American Muslim Immigrants: Identity and Belonging in the Shadow of 9/11

Youssef Chouhoud

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There is a long lineage of both elites and the mass public questioning (or outright disavowing) the compatibility of Islam and democracy—and, by extension, the compatibility of Muslims living in a democratic society. In modern times, this suspicion goes back at least to Montesquieu who devotes a chapter in the second volume of *Spirit of the Laws* to explaining, "That A Moderate Government Is Most Agreeable To The Christian Religion, And A Despotic Government To The Mahometan" (Book XXIV, Chapter III). More recently, evidence of official skepticism over whether Muslims are capable of integrating into American society is not particularly difficult to find among executives and legislators (Allam & Ansari, 2018), and one need not go too far back to find similar proclamations from the third remaining branch of government. In his decision denying a Yemeni immigrant's petition for naturalization, for example, a federal district court judge in the mid-1940s commented:

> Apart from the dark skin of the Arabs [a relevant point given that only Whites were eligible for naturalization at the time], it is well known that they are a part of the Mohammedan world and that a wide gulf separates their culture from that of the predominately Christian peoples of Europe. It cannot be expected that as a class they would readily intermarry with our population and be assimilated into our civilization (In Re Hassan, 1942, p. 844).

These concerns over a tension between Islamic and American/Western culture tended to emerge only occasionally, however, as few Muslims in the United States were foreign-born prior to the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act abolishing national origin quotas. In the decades following the enactment of this landmark bill, an influx of immigrant Muslims from the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa changed the landscape of Islam in America. Buoyed by the cultural depiction of

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D. Stockemer (ed.), *Muslims in the Western World*, Immigrants and Minorities, Politics and Policy, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-99487-7_3

Muslims as a foreign threat (Shaheen, 2008, 2014) and propelled by the seeming affirmation of that depiction with the terrorist attacks of September 11, wariness over Muslims' ability to integrate into a liberal democracy gained renewed and widespread salience at the turn of the twenty-first century. Speaking directly to this point, 44 percent of Americans held that there exists "a natural conflict between the teachings of Islam and democracy" in a recent poll (Pew Research Center, 2017b).

With this abiding skepticism as a backdrop, this chapter assesses whether, and to what extent, immigrant American Muslim attitudes and behaviors diverge from their second-generation counterparts as a way of examining their collective *identity* and *belonging*. This approach aligns with mainstream conceptualizations of these two contested terms. First, "identity" for our purposes follows Fearon's (1999, p. 25) tentative definition: "Personal identity is a set of attributes, beliefs, desires, or principles of action that a person thinks distinguish her in socially relevant ways and that…the person takes a special pride in…." The analysis below features items that directly operationalize this link between identity and pride alongside others that tap a key component of Muslims' identity: religiosity. Second, in terms of belonging, the study draws on Antonsich's (2010) framework that accounts for both a place-belongingness (i.e., a feeling of being "at home" in a particular space) and a politics of belonging (i.e., the dynamics of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion). Measures that highlight Muslims' integration—and their sense of the broader society's support of or opposition to that integration—proxy Antonsich's analytical guidelines.

The chapter proceeds as follows. The next section briefly introduces the subject population before subsequently providing a demographic snapshot of American Muslims, generally, and this community's immigrants, in particular. The analysis then begins by highlighting key demographic differences between foreign-born American Muslims and the generation succeeding them. With this foundation set, the core of the analysis then compares these sub-groups on matters of religiosity and social/political attitudes and behaviors. This chapter thus offers a wide-ranging, empirically grounded appraisal both for scholars looking to expand the dearth of research on this understudied community and those interested in the comparative politics of race and ethnicity more broadly.

2 Immigrant American Muslim Evolution(s)

2.1 An Enduring Myth

The vaunted American "melting pot" often plays a central role in popular narratives of immigration in the United States. While this imagery reflects a certain idealized conception of American multiculturalism, it does not quite align with many immigrant experiences in practice. The assimilation imagined through this metaphor evokes a sense of different groups coming together to create a new common culture. In truth, numerous minority populations have historically been excluded from this

synthesizing process, leaving a cultural core with much more narrowly bounded traits. Put differently, the contents of the pot have had a distinctly "Anglocentric flavor," as Schlesinger (1998, p. 34) argued: "For better or worse, the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant tradition was for two centuries—and in crucial respects still is—the dominant influence on American culture and society."

Thus, the central question surrounding immigrant assimilation has been whether (and to what extent) newcomers would conform to this established tradition—to, in effect, "Americanize." To be sure, many ethnic minorities arriving on US shores as foreigners did eventually and collectively blend into the national landscape. The once precarious now indelible status of Irish- and Italian-Americans is often pointed to as evidence of this phenomenon. Although this classical (or "straight line") assimilationist model has received much criticism in recent decades (see Feldmeyer (2018) for a review), some of its underlying dynamics may still be driving immigrant adaptation. Indeed, evidence suggests that Hispanics may eventually join the ranks of White ethnics. In their 2015 National Survey of Latinos, for example, Pew found that those with Hispanic origin whose family had been in America for at least three generations were just as likely as not to identify as non-Hispanic and that among those who self-identified as non-Hispanic, a clear majority (59 percent) felt that most people would describe them as White (Lopez et al., 2017).

Similarly considered within this framework are religious minorities. There are indications that these communities may also follow a classical assimilative path, along the way diluting (if not altogether discarding) their distinctive beliefs and practices. This may be the case with many American Jews, 62 percent of whom reported in 2013 that being "Jewish" was mainly a matter of "Ancestry/Culture" rather than religion (Pew Research Center, 2013). Relatedly, Catholicism is today no longer the majority religion among Hispanics (Pew Research Center, 2019) despite two-thirds of Hispanic adults self-identifying as Catholic as late as 2010 (Pew Research Center, 2014). Giving these past trajectories and the circumstances that brought them to the United States, American Muslims seem at once well-suited to follow this path of traditional assimilation as well as test its limits.

2.2 A Brief History of the Immigrant American Muslim Experience

Although America's relations with the Muslim World stretch back to the country's founding (Morocco, after all, was the first country to recognize the fledging United States after the latter declared independence from Britain), Muslim immigrants did not arrive on US shores in large numbers until the late-twentieth century. From about 1870 through the 1910s, subjects of the failing Ottoman Empire came to America seeking economic opportunity and mobility, yet these emigres were predominantly Levantine Christian (Foad, 2013). The next wave took place over two decades beginning in the 1940s, but official quotas largely limited immigration during this period to

individuals seeking asylum from war-torn countries and oppressive regimes—most of whom were Muslim, well-educated, and often members of influential families.[1] Then, in 1965, the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) paved the way for an influx of Muslims that continues to this day. During the initial decades following the INA's passage, however, obtaining a visa depended largely on whether a potential immigrant could fill a need in the US labor market. Generally, then, the Muslims that came to America soon after the passage of the INA were: (1) from numerous countries, (2) educated and/or sought to advance their education, and (3) given the opportunity to settle and participate in American affluence (Haddad, 1997).

This particular set of circumstances contrasted with the environment for Muslims across the Atlantic during the post-war period. Rebuilding after the most devastating war in history required a concerted, long-term effort—and, more pressingly, manpower. Mindful that their decimated populations plainly limited any large-scale reconstruction, governments across Europe began turning to foreign workers throughout the 1950s and 1960s to fill blue-collar posts. Though Germany is the country most emblematic of this economically driven immigration boom, "[t]he fabulous post-war prosperity of France, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, and other West European countries was also boosted by immigrant labor, mainly from Turkey and North Africa" (Nickerson, 2006). Unlike in America, then, Muslim immigrants to Western Europe during the post-war period were: (1) largely from a single country or region, (2) comprised mostly of unskilled laborers, and (3) never meant to settle and incorporate into the larger society. This initial state of affairs set the stage for future volatility and strained relations between Europe and its Muslims.

Along with a more hospitable set of policies, Muslim immigrants to America also found a more accommodating cultural climate for religious minorities. In her commentary comparing Muslim integration in the US and France through the prism of the veil controversy, Kristine Ajrouch (2007) suggests that the divergent social environment in these two countries critically affects the overall experience of their respective Muslim populations. The existence of a relatively well-defined and well-promoted national French character, for example, offers less space for ethnic differences than the more varied understanding of what it means to be "American." Similarly, the stricter French perception of secularity fosters a more antagonistic atmosphere for religion than the more malleable American notion of separation between church and state. In France, more specifically, "secularity means removing from the public realm any sign of religion, whereas in the US secularity allows broad latitude for the freedom to practice religion" (Ajrouch, 2007, p. 322). With its hardline assimilationist ideology, France effectively offers Muslims an ultimatum. As such, French Muslim identity is more likely to develop from a defensive posture, thereby reinforcing already established isolationist tendencies within these immigrant communities.

[1] These included Palestinians displaced by the founding of Israel, Egyptians whose property had been nationalized by President Gamal Abdel Nasser, Iraqis fleeing their country after the 1958 revolution, elite Syrians excluded from government participation, and Eastern European Muslims escaping Communist rule (Haddad, 1997, p. 3).

Yet, despite immigrating under conditions less likely to induce alienation and finding a more pliable cultural milieu, first-generation American Muslims often built institutions meant to be more comforting than integrative. For instance, beyond its *raison d'être* as a house of worship, Muslim immigrants originally envisioned the American mosque not as a means to adapt to their new setting, but as a substitute for (and analog to) spaces back home. In effect, "[l]ike the Italian, Irish, and Jewish immigrants before them, many [Muslims] hunkered down in ethnic enclaves" (Miller, 2007) when they reached America's shores. Mosque leadership also reflected these initial impulses. Notably, imams charged with guiding worshippers were often imported from the country or region of the congregation's majority. Consequently, the sermons delivered in mosques led by non-native English speakers were either: 1) in broken/heavily accented English, 2) in the imam's native language followed by a cursory English translation, or 3) exclusively in the imam's native language.[2] These collective tendencies often engendered a culturally homogeneous and linguistically limited mosque environment. While such a setting may have felt familiar to first-generation immigrants, it was far less recognizable to their offspring who found little overlap between mosque culture and the American society they were raised in.

2.3 Generational Divide

In effect, then, second-generation Muslim-Americans were initially exposed to a largely monotone understanding of Islam conveyed in a religious space relatively isolated from the broader society. Had their religiosity ultimately taken hold in this setting, they may very well have carried forward these barriers to integration. As it was, with their conscious decision to fashion American mosques into mirrors of communities in Muslim-majority countries, early Muslim immigrants effectively limited their value as a social space to the generation that founded them. Thus, when the need for a more nuanced understanding of Islam arose in the aftermath of 9/11, young Muslims in America turned to new outlets and culturally competent leaders for guidance in not only developing, but contextualizing their religious identity.

For many young Muslims in America, the Muslim Students Association (MSA) functions as their preliminary (sometimes primary) means of building an identity that is both *Muslim* and *American*. This directive hinges on the organization's ability to compensate for the shortcomings of the immigrant mosques' social idiosyncrasies.

[2] Bagby (2012, p. 9) reports: "Ninety-seven percent of mosques use English as the main language, or one of the main languages, for the message of the Jum 'ah Khutbah (Friday sermon)." This analysis, however, does not speak to the qualitative use of English nor does it specify which language takes precedence during the weekly sermon. More importantly, the report does not disaggregate the data to highlight figures specific to immigrant dominated mosques. Had it done so, the 3% of total mosques that conduct their sermons exclusively in a foreign language, coupled with the study's finding that "[o]f the mosques that do use English, 47 percent use one or more additional languages," would likely yield more sobering statistics on the role of English in these houses of worship.

As Garbi Schmidt (2004, p. 93) observes in her study of Muslims in Chicago, where the MSA was first established:

> Among the [current] generations of young Muslim Americans from which the organization gains its members, religious inspiration and interpretations are no longer imported from abroad. Rather, Islamic perspectives develop through the members' interactions with one another and with the non-Muslim majority surrounding them.

These more diverse exchanges, coupled with a more inclusive organizational structure and native leadership, enabled MSAs to offset the disaffection many young Muslims experienced at American mosques.

Buttressing much of the MSA's capacity in forming a more holistic identity is its pluralistic environment. As opposed to the mostly homogeneous makeup of America's immigrant-led mosques, MSAs have a breakdown that more closely approximate the diverse backgrounds of Muslims in the United States. That is, whereas mosques often have a congregation primarily made up of, for example, Egyptian, Pakistani, or African immigrants, the MSA members are an amalgamation of these and other racial and ethnic backgrounds. As Jamillah Karim (2005, p. 501) notes, "[i]ntegration between African American and second-generation Arab and South Asian Muslim occurs most often on university campuses." This diversity thus undergirds the organization's closer correlation to American society as well as facilitates its role in not only shaping a Muslim identity, but also placing that identity within a broader framework.

In the aftermath of 9/11, second-generation American Muslims also increasingly turned to native leadership rather than imams imported from "back home." Among the high-profile leaders fitting these more culturally conscious criteria are a number of North American converts to Islam. Hamza Yusuf, one of the most prominent religious leaders in America, is a white convert known for his eloquent speeches that often draw scores of listeners. His extensive travels through the Muslim world, and firsthand experience with the educational shortcomings found therein, have also made him an ardent proponent of indigenous Islamic scholarship in America. Along these same lines, Sherman Jackson, a Religion Studies professor at the University of Southern California, is an African-American convert who, though specializing in Islamic law, writes extensively on Islam in America, particularly on historical and contemporary issues within the Black Muslim community. Dr. Jackson's popularity among second-generation Muslim-Americans indicates this demographic's acceptance of a more inclusive Islam, as opposed to the culturally specific versions many of them were exposed to as youths in alternatively Arab, Asian, or African-dominated mosques.

Additionally, the current generation of young Muslims has embraced Western-raised leaders with ethnic backgrounds more traditionally associated with Islam. Yasir Qadhi, who currently heads a large Islamic center in East Plano, Texas, is one such scholar who fits this mold. Qadhi, whose parents immigrated to Houston, Texas in the mid-1970s, received an undergraduate degree in engineering before undertaking traditional Islamic studies at The Islamic University of Madinah in Saudi Arabia and ultimately earning a PhD in Religious Studies from Yale University. This global perspective coupled with Western roots allows Qadhi to offer culturally

relevant yet traditionally grounded lectures on a wide range of topics. This rare ability was in especially high demand in the early- to mid-2000s, as many second-generation American Muslims were coming of age and trying to make sense of a suddenly salient identity. To this uncertainty, Qadhi offered the following pointed remarks during a 2007 talk:

> For those of you who do have a "back home," let me ask you a very blunt question. Think about the situation "back home," think about your friends and relatives...Look at their mentality, look at the way they view the world. Look at the way they view *religion* (emphasis in the original) …. Ask yourself a very blunt question: Where would you rather have been born and raised?

Speaking for himself, and in terms of spirituality, Qadhi replies: "I thank Allah…that I was born and raised where I was [in Houston, Texas]." Such statements acknowledge the consternation that many Muslims living in America (or, more broadly, the "West") felt at the time while countering this sense with an affirmative case for Muslims' place in the West. Clearly, questions of American Muslim identity and belonging have also factored into intra-communal discussions alongside more public debates on this community.

This brief historical and institutional overview underscores the divergent trajectories of American Muslim immigrants and their second-generation progeny. Whereas foreign-born Muslims settling in America aimed to establish communities that reflected the cultural makeup of their home country, the sons and daughters of these migrants to the United States eventually molded institutions and turned to leaders more attuned to the indigenous American experience. Notably, these dynamics all took form in an environment that allowed for an organic expression of religiosity. What, then, has been the outcome of these historical pathways in terms of American Muslims' identity and belonging? Before turning to that analysis, the next section introduces the chief data source for the study, provides a demographic snapshot of this community, and discusses key methodological decisions that stem from the makeup of this population.

3 Demographics and Data

Part of the reason that systematic research on American Muslims (and other low-incidence populations (Berry et al., 2018)) has lagged behind their political and social salience is the lack of quantitative data sources. Prior to 2001, Zogby International conducted the only national survey of American Muslims (which was fielded in the lead-up to the 2000 election), although the data remains proprietary aside from the published topline findings. It was not until 2007 that Pew conducted the first systematic survey of American Muslims, complete with data and methodological transparency. Over the next decade, Pew would field two more waves of this survey and the latest, conducted in 2017, offers us the most reliable insight into this community's demographic makeup.

A number of relevant characteristics emerge from Pew's demographic portrait of American Muslims (Pew Research Center, 2017a). First, Muslim adults in the United States are about three times as likely as the average American to be immigrants (58 percent vs. 18 percent). Second, a majority of these migrants (56 percent) settled in the United States after the year 2000. Third, of those who are foreign-born, about 35 percent hail from South Asia while a similar proportion originate from the Middle East and North Africa (including Iran). Notably, no single country is origin to more than 15 percent of foreign-born Muslim immigrants. This latter statistic highlights the uniquely diverse quality of American Muslims.

Indeed, American Muslims are the most racially and ethnically diverse religious community in America (Mogahed & Chouhoud, 2017, p. 9). In addition to large South Asian and Middle Eastern sub-groups, there is a sizable contingent of White Muslims and African-Americans, as well. This means that one must be careful when setting up in-group comparisons of this community. If the goal is to understand whether identity and belonging varies between first-generation immigrants and their successors, then dividing a Muslim sample solely along lines of nativity would lead to invalid assumptions given the considerable proportion of indigenous Muslims. As such, the analysis in this study compares the attitudes of foreign-born Muslims in Pew's survey to those respondents that reported (1) being born in the United States, and (2) having at least one parent born outside of the United States (i.e., a group commonly referred to as second-generation Americans). Admittedly, this approach could potentially exclude respondents that we would want in the analysis (namely the grandchildren or great grandchildren of immigrants to the United States). That said, a check of the 166 respondents excluded through this process revealed that two-thirds were converts and nearly all were either White, Black, or "Other" in terms of their race/ethnicity. Thus, the inclusion of these respondents would be far more likely to bias our analysis than their exclusion.

Table 1 provides a demographic comparison between foreign-born and second-generation respondents in the Pew 2017 poll. On the key socio-economic indicators of income and education, there appears to be little generational difference. The largest discrepancy is on the basis of age, with two-thirds of second-generation respondents falling into the 18–29 range while only a small fraction is over 55 years old. Along these same lines, there is a wide gulf in marriage rates, with foreign-born American Muslims about one and a half times more likely than their second-generation counterparts to be wed. In terms of political leanings, it is important to note the slightly higher proportion of second-generation Muslims self-identifying as Democrats may have more to do with immigrant aversion to affiliating with any party than ideological divergence, as evident by the statistical parity when it comes to describing oneself as "Somewhat/Very Liberal." Nonetheless, this snapshot cautions us to consider that any observed attitudinal or behavioral correlations with immigrant status could be an artifact of compositional differences. As such, the analyses in the next section control for the variables listed in Table 1.

Table 1 Demographic differences

Variable	(1) First Gen		(2) Second Gen		T-test Difference (1)–(2)
	N	Mean/SE	N	Mean/SE	
HH Income < $30K	645	0.32	190	0.26	0.06
		(0.04)		(0.06)	
HH Income > $100K	645	0.07	190	0.05	0.02
		(0.02)		(0.02)	
College Graduate	645	0.39	190	0.29	0.10
		(0.03)		(0.05)	
Age: 18–29	645	0.28	190	0.68	– 0.40***
		(0.03)		(0.06)	
Age: 55+	645	0.18	190	0.02	0.16***
		(0.03)		(0.01)	
Married	645	0.69	190	0.27	0.43***
		(0.03)		(0.05)	
Women	645	0.47	190	0.56	– 0.09
		(0.04)		(0.06)	
Democrat	645	0.66	190	0.77	– 0.12*
		(0.04)		(0.05)	
SW/Very Liberal	645	0.32	190	0.37	– 0.05
		(0.04)		(0.06)	

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

4 Assessing American Muslim Immigrant Identity and Belonging

To assess identity and belonging among American Muslims, this section highlights the effect of immigrant status on a suite of relevant attitudes and behaviors. Each dependent variable is rendered dichotomous and the coefficients in the regression plots below represent the marginal effect of being a second-generation American Muslim, controlling for standard demographic variables and political leanings. The results are therefore fairly straightforward in their interpretation: Each point estimate in the figures represents the average change in probability that a second-generation Muslim will hold the attitude being modeled compared to a foreign-born baseline. The full logistic regression tables can be found in Appendix A.

4.1 Religiosity

The first set of analyses considers American Muslim religiosity. This factor features prominently in general assessments of assimilation, but takes on added analytical weight when considered in the context of this particular population. This increased significance is rooted in the (sometimes implicit, often explicit) presumption that religiosity and societal disaffection often go hand-in-hand when it comes to Muslims in the West. An Oxford Analytica (2009) brief distributed as incidents of domestic terrorism in America were beginning to multiply typifies this association:

> A sizeable portion of the immigrant Muslim-American population is becoming more religious and alienated from mainstream US society. This is true particularly among second-generation Muslims. This trend is similar to the growing religiosity among Muslims in many countries in Western Europe.

A landmark NYPD counter-terrorism study similarly casts suspicion on rising religious sentiment (Silber & Bhatt, 2007). In the radicalization process the report outlines, for example, the second of four stages is described as "Self-Identification," in which an individual undergoes "religious seeking" by means of "trusted social networks made up of friends and family, religious leaders, literature and the Internet." Moreover, while acknowledging that American Muslims have adapted and have been allowed to adapt, far more than their European counterparts, the report nonetheless cautions that "[d]espite the economic opportunities in the United States, the powerful gravitational pull of individuals' religious roots and identity sometimes supersedes the assimilating nature of American society" (Silber & Bhatt, 2007, p. 32).

As Fig. 1 demonstrates, there is no discernible drop-off in religiosity between first- and second-generation American Muslims on any of the five unique measures of religiosity. Whether it be subjective attitudes, like the importance of religion in one's life, or objective behaviors, like always wearing a *hijab*; whether it be private actions, like praying the 5 *salat*, or public ones, like attending weekly religious services, the analysis evidences no generational divide. Additionally, the one divergence—namely that second-generation Muslims are more likely than their foreign-born counterparts to describe themselves as religious—happens to be in the opposite direction of what classical assimilationist theories would predict.

Taken together, these findings indicate that religion remains an important part of American Muslim identity beyond the first generation of immigrants. Indeed, the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding also found that American Muslim youth (age 18–29) were just as likely as older Muslims to say that religion was important to their daily life, which contrasted with a 25-point gap between the oldest and youngest cohort among the general public (Mogahed & Chouhoud, 2017). These patterns are certainly at odds with the straight-line assimilative paths that other minority groups have taken in the past and, correspondingly, the one that American Muslims were expected to take. As Yvonne Haddad (2007, p. 253) notes in her study of hijab adoption post-9/11:

> The integration and assimilation of second and third generation Muslims into US society was expected to proceed according to a predictable trajectory noted among previous immigrant

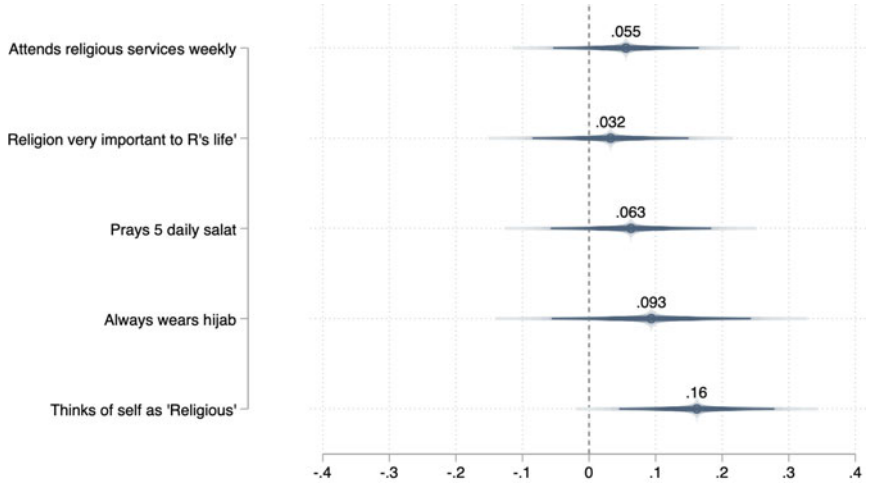

Fig. 1 Religious Parity among Immigrant and Second-Generation Muslims (*Note* Each coefficient was modelled separately, controlling for standard demographics and political learnings. The darker whiskers around the point estimates represent the 90% confidence interval)

groups. The children of the immigrants would shed their parents' religious and cultural markings and become more Americanized.

Haddad hypothesizes that the September 11 attacks, however, established and accelerated what she calls a "re-Islamization" among Muslim youth. Is this durable pattern reflected in American Muslims' social and political attitudes? To be sure, the analytic neutrality of this question does not quite capture what truly piques skeptics' interest in this community.

4.2 Suspicion and Skepticism

Does the stickiness of religiosity among second-generation American Muslims translate to feelings of isolation or resentment? This question is perhaps closer to the core of the concern over Muslim religious behavior. That is, the agencies and commentators mentioned above are not worried about how practicing American Muslims are per se, but are instead concerned about the public ramifications of these personal beliefs.

The findings presented in Fig. 2 seem to indicate that years of suspicion and skepticism being directed toward American Muslims have caused a segment of the community to respond in turn. When it comes to particular institutions, second-generation American Muslims are significantly less likely to believe that the Democratic Party is "friendly" to their community. Given America's political duopoly (at least when it comes to federal office) and the clear animosity that many prominent Republicans

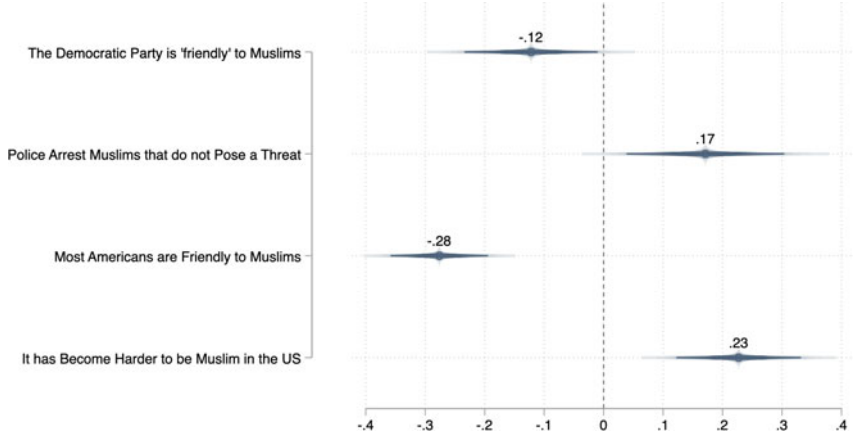

Fig. 2 Skepticism and Suspicion among Second-Generation Muslims (*Note* Each coefficient was modelled separately, controlling for standard demographics and political learnings. The darker whiskers around the point estimates represent the 90% confidence interval)

have shown to Muslims in recent years (Klaas, 2019) (a pattern that manifested even before Donald Trump became president (Beinart, 2015)), this apprehension toward the Democratic Party could limit American Muslims' political efficacy. Along these same lines, second-generation American Muslims are more likely to believe that police arrests of Muslim suspects are not motivated by a credible threat. Certainly, there have been numerous examples of cases driven by questionable—if not altogether illegal—policing tactics bordering on entrapment (Norris & Grol-Prokopczyk, 2015). This distrust of US security officials is all the more understandable given the extensive, invasive, and, again, illegal surveillance of Muslim communities across the country (Khan & Ramachandran, 2021; Mansoor, 2021).

When it comes to perceptions of broader American society, here, too, second-generation American Muslims evidence a bleaker view than their foreign-born counterparts. Native born respondents in the analysis are less likely to believe that most Americans are friendly to Muslims and more likely to say that it has become harder to be Muslim in the United States. Compared to the skepticism showed toward institutions, these findings could potentially lead to more worrying outcomes. As Oskooii (2016) has shown, the source of perceived discrimination can determine downstream socio-political ramifications, with horizontal (as opposed to top-down) animus more likely to lead to withdrawal from public activity.

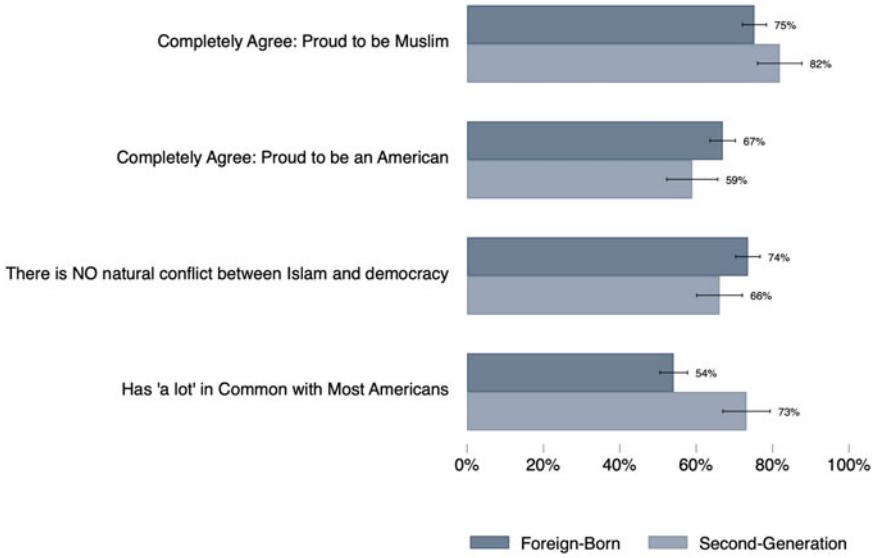

Fig. 3 First- and Second-Generation Muslims Evidence a Sense of Place-Belonging

4.3 Resilient Belonging

Despite these feelings of a society that is wary of Islam and its adherents, Fig. 3[3] shows that American Muslims are not exhibiting signs of alienation. To start, there is statistical parity between immigrant and second-generation American Muslims when it comes to their likelihood to completely agree that they are "Proud to be Muslim." That over three-quarters of each sub-group reports this sentiment shows that religion remains a core component of identity for American Muslims. Just as notable, clear majorities of both immigrant and second-generation American Muslims completely agree when asked if they are "Proud to be an American." While there is some drop-off in these numbers compared to those expressing pride in their religion, it is worth noting that when the next option for this question is taken into account, around 95 percent of each sub-group at least "Mostly Agree" that they are proud to be American. Thus, while not as central as religion, being an American is still nonetheless an important factor in identity formation for Muslims in the United States. At minimum, we can conclude that clear majorities do not see a tension between being Muslim and being American.

[3] These analyses report a simple difference in means in order to highlight the proportions within each group for each outcome alongside the cross-group comparisons. Separate secondary analyses confirmed that the relationships highlighted in the figure hold after controlling for the variables in Table 1.

More broadly, the vast majority of both immigrant and second-generation American Muslims similarly see no conflict between Islam and democracy. While noteworthy, this finding is not at all surprising. Despite a vast literature questioning Muslims' commitment to democratic norms (see Fish (2011) for a review), studies have repeatedly shown that Muslims across the world value democracy as much as other respondents and see no inherent tension between their faith and this political system (Jamal & Tessler, 2008).

Attitudes toward democracy is one thing, but what about Muslims' feelings toward their adopted home country? Here, too, the findings are normatively positive. A majority of Muslim immigrants settling in the United States come with a fairly high sense of commonality with the American people, which only gets enhanced among the second generation. The clear overall conclusion from these metrics is that Muslims do not feel that they need to sacrifice a sense of identity or belonging in order to be a part of American society.

5 Conclusion

This chapter assessed American Muslim immigrant identity and belonging via a brief historical overview and targeted empirical analysis. Two key takeaways emerge from the latter analysis. First, the findings indicate that second-generation American Muslims and their foreign-born counterparts exhibit high levels of pride in being both Muslim *and* American. That is, there does not appear to be any tension between these identity markers and, more notably for this analysis, no statistically significant drop-off from the first generation to the next.

Second, the findings on belonging are mixed. In terms of place-belongingness, American Muslims do not exhibit a feeling of alienation from their society. At the same time, however, they are concerned that societal institutions and the broader public are not fully embracing them, but are instead promoting exclusionary practices and ideas. Thus, while asserting their rightful place in society, second-generation American Muslims are also taking on something of a defensive posture in light of the policies and animus of the post-9/11 period.

A couple of caveats accompany these general takeaways, however. First, we should be careful not to reinforce an existing double standard as we conduct our analyses of Muslim public opinion. This chapter, for instance, featured an extended discussion and inquiry into Muslims' religiosity. On the one hand, since this is a perennial topic of interest whenever Muslims in the West are invoked, it is necessary to investigate the matter systematically rather than leave it susceptible to broad accusations variably tethered to reality. On the other hand, it is worth considering how this type of research may lend credence to the narrative of "exceptionalism" around American Muslims. In Pew's second national survey of American Muslims (Pew Research Center, 2011), for example, they make a point to note that while 49 percent of respondents reported thinking of themselves as "Muslim first" (i.e., before American or any other nationality), a comparable percentage of Christians in the United

States (46 percent) similarly reported prioritizing their religious identity. Clearly, the researchers and writers at Pew were mindful of the need to contextualize their findings given the abiding tendency to read data on Muslims in an uncharitable light.

Second, we should be cautious in not treating the findings presented in this chapter as the final word on American Muslim identity and belonging. Of course, chiefly, this caution is borne of the need to more fully model these attitudes beyond the one (albeit critical) dimension of immigrant status. What role, for example, does experience with discrimination have in driving the drop-off between those proud to be Muslim and those proud to be American? Along these same lines, does immigrant status or nativity moderate this potential link? Moreover, dovetailing off the point in the previous paragraph, is the attitudinal gap shown in Fig. 3 particular to this community or a function of high religiosity across populations? Such questions are critical to building on the (ever sturdier) foundation of knowledge on Muslims in the United States.

More fundamentally, however, American Muslims are the youngest religious community in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2017a). Where they are today in terms of their attitudes and behaviors may not be where they will be a generation down the road. What can be said at this point, however, is that there do not appear to be any internal obstacles to an organic American Muslim identity and sense of belonging in the United States. Whether the policies and proclamations of elected officials and the general sentiment of the broader public erect (additional) *external* obstacles, however, remains to be seen.

Appendix A: Regression Results

Regression Table Corresponding to Fig. 1

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Second Gen	0.27	0.16	0.29	0.48	0.73*
	(0.32)	(0.35)	(0.34)	(0.47)	(0.33)
Age: 18–29	0.20	−0.07	−0.67†	−0.12	0.09
	(0.36)	(0.36)	(0.34)	(0.53)	(0.36)
Age: 55+	0.19	−0.03	0.46	−0.25	−0.72*
	(0.37)	(0.41)	(0.42)	(0.78)	(0.36)
HH Income > $100K	−0.97**	−0.88*	−0.81*	−1.11	−0.01
	(0.37)	(0.35)	(0.39)	(0.81)	(0.34)
HH Income < $30K	−0.22	0.11	0.64*	0.95†	0.96**
	(0.33)	(0.34)	(0.31)	(0.52)	(0.31)
College Graduate	−0.59*	−0.29	−0.28	−0.58	0.03
	(0.28)	(0.30)	(0.29)	(0.50)	(0.27)

(continued)

(continued)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Married	0.68*	0.63†	0.76**	0.70	−0.06
	(0.32)	(0.33)	(0.29)	(0.45)	(0.32)
Middle Eastern	−0.40	0.48†	0.57*	0.47	−0.68*
	(0.29)	(0.29)	(0.28)	(0.43)	(0.28)
Women	−1.03***	0.44	0.21	0.00	−0.19
	(0.28)	(0.28)	(0.28)	(.)	(0.26)
Democrat	1.06***	−0.06	0.26	−0.10	0.41
	(0.32)	(0.32)	(0.31)	(0.63)	(0.29)
Somewhat/Very Liberal	−0.95**	−0.59*	−0.08	0.64	−0.28
	(0.30)	(0.29)	(0.29)	(0.45)	(0.27)
Constant	−0.08	0.46	−1.00*	−1.28	−0.03
	(0.44)	(0.47)	(0.43)	(0.84)	(0.42)
N	835	835	835	312	835

Standard errors in parentheses

† $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Note Model numbers correspond to the following questions (all responses are dichotomized): (1) Attends religious service weekly; (2) Religion very important to R's life; (3) Prays 5 daily *salat*; (4) Always wears hijab; (5) Thinks of self as "religious"

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Second Gen	−0.58†	−1.50***	0.78*	1.12***
	(0.33)	(0.32)	(0.38)	(0.33)
Age: 18–29	−0.18	−0.10	−0.11	−0.85*
	(0.39)	(0.37)	(0.42)	(0.34)
Age: 55+	0.41	0.63	−0.41	−0.37
	(0.38)	(0.46)	(0.56)	(0.37)
HH Income > $100K	0.70*	−0.12	0.32	0.27
	(0.36)	(0.35)	(0.39)	(0.32)
HH Income < $30K	0.81*	0.52	0.27	−0.51
	(0.32)	(0.34)	(0.39)	(0.31)
College Graduate	−0.01	0.01	0.68*	0.90***
	(0.29)	(0.27)	(0.32)	(0.27)
Married	0.25	0.90**	−0.28	−0.77*
	(0.36)	(0.33)	(0.40)	(0.33)
Middle Eastern	−0.08	−0.01	0.95**	0.05
	(0.27)	(0.28)	(0.34)	(0.28)
Women	−0.64*	−0.72**	0.24	0.53*
	(0.27)	(0.27)	(0.33)	(0.26)

(continued)

(continued)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Democrat	1.37***	0.05	−0.06	0.30
	(0.32)	(0.30)	(0.37)	(0.29)
Somewhat/Very Liberal	0.13	0.01	−0.02	0.65*
	(0.27)	(0.29)	(0.33)	(0.29)
Constant	−1.25*	0.51	−1.07*	−0.51
	(0.54)	(0.42)	(0.49)	(0.44)
N	835	835	535	835

Standard errors in parentheses

† $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Note Model numbers correspond to the following questions: (1) The Democratic Party is [friendly] toward Muslim Americans; (2) When law enforcement officers have arrested Muslims in the United States suspected of plotting terrorist acts, do you think they have arrested mostly ___? [ANSWER: People tricked by law enforcement who did NOT pose threat.]; (3) Most Americans are Friendly to Muslims; (4) It has become harder to be Muslim in the United States

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Muslims in Canada: Their Identity and Sense of Belonging

Daniel Stockemer and Antonia Teodoro

1 Introduction

Minorities' identity and sense of belonging are central for their integration into the society they live in. According to psychological and sociological research, there are two fundamental dimensions underlying minorities' integration into their new country of residence, these are: cultural maintenance and participation in the receiving society (Hou et al., 2018). A higher level of cultural maintenance is more strongly associated with a sense of belonging to their country of origin, whereas a higher level of participation in the receiving society is associated with a greater sense of belonging to the new country of residence (Painter, 2013). Through this lens, minorities' level of attachment to their country of residence is largely determined by those they surround themselves with. A sense of belonging emerges if people develop perceptions of unity, togetherness, solidarity and community spirit, and if actors see themselves as one with other people, in the sense that others become 'one of them' (Claridge, 2020). Networks and trust in others are essential in developing attachment to the mainstream society. The same applies to confidence in public institutions, which fosters effective cooperation, communication and positive relationships (Schellenberg, 2004).

For the development of a positive identity with the host country, we cannot overstate the importance of a sense of belonging as a source of well-being and as a factor in minorities' long-term commitment to their new country (Wu et al., 2012). Attachment with the society they live in determines whether or not someone with minority background may feel welcome and 'at home' in her new environment. In contrast, a feeling of marginalization can inhibit social and civil participation. In particular,

The authors want to thank the Environics Institute and, in particular, Keith Neuman for sharing their data of the 2016 survey on Muslims in Canada.

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D. Stockemer (ed.), *Muslims in the Western World*, Immigrants and Minorities, Politics and Policy, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-99487-7_4

discrimination can hamper minorities' life satisfaction, therefore weakening their motivation to participate in the receiving society, which, in turn, can further alienate minorities from the new society they live in.

In this chapter, we want to provide an overview of Muslims' sense of belonging and identity in Canada. To do so, we first present the type of Muslims who reside in Canadian society. Second, we shortly summarize and discuss the existing literature on Muslims' sense of belonging and identity in Canada and beyond. Third, using an Environics (2016) survey, we present our own analysis of Canadian Muslims sense of identity and belonging. Our survey results confirm prior studies in that Muslims in Canada feel well integrated with a strong sense of belonging to the Canadian society. In fact, 95 percent of the queried feel a strong or very strong sense of belonging to Canada. Finally, we discuss our results more broadly and provide some avenues for future research.

2 Muslims in Canada

According to the 2011 Census data, there are approximately over 1 million self-identified Muslims in Canada, which represents 3.2 percent of the country's population (Statistics Canada, 2017). For every 10 Muslims living in Canada, seven of them are immigrants. The most significant country of origin is Pakistan (13 percent of Muslims in Canada originate from there), followed by Iran, Algeria, Morocco, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and India. About 95 percent of the Muslim population live in urban areas, such as in the Greater Toronto Area and Montreal, and approximately 9 in 10 of these individuals regard themselves as visible minorities. Over half of all foreign-born Muslims have arrived in Canada after 2000 (Environics, 2016). In addition, Muslims are on average younger than non-Muslims, more often men and are more likely to be foreign-born (Joly & Reitz, 2018). Furthermore, they are more highly educated than non-Muslims with a higher rate of unemployment. In terms of religious practice, Muslims have a higher rate of religiosity than the general Canadian population.

Compared to Muslims immigrating to other popular Western immigrant destinations, Muslim immigrants to Canada are quite distinct and also share some unique features. One common feature of the Muslim immigrant population in Canada, as well as in many other immigrant destinations including Germany, France and Belgium, is that Muslim immigrants are younger than the average citizen. One major difference lies in the diversity in origin and race, and the relatively high education levels that characterize Muslim immigrants in Canada and the United States, but not many other Western immigrant destinations.[1] Contrary to the diversity in Canada, the immigrant population in many European countries come from one destination. For example,

[1] In the United States, Pew (2018) reports that the majority of Muslims in the US are American-born (42%). The next highest immigration levels to the United States are from South Asia (20%), the Middle East/North Africa (14%) and other Asian-Pacific countries (13%).

Germany has been receiving a fairly high number of Muslim immigrants from Turkey. These immigrants are called *Gastarbeiter*, meaning 'guest workers' with the initial goal of filling labor shortages. In other countries, such as France, most Muslim immigrants originate from Maghreb, and Belgium has a large Muslim population consisting of Moroccan and Turkish immigrants (Czymara and Eisentraut, 2020). In addition to the greater diversity of the Muslim population in Canada, there is another major difference. Several European countries such as Germany or Sweden had to cope with an unregulated mass immigration during the refugee crisis in 2015/2016. Even if Canada has accepted upwards 20,000 Syrian refugees in the aftermath of the refugee crisis, the country has never experienced a comparable uncontrolled influx of Muslim immigrants. Rather, Canadian Muslim immigrants have generally immigrated through regular migration channels. This also implies that many of them have been vetted by Canadian authorities before their arrival to the North American country.

3 History of Muslims in Canada

In this study, we use the generic term Muslims, because we do not have a clear benchmark of when to still talk about an immigrant. However, most Muslims in Canada have some immigration background as first, second or third generation immigrants. They are part of a larger immigrant population. To illustrate, first and second generation immigrants make up 44.6 percent of Canada's population, outside of Quebec and 21.6 percent within Quebec (Reitz et al., 2017). Within these groups, Muslims account for 6.8 percent in Canada and 13.5 percent in Quebec. The history of Muslim settlement in Canada began in the nineteenth century, with the immigration of a Scottish Muslim couple, James and Agnes Love, whose child born in 1854 was the first Muslim born on Canadian soil. The Canadian Census of 1871, which is the earliest record of Muslims in Canada, documented 13 self-identified Muslim men. By 1901, this number reached between 300 and 400, then in 1911, it reached 1500 individuals (McDonough & Alvi, 2002). In 1938, when the Muslim population was still quite small, Muslims in Edmonton, Alberta built the first Canadian mosque (Lorenz, 1998). In 1951, the number of Muslims in Canada reached between 2000 and 3000, then, three decades later, in 1981, it soared to 98,165, making up 0.5 percent of the population (Canefe, 2007). The Census of 1991 declared that there were 253,260 Muslims in Canada, and the number has continued to rise significantly since then (Canefe, 2007).

We can explain the strong increase in the percentage of Muslims in Canada by the removal of European immigration preference in the 1960s. In 1962 and 1967, Canada introduced two Immigration Acts, after embracing internal and external pressures for less discriminatory immigration practices (Boyd, 1976). Prior to this, both Canada and the United States sought to only admit immigrants from countries that were considered compatible with North American values and society. The major change

in the 1960s was that immigration regulations were removed against people of non-European descent, and immigration selection was based on occupational skill rather than citizenship. This resulted in an influx of Muslims from a range of former British colonies, such as South Asia, Africa and the Middle East (Canefe, 2007). These newcomers generally settled in the center of the Canadian political and economic landscape, usually in Ontario. Another factor in the surge of Muslim immigrants over the past 50 years is the increase of conflict in mainly Muslim countries. Refugees and asylum seekers came in large waves from Uganda in the 1970s to escape ethnic persecution, then Afghans fleeing Russian occupation of Afghanistan, and following this, Somalis who were escaping civil war and tribal conflicts in Somalia in the 1980s and 1990s (McDonough & Alvi, 2002). More recently, Muslim refugees came from Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, among other Muslim majority countries. However, compared to regular migration, refugees have still constituted a minority of Muslim newcomers to Canada over the past four decades. Over the 30 years, Canada has also seen a growth in the number of Mosques and Islamic organizations preserving and promoting Muslim religious and cultural identity.

4 Existing Studies

The existing literature agrees that Muslims in North America experience higher levels of attachment to the host country compared to Muslims in other Western countries (Greenwood, 2017). It also seems that among North American countries, Canada is the country where Muslims feel the strongest sense of belonging to the host country (Birani, 2017). According to Grant (2007), it is evident that Muslims internalize a new national identity after they move to Canada. They participate in both mainstream Canadian and cultural activities as well as hold positive views toward multiculturalism. Respondents who have lived in Canada longer than 5 years start to describe themselves as Canadian. These findings suggest that over time, Muslim newcomers gradually acculturate into Canadian society. Another study by Wong and Simon (2009) confirms that Muslim immigrants develop a very strong sense of belonging to Canada; according to the authors, they are almost four times as likely to have that sense in comparison with non-Muslim immigrants. Birani (2017, p. 49) further argues that most Muslims actively seek Canadian citizenship; for them it is the final step toward some successful integration into the Canadian society.[2]

Stockemer and Moreau (2021) provide three explanations for why Muslims in Canada are likely to develop this strong sense of identity. First, the culture in Canada is far less homogeneous and the Canadian society is far more accepting of multiple identities within their citizenry than many Western European countries. Canada is

[2] . According to Reitz et al. (2017), about 73 percent of Canada's foreign-born population are naturalized, compared to a lower percentage in other Western countries, such as France, reaching only 39 percent.

an immigrant country; it has developed its culture, political landscape and infrastructure around the notion of an immigrant society. Second, in order to immigrate to North America, most immigrants must have more wealth and a higher education status. In particular, the higher education status is necessary to enter the Canadian migration system, which favors high skilled workers. Third, there are major differences in immigration laws and perceptions in society between Canada and some European countries, such as Germany. For example, the Canadian immigration system offers immigrants a clear route to citizenship, and Canadians generally welcome newcomers as citizens. In contrast, gaining citizenship in Germany is very difficult and time-consuming. The German society still considers second- and third-generation Muslim immigrants as part of the 'immigrant community'; they are not recognized as 'Germans.' Taken these three points together, it seems that Muslim immigrants coming to Canada are willing to integrate in the host society and find a structural environment conducive to do so.

Yet, there are also some signs that some subgroups of Muslim immigrants experience some difficulties in their journey to adopt a positive identity toward the Canadian culture and society. For example, Joly and Reitz (2018) find that Muslims have a higher prevalence of psychological distress than non-Muslims, and it is women who experience these higher stress levels more so than man. According to a news article by Nasser (2016), young Muslims sometimes feel a strong societal pressure to answer questions about violence perpetrated by extremists in the name of Islam and are struggling with reclaiming their Muslim identities. Such questions about violence has driven some young Muslims to pull away from their faith and others to recapture it. They feel their Canadian identities have been put in question.

Survey results reported by Nasser (2016) further display that 61 percent of respondents said that being Muslim was the most important part of their identity, 6 percent said that being Canadian was the most important and 26 percent said that both were important. Furthermore, the same article reports that Muslim Canadians feel profiled by Canadian authorities, with 62 percent worrying about discrimination, 35 percent have actually experienced it and 35 percent believe that the next generation of Muslims will face more discrimination. When this occurs, Muslim Canadians may feel as though they are being sent the message that they are not Canadian, despite the fact that they feel Canadian.

A recent survey conducted by the group Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) confirms that there is growing suspicion toward Muslims. The survey summarized five points: (1) Canadians are the least comfortable with authority figures wearing a hijab versus any other religious dress or symbolism. (2) Canadians are more likely to hold negative perceptions about Muslims than about Jews or Christians. (3) They are less comfortable welcoming a Muslim into their family than Jews or Christians. (4) They are less concerned about protecting Muslim religious rights than other religions. (5) A sizable minority of 17 percent perceive the Muslim

community as a monolith with uniform views (CJPME, 2018).[3] Nevertheless, the same survey also reports that Canadians are aware of the issues facing Muslims, with 81 percent agreeing that there is Islamophobia present in Canadian society, and that they have faith in Canada's multiculturalism model to rectify this.

5 Our Study

In this study, we want to complement the existing research aiming to confirm Muslims high levels of identification with the Canadian society, but also determine variation in this sense of belonging among different types of demographics. To do so, we use the Environics (2016) survey entitled 'Survey of Muslims in Canada,' a comprehensive survey of 600 Muslims living in Canada. This survey is predominantly a survey of Muslim immigrants. Only 59 of the 600 Muslim respondents of the survey indicate that their country of origin is Canada. Therefore, we consider this survey to be predominantly a survey of Muslim immigrants, when we describe Muslims sense of belonging and identity, even if many of these first generation migrants have already accepted the Canadian citizenship.

We proceed by providing some general overview statistics of Muslims' sense of belonging and identity. In a second step, we present some hypotheses as to which type of Muslims should have a higher or lower sense of identity with the Canadian host society. Third, we test these hypotheses using various types of multiple regression models.

6 Overview Statistics

To get an overview of how Muslims feel toward their country of residence, we have decided to present four different overview statistics. First, we offer some information on the two items: (1) the importance of being Muslim and (2) the importance of being Canadian. Second, we display the percentage of Muslims who feel a strong or a very strong sense of belonging to Canada, as well as indicate their level of proudness in becoming Canadian citizens. Third, we look at how satisfied Muslims are with their life in Canada. Finally, we present some statistics on how Muslims feel treated in Canada compared to other Western countries.

Table 1 illustrates that it is important for Muslims to be both Canadian and Muslim. From these summary statistics, it seems that Muslims have both a strong attachment

[3] Other surveys come to similar conclusions. For example, McAndrew and Bakhshaei (2012) illustrate that Muslims rank as the least favored group compared with other religious or cultural communities in Canada. In their study, this sentiment was strongest in Quebec where 41 percent of respondents said they have a very unfavorable opinion of Islam. An Angus Reid (2017a, b) opinion poll further demonstrates that out of older respondents, aged 55 and older, 81 percent of them opposed wearing the niqab and burka in public.

Table 1 The importance of being Canadian and being Muslim

	Being Canadian (%)	Being Muslim (%)
Not important at all	1.67	1.50
Somewhat unimportant	0.50	5.83
Somewhat important	13.33	9.67
Very important	83.17	82.50
Do not know	1.33	0.50

to Canada as well as their Muslim religion. To illustrate, more than 95 percent of the polled deem it very important or somewhat important to be or become Canadian, and more than 93 percent find their identification with their Muslim belief either important or somewhat important. Given these high numbers, it also appears that nearly all of the respondents do not find that these two identities are conflictual. Rather, it seems that the respondents agree that they can be both Canadian and Muslim.

The summary statistics in Tables 2 and 3 further corrugate the findings from Table 2. Muslims in Canada have a strong sense of identity toward Canada; 95 percent identify strongly or very strongly with Canada. In addition, more than four out of five Muslims are very proud to be Canadian and accept the Canadian nationality. In contrast, less than 5 percent express no proudness. In a report, the Environics Institute (2016) further argues that the percentage of Muslim immigrants expressing their proudness to become Canadian has increased by 10 percentage points over the

Table 2 The sense of belonging toward Canada

	Being Canadian (%)
Very weak	0.33
Generally weak	2.83
Neither weak or strong	1.17
Generally strong	36.50
Very strong	58.50
Do not know	0.67

Table 3 The feeling toward gaining Canadian nationality

	Being Canadian (%)
Not proud/not very proud	0.50
It depends	0.17
Somewhat proud	12.17
Very proud	83.83
Do not consider myself Canadian	2.5
Do not know	0.83

Table 4 Muslims' satisfaction rates with their life in Canada

	Satisfaction with one's life in Canada (%)
Dissatisfied	7.50
Satisfied	88.30
Do not know/refusal to answer the questions	4.17

Table 5 Muslims' perceived treatment in Canada compared to other Western countries

	Treatment of Muslims in Canada compared to other Western countries (%)
Worse	2.00
The same	9.33
Better	82.83
Do not know	5.83

past ten years overall, with this upward trend rising the most in Quebec by 30 percent in ten years.

Table 4 illustrates that Muslims' strong sense of belonging to the Canadian society also translates into a relatively high satisfaction rate with their life in Canada. In total, more than 88 percent of Muslims are satisfied with their lives in Canada. This is an incredibly high percentage, and we hypothesize that this life satisfaction stems, at least in part, from their strong sense of belonging with Canada.

The last item we discuss—Muslims' perceived treatment in comparison with other Western countries—shows a very high percentage of survey respondents agreeing with the statement that Canada treats Muslims better than other Western countries (see Table 5). In fact, nearly 83 percent of the polled feel that Muslims are better treated in Canada than elsewhere; this compares to only two percent, who believe that Canada treats Muslims worse than other Western countries.

7 Explaining Variation in Muslims' Attachment to Canada and Their Life Satisfaction

So far, we have established that the grand majority of Muslims feel a strong sense of belonging with Canada. Most Muslim Canadians are also satisfied with their lives. In this section, we are interested in the factors that explain variation in Muslims' feelings of belonging toward Canada and in differences in their life satisfaction. We hypothesize that six factors could explain such variation: (1) birth status of the Muslim (i.e., foreign-born or born in Canada), (2) education, (3), (3) gender, (4) age, (5) whether they have experienced discrimination and (6) the region in which the Muslims live.

7.1 Hypotheses

H (1): Second-generation and third-generation (Canadian-born) Muslim feel a stronger sense of identity and belonging to Canada than first generation (foreign-born) Muslim immigrants do.

We believe that first generations feel a strong attachment to their home country. They have already led a life with a previously inherited culture which they inevitably bring with them to their new country of residence. While their culture and their identities can evolve and multiply, there will always be a strong sense of their home identity. In contrast, it is more common for second generation immigrants to have more fluid, multi-dimensional identities and not want to be categorized within a set group (Tiflati, 2017). Most second generation immigrants will get their Muslim culture through their parents, visits to their parents' countries of origin and through cultural activities in which they participate in their country of residence. However, they will also get their 'new culture' in school, in interactions with friends, and in social activities.

H (2): More educated Muslims feel more attached to Canada than their country of origin than less educated Muslims.

We hypothesize that higher educational attainment can lead to more social participation of immigrants into Canadian society (Wu et al., 2012). With higher education comes more contacts and the possibility for higher socio-economic mobility. This higher social capital and the likelihood to gain friends and contacts with nationals should increase their identity and positive feelings toward Canada. On average, those who are more educated are also more likely to contribute to their new economy more directly through employment in a better paid job. This, in turn, may create many opportunities for interactions, create life satisfaction and increase newcomers' attachment to their host country.

H (3): Muslim women feel less of a sense of identity and belonging to Canada than Muslim men.

The integration for Muslims into the host society might be more difficult for women. Women might wear the hijab, a public Muslim symbol, and they might be held to high (moral) standards within their culture. Because of the visibility of their Muslim identity due to their scarf, they might feel that they have to auto-supervise their behaviors in public (Tiflati, 2017). Being a Muslim woman can thus lead to more discrimination than being a Muslim man, which could be another factor preventing her to develop a strong sense of belonging to the host culture. In contrast, men are able to experience the privilege of being less visibly Muslim, which can be advantageous in their everyday lives and lead to a stronger sense of belonging.

H (4): Younger Muslims should feel a stronger sense of belonging and identity to Canada than older Muslims.

There are several reasons why youth should find it easier to integrate into the host society. For example, Muslim youth who have experienced, either directly or indirectly, poor living or undemocratic conditions, tend to have a deeper appreciation for their parents' choice to immigrate to Canada (Tiflati, 2017). This also implies that

when comparing Canada with their country of origin, in regard to democratic rights and freedoms, youth might express a feeling of gratitude for Canada's multiculturalism. In addition, Muslim youth rather naturally make friends and acquaintances in school and university and get accustomed to the rules and costumes of the host country.

H (5): Muslims who experience religious based discrimination are more likely to identify less with Canada.

Even if it is not as pronounced as elsewhere, discrimination of Muslims has been on the rise in Canada in recent years. In the global climate of terrorism and insecurity, a larger portion of the population sees Muslims with suspicion or outright rejection (Wilkins-Laflamme, 2018). It comes as no surprise that in such a climate, some Muslims have experienced religious discrimination (i.e., around 20 percent in our survey sample). We believe that such discrimination could compromise Muslims social integration and respect for the mainstream values and beliefs (Kitchen et al., 2015), which, in turn, might reduce their social engagement and attachment to Canada's values and beliefs.

H (6): When it comes to region, we believe that Muslims in Quebec feel less of an attachment to Canada than Muslims in the rest of Canada.

For one, people in Quebec embrace a double identity. They are Quebecers and Canadians. For example, Tiflati (2017) argues that Quebecers recognize that they cannot be Quebecois without being Canadian but identify more strongly with their Quebecois identity. On the other hand, it is possible that Muslims in Quebec feel some sense of discrimination in the province. For instance, Mahmut's (2021) study demonstrates that Muslim immigrants in Quebec, although highly educated and skilled, have a very difficult time securing jobs in their field and believe that all of the good jobs in Quebec are reserved for Francophone white people. This sentiment was different in other parts of Canada (e.g., in Alberta and Ontario, respondents expressed a minimum degree of concerns over Islamophobia and felt more connected to society).[4]

8 Statistical Procedures

We are interested in the influence of our six independent variables on two dependent variables: individuals' sense of belonging with Canada and their general life satisfaction. For the first dependent variable, we use a three value ordinal scale with the categories: weak sense of belonging with Canada, strong sense of belonging with Canada and very strong sense of belonging with Canada. In doing so, we combine the three categories: very weak, generally weak, and neither weak nor strong under the category weak, because the three original categories make up less than five percent

[4] It is also important to note that Quebec's immigration policy differs from the rest of Canada. Quebecers abide by the idea of 'interculturalisme' rather than 'multiculturalism' like in the rest of Canada. This perspective recognizes minority cultures but advocates for a deeper integration and participation in French culture and language, and is a far more secularized society, whereas, in the rest of Canada, these differences are more celebrated (Reitz et al., 2017).

of the responses in the survey. Because we have a three value ordinal variable, we use ordinal logistic regression analysis for this model. The second variable—satisfaction with life in Canada—is a binary variable with two categories: dissatisfied and satisfied. This binary choice of the dependent variable calls for binary logistic regression analysis.

We operationalize the six independent variables as follows: (1) birth status of the respondent is a dummy variable coded 1 if the survey participant is born outside of Canada and 0 for Canadian-born second and plus generation immigrants. (2) Education is an 8 value ordinal variable ranging from public or elementary education (coded 1) to a graduate degree (coded 8). (3) Gender is a dummy variable coded 0 for men and 1 for women. (4) The variable age denotes the actual age of the participant at the time he/she took the survey. (5) The variable experienced discrimination is a binary variable coded 0 if respondents have not experienced discrimination over the past 5 years and 1 if they have experienced discrimination. (6) The final variable is a dummy variable coded 1 if the respondent lives in Quebec and 0 if she lives in another province.

Both regression models have the two dependent variables—the degree to which the polled feel a sense of belonging with Canada and survey respondents' life satisfaction levels with Canada—respectively. On the right hand side of the equations are the six independent variables. To the model measuring Muslims' life satisfaction in Canada, we also add our first dependent variable, which measures the sense of belonging the polled feel toward Canada hypothesizing that survey respondents' sense of belonging, as a proxy for a Canadian identity, can be a strong source of life satisfaction. For both models, we also present probability plots of the average predicted effects of statistically significant independent variables to get an idea of the substantive meaning of these statistically significant variables (Fig. 1).

9 Results

Table 6 displays the ordered logistic regression coefficients, standard errors and significance levels of the regression model explaining and predicting the strength of sense of identity and belonging Muslims feel with Canada. We find that the four explanatory variables—born in Canada, gender, age and residence in Quebec are statistically significantly different from zero ($p < 0.05$). Yet, only three variables behave in accordance with our hypotheses. As expected, we find that Muslims, who are born in Canada, have a stronger sense of belonging, than those who are born outside of Canada. The same applies to men and survey respondents who live outside of Quebec. In contrast, the variable of age has an effect that runs counter our expectations. Contrary to our hypothesis, it is older survey respondents who experience a stronger sense of belonging. As with the other statistically significant variables, these differences mainly occur between the categories of a strong sense of identity with Canada and a very strong sense of identity with Canada. Yet, and in particular for age, the differences between these two response choices can be quite substantial.

Table 6 Ordered logistic regression analysis explaining Muslims' level of proudness to be or become Canadian

	Unstandardized logistic regression coefficient	Standard error	Significance level
Born in Canada	0.598	0.302	0.047
Education	0.019	0.057	0.741
Gender	–0.719	0.181	0.000
Age	0.029	0.006	0.000
Experienced discrimination	–0.250	0.221	0.258
Quebec	–0.421	0.205	0.040
Cut off point 1	–2.58	0.840	
Cut off point 2	0.369	0.467	
N	573		
Log likelihood	–437.70		
Pseudo R-squared	0.06		

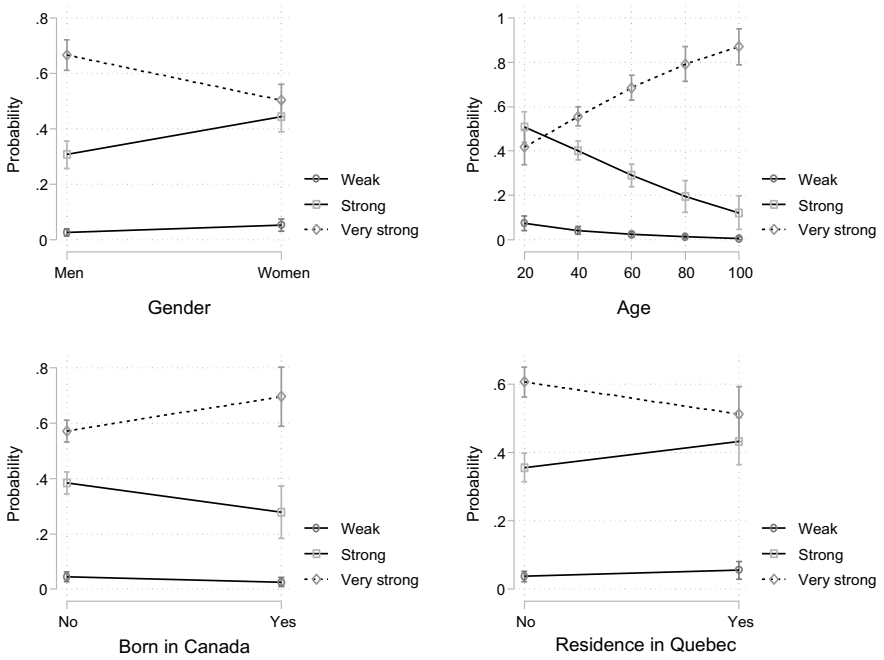

Fig. 1 The predicted effect of gender, age, born in Canada and residence in Quebec on Muslims' level of proudness to become Canadian

For example, if we look at the predicted effect of age, Fig. 1 predicts that somebody aged 25 years old has a roughly equal chance (i.e., nearly 50 percent) of having

either a strong or very strong sense of identity with Canada. In contrast, somebody aged 60 years old has a 75 percent likelihood to have a very strong sense of identity with Canada. In addition, to the four variables that have explanatory power in our regression models, we also have two variables, which do not have any influence on the dependent variable; these are education and having experiences of discrimination. This latter finding pinpoints that Canada can become a home with which survey respondents identify for Muslims with various education levels. In addition, we find that the experience of discrimination does not translate into more hesitancy to identify with Canada. This finding also pinpoints that the growing Islamophobia has not created a feedback loop yet. It seems that Muslims are eager to integrate into Canadian society even if they have experienced some discrimination.

When it comes to our second dependent variable, variation in life satisfaction with one's life in Canada, we find the expected relationship; that is Muslims' sense of belonging with Canada is a very strong driver to explain the survey respondents' life satisfaction. To illustrate, the regression model in Table 7 predicts that nearly 95 percent of Muslims, who feel a very strong sense of identity with Canada are also satisfied with their lives (see Fig. 2). In contrast, individuals who only have a weak sense of belonging with Canada 'only' have a roughly 78 percent likelihood to be satisfied with their lives in Canada. Surprisingly, none of the other independent variables bears any salience in explaining Muslims' life satisfaction.

Table 7 Ordered logistic regression analysis explaining Muslim s' level of satisfaction with their life in Canada

	Unstandardized logistic regression coefficient	Standard error	Significance level
Sense of belonging with Canada	0.847	0.276	0.002
Born in Canada	–0.065	0.576	0.911
Education	0.088	0.102	0.386
Gender	–0.063	0.346	0.855
Age	–0.007	0.011	0.495
Experienced discrimination	–0.048	0.413	0.907
Quebec	0.773	0.462	0.094
Constant	0.922	0.895	0.303
N	549		
Log likelihood	–144.07		
Pseudo R-squared	0.05		

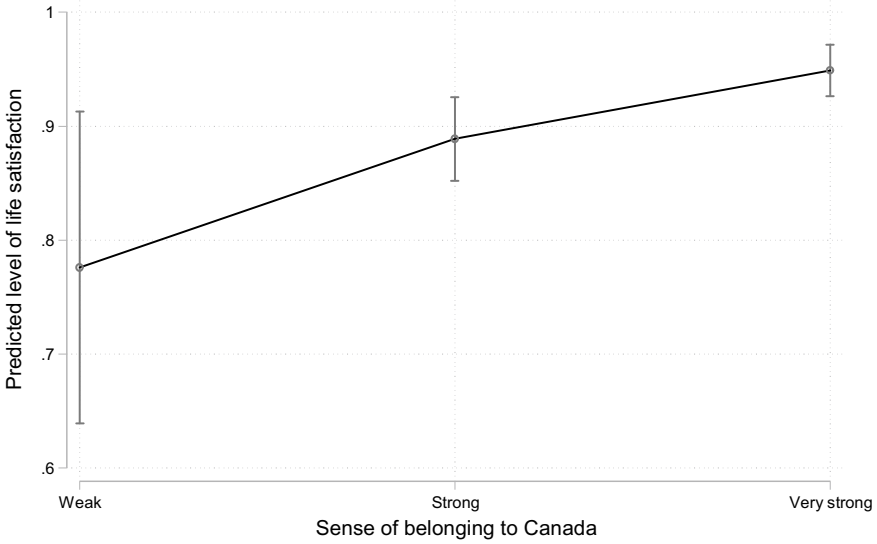

Fig. 2 The predicted effect of somebody's sense of belonging to Canada on life satisfaction in Canada

10 Conclusion

Our analysis points a rather rosy picture of Muslims' sense of belonging and integration. Becoming a Canadian citizen is a goal nearly all Muslims share. In the overall majority, Muslims have strong or very strong sense of belonging with Canada and are proud, if they can become Canadian. While generally this high sense of belonging applies to the overall majority of Muslims, there are some differences with men, older survey respondents, Canadian-born survey respondents and survey respondents from outside of Quebec having an even stronger sense of belonging to Canada. Over 80 percent of Muslims in the survey also acknowledge that they are treated better in Canada compared to other Muslim immigrant Western destinations. In addition, nearly 90 percent of Muslims in Canada are satisfied with their lives. This number is higher than in the general population where life satisfaction levels are roughly at 80 percent (Bonikowska et al., 2014). It is also worth noting that Muslims' sense of belonging is a prime factor in their life satisfaction in Canada.

At first site, our analysis offers very little reason for concern. Based on our results, Canada appears to be the typical country for a successful integration of Muslims. Yet, there are first signs of alarm and we should take these concerns seriously given that our study is based on survey data from 2016. While Canadians' overall views on multiculturalism have remained quite positive, with the majority of 80 percent of the population agreeing that immigration is beneficial for the country (see Environics, 2018), there are clear indications that the acceptance of Muslims into Canadian society is waning. For example, Triadafilopoulos and Rasheed (2020) claim

that public opinion toward Muslim shifts toward negativity. According to them, the renewed fear of Islam is rooted in the recent past, most notably in the War on Terror.

If this stronger rejection of Islam continues in the Canadian society, Muslims, both recent immigrants, naturalized Canadians and converts might face more difficulties in integrating into Canadian society. They might also face more resistance and prejudice; this, in turn, could render it harder for them to develop a Canadian identity. Being eyed critically by a part of Canadian society might also hamper social contexts and mobility and might drive old and new Canadian Muslims to build ethnic communities, something that is not beneficial for cross-cultural contact and integration. Hence, it is possible that the increased discrimination Muslims are facing will finally translate into some more rejection of the Canadian life, something that has not occurred up to now.

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