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Racial and ethnic differences in perceptions of discrimination among Muslim Americans

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ABSTRACT
I use data from the 2011 Pew Survey ($N = 1,033$) to examine the prevalence and correlates of perceived discrimination across Muslim American racial/ethnic groups. Asian Muslims report the lowest frequency of perceived discrimination than other Muslim racial/ethnic groups. Nearly, all Muslim racial/ethnic groups have a few times higher odds of reporting one or more types of perceived discrimination than white Muslims. After controlling for socio-demographic characteristics, the observed relationships persist for Hispanic Muslims but disappear for black and other/mixed race Muslims. Women are less likely than men to report several forms of discrimination. Older Muslims report lower rates of perceived discrimination than younger Muslims. White Muslim men are more likely to report experiencing discrimination than white, black and Asian Muslim women. The findings highlight varying degrees of perceived discrimination among Muslim American racial/ethnic groups and suggest examining negative implications for Muslims who are at the greatest risk of mistreatment.

Introduction

Muslim Americans face discrimination on multiple fronts. They are discriminated against based on colour, ethnicity and religion (Naber 2000; Read 2008; Padela and Heisler 2010). The prevalence of discrimination against Muslim Americans has been well documented in scholarly works, media outlets, national polls and civil rights advocacy publications (Nimer 2001; Gallup 2009; Pew Research Center 2009). A 2009 Gallup poll revealed that almost half of Muslim Americans (48 per cent) reported experiencing some type of racial or religious discrimination (Gallup 2009). According to the same source, Muslim Americans are far more likely to be discriminated against than other major religious groups, including Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Mormons and atheists. The US public also believes that Muslims face

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more discrimination in the USA than other major religious and racial groups. A 2009 survey revealed that 58 per cent of Americans believe that Muslims are subject to more discrimination than Jews, evangelical Christians, atheists, Mormons and racial minorities, such as Hispanics and blacks (Pew Research Center 2009).

Discrimination has permeated all aspects of Muslim life and has been experienced in many domains of American society. These encounters with discrimination occur in workplaces (Kaushal, Kaestner, and Reimers 2007), schools (Aroian 2012), leisure settings (Livengood and Stodolska 2004) and prisons (Marcus 2009).

Muslim Americans face all forms of discrimination, ranging from verbal abuse to physical threats and to racial and religious profiling. For example, the Hamilton Muslim America Poll asked Muslim Americans about encountering discrimination, harassment, verbal abuse or physical attack incidents and revealed that one in four reported being victimized after 9/11, and about half of respondents personally knew a person who experienced mistreatment (Gilbert 2002).

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the number of discriminatory acts, including violence and hate crime incidents against Muslims, spiked. According to the Hamilton Poll, Muslim Americans reported almost a threefold increase (from 21 to 60 per cent) of anti-Muslim incidents in their communities since 9/11 (Gilbert 2002). In 2001, the FBI reported 481 anti-Islamic incidents, representing an almost 1,700 per cent increase from 28 cases reported in 2000 (FBI 2001). Two thousand four hundred and sixty-seven civil rights complaints were reported to the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) in 2006, a 687 per cent increase, compared to 366 cases reported in 2001 (Nimer 2001).

Yet, Muslim Americans have been the targets of discrimination for a long time, dating back far earlier than 9/11 (Nimer 2001; CAIR 2004). In 1995, after the Oklahoma City bombing, CAIR (2004) reported 296 incidents, ranging from verbal abuse to workplace discrimination and to mosque vandalism. Over 200 of these incidents occurred just within a week after the bombing. These reports have been on rise. In 1996, only 80 discrimination complaints were reported to CAIR, whereas in 2000, the number increased to 322, indicating a 400 per cent increase in five years (Nimer 2001).

In general, Muslim Americans' experiences of discrimination have been well documented. Yet, most research uses a broad categorization of Muslims as a single group in reporting perceived experiences with discrimination. Given the entrenched nature of racism in the USA that adapts and takes modern forms, however, it is expected that Muslims of different racial/ethnic backgrounds may become common targets of discrimination. In this respect, they might share the experiences of African-Americans, South Asians and Latinos. Thus, it is necessary to explore whether Muslims of various racial/ethnic backgrounds all perceive that they experience

discrimination similarly or differently. My study extends upon work that treats Muslim Americans as a dichotomous and monolithic category and identifies sources of heterogeneity in Muslim Americans' experiences of perceived discrimination. Specifically, I examine the prevalence of perceived discrimination across Muslim American racial/ethnic groups, assess socio-demographic correlates of perceived discrimination and evaluate whether the race effects vary significantly by gender. This study does not ignore the fact that members of a disadvantaged group may underestimate or overestimate discriminatory incidents occurred against them. Rather, it emphasizes the importance of examining what subgroups among a devalued group are more likely to perceive themselves as targets of discrimination.

Muslim Americans: the neglected diversity

Similar to other minority groups, Muslims are commonly viewed as homogenous. However, most empirical research fails to consider that Muslim Americans may come from all over the world or that black, white and Latino persona may convert to Islam from another religion. Rather, Muslims are seen most often as Arabs (Slade 1981; Shaheen 2003). Figures run as high as 74 per cent for Americans considering all Arabs as Muslims and all Muslims as Arabs (Slade 1981). However, population data reveal that Arabs account for only 12 per cent of Muslim Americans (Power 1998) and of the world's Muslim population (Shaheen 2003).

Muslim Americans come from many different cultures, traditions, ethnicities and countries. Estimates range from sixty-eight to seventy-seven and to eighty different ethnicities and nationalities from over the world to which Muslim Americans belong (McCloud 2006; Pew Research Center 2009; Pew Research Center 2011). A 2009 Gallup poll revealed that among surveyed religions of the USA, including Protestants, Catholics, Mormons, Jews and Muslims, Muslim Americans are the most racially diverse religious group (Gallup 2009). The increasing diversity of the Muslim community is also reflected in the ethnic composition of American mosques. There was a sharp decrease in the number of mosques that had only one ethnic group as attendees. In 2000, 93 per cent of mosques were ethnically diverse, whereas in 2011, the figure was as high as 97 per cent (Bagby 2012).

Furthermore, polls reveal that diversity among Muslim Americans is not only racial. It also encompasses various economic, religious, political and attitudinal factors, such as household income, educational attainment and religious and political engagement (Gallup 2009; Pew Research Center 2009), reflecting the social, economic and political diversity of larger American society.

Previous research

Muslim studies

Empirical studies on discrimination against Muslims are growing. Yet, compared to other racial/ethnic group studies, they are still few in number, primarily based on small sample sizes and mostly of qualitative nature. Sheridan and North (2004) reviewed 1,354 abstracts in the PsycINFO database that addressed Islam and/or Muslim samples for the period of 1925–2002. They found that studies that addressed attitudes towards and discrimination against Muslims were very limited making 0.8 and 0.4 per cent, respectively.

Most studies examined how racial, ethnic and religious discrimination is related to self-reported psychological distress and well-being of Muslims (Rippy and Newman 2006; Padela and Heisler 2010). Other studies examined how some Muslim group members responded to the experiences of discrimination by illuminating their coping strategies (Byng 1998; Livengood and Stodolska 2004). Still another group of studies compared differences of perceived mistreatment among Muslim and Christian Arab Americans (e.g. Read 2008). Overall, focusing mainly on Arab Americans, these studies are limited in evaluating the rates of discrimination that differ across Muslim racial/ethnic groups. They are primarily qualitative, use regional small samples and concentrate on specific communities. With an exception of very few empirical works that focus on Arab Americans (Padela and Heisler 2010), studies that use nationally representative samples of Muslim Americans to explore racial/ethnic differences in perceived discrimination among Muslims are absent.

Other racial/ethnic studies

A large body of research on perceived discrimination has focused on African-Americans and their greater perceived discrimination relative to whites (Feagin 1991; Kessler, Mickelson, and Williams 1999; Barnes et al. 2004). A number of previous studies indicate that the prevalence of perceived discrimination varies by ethnic groups, such as African-Americans, Asian Americans and Hispanic Americans (Naff 1995; Bobo and Suh 1995 and Klugel and Bobo 2001 as cited in Harris 2004; Ayalon and Gum 2011). These studies find that rates of perceived discrimination among Hispanics and Asians tend to be lower than those reported by blacks. Nevertheless, these studies fail to show differences that exist within ethnic minority groups treating them as uniform groups. Harris's (2004) and Perez, Fortuna, and Alegría's (2008) works are among very few studies that use nationally representative samples to examine racial/ethnic differences in perceived discrimination among disaggregated minority groups. Harris's (2004) study from the Commonwealth Fund Minority Health Survey on blacks (African-Americans and

Caribbean Americans), Hispanics (Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans) and Asians (Chinese, Koreans and Vietnamese Americans) finds that Asian Americans report higher levels of perceived discrimination than Hispanics and blacks. Perez, Fortuna, and Alegria's (2008) work of 2,554 Latinos from the National Latino and Asian American Study reveals that among the four analysed Latino subgroups of Cuban, Puerto Rican, Mexican and other Latino, Cubans and Latinos with high ethnic identity are less likely to perceive discrimination than Latinos with low ethnic identity.

Patterns of perceived racial/ethnic discrimination and its correlates

Prior research indicates that racial/ethnic minorities vary across groups in their perceptions of discrimination (Naff 1995; Kessler, Mickelson, and Williams 1999; Barnes et al. 2004; Ayalon and Gum 2011). Most research on black–white differences reveal a greater perceived discrimination reported by blacks relative to whites (Feagin 1991; Kessler, Mickelson, and Williams 1999; Barnes et al. 2004). With an exception of very few works (Ayalon and Gum 2011), a similar pattern is observed in studies on other minority groups. Most studies are consistent in their findings that other racial/ethnic minorities report higher levels of perceived discrimination compared to whites (Barnes et al. 2004; Harris 2004). As concerns findings on racial/ethnic differences in perceived discrimination among minorities, with an exception of very few works (Harris 2004), most studies show lower levels of perceived discrimination among Asians relative to Hispanics and blacks (Naff 1995; Bobo and Suh 1995 and Klugel and Bobo 2001 as cited in Harris 2004).

Consistent with previous studies,

> I expect a differential pattern to be observed in perceived discrimination among different Muslim racial groups with Hispanics and blacks reporting discrimination at a much higher rate than those reported by other racial groups. I also expect that other racial groups report more discrimination compared to white Muslim Americans.

I test my proposition with two hypotheses. Since Hispanic and black Muslims encounter both racial and religious prejudice, they may constitute primary targets of discrimination. A rigorous exploration of the combined effects of race and religion on discrimination can be best guided by adopting an intersectional perspective, which posits that a marginalized person's identity is constructed through overlap of multiple simultaneously functioning systems of oppression and could not be limited to the examination of a single social category or a simple sum of several disadvantaged statuses (e.g. Collins 1991; Crenshaw 1991). Alternatively, research shows that the

larger the minority group the more discrimination it encounters. An explanation for this phenomenon can be offered by the numerical strength of a minority group hypothesis (Fernandez 1981).

Given the nature of the data that focus solely on Muslims, I generate an alternative hypothesis to test *no race/ethnic differences in perceptions of discrimination*. It is expected that Muslim would be a 'master status', or an attribute that trumps all other attributes of person's identity (Goffman 1963), to determine discrimination.

Research shows that discrimination varies across members of disadvantaged groups (Carr and Friedman 2005; Carr, Jaffe, and Friedman 2008). Within a disadvantaged group, some members are attributed with more denigrated traits than others. These members possess poor demographic characteristics and come from lower socio-economic status (Carr and Friedman 2005; Carr, Jaffe, and Friedman 2008). On the same line, most previous research on perceived discrimination has identified socio-demographic characteristics as correlates of perceived discrimination. While among demographic characteristics age, gender and marital status have been shown to covariate with perceived discrimination, education and various indicators of income (household income, employment or occupational status) have been primarily employed as socio-economic status correlates of perceived discrimination (Forman, Williams, and Jackson 1997; Kessler, Mickelson, and Williams 1999; Harris 2004; Carr and Friedman 2005; Rippy and Newman 2006; Perez, Fortuna, and Alegria 2008; Sirin and Katsiaficas 2011). Yet, findings are mixed, ranging from positive to negative and to curvilinear relationships.

Consistent with prior research, *I expect socio-demographic characteristics as correlates of perceived discrimination*. Yet, considering the complexity of previous findings, no prior hypotheses are constructed. The magnitude and direction of the effect of socio-demographic correlates across the various Muslim racial groups will be evaluated through binary logistic regressions.

Some previous studies (Kessler, Mickelson, and Williams 1999; Carr and Friedman 2005; Carr, Jaffe, and Friedman 2008) evaluated whether their key independent predictors varied in effecting perceptions of discrimination across demographic groups of the disadvantaged population. Given findings of previous studies that Muslim women are more likely to become easy target of discrimination due to wearing a headscarf or traditional dress (Nimer 2001; Livengood and Stodolska 2004; Aroian 2012), I asses two-way interaction terms to determine whether the effects of race/ethnicity on perceived discrimination differ by gender. Extensive research has considered the disadvantaged status of women of colour and identified different ways in which gender and race intersect in shaping their experiences of discrimination (Collins 1991; Crenshaw 1991). For Muslim women, religious affiliation might be added to the intersecting effects of sex and ethnicity on discrimination. Multiple disadvantaged statuses emerging from ethnic, sexual and

religious prejudice faced by Muslim women (Karim 2006), lead me to *hypothesize that Muslim women of all racial/ethnic subgroups report more discrimination than white Muslim men*.

Data and method

The study draws on the 2011 Muslim American Survey conducted by the Pew Research Center. The survey included landline and cell phone interviews with 1,033 Muslim adults 18 years old and older living in the USA. The response rates ranged from the lowest 18 per cent for the list sample, to 20 per cent for the cell random digit dial (RDD) sample, to 22 per cent for the geographic landline RDD sample and to the highest 54 per cent for the recontact sample (Pew Research Center 2011).

Dependent variables

Perceived discrimination is assessed with the question that is phrased as follows:

> Here are a few things that some Muslims in the US have experienced. As I read each one, please tell me whether or not it has happened to you *in the past twelve months*, because you are a Muslim, or not? (emphasis in the original)

This question is followed by a series of questions assessing six types of discrimination (1) 'have people acted as if they are suspicious of you'; (2) 'has someone expressed support for you'; (3) 'have you been called offensive names'; (4) 'have you been singled out by airport security', (5) 'have you been singled out by other law enforcement officers', and (6) 'have you been physically threatened or attacked'. Responses included 'yes, has happened' and 'no, has not happened'. I dropped questions #2 and #4. The former does not capture the assessment of perceived discrimination. The latter is a relevant measure only if the respondent travelled by aeroplane during the past year.

I constructed two sets of outcomes based on the remaining four questions. First, each question was recoded into 'yes' = 1 as a separate dichotomous outcome. Second, all four answers were combined and recoded into a dichotomous variable signifying whether a person has experienced any of the four types of discrimination.

Independent variables

Race is self-reported measure with five categories: black, non-Hispanic; Asian, non-Hispanic; Hispanic; other or mixed, non-Hispanic; and white, non-Hispanic (reference category). Hispanic was not an answer choice in the 2007

Pew survey. Its inclusion as a separate category could be related to the increasing number of Latino converts to Islam. Various estimates put Latinos among the fastest growing ethnic minority group of the Muslim American population (Bagby 2012) with as many as a fifth of new converts to Islam nationwide (Padgett 2013).

Demographic and socio-economic characteristics

Demographic measures include sex (1 = female; 0 = male), age (coded in four categories – 18–29 years (reference category), 30–39 years, 40–54 years and 55+ years) and marital status (married = 1 and all other (living with a partner, divorced, separated, widowed, never been married) = 0). Socio-economic status variables are education (coded in four dummy variables: high school or less (omitted category), some college, college graduate and post graduate) and home ownership (yes = 1; no = 0).

Analytic plan

I start by using a bivariate table to give descriptive statistics for all independent and control measures used in the study and determine whether there are significant racial/ethnic differences on control variables. Next, I look at the distribution of perceived discrimination across Muslim racial/ethnic groups, to examine the prevalence of perceived discrimination. I assess whether the prevalence varies by race/ethnicity by doing significance tests in bivariate analysis. Finally, I run binary logistic regressions to predict each of five types of perceived discrimination as the outcomes of my dichotomous variables. I assess the socio-demographic correlates of perceived discrimination. I also control for demographic and socio-economic characteristics, to examine whether these variables account for the observed relationship between racial/ethnic groups and perceived discrimination. And I evaluate whether the effects of race/ethnicity on perceived discrimination vary by sex.

I use STATA 13.0 for all analyses. Considering the complex sampling design, I use the weighted data and the Pew suggested 'svy' command, to better represent the US Muslim population. To impute missing values on all variables, I employ multiple imputation procedures using mi estimate chained commands.

Results

Descriptive statistics

Table 1 presents the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the sample. Muslim Americans are racially/ethnically diverse. White Muslims

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for socio-demographic characteristics of the sample by race/ethnicity (weighted complex sample) (Pew 2011).

	Total sample	White non-Hispanic (30.43%)	Black non-Hispanic (23.23%)	Asian non-Hispanic (21.21%)	Hispanic (6.49%)	Other non-Hispanic (18.64%)	p
Gender	**1,009**						**
Female	48.7%	59.18%	33.75%	43.29%	58.51%	52.99%	
Age	999						
18–29	36.13%	28.53%	31.12%	41.06%	44.05%	46.49%	
30–39	23.42%	27.58%	25.68%	19.76%	32.16%	14.9%	
40–54	28.48%	30.36%	28.58%	29.90%	13.38%	28.89%	
55+	11.97%	13.53%	14.62%	9.27%	10.41%	9.71%	
Marital status	**1,005**						*
Married	56.28%	66.03%	47.57%	60.37%	50.24%	48.74%	
Education	**1,007**						***
High school or less	53.47%	46.55%	63.91%	42.96%	57.72%	62.12%	
Some College	19.25%	18.56%	23.38%	16.67%	38.21%	11.54%	
College graduate	15.66%	18.55%	8.6%	21.66%	4.07%	16.99%	
Post graduate	11.62%	16.34%	4.11%	18.7%	0%	9.35%	
Homeowner	**1,007**						**
Yes	33.76%	40.42%	26.57%	39.02%	11%	33.79%	

Notes: Racial/ethnic differences are examined using chi-squared analyses. Sample numbers and proportions (%) are based on weighted counts excluding non-responses.
*χ^2 significant at: $p \leq .05$.
**χ^2 significant at: $p \leq .01$.
***χ^2 significant at: $p \leq .001$.

comprise the largest racial group (30.43 per cent), followed by blacks (23.23 per cent), Asians (21.21 per cent), other/mixed race (18.64 per cent) and Hispanics (6.49 per cent). Almost half of respondents are female (49 per cent). Young Muslims comprise the largest age category. Over one-third of adult Muslims (36 per cent) are between the ages of 18 and 29. The largest proportion of respondents is married (56 per cent). A 53 per cent majority of Muslim Americans hold a high school diploma or less and one-third (34 per cent) are homeowners. Significant ethnic differences are observed on all measures used in the study except for the age variable. Compared to other ethnic groups, significantly higher proportions of white Muslims are married and hold home ownership. Significantly higher proportions of Asian Muslims have college and postgraduate degrees, relative to the other four ethnic groups. The lowest percentage of respondents who hold college and postgraduate degrees and home ownership is represented by Hispanic Muslims.

Bivariate analysis

Table 2 displays the distribution of perceived discrimination by Muslim racial/ethnic groups. With the exception of one outcome (being called offensive names), there are significant differences on all outcomes. Nearly, 30 per

Table 2. Proportion reporting each type of perceived discrimination due to Muslim identity (Pew 2011).

	Total sample	White non-Hispanic	Black non-Hispanic	Asian non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other non-Hispanic	p
People suspicious	**994**						*
of you	28.83%	23.68%	30.43%	19.68%	54.27%	37.00%	
Called offensive	**1,004**						
names	22.12%	18.42%	19.77%	20.67%	35.64%	28.09%	
Singled out by other	**1,005**						*
law enforcement officers	12.92%	8.63%	20.77%	5.21%	25.19%	14.76%	
Physically threatened	**1,008**						**
or attacked	5.76%	6.08%	2.88%	5.86%	23.61%	2.47%	
Any discrimination	**997**						*
	36.25%	30.26%	36.84%	26.80%	61.66%	47.34%	

Notes: Proportions (%) are given for answer 'yes'. Sample numbers and proportions (%) are based on weighted counts excluding non-responses.
*χ^2 significant at: $p \leq .05$.
**χ^2 significant at: $p \leq .01$.

cent (28.83 per cent) of Muslim Americans report that in the past twelve months people have acted as if they were suspicious of them, because they were Muslim. While 12.92 per cent say they have been singled out by law enforcement officers in the past twelve months, only 5.76 per cent report that they have been physically threatened or attacked. Over one-third of Muslim Americans (36.25 per cent) report experiencing at least one of the four types of discrimination in the past year.

There are significant differences across the Muslim racial/ethnic groups on two outcomes (being suspected and any type of discrimination) with more Hispanic and other/mixed race Muslims perceiving discrimination than the other three groups. Additionally, there are significant differences across the analysed Muslim groups with more Hispanic (25.19 per cent) and black Muslims (20.77 per cent) perceiving being singled out by other law enforcement officers. A significantly higher proportion of Hispanic Muslims (23.61 per cent) also perceive being physically threatened or attacked than the other four groups. Overall, Hispanic Muslims are significantly more likely to report a great number of discriminatory events than the rest of the Muslim racial/ethnic groups.

Binary logistic regressions

Table 3 presents results from five sets of binary logistic regression models. Model 1 displays the logistic regression predicting perceived exposure to five types of discrimination by Muslim race and ethnicity. In Model 2, the dependent variables are regressed on demographic variables. Model 3 builds upon the previous model while controlling for socio-economic characteristics.

Table 3. Binary logistic regression predicting experienced discrimination across Muslim American racial/ethnic groups (Pew 2011).

	People suspicious of you			Called offensive names			Singled out by other law enforcement officers			Physically threatened or attacked			Any discrimination		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Race															
Black[a]	1.44 (.69–3.0)	1.28 (.60–2.74)	1.30 (.59–2.88)	1.08 (.47–2.52)	.94 (.38–2.32)	.89 (.37–2.16)	2.77* (1.12–6.89)	2.37+ (.94–5.98)	2.00 (.75–5.29)	.46 (.12–1.72)	.37 (.08–1.64)	.33 (.07–1.46)	1.30 (.70–2.44)	1.14 (.59–2.22)	1.13 (.56–2.26)
Asian[a]	.83 (.43–1.59)	.70 (.37–1.34)	.68 (.36–1.30)	1.16 (.59–2.28)	.96 (.50–1.86)	.98 (.50–1.91)	.57 (.22–1.46)	.50 (.19–1.27)	.51 (.20–1.32)	.98 (.42–2.28)	.77 (.32–1.85)	.78 (.31–1.96)	.83 (.48–1.44)	.67 (.38–1.18)	.67 (.38–1.19)
Hispanic[a]	3.73* (1.18–11.84)	3.70* (1.11–12.32)	4.16* (1.26–13.73)	2.43 (.82–7.25)	2.24 (.65–7.68)	2.08 (.60–7.14)	3.51 (.77–16.03)	3.37 (.69–17.02)	2.90 (.62–13.52)	4.80* (1.02–22.56)	4.50+ (.75–27.01)	4.80+ (.74–31.14)	3.88* (1.37–11.0)	3.83* (1.37–10.68)	3.80* (1.34–10.77)
Other/mixed[a]	1.90+ (.99–3.66)	1.62 (.82–3.21)	1.57 (.78–3.14)	1.70 (.76–3.78)	1.41 (.63–3.13)	1.40 (.63–3.13)	1.78 (.73–4.33)	1.67 (.70–4.00)	1.48 (.62–3.56)	.39 (.08–1.88)	.30 (.06–1.51)	.29 (.05–1.50)	2.00* (1.0–3.96)	1.67 (.81–3.43)	1.68 (.82–3.43)
Demographics															
Sex (1 = female)		.71 (.41–1.23)	.69 (.41–1.15)		.66+ (.42–1.05)	.65+ (.42–1.02)		.47** (.28–.81)	.49** (.30–.81)		.46 (.16–1.27)	.41+ (.14–1.19)		.65+ (.41–1.01)	.64* (.41–.98)
Age 30–39[b]		.52 (.22–1.25)	.47+ (.19–1.31)		.48+ (.21–1.05)	.49+ (.23–1.06)		.88 (.37–2.08)	.96 (.40–2.33)		.33+ (.10–1.06)	.32+ (.10–1.06)		.43+ (.20–.93)	.42* (.19–.92)
Age 40–54[b]		.87 (.44–1.72)	.72 (.37–1.41)		.64 (.29–1.38)	.66 (.30–1.44)		.65 (.18–2.38)	.75 (.22–2.55)		.54 (.18–1.65)	.43 (.12–1.45)		.67 (.35–1.28)	.64 (.34–1.22)
Age 55+[b]		.37* (.17–.83)	.30** (.13–.71)		.32* (.11–.87)	.33* (.12–.92)		.85 (.30–2.38)	.96 (.33–2.79)		.53 (.02–15.84)	.42 (.01–19.54)		.26*** (.13–.54)	.25*** (.12–.53)
Married		.79 (.44–1.42)	.71 (.38–1.32)		.79 (.42–1.49)	.80 (.39–1.63)		1.06 (.46–2.45)	1.23 (.46–3.27)		.99 (.35–2.79)	.82 (.22–3.02)		.86 (.48–1.56)	.82 (.45–1.52)
Socio-economic															
Some College[c]			.78 (.37–1.64)			1.09 (.55–2.18)			.39* (.19–.82)			.78 (.26–2.34)			1.14 (.55–2.39)
College graduate[c]			.74 (.44–1.24)			.84 (.45–1.59)			.56 (.24–1.33)			.73 (.27–1.99)			.88 (.52–1.51)
Post graduate[c]			1.04 (.53–2.03)			.75 (.36–1.54)			.33+ (.10–1.06)			.23 (.03–1.49)			.93 (.50–1.74)
Homeowner (1 = Yes)			1.64 (.87–3.09)			.99 (.52–1.89)			.60 (.23–1.58)			2.61 (.63–10.76)			1.22 (.69–2.15)
Constant	.30*** (.19–.49)	.58 (.29–1.17)	.64 (.29–1.39)	.22*** (.13–.37)	.51* (.24–1.08)	.53 (.24–1.17)	.09*** (.04–.19)	.16*** (.07–.37)	.23** (.08–.63)	.06*** (.03–.14)	.16** (.05–.53)	.18** (.05–.59)	.44*** (.30–.64)	1.01 (.56–1.84)	1.01 (.52–1.95)

Notes: N = 1033. Effect estimates are presented as odds ratios. Confidence intervals are given in parentheses.
[a]White.
[b]Age 18–29.
[c]High school or less.
+p < .10.
*p ≤ .05.
**p ≤ .01.
***p ≤ .001.

Which race/ethnic persons are more likely to report discrimination?

On three outcomes of Models 1 (people suspicious of you, physically threatened or attacked and any type of discrimination), Hispanic Muslims have almost four, five and four times higher odds (3.73, 4.80 and 3.88, respectively) of reporting discrimination than white Muslims. On the first (people suspicious of you) and last (any type of discrimination) outcomes, the odds of being discriminated are 1.9 and 2.0 times higher among Muslims of other or mixed race than white Muslims. A significant relationship is observed for black Muslims who are 2.77 times more likely than white Muslims to report discrimination on being singled out by law enforcement officers. None of Muslim racial/ethnic groups are predictors of the perceived discrimination on being called offensive names. Compared to white Muslims, the odds of reporting discrimination are not significant for Asian Muslims on any of the five outcomes.

Do the observed race/ethnic differences persist after controlling for demographic and socio-economic status characteristics

Models 2 observe some changes, once the demographic variables are introduced. Initial racial/ethnic differences persist for Hispanic Muslims with Model 2 controls. The effects attenuate only slightly (over 5 per cent) for Hispanic Muslims who report being physically threatened and attacked. Noticeable changes occur with other/mixed race and black Muslim categories. The magnitudes of other/mixed race category's effects decrease by 15 per cent for the two outcomes (people suspicious of you and any type of discrimination) turning the previously significant categories into non-significant (comparing the coefficients on the other/mixed category in Model 1 to Model 2 of the first and last outcomes). Similar changes in the magnitude of effects (about 15 per cent) are observed for black Muslims for the outcome of being singled out by law enforcement officers.

Not all demographic characteristics are significant predictors of five types of perceived discrimination (Models 2). Women report significantly lower odds of being singled out by law enforcement officers (OR = 0.47, $p \leq .01$), being exposed to any type of discrimination (OR = 0.65, $p < .10$) and being called offensive names (OR = 0.66, $p < .10$) than men. Compared to 18–29 years old respondents, those of 55 years of age and older report significantly lower odds on such outcomes as being suspected by people (OR = 0.37, $p \leq .05$), being called offensive names (OR = 0.32, $p \leq .05$) and any type of discrimination (OR = 0.26, $p \leq .001$). Respondents aged 30–39 years report significantly lower odds of being called offensive names (OR = 0.48, $p < .10$), being physically threatened or attacked (OR = .33, $p < .10$) and being exposed to any type of discrimination (OR = 0.43, $p \leq .05$) relative to the reference group. Marital status is not a significant predictor of perceived discrimination on any of the five outcomes.

When the dependent variables are regressed on the socio-economic variables (education and homeownership) in Models 3, education is the only significant predictor and only for one type of discrimination. Respondents with some college education and post graduates have significantly lower odds (OR = .39, $p \leq .05$ and OR = .33, $p < .10$) of reporting being singled out by law enforcement officers than those with high school diploma or less. The black–white difference disappears with Model 3 controls, whereas the effects found in Models 2 remain mostly the same for the rest of the racial/ethnic groups after socio-economic characteristics are controlled.

Do the effects of race/ethnicity on perceived discrimination vary by gender?

To address this question, I estimate two-way interaction terms for each race/ethnic category and gender. The effect of each of the five race/ethnic categories did not vary significantly by gender for the first three discrimination outcomes (people suspicious of you, called offensive names and singled out by law enforcement officers). Yet, the effects of some race/ethnic categories differed significantly by sex for the remaining two outcomes.

Figure 1 shows the odds of reporting being physically threatened or attacked, by race and gender, net of all demographic and socio-economic status variables. Muslim women of white, black and Asian racial/ethnic backgrounds report significantly lower odds of being physically threatened or attacked relative to white Muslim men. Black women are nearly half times (OR = 0.44) less likely than white men to report this type of discrimination. As concerns white and Asian women, they have 77 and 98 per cent less odds of reporting being physically threatened or attacked than white men.
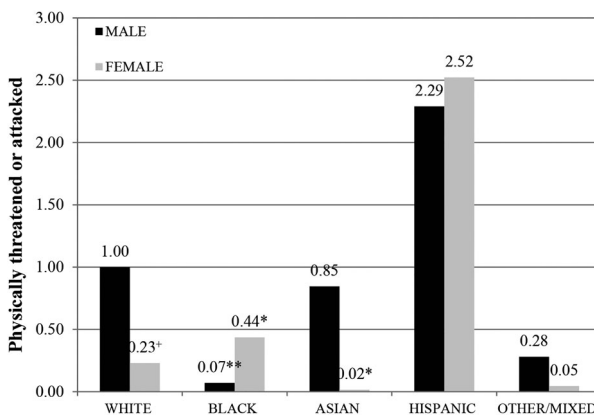

Figure 1. Odds of reporting being physically threatened or attacked by Muslims' race and gender (Pew 2011). Notes: $N = 1033$. Plotted values are net of demographic and socio-economic status measures. $^{+}p < .10$, $^{*}p \leq .05$, $^{**}p \leq .01$.
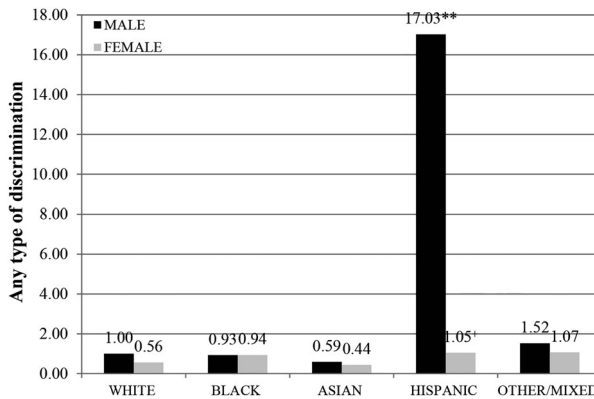
Figure 2. Odds of reporting any type of discrimination by Muslims' race and gender (Pew 2011). Notes: $N = 1033$. Plotted values are net of demographic and socio-economic status measures. $^+p < .10$, $^*p \leq .05$, $^{**}p \leq .01$, $^{***}p \leq .001$.

Figure 2 reveals the odds of reporting any type of discrimination, by race and gender, net of all socio-demographic characteristics. The only significant categories are Hispanic men and women. Hispanic Muslim women are 1.05 times more likely than white Muslim men to report any type of discrimination, although the effect is only marginally statistically significant.

Discussion

Several important sets of findings emerged from the present study. The first set of findings is associated with the prevalence of perceptions of racial/ethnic discrimination among Muslim Americans. The prevalence of perceived discrimination is highest for Hispanic Muslims and lowest for Asian Muslims and intermediate for white, other/mixed and black Muslims. The findings are inconsistent with previous survey-based studies suggesting that Hispanics and Asians fall between whites and blacks with the former reporting discrimination at lowest and the latter at highest rates (Smith 2002, 16). Additionally, these findings do not support an earlier proposition offered by Fernandez (1981) and supported by other studies (Naff 1995) on the numerical strength of a minority group – the larger the group the more discrimination it encounters. Hispanics are the smallest in number (6.49 per cent), but they perceive discrimination at significantly higher rates than other minority groups. The variations that exist within the Muslim race/ethnic groups contradict the 'master status' hypothesis but accord with other studies (Carr and Friedman 2005; Carr, Jaffe, and Friedman 2008) that perceptions of discrimination differ across members of the disadvantaged group. They support the intersectional perspective suggesting that people with multiple intersecting

disadvantaged statuses are discriminated at significantly higher rates than those who hold one denigrated status. Hispanic Muslims are discriminated against based on their disadvantaged status as minority groups and disadvantages arising from their affiliation with Islam. Prior research shows African-American Muslims experience more discrimination not only in American society at large but also within the *ummah* (Muslim community) (Karim 2006). Similarly, for Latino Muslims who are a new rising minority group among Muslim Americans this marginalization is extended beyond the intersection of these two disadvantaged statuses, as they might be discriminated not only by the Muslim community and larger society but also by the Latino community for converting into Islam. Narrative accounts of such discriminatory treatments are emerging (Padgett 2013). Studies also show that after Arab Muslims the sole right of representing and defining Islam in the USA lies with Asian Muslims (McCloud 2006), leaving African-American and Hispanic Muslims at a disadvantaged status within the larger Muslim community.

The second set of findings is related to correlates of perceived discrimination among Muslim racial/ethnic groups. Consistent with the proposed hypothesis, nearly, all Muslim ethnic groups have a few times higher odds of reporting one or more types of perceived discrimination, relative to white Muslims. The observed relationship between race and perceived discrimination persists for Hispanic Muslims but disappears for Muslims of other/mixed race after controlling for demographic and socio-economic status characteristics. For black Muslims, this relationship attenuates with the adjustment for demographic measures and disappears with the introduction of socio-economic characteristics. These findings highlight the importance of the existence and interplay of various demographic and socio-economic factors influencing racial/ethnic differences among Muslim Americans.

Surprisingly, Asian Muslim Americans are exception from the above observation, as the odds of perceived discrimination are not significant for this group on any of the five outcomes. Somewhat similar findings, albeit with statistically significant results are revealed for Asian Muslims from the bivariate analysis on the prevalence of perceived discrimination among Muslim racial/ethnic groups. Asian Muslims report significantly lower levels of perceived discrimination relative to other Muslim ethnic groups. One explanation for these findings could be given by studies that suggest that Asian Muslims view larger American society tolerant of Muslims and for whom discrimination has not been an issue before the 9/11 events (Jamal 2005). Another explanation can be linked to the high socio-economic status of Asian Muslim Americans, relative to other ethnic groups. Still another explanation could be associated with perceived high quality of life in the USA by Asian Muslims. Over three quarters of Muslim Americans born in Pakistan (76 per cent), who comprise the majority of Asian Muslim Americans, view the quality of

life for Muslims in the USA better than in most Muslim countries, compared to those born in the Middle East and North Africa (63 per cent) (Pew Research Center 2011).

Non-significant differences among Muslim racial/ethnic groups in perception of discrimination related to being called offensive names need an explanation. Both empirical and non-empirical sources indicate the prevalence of calling Muslims offensive names among other discriminatory acts (CAIR 2004; Rippy and Newman 2006). One speculation for the current observation is that Muslim Americans of all ethnic groups report equally and extensively about this type of discrimination. Additionally, on this particular type of discrimination, Muslim is a 'master status' that overcomes all other devalued attributes and, consequently, does not vary by race.

Another interesting result is found while controlling for some demographic and socio-economic characteristics, such as gender and age. Differences between older and younger Muslims in perceptions of discrimination with the former reporting experiencing discriminatory acts at significantly lower rates are in concurrence with some research on black–white differences in perceived discrimination (Forman, Williams, and Jackson 1997; Adams and Dressler 1988) and stigmatized group (Carr and Friedman 2005). While one explanation is sought in the older generation upbringing as more tolerant of discrimination (Adams and Dressler 1988), another explanation links this inverse relationship to generational differences with younger generations being more conscious of and ready to report discrimination (Carr and Friedman 2005). Related to this are increased practices of racial profiling against Muslims after the 9/11 terrorist acts. The main targets of racial profiling policies remain young Muslims. Still another explanation may be sought in the absence and usage of a term such as discrimination in the vocabulary of older generations of Muslims. It may resemble the experience of people raised in the pre-civil rights movement of the 1960s who may not have this as part of their consciousness.

Women are less likely than men to report several types of discrimination. This finding is inconsistent with prior studies on Muslim discrimination that found either no gender differences (Sirin and Katsiaficas 2011) or reported higher rates of experienced discrimination among women than men (Nimer 2001). It is consistent with Rippy and Newman (2006) who found gender differences among Muslims on subclinical paranoia. They linked it to suspicion and fear of Muslim men from a hostile environment in the aftermath of the 9/11 terror attacks. Studies show that Americans favour more strict security measures for Muslims, especially for Muslim men, compared to other US citizens. Nearly, one-third of Americans (31 per cent) would feel nervous if they noticed a Muslim man flying on the same plane (Saad 2006). Nearly, four in ten Americans support the idea of requiring Muslims, including those who are US citizens, to carry a special ID (39 per cent) and undergo more intensive security

checks at airports (Saad 2006). Another possible explanation is that women are more likely than men to deny their personal experience with discrimination and underestimate their encounters with discriminatory acts (Crosby 1984).

The final set of findings is associated with the effects of race/ethnicity on perceived discrimination by gender. I obtain mixed results on the proposed hypothesis. Contrary to the proposed hypothesis, white Muslim men are more likely to report experiencing discrimination than white and other minority women on the outcome of being physically threatened or attacked. Yet, on the other outcome – any type of discrimination, Hispanic Muslim women are more likely to report discrimination than white Muslim men.

On this particular set of findings, I replicated my study using data from the 2004–2006 National Survey of Midlife Development in the United States (MIDUS II), to examine whether the perceptions of discrimination among Muslim disaggregated racial/ethnic groups are similar or different from non-Muslim members of the same disaggregated categories. I focused on two outcome measures most comparable to those in the Pew study, namely, being threatened or harassed and being called names or insulted. With the exception of white women, the rest of the MIDUS findings are either inconsistent with the findings from the Muslim population or produce insignificant results (available from the author upon request). These differences indicate that there is something akin to a 'Muslim factor' in the perception of discrimination in society. In other words, being a 'Muslim', especially white man makes a difference in the perceptions of discrimination among racially/ethnically identified individuals.

Several speculations can be made regarding this observation. Previous research suggests that women underreport experiences of discrimination (Crosby 1984), whereas white Muslims are less likely than other ethnic groups to believe that larger American society is just towards Muslims (Rippy and Newman 2006). Additionally, studies show that white Muslims, represented mostly by Arabs, are seen as 'not quite white' (Bakalian and Bozorgmehr 2009, 30) and are not well received and tolerated by mainstream society. Furthermore, associating Arabs with terrorists (Shaheen 2003; McCloud 2006) leaves this group at disadvantaged position, compared to other Muslim racial/ethnic groups. Multiple identity categories of white Muslim men (race/ethnicity, gender, religion) intersect at the individual level to reflect interlocking systems of disadvantage at the structural level (Collins 1991), including racism, sexism and Islamophobia.

Concerning Hispanic Muslim women who are more likely to report experiencing any type of discrimination than white Muslim men, it could be speculated that the experiences of Latina Muslims are the result of intersecting of multiple disadvantaged statuses (ethnic, sexual and religious) that they hold within the Muslim community and in society at large.

These findings on the race/ethnicity and gender interaction terms should be interpreted with caution, as the overall proportion of Muslim Americans who report being physically threatened or attacked and the proportion of respondents who identify themselves as Hispanic are small (5.76 and 6.49 per cent, respectively). They may be considered as an initiation for future research to investigate what might lead to such paradoxical variations in perceptions of discrimination among Muslim women of different race/ethnicity.

Limitations and future directions

The study has several important limitations. First, one cannot eliminate the possibility of selection bias. It is possible that respondents who experienced discrimination did not participate in the survey. Associated with this is the issue of subjectivity, which is common for questions such as discrimination. The degree to which respondents were honest and possessed good ability to recall past discriminatory acts remains questionable. Second, the cross-sectional nature of the data does not allow inferring causal relationships. To assert that the analysed socio-demographic factors are sole causes of reporting experienced discrimination for certain Muslim race/ethnic persons, longitudinal studies will be needed. Finally, the study focused on demographic and socio-economic predictors while neglecting cultural factors. For example, research has shown that religion plays a vital role in racialization of Muslim Americans (Naber 2000). Future studies might consider examining religion and other socio-economic factors that have effect on shaping ethnic groups' perception of discrimination.

Despite these limitations, this is one of very few studies to examine the prevalence and correlates of perceived discrimination among Muslim racial/ethnic groups. It contributes to the growing body of literature on perceived discrimination among minority groups and, more specifically, to the existing body of knowledge on discrimination against Muslim Americans. The findings show that Muslim Americans continue comprising one of the disadvantaged minority groups in the USA. They highlight the existence of varying degrees of discrimination among Muslim American racial/ethnic groups and suggest that future studies examine negative implications and develop tailored interventions for Muslims who are at the greatest risk of mistreatment.

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