

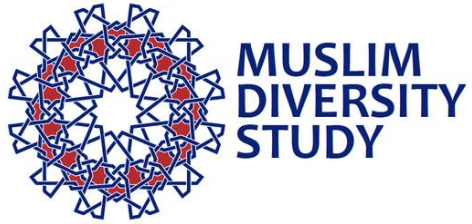
# Enablers and challengers of data collection from the Muslim community in Aotearoa New Zealand

Usman Afzali, PhD

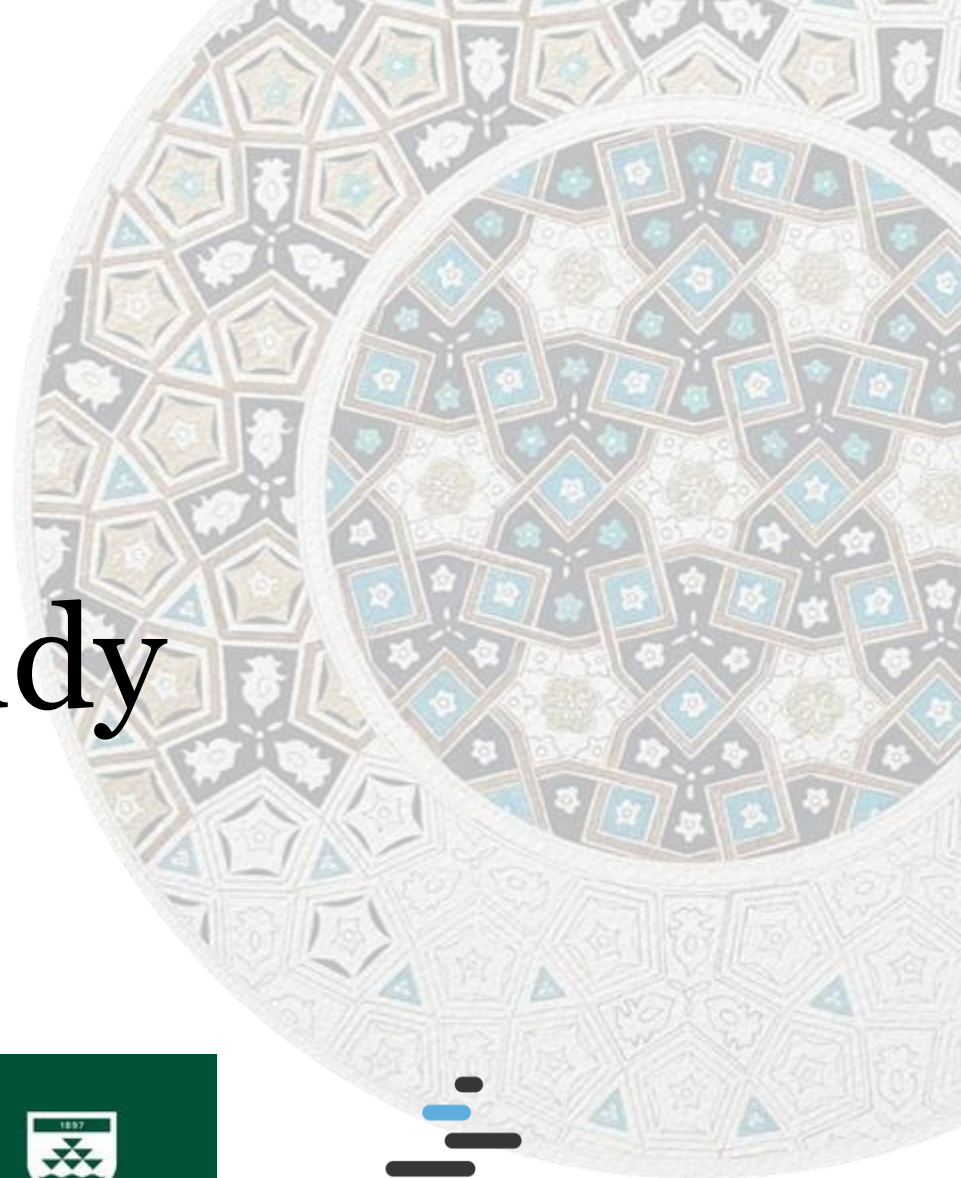
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New Zealand  
Psychological Society  
*Rōpū Mātai Hinengaro o Aotearoa*  
Annual Conference 2024



# Muslim Diversity Study





# Muslim Diversity Study

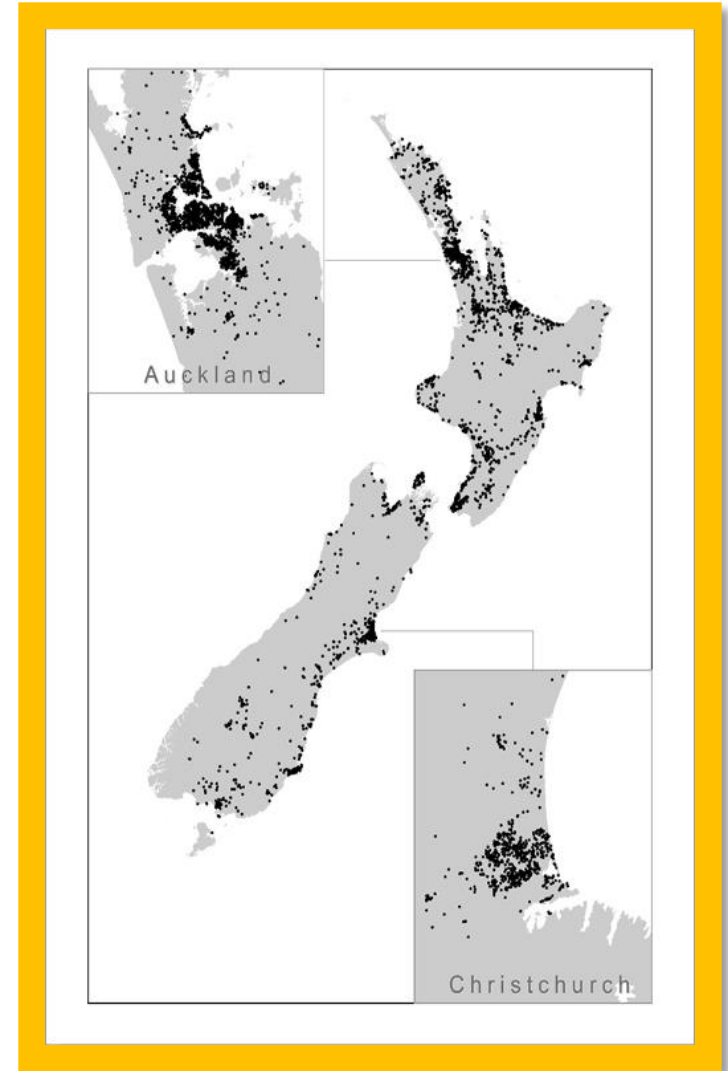
- Started in Feb 2023
- Examines the the social attitudes, values, resilience, flourishing, meaning-making, well-being, and the experiences of Muslims
- Examines the role of religion and religiosity
- Effects of these variables on each other
- Addresses under-representations of Muslims in the New Zealand Attitudes and Values Study (NZAVS)

Afzali et al. (preprint). A national longitudinal study of Muslim diversity and flourishing in Aotearoa New Zealand: A quantitative study protocol.



# NZAVS

- Planned 20-year longitudinal study, currently in its 15th year
- Postal/online questionnaire
- Sample frame drawn randomly from NZ Electoral Roll
- Large multidisciplinary research team
- Sample contains ~48k unique people, or 1.45% of the adult NZ population.



# NZAVS measures

- Big-Six Personality
- Social Dominance Orientation
- Right-Wing Authoritarianism
- Ambivalent Sexism
- Patriotism
- Nationalism
- Affect toward different ethnic groups
- Attitudes toward Multiculturalism
- Immigration
- Schwartz Values
- Subjective Wellbeing
- Satisfaction with Life
- Body Image
- Self-Esteem
- Psychological Distress
- Health ratings
- Climate change beliefs
- Attitudes toward the environment
- Intergroup contact (positive and negative)
- Voting behaviour
- Political party support
- Perceived discrimination
- Felt belongingness
- Colour-blind ideology
- Ethnic identity

# Attitudes toward Muslims





*New Zealand national identity and attitudes towards Muslims and diversity*

## **Exploring New Zealand National Identity and Its Importance for Attitudes toward Muslims and Support for Diversity**

**Kumar Yogeeswaran<sup>1</sup> M. Usman Afzali<sup>1</sup> Nadia P. Andrews<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth A. Chivers<sup>1</sup>  
Meng-Jie Wang<sup>1</sup> Thierry Devos<sup>2</sup> and Chris G. Sibley<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> University of Canterbury, New Zealand, <sup>2</sup> San Diego State University, USA, <sup>3</sup> University of  
Auckland, New Zealand

National  
identity

2019

2020

2021

2022

2023

Now

## Prejudice toward Muslims in New Zealand: Insights from the New Zealand Attitudes and Values Study

Chris G. Sibley<sup>a</sup>, M. Usman Afzali<sup>b</sup>, Nicole Satherley<sup>a</sup>, Anastasia Ejova<sup>a</sup>, Samantha Stronge<sup>a</sup>, Kumar Yogeeswaran<sup>b</sup>, Michael Grimshaw<sup>b</sup>, Diala Hawi<sup>c</sup>, Zahra Mirnajafi<sup>d</sup>, Fiona Kate Barlow<sup>d</sup>, Petar Milojev<sup>a</sup>, Lara M. Greaves<sup>a</sup>, Sarah Kapeli<sup>a</sup>, Elena Zubielevitch<sup>a</sup>, Logan Hamley<sup>a</sup>, Maria C. Basabas<sup>a</sup>, Marvin H. Wu<sup>a</sup>, Chloe Howard<sup>a</sup>, Carol H. J. Lee<sup>a</sup>, Yanshu Huang<sup>d</sup>, Christopher Lockhart<sup>a</sup>, Joaquín Bahamondes<sup>a</sup>, Sam Manuela<sup>a</sup>, Taciano L. Milfont<sup>e</sup>, Ryan Perry<sup>f</sup>, Nikhil K. Sengupta<sup>g</sup>, Nickola C. Overall<sup>a</sup>, John H. Shaver<sup>h</sup>, Geoffrey Troughton<sup>a</sup>, Danny Osborne<sup>a</sup>, and Joseph Bulbulia<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> University of Auckland, NZ; <sup>b</sup> University of Canterbury, NZ; <sup>c</sup> Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, Qatar; <sup>d</sup> University of Queensland, Australia; <sup>e</sup> Waikato University, NZ; <sup>f</sup> University of Melbourne, Australia; <sup>g</sup> University of Kent, UK; <sup>h</sup> University of Otago, NZ

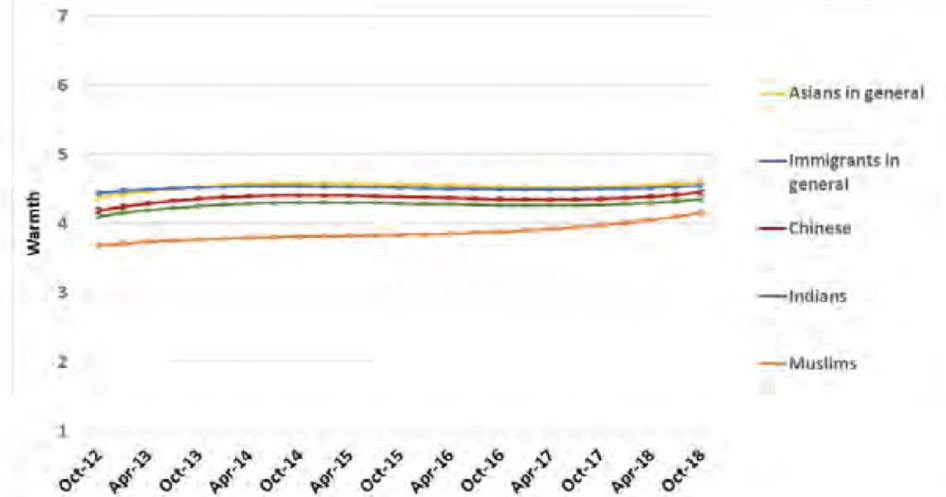


Figure 9. Latent growth curves representing the average rate of change in feeling thermometer ratings toward 'Asians in general', 'Immigrants in general', 'Chinese', 'Indians' and 'Muslims.' Growth curves were estimated separately for ratings of each group, and the curves represent model-implied values based on the parameters reported in Tables 7-11.

Long-term  
prejudice

2019

2020

2021

2022

2023

Now



# Hate Begets Warmth? The Impact of an Anti-Muslim Terrorist Attack on Public Attitudes toward Muslims

Sadi Shanaah , Kumar Yogeeswaran , Lara Greaves , Joseph A. Bulbulia , Danny Osborne , M. Usman Afzali  & ...show all

Pages 156-174 | Published online: 09 Mar 2021

 Download citation  <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2021.1877673>

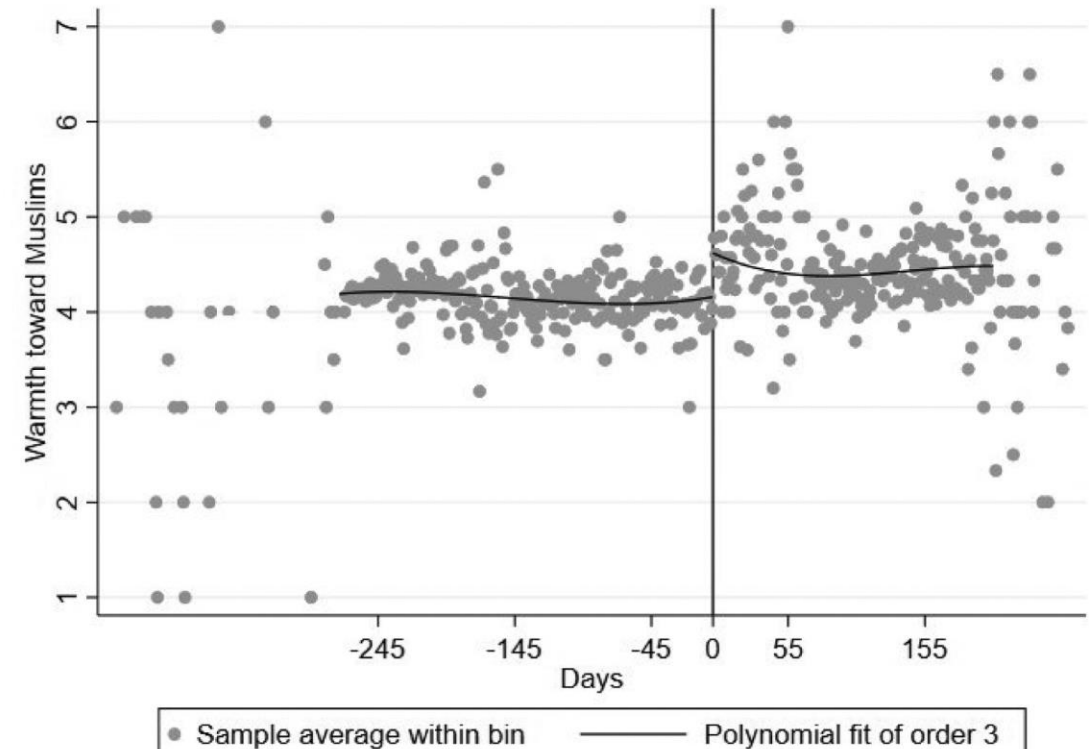


**Terrorism and Political Violence** >

Volume 35, 2023 - Issue 1

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Aftermath

2019

2020

2021

2022

2023

Now

Article | [Open Access](#) | [Published: 31 January 2022](#)

# Psychological impact of far-right terrorism against Muslim minorities on national distress, community, and wellbeing

[Kate G. Byrne](#), [Kumar Yogeeswaran](#) , [Martin J. Dorahy](#), [Jessica Gale](#), [M. Usman Afzali](#), [Joseph Bulbulia](#) & [Chris G. Sibley](#)

Psyc  
effects

2019

2020

2021

2022

2023

Now

## Long-term causal effects of far-right terrorism in New Zealand

Joseph A Bulbulia , M Usman Afzali, Kumar Yogeeswaran, Chris G Sibley

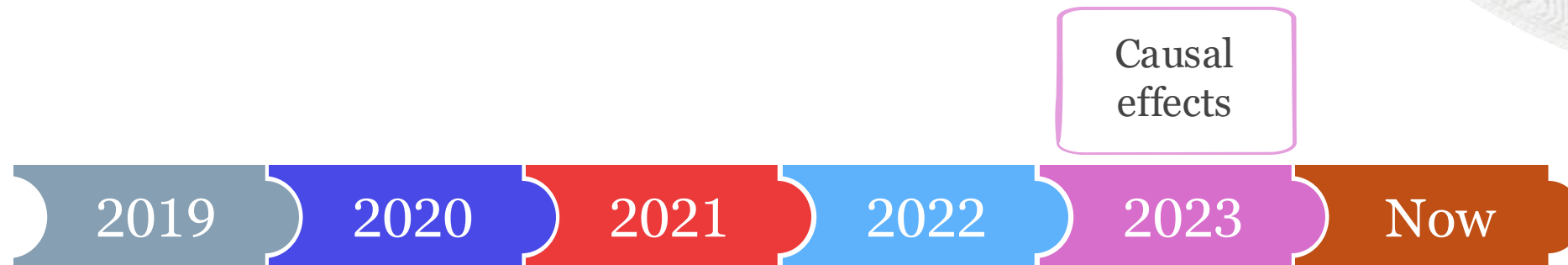
[Author Notes](#)

*PNAS Nexus*, Volume 2, Issue 8, August 2023, pgad242,

<https://doi.org/10.1093/pnasnexus/pgad242>



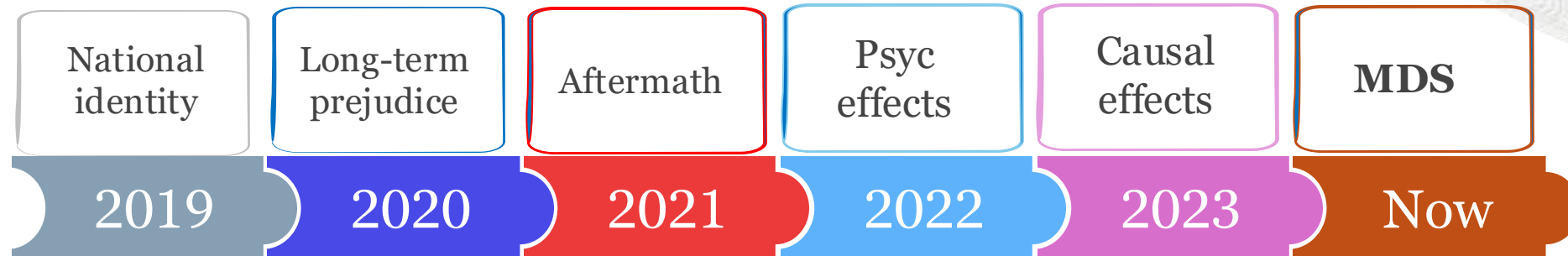
The Christchurch mosque attacks in 2019, committed by a radical right-wing extremist, resulted in the tragic loss of 51 lives. Following these events, there was a noticeable rise in societal acceptance of Muslim minorities. Comparable transient reactions have been observed elsewhere. However, the critical questions remain: can these effects endure? Are enduring effects evident across the political spectrum? It is challenging to answer such questions because identifying long-term causal effects requires estimating unobserved attitudinal trajectories without the attacks. Here, we use six preattack waves of Muslim acceptance responses from the New Zealand Attitudes and Values Study (NZAVS) to infer missing counterfactual trajectories (NZAVS cohort 2012,  $N = 4,865$ ; replicated in 2013 cohort,  $N = 7,894$ ). We find (1) the attacks initially boosted Muslim acceptance; (2) the magnitude of the initial Muslim acceptance boost was similar across the political spectrum; (3) no changes were observed in negative control groups; and (4) two- and three-year effects varied by baseline political orientation: liberal acceptance was stable, conservative acceptance grew relative to the counterfactual trend. Overall, the attacks added five years of growth in Muslim acceptance, with no regression to preattack levels over time. Continued growth among conservatives highlights the attack's failure to divide society. These results demonstrate the utility of combining methods for causal inference with national-scale panel data to answer psychological questions of basic human concern.





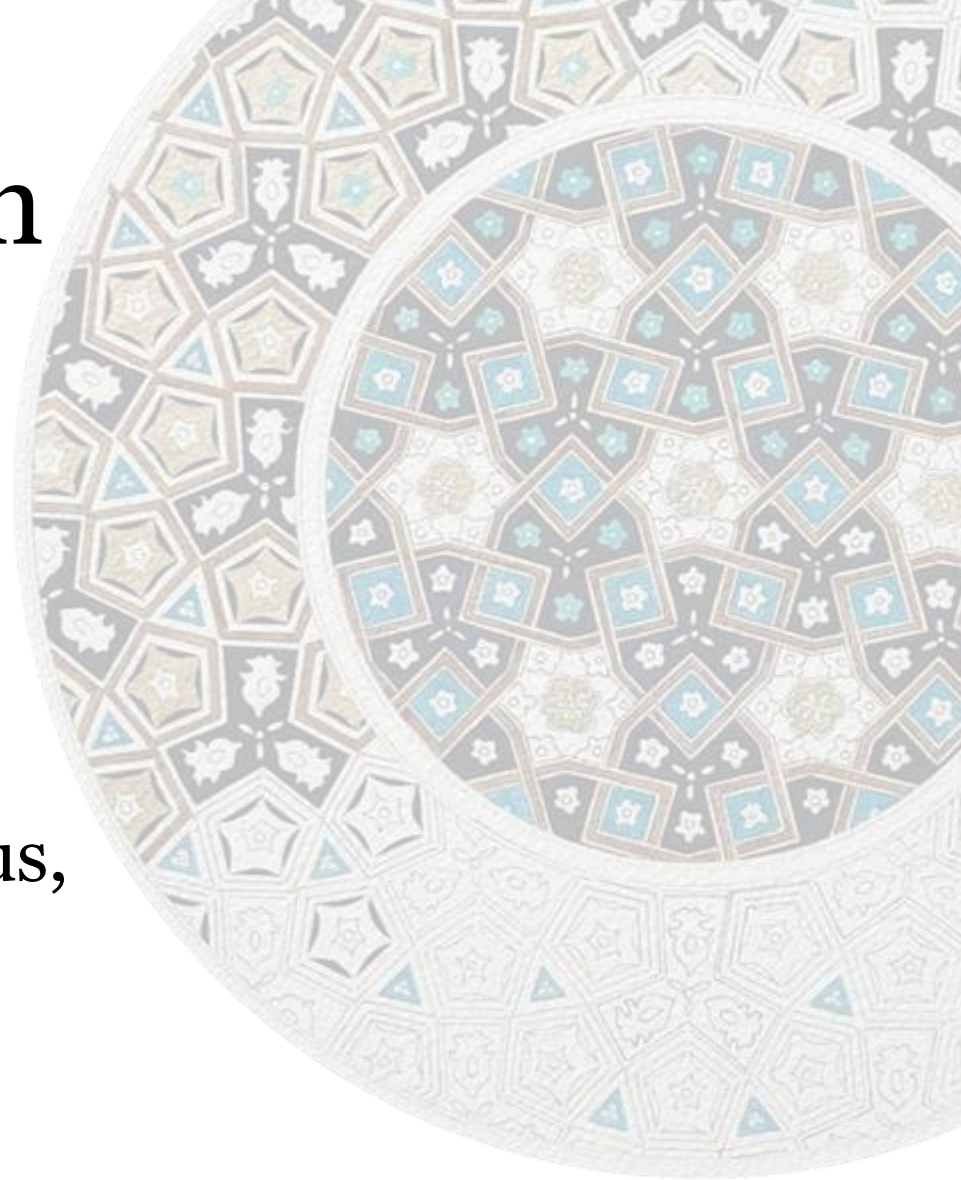
# Considerations

- Muslim representation
- Muslims self perception
- Muslim resilience, flourishing, thriving
- Effects of religiosity



# Pilot community consultation

- Feasibility
  - Languages
  - Participation
  - Dissemination
- $n = 29$
  - 7 languages
  - Woman > men
  - Community, religious, and ethnic groups



# Muslim Diversity Study

- Representation: six cities
- Publications
- Opportunities
- Closeness to science
- Advocacy
- Talks in major cities and reaching out to organisations
- Ongoing consultation: E.g., potential objectionable items
- Social media





# Muslim Diversity Study Wave 1 Timeline

- RA recruitment
- RA training
- Reaching out to family and close friends
- Community organizations
- Social media
- Lectures, talks, panels



# What does and doesn't work?

- Change in approach based on feedback
- And, based on anecdotal evidence of what might or might not work
- Recommendations from other researchers (e.g., 15 March Study group – Uni of Otago).

# Enablers

- Community engagement: organizations, leaders, celebrities, authority figures
- Individual contact vs. general/social media promotion
- Online vs paper responses
- Transparency: especially in terms of ethics



# Challengers

- Trust of institutions
- Privacy
- Political climate
- Demographic/generational variability
- Education
- Language barriers
- Length of the survey



# Can we examine more systematically?

- Who?
- Method
- Thematic analysis. Classic Ground Theory
- Sampling: Purposive
- Screening and semi-structured interviews
- Enablers and challengers of collecting data from Muslim community in Aotearoa New Zealand: An in-depth qualitative exploration of research assistant experiences using NVivo and Copilot.

Afzali et al. (in preparation).





# Aims

- Document RA skills in identifying community response and feedback
- Capture the decision-making process in responding to community feedback
- Identifying enablers and challengers of data collection
- Present findings to future researchers
- Compare NVivo and Copilot



## 2.1. *Screening items*

Developed using AI.

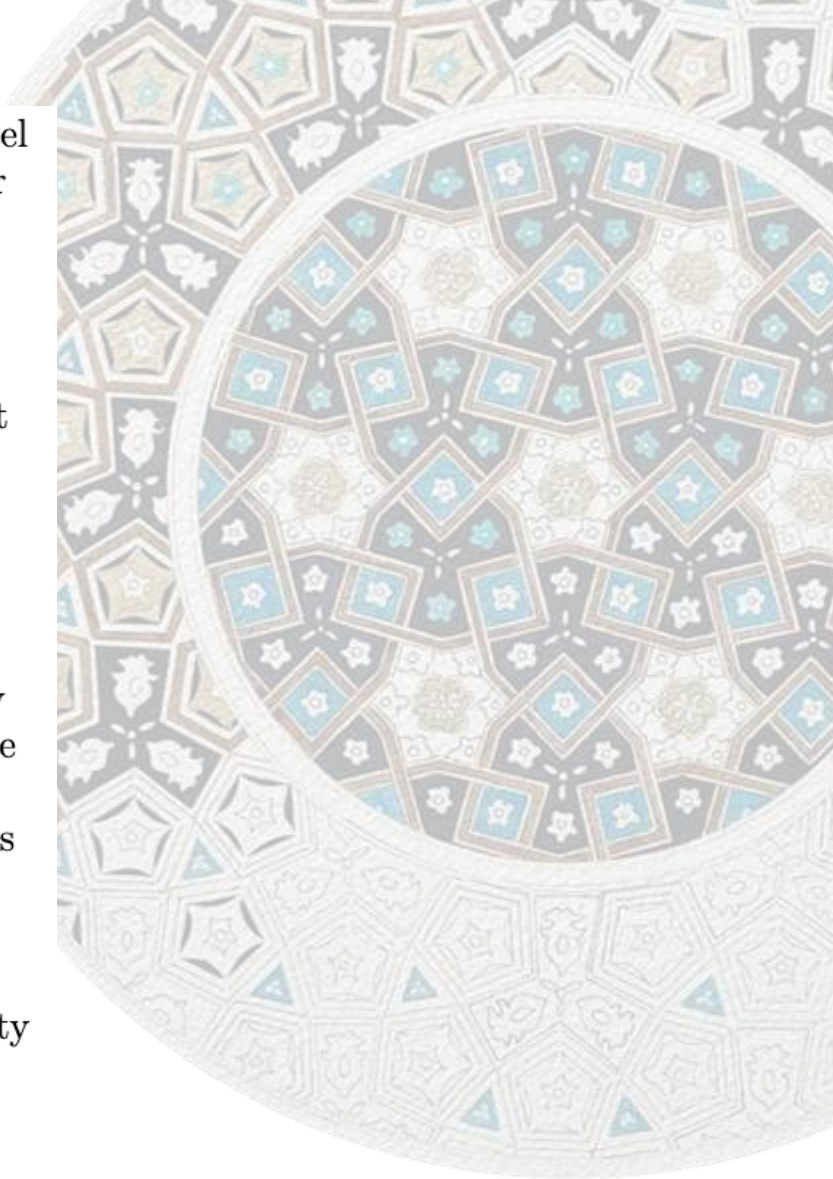
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Item

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1. How long have you worked on the MDS project as a research assistant?
2. Have you worked with Muslim communities as a researcher prior to MDS?  
[if yes] Have you worked with Muslim communities as a researcher in New Zealand prior to MDS?
3. Please indicate the majority of your promotion efforts to engage the Muslim community in New Zealand for data collection for MDS:
4. Please provide the approximate number of individuals from the Muslim community you have engaged with during this data collection project.
5. Approximately how many completed responses have you received from the Muslim community participants during this data collection effort?
6. From your existing skillset, list the top three skills/qualifications that you think are the most beneficial for an RA to have on this project.
7. During your role as an RA on this project, what would you consider to be the most useful skill you picked up? You can list as many as you like (up to three).

13. On a scale of 1-5 (1 being none and 5 being very much), to what extent do you feel that your interactions with the Muslim community have helped you understand their needs and preferences in data collection?
14. On a scale of 1-5 (1 being none and 5 being very well), how well do you understand the factors that influence community responses to our data collection initiatives within the Muslim community in New Zealand?
15. On a scale of 1-5 (1 being none and 5 being to the highest extent) to what extent do you believe that current engagement strategies effectively address the specific cultural and religious considerations of the Muslim community in New Zealand?
16. How well do you think our research methods ensure inclusivity of diverse voices and cultural practices within the Muslim community in New Zealand? (Rate on a scale of 1-5, 1 being not at all and 5 being perfectly).
17. To what extent do you believe that the research methods employed are culturally sensitive to the needs and practices of the Muslim community in New Zealand? (Rate on a scale of 1-5, 1 being not at all and 5 being perfectly).
18. Are you willing to provide further feedback for improving data collection methods within the Muslim community in New Zealand.
19. Are you willing to provide further suggestions for improving data collection methods within the Muslim community in New Zealand.
20. Are you willing to share your experiences on engaging with the Muslim community during data collection efforts.
21. Are you willing to share your perspectives on engaging with the Muslim community during data collection efforts.





# Screening

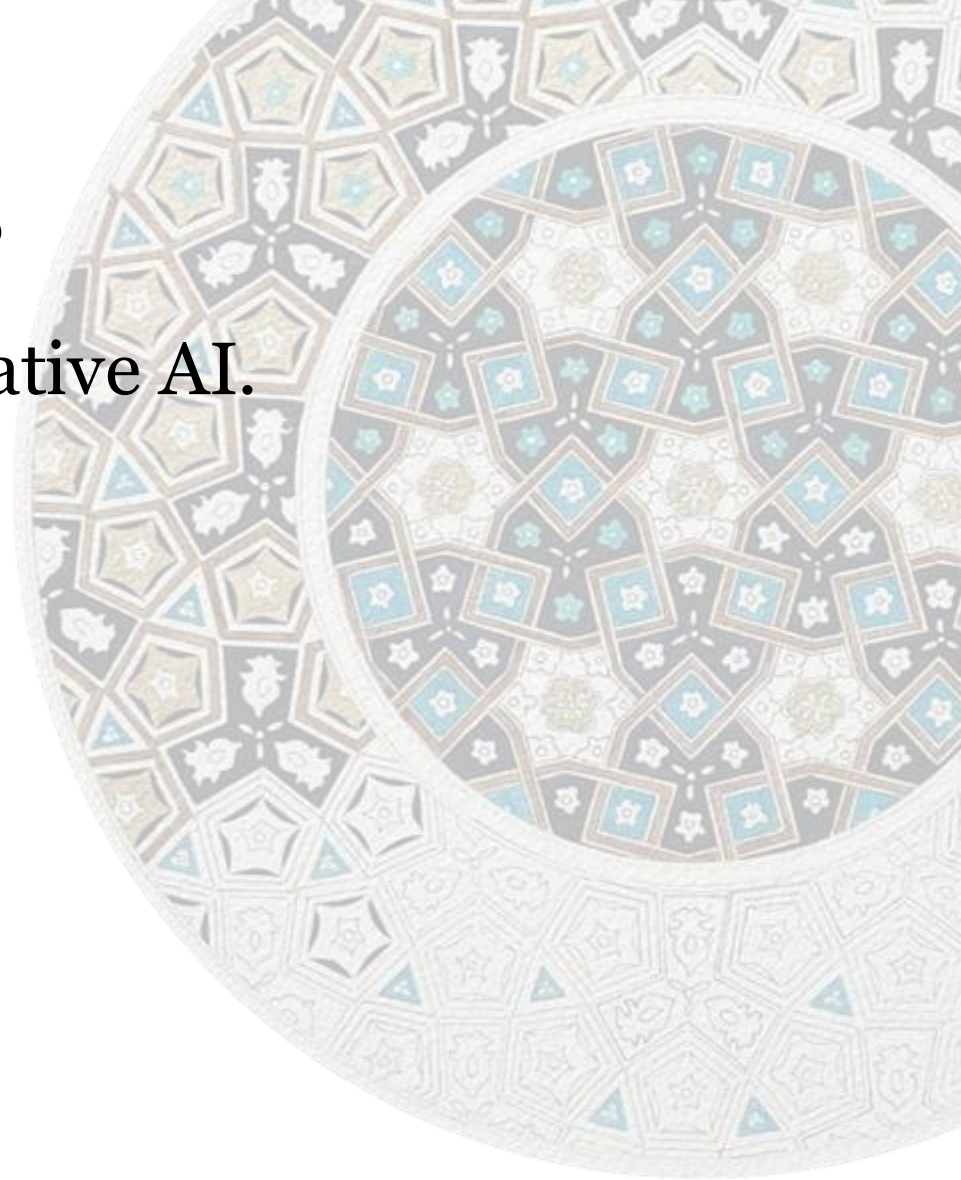
- $n = 27$  responses
- Factors to decide potential interviewees
  - Willingness to provide/share suggestions/experiences
  - Total number of confirmed surveys, and
  - Prior experience of working with Muslim communities.



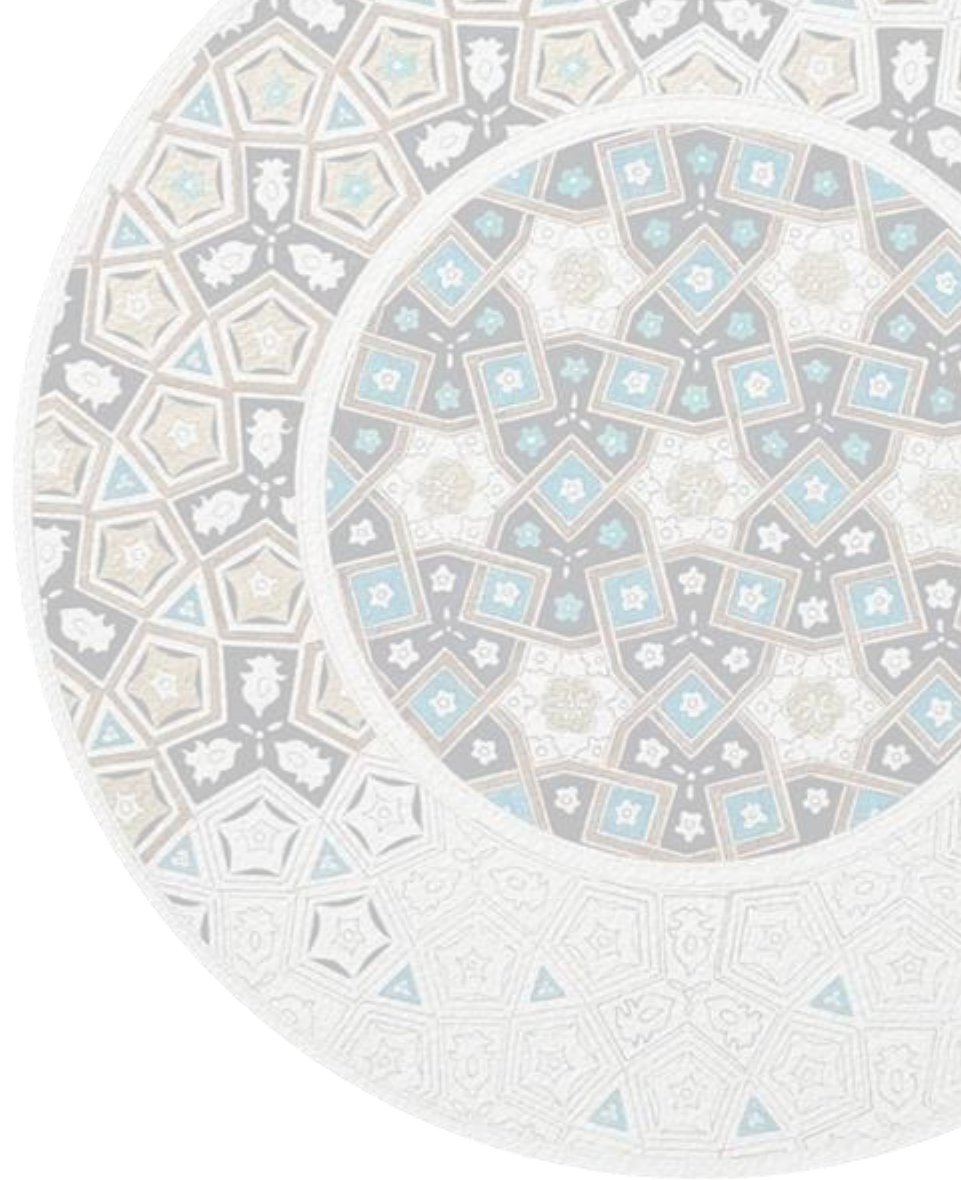


# Semi-structured interviews

- Interview questions produced using generative AI.
- Phase 1 interviewees: 14 (Green category)
- Phase 2 interviewees: 7 (Blue category)
- Phase 3 interviewees: 1 (Purple category)



# Themes



# Meaningful connections

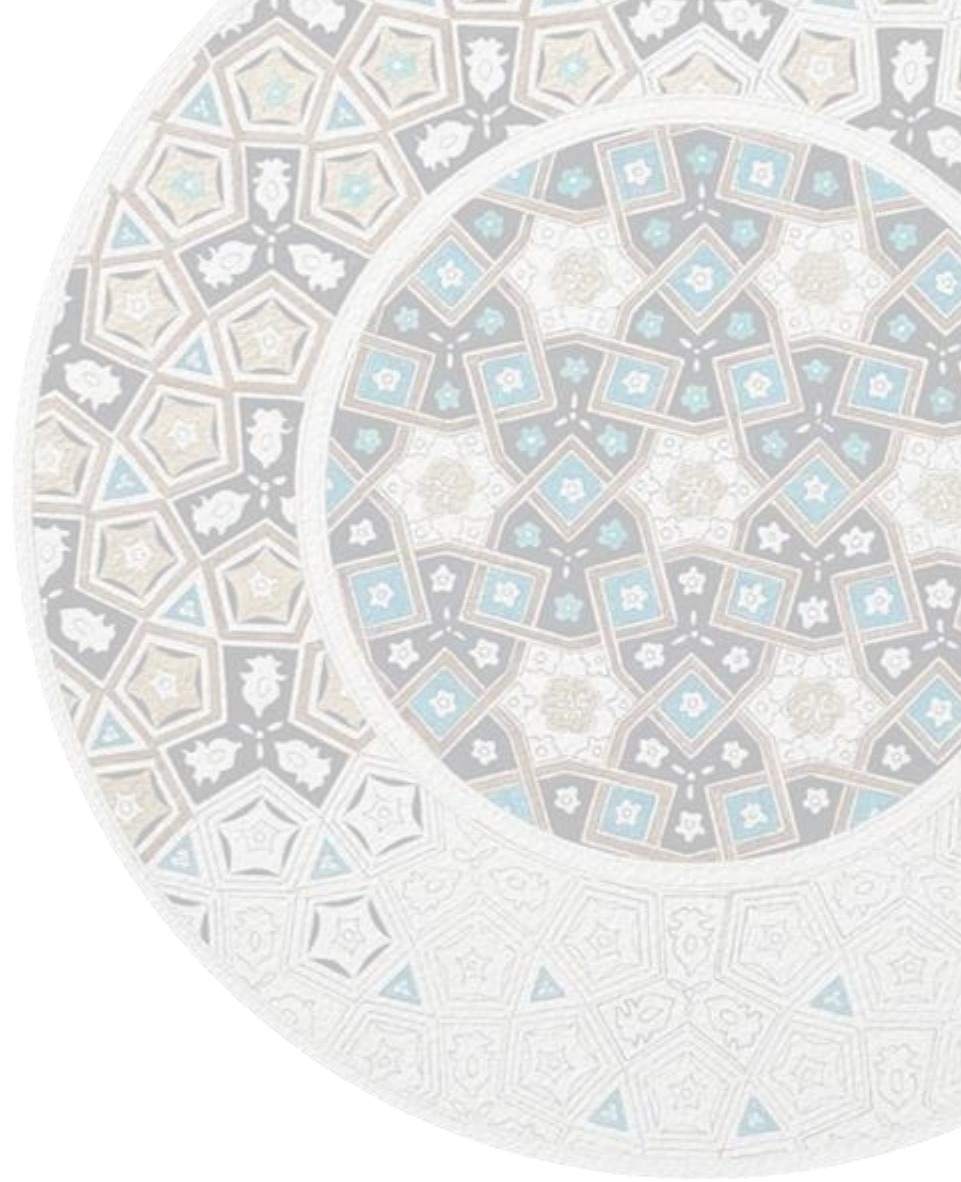
- Cultural connections
- Cultural events, and timing of these events
- Networking
- Leveraging community leaders to reach out to broader community members.



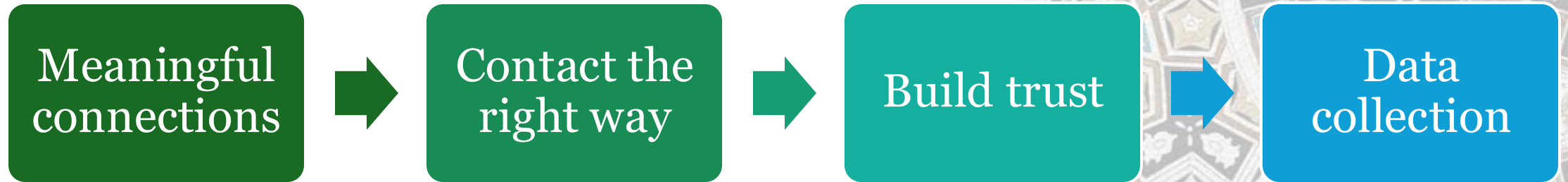
# Contact dynamics

- Leveraging community leaders to reach out to broader community members.
- Visiting centres personally to build rapport
- Individual contacts (vs. group contacts)
  - Face to face

# Trust building



# Enablers



Afzali et al. (in preparation). Enablers and challengers of collecting data from Muslim community in Aotearoa New Zealand: An in-depth qualitative exploration of research assistant experiences using NVivo and Copilot.



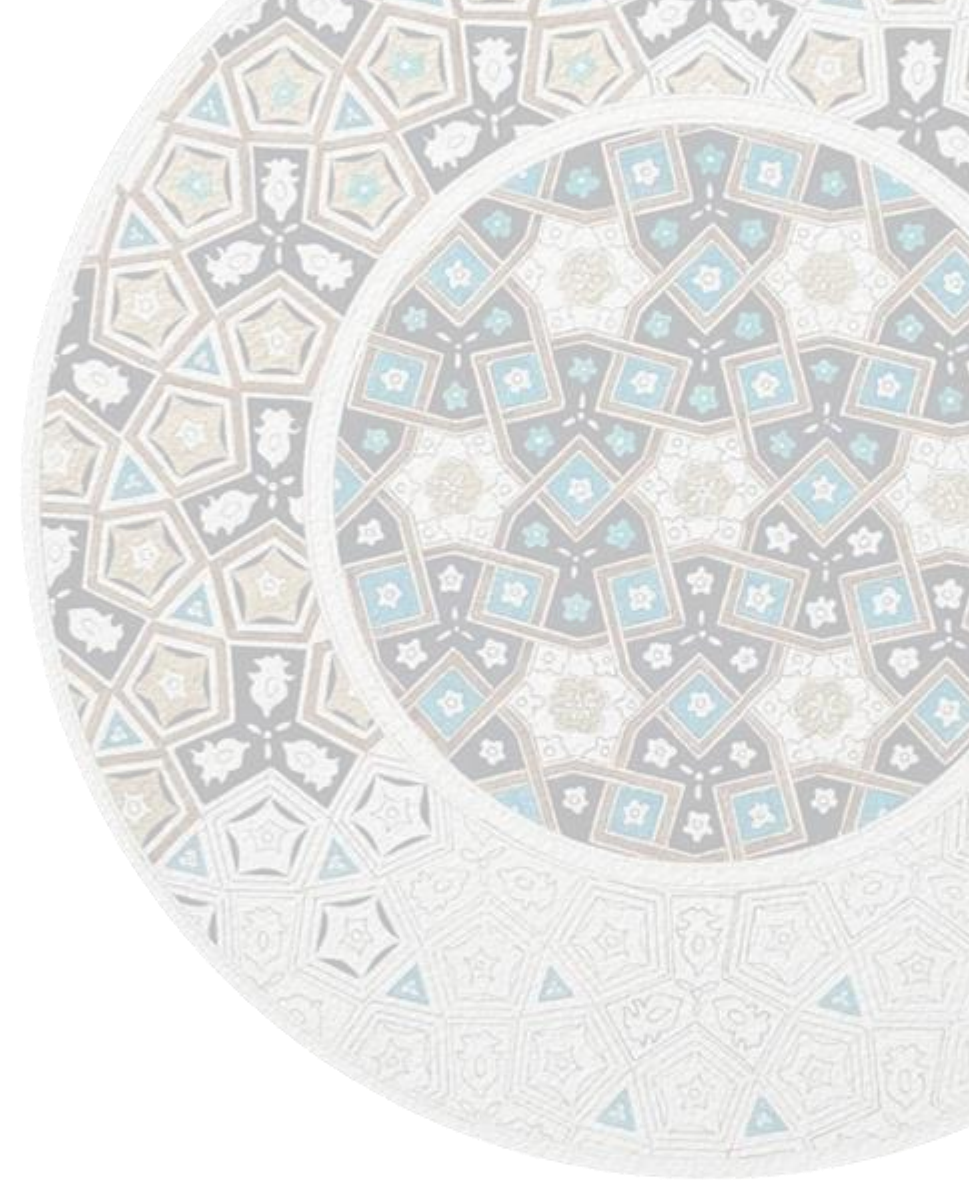
# No engagement

- Data privacy
- Sensitive/personal information
- Familiarity
- Paper vs online

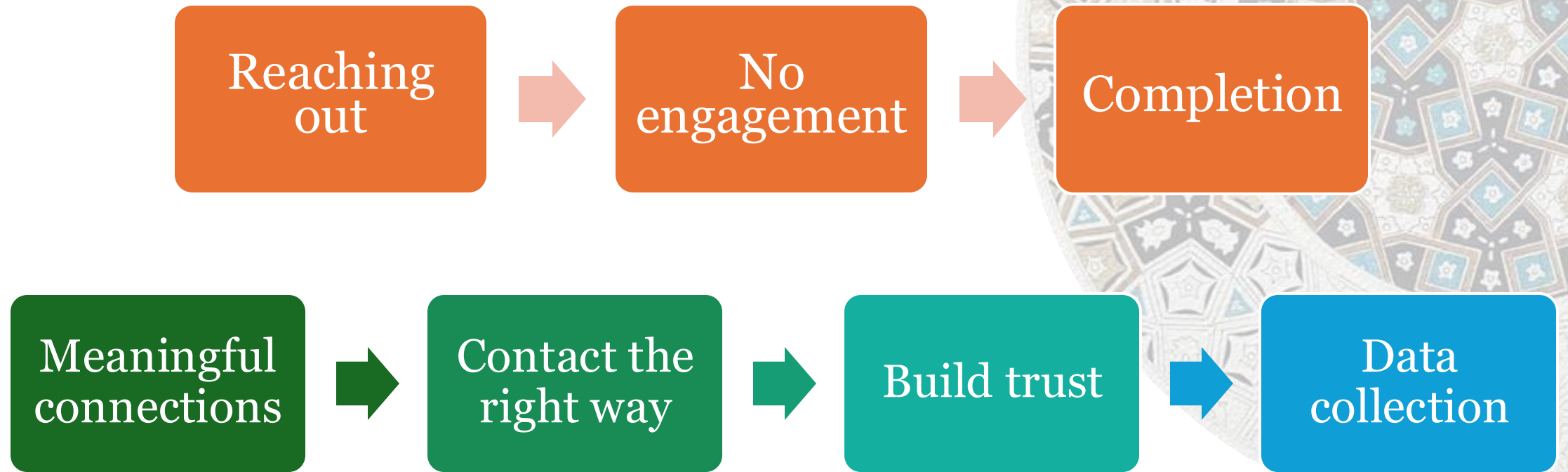


# No completion

- Distribution vs completion
- Authenticity of responses
- Length of the survey questionnaire



# Solutions



Afzali et al. (in preparation). Enablers and challengers of collecting data from Muslim community in Aotearoa New Zealand: An in-depth qualitative exploration of research assistant experiences using NVivo and Copilot.



# RA factors

- Handling negative feedback
- Lack of peer support/coordination
- Logistics

Afzali et al. (in preparation). Enablers and challengers of collecting data from Muslim community in Aotearoa New Zealand: An in-depth qualitative exploration of research assistant experiences using NVivo and Copilot.



# Positive feedback

- Studying Muslim issues
- Inclusivity, with well-worded questions that allowed for diverse responses.
- Appreciation of the effort to **collect data** and **understanding the importance** of the research.

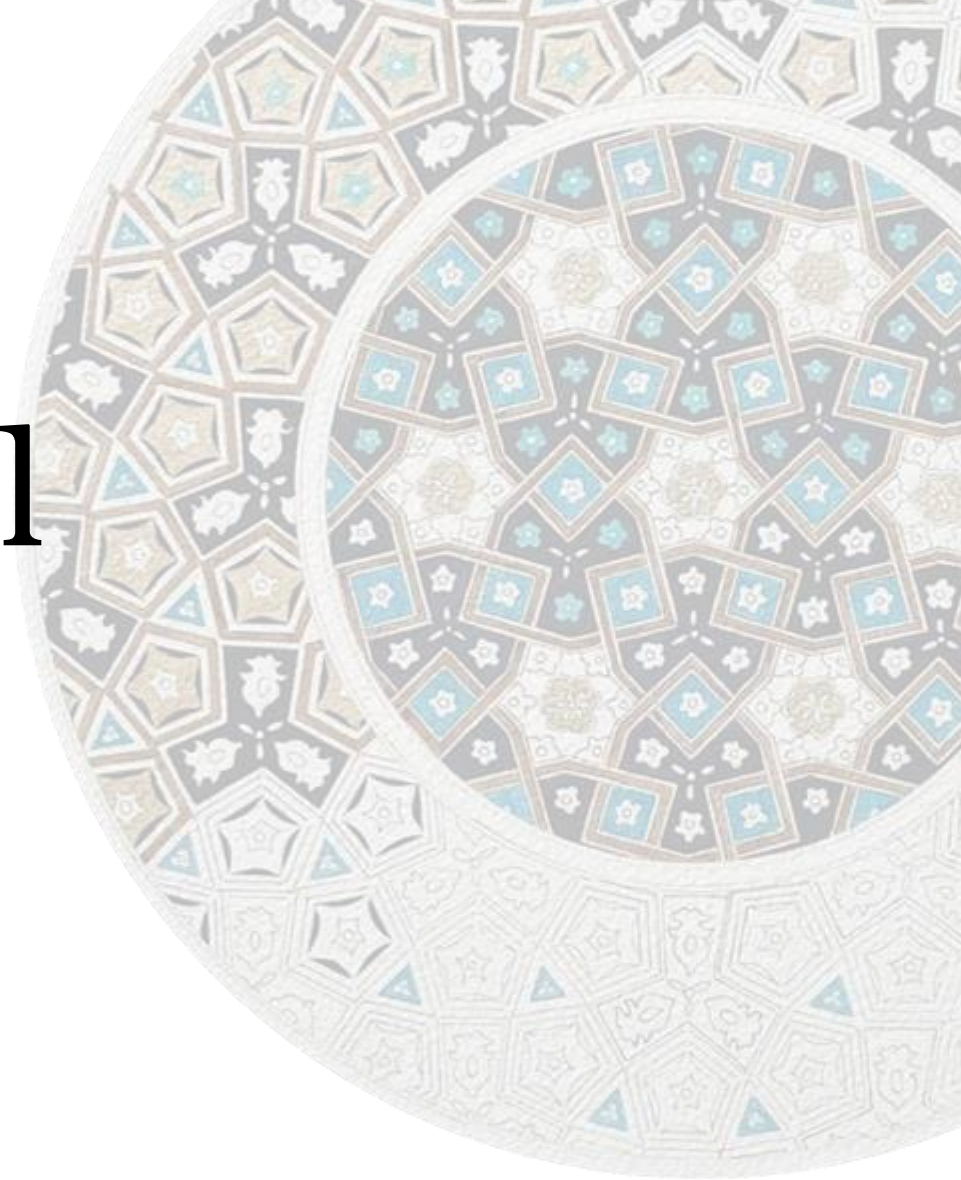


# Constructive feedback

- Address cultural sensitivities
- Engage with community leaders early in the research process
- Maintain open and ongoing communication with the community
- Train researchers on cultural competency and sensitivity
- Be mindful of gender dynamics within the community, especially in religious settings.
- Incentives to encourage participation and completion of the questionnaire



# Revisiting our initial understanding



# Enablers

- Community engagement: organizations, leaders, celebrities, authority figures
- Individual contact vs. general/social media promotion
- Transparency: especially in terms of ethics
- Online vs paper responses

# Challengers

- Privacy
- Length of the survey
- Trust of institutions
- Political climate
- Demographic/generational variability
- Education
- Language barriers





# Acknowledgements

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MDS Wellington Team

MDS Dunedin Team

MDS Hamilton Team

MDS Christchurch Team

MDS Palmerston North Team



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The University of  
Auckland



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University of Canterbury



Lawyer Aarif Rasheed  
Just Community

Templeton Religion Trust

New Zealand Psychological Society

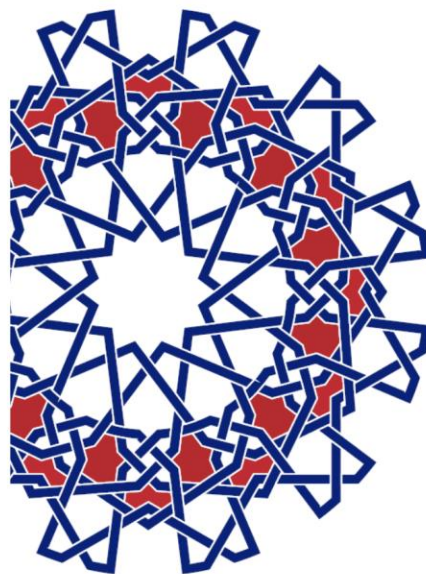




TOPIC

# The Muslim Diversity Study

The general scope of the Muslim Diversity Study is to study attitudes and values of Muslims in New Zealand. Learn more about our Muslim diversity study.



## MUSLIM DIVERSITY STUDY

### About the project

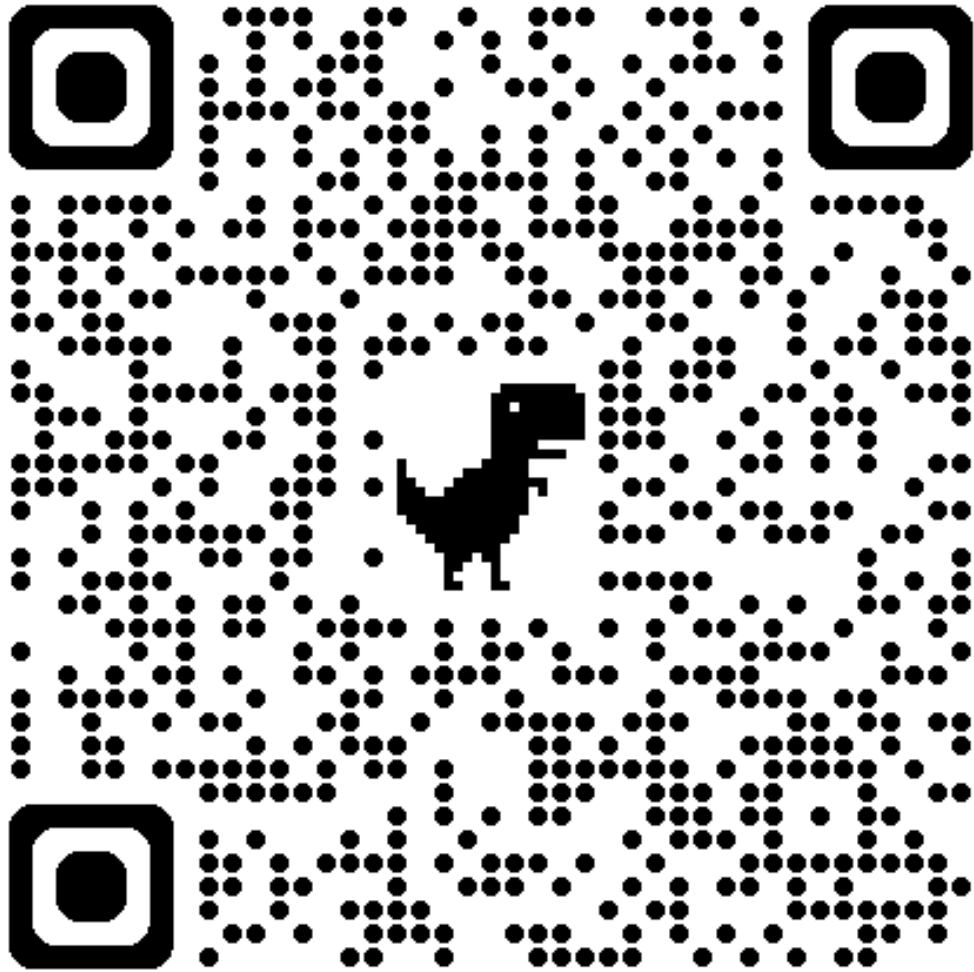
### CONNECT WITH US





# Thank you!





Slides here

