah will be happy with you.”

**Proactive Conversation.** Another method parents used to convey their egalitarian messages was through engaging in open dialogues with their children. Proactive conversations usually formed part of a parenting agenda rooted in egalitarian principles and represented more planned discussions. For example, Nabil explained, “My parents often remind us that we live in a
diverse society, it is ok to be friends with students who are not Muslim, and who are not even Arabs because we are all the same.”

**Reactive Conversation.** Reactive conversations rooted in egalitarian principles took place in reaction to various events, such as instances where parents and children observed discrimination, experienced discrimination firsthand, or were influenced by media coverage on the subject. The majority of students recalled engaging in a conversation with their parents regarding the importance of standing against discrimination after experiencing continuous Islamophobic incidents in schools. This conversation occurred simultaneously with other practices of ethnic-racial socialization. In this study, egalitarian messages occasionally coincided with the preparation for bias, and frequently transpired as a direct reaction to a racially discriminatory occurrence. An example of this emerged in a discussion with Akram when he spoke of the anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim comments made by students at his school. Akram explained:

> It was the time when my parents spoke about Islamophobia and the anti-Palestine rhetoric in the U.S. . . . and encouraged me to speak up and never be afraid to say the truth . . . that is your right.

Reactive conversation for promoting egalitarianism, along with proactive conversation, have also been documented in previous scholarly works (Hughes et al., 2008).

**Celebrating Diversity.** Celebrating diversity occurs when parents introduce their children to various customs, cuisines, cultural objects, and other multicultural experiences. Parents emphasized the significance of understanding diversity, various religions, and tolerance. Jana spoke about celebrating different festivals and attending different religious places of
worship. She explained, “My dad took me to an interfaith event at a church, interacting with people from different faiths makes you recognize that we have a lot in common.”

According to some students, parents demonstrated their commitment to egalitarianism by choosing to remain silent on the topic of race and ethnicity. By deliberately not acknowledging these factors, they subtly conveyed the notion that everyone is equal, and race and ethnicity should not serve as a basis for discussion. The students expressed their opinions about their parents’ silent positions upon becoming aware of racist and discriminatory incidents happening across the nation via the media. Ahmad added their parents are “tired and overwhelmed with the surge of hate in this country, sometimes they don’t even comment on experiences of discrimination.”

**Preparation for Bias**

Studies indicated Arabs living in the United States are still subjected to negative stereotypes and racism (Meymand, 2018; Shaheen, 2003). For instance, U.S. high school students’ perceptions of Arabs and the Middle East region are “overwhelmingly negative” (Kamalipour, 2000, p. 58). Furthermore, Muslims experienced racist incidents and marginalization because of their religious beliefs (Berns-McGown, 2013; Edge et al., 2014; Hanniman, 2008), and these racist incidents have a negative effect on the mental health of young individuals (Correa-Velez et al., 2010). Unfortunately, the current study revealed not all the Muslim parents participated in preparing their children for bias, discrimination, and marginalization.

To gain a deeper understanding of this finding, the focus group delved into a discussion surrounding preparation for bias. The conversation was centered around: (a) what would prevent Muslim parents from raising awareness of bias and discrimination and provide their children
with possible coping skills and (b) whether children initiated a socialization on discrimination and what response parents exhibited.

Most of the male and female participants in the present study confirmed their parents refrained from preparing them for Islamophobia. However, two students indicated receiving messages emphasizing the barriers and biases they may experience in schools, giving them some form of preparation for bias and occasionally equipping them with responses strategies. Both students indicated their parents felt the responsibility in terms of preparing for or responding to Islamophobia. They also indicated preparation would help them overcome the impact of discriminatory incidents they may face or are currently experiencing. One particular family engaged in preparation for bias socialization had a deep commitment to activism and social justice issues at the local and national levels in the United States. As Sereen explained, “My parents and my older sisters are very active on issues related to injustices in our community and beyond. For that my parents often talk to me about Islamophobia and what to do if I face difficulties in schools.” The value of preparation for bias was emphasized by the second family, as both parents were born and raised in the United States and have undergone the same experiences their children are currently facing. As Mohamed put it, “My parents went to public school in the United States. They also faced Islamophobia and discrimination for being Muslims and Arabs.”

Previous research has found parents who encounter discrimination have been observed to convey messages about preparing their children for bias (Hagelskamp & Hughes, 2014; Hrapczynski & Leslie, 2018; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Kurtz-Costes et al., 2019; McNeil Smith et al., 2016). For instance, Crouter et al. (2008) found when African American parents reported
experiencing workplace discrimination, they also mentioned providing their adolescents with a greater amount of preparation for bias messages.

In terms of students who indicated they did not receive any parental preparation for bias message, parents’ experiences may be the reason behind the reluctance to discuss and prepare children for possible discrimination in schools. Most Muslim parents are immigrants who have grown up in Muslim and Arab countries and have not encountered marginalization or discrimination due to their religious belief. For instance, Isra explained:

Our parents have different experiences, they grew up back home and they went to school with people like them, who have the same religion, the same ethnicity as them. But we go to schools where we are the minority, so they would never know how to prepare or help us.

Similarly, Amir noted:

A lot of our parents are immigrants, did not grow up in an American Western society, as much as they want to talk and help us they never gonna truly understand what is like to go to school in America, and what everyday life is like to us. Yes, they are exposed to the American society when they go shopping, working, studying . . . but it’s different when you are a teenager, a student who is in school. They will never be able to understand our reality. It is not something that the parents are lacking themselves, it is just our reality is completely different from their reality.

Several studies argued that until parents experience discrimination, their level of concern for the challenges their children will face due to living in societies where racism and discrimination are deeply ingrained increases (Atkin et al., 2018; Hughes et al., 2006);
consequently, they sense a duty to convey messages about preparing their children for bias in the hopes that it may equip them to face potential discrimination (Stevenson et al., 1997).

Some students in this study backed the notion that apart from personal experiences, parents have endorsed concerns about protecting their children from potential negative or distressing effects arising from discussions about Islamophobia in schools. As Sara explained:

My two siblings go to a predominantly non-Muslim middle school. When the Israeli war on Gaza started, my mom knew about increased hate against Arabs and Muslims, so she told my little siblings to keep to themselves, and to not share their Arab origin with no conversation on discrimination.

Due to the enhanced availability of technology and social media, today’s adolescents have greater accessibility to social movements, access information about discrimination against marginalized communities, particularly Muslim communities compared to previous generations. The increased availability often encouraged those Muslim students participating in this study to start dialogues and engage in discussions regarding these subjects with their parents. The ways in which parents respond to child-initiated conversations about discrimination had a profound impact on the students’ understanding of their parents’ different experiences in schools. Additionally, the conversation acknowledges the parents’ limited understanding of the difficulties their children encounter in the hostile environments of U.S. schools. As Ramy explained, “When I talk to my parents about incidents of discrimination against Muslims around the country, they are surprised and left without words.”

**Promotion of Mistrust**

Hughes et al. (2006) indicated qualitative studies using intensive interviewing or observational techniques are more likely to reveal the promotion of mistrust socialization among
marginalized communities compared to survey-based research. Subsequently, students in this study were asked to discuss their experiences with parental promotion of mistrust socialization. Student participants engaged in discussion, focusing primarily on the promotion of mistrust and their experiences interacting with other ethnic and racial groups. The students conveyed their parents never advised them against placing trust in individuals from different ethnic and racial backgrounds in schools. Unexpectedly, parents wished for their children to participate in intergroup activities to clear the misconception and enhance people’s knowledge of the Islamic faith and Arab culture. For instance, Zack spoke about how his parents emphasized the value of interethnic and interracial friendships to reduce prejudice and discrimination in schools. He noted, “I have friends who are White, Asians, and African Americans.” Similarly, Yasmine explained, “I am friends with White girls.” According to Hughes et al. (2006), after conducting interviews and surveys with various parents for over 25 years, many of the discussions between parents and adolescents regarding race and ethnicity revolve around the four practices of ethnic-racial socialization including the promotion of mistrust. However, families of all racial and ethnic backgrounds may prefer one method over another (Weir, 2023).

The students in this study made it clear their parents stressed the significance of choosing friends who have similar values, overlooking any ethnic or racial disparities in their conversations about friendship. In fact, the Quran and the prophetic traditions have made it clear that Muslims are to cooperate with everyone, regardless of differences, and Islam has spread in various parts of the world mainly because of Muslims interacting with others compassionately. As Nabil explained, “Following our Islamic teaching, it is good to be friends with different people, so we can learn about each other.” However, the students also expressed feeling
“disrespected” and “judged” by certain comments, yet they did not consider terminating their friendship, according to Sara.

**Theme 6: Social Media as a Tool for Resistance**

Social media emerged as a significant theme in this study despite its absence from the initial inquiries. Student participants in the study first discussed the role of the media encompassing news outlets and the entertainment industry in the dissemination and perpetuation of Islamophobia, and numerous students raised inquiries regarding the reasons behind the negative portrayal of Islam and Muslims in western media, where they are often depicted as a threat to western values. G. M. Jackson’s (2017) research substantiated the notion that media representation of Muslims since 9/11 has been of a “scary, shady, an unlikable, intolerable enemy of society” (p. 9). Second, students expressed gratitude for the social media platforms as a viable alternative, where Islam and Muslims are portrayed in a positive light. As noted by Zack, “Our media outlets are very biased. They promote skewed information, and they never portray us well.” Students also mentioned the importance of discovering safe spaces online where they could connect with individuals who shared similar experiences or struggles. Those who experienced feelings of isolation or marginalization due to their identity or other obstacles can access valuable resources, knowledge, and a supportive community, fostering relationships and unity which may lead to collective political engagement. As noted by Isra, “I feel good connecting with people on Tik Tok or social media in general who have the same experiences and ideas as me. They believe what’s happening in Gaza is a genocide and has to stop.”

This finding supported the conclusions drawn by Carney (2016) and Murthy (2018), who also believed movements like Black Lives Matter and the Arab Spring demonstrated the influence of social media in enhancing the impact of a speech. This concept was evident in the
focus groups of the present study, where it was observed how in the absence of a fair and just media outlet in the United States, social media broke down the geographical barriers, kept them updated on the situations of the Palestinians in Gaza, and most importantly made them challenge the injustice. As Nadia noted, “Forget about the media. Social media has been the only place where you find something positive about us.” Ramy added, “It is the social media, like Tik Tok and Instagram that showed us the reality in Gaza, educated, and motivated us to take actions, not our local media.” The extent to which male and female students spoke about how they felt the need to often engage and promote social media posts that represent Muslims and Arabs positively was interesting. Yasmine recognized when “influencers post and everyone is liking and seeing the post on their feed, it spreads quickly and reaches a large number of people.” Some said the potential of social media to alter the negative perception of Islam and Muslims is immense, leading to increased visibility and the sensation of listening to your own voice. As Nabil put it, “You feel seen, you feel heard, you feel like hearing your voice even though you are not saying it someone is representing you.”

Whether perceived or actual, one of the male students, Youcef, said because of the social media posts on Islam and Palestine he believed “friends at school, none of them are Arabs, but they all support Palestine because they understand now.” He further explained, “Social media has brought a lot of awareness on Islamic practices such as Ramadan, and the Palestinians’ struggle.” This finding was consistent with earlier findings that suggested social media can engage the global audience toward crisis (Zeitzoff, 2012) and provided avenues for people to spread the social condition, the conflict, and deliver the message to people around the world specifically in the Middle East (Oguah & Chattopadhyay, 2018).
The students also expressed that social media is a valuable source of emotional support for marginalized communities as it amplifies their voices and ensures they are seen and heard. Furthermore, it brings a positive effect to them and their social life. Sreen felt, “Because of social media like Tik Tok, I feel happy and well represented specially when people make positive content about Islam, Muslims, and Palestine.” Yasmine also noted how social media allowed her to feel contentment “when influencers post about Ramadan decoration, or Iftar . . . you feel more supported and when you have that support from your phone, or social media. It’s comforting and boosts your positive energy.”

**Summary**

The purpose of this qualitative phase of the current study was to provide a deep description of the experiences of Muslim Arab American students in public schools, in light of the prevalent Islamophobia. It sought to explore the stories, emotions, and accounts of Muslim Arab American students attending public schools; interrogate the practices and policies of public schools; and question the U.S. international politics, all of which have served as a framework to elucidate the lived experiences of Muslim students. The current study revealed Muslim Arab students are experiencing overt and covert Islamophobic incidents such as, verbal abuse, name calling, or the use of derogatory slurs, and non-verbal interactions, leading to detrimental effects on students’ mental health and academic performance. Additionally, the unjust educational system in U.S. schools hinders Muslim students, who have a hyphenated identity, and their classmates explore different perspectives on history, politics, social studies, and media literacy. The study further found public schools, similar to others across the United States, not only fail to adequately teach students accurate, nuanced history and provide unbiased context about Israel war on Palestine, but also contribute to the escalation of anti-Arab, anti-Muslim sentiments in the
United States, resulting in an increase in Islamophobia. In response, students displayed significant resilience and explained influences of the practices of ethnic-racial socialization, spiritual messages in strengthening the Muslim Arab students’ resilience, and well-being. In addition, the qualitative study addressed the quantitative results regarding the low level of resilience among female participants, suggesting, the resilience of Muslim Arab students can be influenced by a combination of genetic factors and the parental interaction related to gender socialization, leading to diverse outcomes. Furthermore, it explored the types and frequency of cultural socialization, egalitarianism, and the extent to which Muslim parents prepared their children to discrimination and Islamophobia in schools. Muslim Arab parents have a higher tendency to convey cultural messages intertwined with spiritual messages, and at times, moral socialization. Meanwhile, the Islamic principles of justice and equality, uphold parental egalitarian values and socialization. Lastly, it focused on the preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust. Although the quantitative phase of the present investigation did not identify preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust as significant practices, the qualitative phase uncovered their relevance. Promoting intergroup interactions and friendship with students from different ethnic, racial, and religious groups was observed by Muslim parents. Parents dedicated to social justice, parents who attended U.S. public schools, and parents who personally encountered discrimination noted the importance of preparing their children for bias. The qualitative study also unveiled the manner in which social media platforms operate as a tool for resistance. They played a pivotal role in assisting Muslim Arab adolescents in shaping their identity, fostering a sense of community, and enhancing their overall state of well-being.
CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to obtain an in-depth understanding of Muslim students’ experiences in schools, considering the growing climate of Islamophobia and the rise of anti-Muslim bigotry, and it examined the reactions of Muslim students to experiences of discrimination. The study revealed Islamophobia continues to be a widespread and complex challenge, and Muslim students are subjected to both overt and covert forms of Islamophobia resulting in adverse effects on their well-being. Negative labels were found to have a positive correlation with Muslim students’ level of religiosity, indicating the greater the display of religious beliefs, the higher the likelihood of receiving negative labels and being subjected to perceived prejudice. Although experiences such as closet symptoms; perceived prejudice; feelings of being ignored, unseen, and unheard; nonverbal interactions; teachers’ biased approach toward the curriculum; and inadequate support from counselors were perceived by students to be associated with their religious identity and highlighted the fact that Islamophobia encompasses dimensions of religious discrimination.

Moreover, experiences of Islamophobia varied among Muslim students in the study, and Islamophobia operated on multiple levels. It was compounded by struggles of race, ethnic background, gender, and mothers’ educational level. For instance, the act of female students donning the hijab was not perceived as an embodiment of religious freedom or self-expression; instead, it was seen as a symbol of their otherness, which needed to be reprimanded and denigrated. The students’ ethnic background played a significant role, highlighting that Arab students were more likely to openly disclose their religious and ethnic background, resulting in heightened experiences with Islamophobia. Conversely, students from Southeast Asia chose to
conceal their identities, resulting in fewer instances of Islamophobic behavior. Furthermore, in the current study, mothers’ education level had a tendency to broaden Muslim American students’ awareness about the Islamophobic social context leading to experiencing increasing negative assumptions in schools.

With the recent Israel war on Gaza, this study found Palestinian American students were deeply affected by the recent surge of violence that has resulted in the tragic loss of lives in their families and communities in their home country. Muslim Arab American students have been saddened by the escalation of instability and unrest in their homeland and grieving over the suffering endured by their fellow brothers and sisters of faith; yet, schools failed to demonstrate inclusive and just school leadership and ensure the protection of Muslim students from hate speech, harassment, and discrimination, while also validating their fears and grief. The findings of this study indicated the Israeli war on Gaza intensified the level of Islamophobia, conveying a message about the global nature of Islamophobia.

In addition, this study aimed to explore the level of resilience and the strategies employed by Muslim students to showcase resilience despite the emotional distress and stress of Islamophobia. Initially, Muslim students exhibited significant resilience as all resilience items of the scale scored a frequency ranging from sometimes true to often true. Female students demonstrated a lower level of resilience when compared to their male counterparts. For this study’s cohort, the impact of genetic factors and family dynamics, particularly the role of parents and their parenting approach, focused on protection and concern toward the girls and diminished the resilience of the female students. This study also demonstrated a complementarity between the quantitative and qualitative findings and illustrated a strong correlation between spirituality and Muslim students’ resilience. The study further supported previous studies that have also
discovered a connection between spirituality and resilience, emphasizing their interdependence and ecological bond.

This study expanded the existing knowledge on resilience and discrimination by investigating how Muslim parents socialize their children to better understand their ethnicity, culture, and prepare them for bias, as ethnic-racial socialization is recognized by literature as a form of resilience. Muslim students in the quantitative research of this study, were more prone to receiving cultural socialization and egalitarianism and less likely to experience preparation for bias and the promotion of mistrust. Cultural socialization, overt and covert, along with the promotion of egalitarian values that fostered a sense of equality among children served as protective factors against discrimination and enhanced the resilience of Muslim students. This type of socialization has been discovered to be multifaceted, taking place in various settings and serving multiple purposes. The frequency with which it was used was also different across Muslim families as well. However, the qualitative research of this study revealed the Muslim Arab parents were actively involved in the cultural socialization, transmitting ethnic knowledge and values, along with spiritual messages, and sometimes moral socialization. Moreover, parental spiritual socialization may not always occur alongside cultural socialization, but cultural socialization was consistently accompanied by spiritual elements. The process of instilling egalitarianism among Muslim Arab students was built upon the Islamic principles of justice and equality, which were deeply ingrained in the religious convictions of their parents.

On the other hand, the qualitative study was able to reveal preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust socialization among Muslim families. The parents who actively participated in social justice matters and those who attended public schools in the United States and experienced discrimination were found to have a higher tendency to educate their own
children about possible bias and discrimination in public schools. Additionally, Muslim Arab parents were found to encourage their children to form friendships with individuals from diverse ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds emphasizing the importance of intergroup contact. The qualitative research also highlighted social media as a tool for resistance. The online environments serve as spaces where Muslim adolescents shaped their sense of identity and belonging. The participants emphasized the significance of platforms like Instagram and TikTok, which provided them with a sense of comfort and security by showcasing favorable Islamic and Muslims content. They also expressed gratitude for the opportunity to witness others expressing their viewpoints and beliefs in these spaces.

**Significance to the Study**

The narrated experiences of Muslim students must be understood. Gaining insight into their perspectives, actively listening to their voices, and comprehending their perceptions can greatly enhance institutional and program policies. Numerous scholars have suggested a range of measures to educational policymakers, administrators, instructional and noninstructional faculty, counselors, and legislative bodies calling into question the existing social inequalities in schools (DeSena & Ansalone, 2009) and emphasized the significance of providing Muslim students with fair opportunities and resources in public schools (A. Ahmed, 2022; Mir & Sarroub, 2019; Sarroub, 2005). This study presented the genuine perspectives of Muslim students residing in one of the most culturally diverse urban areas in the United States and provided a platform for Muslim American students to express their voices and advocate for the necessary changes to be implemented. Their perspectives must be heard and considered for meaningful change to be made, ultimately leading to an enhanced school experience for Muslim students. For that, Ballinger (2011) emphasized the importance of educators moving past mere tolerance and
striving for a level of deep understanding that drives them to advocate for the students they serve.

Muslim families in the United States are presently encountering a difficult social and political climate as they raise their children, leading them to employ practices of ethnic-racial socialization such as cultural socialization, egalitarianism, preparation for bias, and promotion of mistrust messages that Muslim American students have confirmed receiving, along with spiritual and moral socialization. This study explored how Muslim parents communicate ethnic-racial socialization messages to their children, using both quantitative and qualitative children’s perspectives, can help address the current gap in the literature on this subject. Researchers proposed that children’s reports hold more significance compared to parents’ reports, as they convey the messages perceived by children rather than the intentions of parents (Hughes et al., 2009; Peck et al., 2014; Yasui, 2015).

Implication for Future Research

This mixed-method study of Muslim American adolescents in public school sparks a valuable conversation about creating inclusive educational settings and addressing the disparity between students’ identities and the school environment. One potential avenue for expanding upon this study is to delve into the psychological, emotional, and mental impact of Islamophobia on Muslim students. Conducting this research has increased my understanding of the difficulties and harmful effects of Islamophobia. Further investigation of this topic is crucial, and there is an imperative need for research focused on the effective implementation of policies. I suggest obtaining the perspectives or opinions of the educational leaders, teachers, and other significant stakeholders. This can offer a different perspective in terms of deconstructing institutionalized oppression, establishing effective support systems to help Muslim students, and providing
context to comprehend the unique experiences of this group. For change to take place, educators and educational leaders must acknowledge the presence of institutional inequalities for students coming from various backgrounds (Agosto & Karanxha, 2012). After acknowledging the presence of these inequalities, educators must engage in restructuring and reorganizing to ensure that quality education is provided to the different student populations in the schools (Agosto & Karanxha, 2012).

The current study made a significant impact on the area of resilience and ethnic-racial socialization in Muslim American adolescents. However, further research is needed to delve into the intricacies of resilience and ethnic-racial socialization. First, the need for resilience research to engage with injustice and inequality issues is becoming ever more crucial (Ungar et al., 2013). Resilience research needs to move beyond an individualistic conceptual framework and challenge the larger structural contexts that create inequalities that require resilience. Now more than ever, research needs to look beyond the individual by paying attention to individual, social, and environmental exchanges as they occur concurrently. Expanding research in this area is imperative to explore Muslim American students’ resilience because of external factors that impact marginalized groups. Research on Islamophobia and resilience are increasingly needed because Muslim American students’ experiences are unique and cannot be generalized. Furthermore, I recommend conducting research that examines the impact of social inequalities at various levels of the resilience-building process. Resilience should not be concerned with only overcoming discrimination and adversity, but also potentially changing and transforming some aspects of adversity.

Second, given the increasing diversity of the Muslim American population, more research on the contribution of the four practices of ethnic-racial socialization to adolescents’
positive development may have to evolve accordingly. Conducting focus groups, interviewing parents and experts, and exploring the ways in which Muslim parents employ ethnic-racial socialization messages with their children are valuable methods for enhancing research on Muslim American youth. Additionally, developing a comprehensive measure that encompasses the ethnic-racial socialization messages derived from the current study and communicated by Muslim parents to their children would be a beneficial endeavor, as it would contribute to improving future research findings in this area. In addition, future research could gather information from children and parents. This approach would provide valuable insights into the transmission of ethnic-racial socialization messages in the Muslim families.
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APPENDIX A

Demographic Survey Questions and Religious Discrimination Scale

Peace Be Upon You

My name is Lallia Allali. I am a student researcher, and a PhD student at the University of San Diego School of Leadership Studies. As part of my dissertation, I am conducting a survey about the role of familial ethnic-racial socialization in reducing the negative effects of school-based Islamophobic situations. I am reaching out in order to invite members of your mosque who are Muslim students between 11-18 years to participate in my research study.

This research contributes to greater knowledge about how family efforts create resilience in the school context among Muslim Americans.

Your answers will be completely anonymous; the results will be combined and aggregated in a summary report in my dissertation and provided to Muslim families to help their children build resilience. Participation in this survey is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without penalty.

If you have any questions regarding this survey, or if you would like a summary of the survey results, you can contact me at xxxx@sandiego.edu.
I would really appreciate it if you take a few minutes to fill up this questionnaire. Thank you for your time and input.

Sincerely,

Lallia Allali

PhD Candidate in Philosophy of Leadership Studies

University of San Diego
Date: ______________

1. Student’s grade level?  ____________________________
2. School of Attendance:  ____________________________
3. School District:  ____________________________
4. Age:  ____________________________
5. Are you?  Male  Female
6. I am  1st Child  2nd Child  3th Child  4th Child  Other———

7. How would you best describe yourself?
   ● African American
   ● East African
   ● South East Asian
   ● South West Asian (Middle Eastern)
   ● North African
   ● West African
   ● Asian or Pacific Islander
   ● Hispanic or Latino
   ● White/Caucasian
   ● Other  ______________
   ● Mixed; parents are from different groups. If so, which: __________and __________
   ● When you think of yourself, you would most likely use the term ______________
     (write in from the list above) to describe your racial or ethnic group.

8. Were you born in the United States?  Yes  No

9. If not, in which country were you born in?  ______________

10. Languages Spoken at Home:  ______________

11. Were your father born in the United States?  Yes  No

12. If not, in which country were you born in?  ______________

13. Were your mother born in the United States?  Yes  No

14. If not, in which country were you born in?  ______________
15. Parents’ marital status
   1. Married
   2. Divorced
   3. Separated
   4. Other (Specify)

Father’s Education:
1-Some High School
2-High School Graduate
3-Some College

Father’s employment status?
Employed Full-Time
Employed Part-Time
Self-Employed
Seeking Opportunities
Retired
Not employed

Mother’s Education:
1-Some High School
2-High School Graduate
3-Some College

Mother’s employment status?
Employed Full-Time
Employed Part-Time
Self-Employed
Seeking Opportunities
Retired
Not employed
**Religious Discrimination Scale**

Please rate how often during your life you have had the following experiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-I felt disrespected because I am Muslim</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-I was ignored by adults and students at school because I am Muslim</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-People at my school assume things about me because I am Muslim</td>
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<td>4-I often keep my religious identity private</td>
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<td>5-I was afraid of others finding out that I am Muslim</td>
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<td>6-At school, I often feel alone because I am Muslim</td>
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<td>7-I lost involvement’s opportunities at school because I am Muslim</td>
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<td>8-I sense hostility from others because I am Muslim</td>
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<td>9-I have heard people make negative remarks about my religion</td>
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<td>10-At school people hold negative stereotypes about Muslims</td>
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<td>11-I do not feel free at school to express my religion</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX B

**Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale**

**CD-RISC-10 Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not true at all</th>
<th>Rarely true</th>
<th>Sometimes true</th>
<th>Often true</th>
<th>True nearly all the time.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- I am able to adapt when changes happen</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2- I can deal with whatever comes my way</td>
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<tr>
<td>3- I try to see the positive side of things when I am faced with problems.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4- I try to see the positive side of things when I am faced with problems.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5- Having to cope with stress can make me stronger</td>
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<td>6- Under pressure, I stay focused and think clearly</td>
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<td>7- I am not easily discouraged by problems</td>
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<td>8- I think of myself as a strong person when dealing with life’s challenges</td>
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<td>9- I am able to handle painful feelings like sadness, fear, and anger</td>
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</table>
APPENDIX C

Family Ethnic-Racial Socialization Scale

*Please rate how much you agree with each of the following items.*

Items tapping Covert FES: 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 12
Items tapping Overt FES: 1, 2, 6, 7, 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Very Much</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- My family teaches me about my ethnic/cultural background.</td>
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<td>2- My family encourages me to respect the cultural values and beliefs of our ethnic/cultural background.</td>
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<td>3- My family participates in activities that are specific to my ethnic group.</td>
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<td>4- Our home is decorated with things that reflect my ethnic/cultural background.</td>
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<td>5- The people who my family hangs out with the most are people who share the same ethnic background as my family.</td>
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<td>6- My family teaches me about the values and beliefs of our ethnic/cultural background.</td>
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<td>7- My family talks about how important it is to know about my ethnic/cultural background.</td>
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<td>8- My family celebrates holidays that are specific to my ethnic/cultural background.</td>
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<td>9- My family teaches me about the history of my ethnic/cultural background.</td>
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<td>10- My family listens to music sung or played by artists from my ethnic/cultural background.</td>
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<td>11- My family attends things such as concerts, plays, festivals, or other events that represent my ethnic-cultural background.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12- My religious identity is an important part of my ethnic-racial background</td>
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<td>13- It is important for my family to go to the mosque</td>
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<td></td>
<td>14- I attend religious and community events at the Mosque.</td>
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<td>15- I have faith that Allah can protect and help me overcome difficulties in my life</td>
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<td></td>
<td>16- My belief in Allah helps me deal with life struggles</td>
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<td>17- My parents told me that I will be treated unfairly because of my religious beliefs</td>
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<td>18- My parents taught me that the system is not fair, and I don’t always have the same opportunities as whites.</td>
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<td>19- My parents told me about differences in rights based on religious, ethnic and racial status.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>20- My parents told me to keep away from other groups because they may discriminate against you.</td>
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<td>21- My parents told me that the color of a person’s skin does not mean that person is better or worse than anyone else.</td>
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<td>22- My parents taught me that people should get the same rights and must be treated equally</td>
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</table>
November 2, 2023

Re: Renewal - IRB-2023-324 Islamophobia in Public Schools: A Mixed Methods Look at the Effectiveness of Parental Ethnic-Racial Strategies in Promoting Resilience among Muslim Children

Dear Lallia Allali:

The University of San Diego Institutional Review Board (USD IRB) has rendered the decision below for IRB-2023-324: Islamophobia in Public Schools: A Mixed Methods Look at the Effectiveness of Parental Ethnic-Racial Strategies in Promoting Resilience among Muslim Children

Decision: Approved

IRB Review Category: Expedited

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies. (NOTE: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the
protection of human subjects. 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) and (b)(3). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt."

Sincerely,

Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost
Hughes Administration Center, Room xxx
xxxx Alcalá Park, San Diego, CA 92110-2492
Phone (xxx) xxx-xxxx • Fax (xxx) xxx-xxxx • www.sandiego.edu