

Muslim couples: The role of dyadic coping in buffering the effects of perceived religion-based couple discrimination on relationship satisfaction

by

Emel Genc

B.S., Ankara University, 2010
M.A., Western Michigan University, 2015

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

School of Family Studies and Human Services
College of Human Ecology

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

2019

Abstract

Muslims are one of the most discriminated groups and frequent targets of negative stereotype and discrimination, especially after the attacks on the U.S. by Muslim terrorists on September 11, 2011. Although there is sufficient evidence of discrimination toward Muslim adults in the U.S., there is limited information specific to Muslim couples. Studies on minority couples claim that the social disapproval and discrimination experience result in adverse relationship outcomes, however how couples cope with discrimination is unclear. This study examined the relationship between religious congruity and clothing style with religion-based couple discrimination and how dyadic coping moderates the mediating effects of couple negative interaction on the relationship between partners and relationship satisfaction. Participants were 129 Muslim couples residing in the U.S. Results indicated that men's clothing style and feeling religiously congruent with the community were related to the perception of discrimination. Further, perceiving discrimination was linked with destructive interaction between couples, which caused lower relationship satisfaction. However, couples' abilities to cope with stress reduced the indirect effect of perceived religion-based couple discrimination on relationship satisfaction.

Keywords: discrimination, dyadic coping, Muslim, negative interaction, religious congruity, relationship satisfaction

Muslim couples: The role of dyadic coping in buffering the effects of perceived religion-based couple discrimination on relationship satisfaction

by

Emel Genc

B.S., Ankara University, 2010
M.A., Western Michigan University, 2015

A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

School of Family Studies and Human Services
College of Human Ecology

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

2019

Approved by:

Major Professor
Dr. Joyce Baptist

Copyright

© Emel Genc 2019.

Abstract

Muslims are one of the most discriminated groups and frequent targets of negative stereotype and discrimination, especially after the attacks on the U.S. by Muslim terrorists on September 11, 2011. Although there is sufficient evidence of discrimination toward Muslim adults in the U.S., there is limited information specific to Muslim couples. Studies on minority couples claim that the social disapproval and discrimination experience result in adverse relationship outcomes, however how couples cope with discrimination is unclear. This study examined the relationship between religious congruity and clothing style with religion-based couple discrimination and how dyadic coping moderates the mediating effects of couple negative interaction on the relationship between partners and relationship satisfaction. Participants were 129 Muslim couples residing in the U.S. Results indicated that men's clothing style and feeling religiously congruent with the community were related to the perception of discrimination. Further, perceiving discrimination was linked with destructive interaction between couples, which caused lower relationship satisfaction. However, couples' abilities to cope with stress reduced the indirect effect of perceived religion-based couple discrimination on relationship satisfaction.

Keywords: discrimination, dyadic coping, Muslim, negative interaction, religious congruity, relationship satisfaction

Table of Contents

List of Figures	viii
List of Tables	ix
Chapter 1 - Introduction.....	1
Definitions	2
Chapter 2 - Literature Review.....	4
Muslims in the U. S.	4
History of Muslims in the U.S.	5
Acculturation and Assimilation Process of Muslim Immigrants	6
Discrimination and Islamophobia	8
Theoretical Frameworks	9
Race-based Traumatic Stress Theory.....	10
The Stress Process Model	11
Effects of Discrimination on Relationship Processes and Outcome.....	11
Resources for Couples	13
Religious Congruity	14
Dyadic Coping	15
Purpose of this Study	16
Chapter 3 - Methods.....	18
Participants.....	18
Data Collection	18
Measures	19
Religious Congruity	19
Clothing Style	20
Perceived religion-based couple discrimination	21
Couple negative interaction	22
Dyadic Coping	22
Relationship Satisfaction	22
Covariates	23
Data Analysis	24

Preliminary Analysis.....	24
Measurement Model	24
Structural Model	25
Chapter 4 - Results.....	26
Preliminary Analysis.....	26
Correlations and Non-independence.....	26
Group Differences.....	26
Measurement Model	27
Structural Model	28
Main Analysis	28
Chapter 5 - Discussion	31
Limitations and Future Directions	35
Implications	35
Conclusion	37
References.....	48
Appendix A - Informed Consent.....	59

List of Figures

Figure 1. Common-fate moderated mediation model of perceived religion-based couple discrimination on relationship satisfaction.	45
Figure 2. A visual representation of the linear function relating dyadic coping to the indirect effect of perceived religion-based couple discrimination to relationship satisfaction through couple negative interaction.	46
Figure 3. Levels of dyadic coping on the indirect effects of perceived religion-based couple discrimination on relationship satisfaction.	47

List of Tables

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N=129).....	39
Table 2. Summary of Intercorrelations of Study Variables (N = 129)	40
Table 3. Results of Group Comparison of Study Variables and Descriptive Statistics (N = 129).	41
Table 4. Results for ANOVAs for Perceived Religion-based Couple Discrimination across Regions in the U.S. (N = 129).....	42
Table 5. Results of ANOVAs for Perceived Religion-based Couple Discrimination across Clothing Style (N = 129).....	43
Table 6. Results of Moderated Mediated Model of Perceived Religion-based Couple Discrimination on Relationship Satisfaction	44

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Muslims are one of the fastest growing minority groups in the United States (U.S.), reaching numbers of approximately 3.5 million (Pew Research Center, 2017). It is estimated that the Muslim population in the U.S. will continue to increase and double by 2050 (Pew Research Center, 2017) through immigration, birth and religious conversion of non-Muslims (Bagasra & Mackinem, 2014). As a minority group in the U.S., Muslims face challenges related to identity and acculturation issues, religion-based couple discrimination, the lack of resources to maintain their religious beliefs and the lack of social support (Ahmed et al., 2011).

Social disapproval and bullying of Muslims that increased after the attacks on the U.S. by Muslim extremists on September 11, 2001 (popularly referred to as 9/11), were attributed to media's portrayal of Muslims as terrorists (Ahmed, 2012; Britto, 2011; Khawaja, 2015; Aroian, 2012). Since 9/11, implicit discrimination attitudes towards Muslims increased by 82.6 percent and overt discrimination increased by 76.3 percent (Sheridan, 2006). Studies found that for Muslims, perceiving discrimination negatively affects mental [e.g., self-esteem and depression (Ghaffari & Cifci, 2010; Moradi & Hasan, 2004)] and physical [e.g., coronary artery disease, high blood pressure, giving birth to low birth-weight infants, cognitive impairments, poor sleep, and visceral fat (Paradies et al, 2015)] health. While there have been many studies examining the direct effects of Islamophobia and discrimination on mental health of Muslim immigrants (e.g., Schmitt et al., 2014; Padela, & Heisler, 2010), there has been lack of interest in examining the effects of religion-based couple discrimination on Muslim couples to date.

Although there is little literature specifically addressing the effects of discrimination on intimate relationships among Muslim couples, research on minority couples provide insight into minority discrimination and relationship outcomes. Perception of discrimination were found to

adversely affect relationship outcomes for interracial couples (e.g., Baptist, Craig & Nicholson, 2018; Bryant, Wickrama, Bolland, Bryant, Cutrona, & Stanik, 2010). However, research has also shown that many interracial and same-sex couples are able to buffer the negative effects of discrimination and protect their romantic relationships (e.g., Baptist et al., 2018; Frost, 2011; Gamarel, Reisner, Laurenceau, Nemoto, & Operario, 2014; Lehmler & Agnew, 2007). Protective factors such as positivity, openness, and dyadic coping skills within the relationship, and the strength of one's religious faith have been found to attenuate the effects of discrimination and are linked to resilience against discrimination and overall strengthening of relationship well-being (e.g., Baptist et al., 2018; Erol & Orth, 2013; Liao, Kashubeck-West, Weng, & Deitz, 2015). These protective factors that contribute to the stability and longevity of relationships (Canary & Stafford, 1992) may play an important role in buffering the negative effects of discrimination that Muslim couples' experience. Because disapproval from society can negatively affect relationship outcomes for minority race couples, of which relationship processes can help alleviate, it is expected that Muslim couples living in the U.S. may have similar strategies that help buffer the effects of religion-based couple discrimination.

Definitions

Terms that are used through this document and that may not be familiar to readers, are defined below:

1. Muslim couples in this study will include couples with at least one partner who identifies as Muslim. The couple may be married, engaged, cohabitating or dating.
2. Allah is the Muslim reference to God. In the Qur'an, Allah introduces himself as: *"He is God, [who is] One. God, the Eternal Refuge. He neither begets nor is born, Nor is there to Him any equivalent"* (112:1-4).

3. Qur'an is the holy text of Islam. Muslims believe that the Qur'an was revealed from Allah (God) to prophet Muhammed.
4. The term of Surah refers to a chapter of the Qur'an.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

This chapter will provide a background of Muslims in the U.S., the theories that guide this study, and a summary of relevant literature on religion-based couple discrimination and relationship satisfaction.

Muslims in the U. S.

The Muslim population in the U.S. consists of different ethnic, racial and national groups, majority having emigrated from the Middle East (58%) and North Africa (25%), South Asia (35%) Asia Pacific (23%), sub-Saharan Africa (9%), Europe (4%) and elsewhere in the Americas (4%) (Pew Research Center, 2017). U.S. born Muslims are also diverse with 32% being Black, 35% White, 10% Asian, 17% Hispanic and 5% other or mixed race. Although migration of Muslims to the U.S. has reduced after 2007 when the U.S. banned travel from seven Muslim countries (BBC News, 2018), it is estimated that by 2050, the Muslim population in the U.S. will reach 8.1 million -- the second largest religious group after Christians (Pew Research Center, 2017).

Of all the Muslim adults in the U.S., more than half (53%) are married, 4% are cohabitating, 1% widowed, 8% divorced or separated and 33% have never married (Pew Research Center, 2017). Of the married Muslims, 70% are foreign born who are likely to marry fellow Muslims (89%) compared to U.S. born Muslims (81%). Pew Research Center (2017) further reported that on a whole, Muslims aged 39 years old and younger are more likely to marry non-Muslims (17%) compared to Muslims older than 39 (9%). The likelihood of having a Muslim spouse increased when one's social network comprised of more Muslims and the practice of Islam was deemed important.

History of Muslims in the U.S.

Muslims first immigrated to the U.S. 400 years ago in three major waves. The first wave of Muslims arrived in the 17th century through forced and involuntary migration of African slaves. Because of slavery, race and class struggles, African slaves were not allowed to freely practice their religious faith that they observed in secret and of which they passed onto their children (Turner, 1997). The second wave of Muslims arrived in the mid-19th century when large numbers of Arabs from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Palestine escaped civil war. This was followed by post-World War I Eastern European Muslim migration. Unlike the first wave, the second wave was voluntary, and brought unskilled labor seeking economic opportunities (Fonder, 2007). Post World War II saw the migration of Muslims from India, Pakistan, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union seeking democratic freedom and/or the pursuit of higher education (Azzaoui, 2009). This group brought diversity of social and economic class where many were educated. The third wave of Muslims arrived after changes to U.S. immigration laws in 1965 that attracted well-educated and highly skilled Easterners, Asians and Africans (Haddad et al., 2009), who were seeking better education and professional opportunities.

With the rise of fear and persecution from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and Al Qaeda in Iraq, Yemen and Libya, many Muslims have been displaced and forced to flee their homeland. As war and terrorism continue in the Middle East, several countries including the U.S. have helped resettle Muslim refugees (Connor & Krogstad, 2016). These refugees are not always welcomed by local residents who associate Muslims with terrorism (DeSilver, 2015). The aversion towards Muslim refugees has grown since the 2017 executive order on immigration that bans Iraqis, Iranians, Syrians, Yemenis, Sudanese, Libyans, and Somalians from entering the U.S. (Malone, 2018).

Muslims who migrate to the U.S. in pursuit of a brighter future are often challenged by the poor reception by U.S. citizens due to the association of Muslims with terrorism. Furthermore, transitioning into a predominantly Christian nation can pose numerous challenges for Muslims where faith-based social support networks for Muslims are limited. Immigrants who settle in communities that lack fellow citizens from their country-of-origin and a place for religious worship can feel isolated and discouraged (De Jong Gierveld, Van der Pas, & Keating, 2015). The process of adjusting to a new culture and way of life can be conceptualized via the process of acculturation or assimilation (Berry, 1980).

Acculturation and Assimilation Process of Muslim Immigrants

Acculturation is the process of learning and adapting to the values, attitudes, life style, and norms of the host society (Berry, 1980). Berry identified four strategies of acculturation: assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization. Assimilation occurs when people adapt the host culture and reject their original culture. Separation ensues when person holds their original culture while avoiding the host culture. Integration refers to maintaining both the original and host culture. Marginalization arises when immigrants have little desire to maintain their culture while avoiding adapting the host culture. The acculturation process of immigrants largely depend on demographic factors (e.g., country of origin, age, gender, length of time in the U.S, occupation, and education), level of religiosity, language and dependence on of traditional values (Berry, 2003).

Studies showed that school-aged immigrants tend to adjust to the host culture more swiftly than adult immigrants (Berry, 2003; Kim & Wolpin, 2008; Kalmijn & Kraaykamp; 2018). School-aged immigrants who are in their formative years have more time and opportunities for exposure to the host culture, thus easing the process of acculturation (Berry,

1997). Adult immigrants are more likely to struggle with adapting to the norms of the host culture especially if adaptation means changing their cultural beliefs, values and traditions that are ingrained in their personhood (Kruzykowski, 2007; Marsiglia et al., 2013). The process of acculturating to the host culture eases overtime as immigrants extend their stay in their host country (Alkazraji et al., 1997). New immigrants who are not conversant with the local language can feel isolated thus have more problems adjusting to the host culture (Lueck & Wilson, 2011). The process of acculturation is also influenced by immigrants' level of education that often correlates with proficiency in the English language (Amer & Hovey, 2007; Ajrouch, 2007), that can facilitate socializing with the local community. The ability to connect with the local community provides opportunities to integrate and learn the culture, history, values and norms of the host culture. Exposure to and involvement with the citizens from the host culture can influence immigrants' behaviors and choice of dressing (Killian, 2002; Versteegh, 2000) that in turn facilitates acculturation.

For Muslim immigrants, the process of acculturation is complicated by the lack of shared religious beliefs with most U.S. citizens (Awad, 2010; Haddad, 2004). The events of 9/11 and the increased hostility and discrimination experienced by Muslims in the U.S. (e.g., Kunst et al., 2012), has further challenged this process of acculturation (Phalet, Baysu, & Van Acker, 2015). The overt markers of Islam (e.g., beards for men, hijab for women) can make the process of acculturation tougher (Fozdar, 2011). Women who adorn hijab (i.e., headscarf) and niqab (i.e., veil covering the face except eyes) face more prejudicial treatment (Yasmeen, 2007) and suspicion by law enforcement (Dellal, 2004) that can escalate stress and anxiety levels. Islamic practices that requires a private place to pray during the day and access to halal food (i.e., prescribed method of slaughtering animals) that are not readily available in most parts of U.S.

are further concerns faced by Muslim immigrants (Amer & Bagasra, 2013). While these are important practices for Muslims to uphold, their commitment to their religious identity, maintaining their heritage culture, and continued use of ethnic language put them at risk of increased discrimination that in turn can affect their process of acculturation (Güngör et al., 2012; Saroglou & Galand, 2004).

Discrimination and Islamophobia

Discriminatory behaviors toward Muslims were common even before the attacks of 9/11 (Bakalian & Bozorgmehr, 2011). Arabs and Middle Easterners have experienced discrimination due to U.S. policy toward Middle Eastern countries, and Israel in the conflict with Palestine that began in the 1960s (Bakalian & Bozorgmehr, 2011). In the early 1990s, Arabs and Middle Easterners have often been portrayed as barbaric, violent, corrupt, dishonest and extremists in Western media (Sheridan, 2006). By the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001, the rate of hate crime against Muslims, known as Islamophobia, had increased and intensified during the 2016 U.S. presidential election campaign that called for “total and complete shutdown of Muslim entering the U.S.” (Sullivan & Zezima, 2016).

Islamophobia is defined as unfounded fear, hostile attitudes, and behaviors toward Muslims that result in discrimination, bias, aggression, and even violence (Runnymede Trust, 1997). Islamophobia, a form of prejudice and discrimination, can be experienced explicitly or covertly in different settings. Examples of Islamophobic acts include vandalism and hate crimes such as abusive phone calls, threatening mail, violence targeting Muslim worship places, treating Muslims with suspicion, staring, name calling, leaving Muslims out of conversations, ignoring or experiencing social distance (Kaplan, 2006; Lorente, 2010; Sheridan, 2006). Such discriminatory acts towards Muslims have increased from pre- to post- 9/11. According to the Pew Research

Center (2017), 50 percent of Muslims reported that being a Muslim in the U.S. has become more difficult in recent years, and 48 percent said they had experienced at least one incident of discrimination in the past 12 months. Hate crimes against Muslims have also increased. In 2015, Muslims were six to nine times more likely to experience hate-based attacks (Abdelkader, 2016) and reported attacks increased from 257 in 2015 to 307 in 2016 (an increase of 19 percent) (Pew Research Center, 2017). Discrimination towards Muslims may be compounded because Muslims are a minority group in the U.S.

Muslims who adorn traditional attire (e.g., hijab for women) or maintain traditional grooming styles (e.g., long beard for men) are more easily identified, hence may be more likely to be targeted for hate crimes. It was been reported that women wearing veils (e.g., hijab, niqab, and burqa) experience more discrimination than Muslim men or Muslim women who wear Western-styled clothing (Jasperse, Ward, & Jose, 2012; Rahmath, Chambers, & Wakewich, 2016). Increased religion-based hostility have not only left Muslims fearful of potential hatred (Love, 2009) but potentially mental and physical illness (e.g., Abu-Ras & Suárez, 2009; Kunst et al., 2012; Rousseau et al., 2011; Samari, 2016; Schmitt et al., 2014).

Theoretical Frameworks

Two models were used to conceptualize this study. Carter's (2007) race-based traumatic stress theory is applied to religion-based couple discrimination to provide insight into the types of discrimination and its effects on Muslim couples. The stress process model informs how couples process the effects of discrimination and utilize dyadic coping skills to cope with the effects of discrimination.

Race-based Traumatic Stress Theory

The idea that couple satisfaction may be directly and indirectly impacted by discrimination is understood through the theoretical lens of Race-Based Traumatic Stress Theory (RBTST; Carter, 2007). RBTST emerged from the attempts to explain the effects of discrimination on minority populations that tend to be “general and global” and lack specificity as to how specific aspects of discrimination inflicted emotional and psychological harm given how one copes with such traumatic experiences. Consequently, RBTST differentiates between discrimination, harassment, and discriminatory harassment, providing a broader perspective on discrimination. Carter (2007) defined discrimination as an experience of avoidance that includes “barring access, exclusion, withholding information and use of deception” (p. 89). Harassment is more hostile in nature and encompasses “physical, interpersonal and verbal assaults, treatment as stereotype, [and] assumptions as criminal or dangerous” (p. 89). Discriminatory harassment, an aversive form of hostility, may take the form of “isolation at work, denial of promotion, [and] question of qualifications” (p. 89). These experiences can elicit reactions and/or symptoms that represent depression, avoidance, vigilance, and isolation (Carter, 2007). It has been argued that the forms of discrimination described by Carter are relevant to religion-based couple discrimination.

According to RBTST, perception of discrimination regardless of form, if not addressed or managed well, can culminate to being a traumatic experience. Untreated trauma, can in turn increase vulnerability and pose a threat to close relationships including romantic relationships. However, healthy relationship processes and individual strengths can provide couples with strategies to counter the effects of discrimination. The stress process model (SPM; Pearlin, Menaghan, Lieberman, & Mullan, 1981) described below expands this idea.

The Stress Process Model

SPM provides a framework to understand the social determinants of stress by examining how life events and relationship stressors may worsen physical or psychological health by challenging a person's coping ability, whereas buffers may moderate the detrimental effects of stressors (Pearlin et al., 1981). This model suggests that the ability to manage stress is dependent on the meaning ascribed to the stress and on the capacity to access social and personal resources.

The SPM model includes three main components: (1) social stressors (2) stress mediators and moderators and (3) stress outcomes (Prealin et al., 1981). Social stressors refer to adverse life events and chronic or ongoing strains. Stress moderators or mediators (also known as social and personal resources), can help explain why people experience different outcomes when they encounter similar stressors. Stress outcomes resulting from the exposure to social stressors may involve physical, relational, familial or psychological aspects of life. This framework was used in this study to develop the proposed model tested in this study where religion-based couple discrimination was modeled as a social stress, couple negative interaction and dyadic coping were modeled as mediator and moderator respectively and relationship satisfaction served as the stress outcome. In addition, how clothing style and religious congruity may effect religion-based couple discrimination were examined.

Effects of Discrimination on Relationship Processes and Outcome

Although, the number of minority couples (e.g., same-sex, interracial) has risen, minority couples still experience discrimination and/or prejudice from the society due to their minority or marginalized identities (Lehmiller & Agnew, 2006). Studies reveal that these couples experience negative reactions and public disapproval such as stares, jokes, comments, poor services, restricted travel and leisure opportunities due to safety issues, challenges when job

searching, and housing discrimination (e.g., Bell & Hastings, 2011). These experiences are negatively associated with physical and mental health outcomes (Pascoe & Richman, 2009), and thus constitute as sources of stress for minority couples (Boss, Bryant, & Mancini, 2017).

The stress related to being a minority, and isolation from society can create tension and destructive communication between couples that may encompasses conflict, hostility, poor problem-solving, and demand–withdraw patterns of communication or interaction (Gottman, 1979; Levenson & Gottman, 1983), and avoidance or invalidation partners’ feelings and concerns (Fekete, Stephens, Mickelson, & Druley, 2007). These forms of destructive communication are referred to as couple negative interaction. A large body of research indicates that couple negative interactions between couples are associated with lower levels of positive relationships outcomes (e.g., satisfaction, commitment, and quality) and higher rates of divorce or break up (Cui et al., 2010; Gottman & Notarius, 2000; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Markman, Rhoades, Stanley, Ragan, & Whitton, 2010). Further, feeling disconnected with the partner was found to be strongly related to higher level of psychological and marital distress (Markman et al., 2010) and decreased physical health (Cornwell & Waite, 2009).

The conflict within relationships that stem from minority stress can have a negative effect on relationship satisfaction, lower marital quality (e.g., Baptist et al., 2018; Leslie & Letiecq, 2004), and can end in relationship dissolution or divorce (e.g., Bratter & King, 2008; Hohmann-Marriott & Amato, 2008). On the other hand, challenges that minority couples face can strengthen their relationship by creating opportunities for closeness and support, which may result in higher relationship functioning including commitment, trust, and happiness (Troy, Lewis-Smith, & Laurenceau, 2006; Kamen, Burns, & Beach, 2011).

Muslims in the U.S. can encounter similar types of discrimination as other minority groups, but the reasons for religion-based couple discrimination are generally different and politically informed (Ahmed, 2012). Although the effects of discrimination on Muslims in the U.S. is well researched, the impact on couple relationships are unclear, and it needs to be better understood for couple therapist to be effective in their work. Examining how discrimination influences relationship processes and satisfaction among Muslim couples is a step towards understanding this process.

Resources for Couples

Mainstream society can play an important role on Muslims, increasing their likelihood of perceiving any act as discrimination. Feeling welcomed and accepted by the society can lessen the perception of discrimination. Hence, feeling religiously congruent with the society would be considered as a resource for Muslim couples. Additionally, Muslims may feel they have to rely on each other. Having a partner to cope with the stress together and feel supported when one encounters the perception of discrimination can help ease the stress and contribute to the couples' relationship outcomes. This form of coping as a couple is encouraged in Islam and can be a resource to couples.

These resources that are highlighted in the Quran can serve to maintain couple relationships. The author is aware that there are different interpretation of the teachings of the Quran some of which may appear oppressive to women. Regardless, there are Quranic teachings that promote cooperation among couples that in turn can serve as a resource to strengthen relationships.

Religious Congruity

Religious congruity refers to the fit between one's religious values with the values within one's environment (Chaves, 2010) such as community, school, and workplace. Previous research on cultural congruity found that college students' perception of how their cultural values fit with the values of their university was related to students' psychological adjustment (Gloria & Robinson Kurpius, 1996). Increased cultural congruity was positively associated with perceptions of the university's environment and sense of belonging (Bordes & Arredondo, 2005) as well as increased persistence and psychological well-being among Black and Latina/o students (Gloria, Castellanos, & Orozco, 2005; Gloria, Castellanos, Scull, & Villegas, 2009). Latino students who perceived higher cultural congruity reported fewer educational barriers and higher academic success (Cerezo & Chang, 2013). Students who reported higher cultural congruity tended to cope by using an active, positive, planned approach. However, when students' values, beliefs, and behaviors were inconsistent with the values of the university, which then led to cultural incongruity, conflict in knowing how to balance participation in two different cultures arose (Gloria & Robinson Kurpius, 1996). Experiencing cultural incongruently may result in psychological distress, depressive symptoms, increased substance use (Cano, Castillo, Castro, de Dios, & Roncancio, 2014), feelings of self-blame, and disrespect that distort students' self-concept (Pyke, 2010). In summary, cultural congruity was associated with feeling accepted, as opposed to culture shock and not feeling accepted (Edman & Brazil, 2007; Gloria & Robinson Kurpius, 1996).

This concept of congruity is highlighted in Islam. Islamic teachings encourage Muslims to be tolerant and accept others as they are. The holy Qur'an advises the unity of mankind and mutual respect to different faiths: "*O You who believe! Stand out firmly for God, as witnesses to*

fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice..." (Al Maidah 5:8). The message from God is clear for all humans: universal peace, love and brotherhood, as stated in Surah 17-70: "*Respect and honor all human beings irrespective of their religion, color, race, sex, language, status, property, birth, profession/job and so on*" and Surah 49:10: "*The believers are but a single Brotherhood. Live like members of one family, brothers and sisters unto one another.*" Even though, in U.S. society, Muslims are not treated as the way that God commanded i.e., living in a supportive, kind, and peaceful environment would protect people from discrimination and stress derived from such discrimination. Thus, similar to cultural congruity, religious congruity could contribute to feeling accepted by one's community, fairly treated and overall well-being.

Dyadic Coping

Dyadic coping refers to the way couples cope with stress together, which is a shared process, involving both partners' joint efforts and behaviors such as communication, problem-solving, providing emotional support, and facing the difficulties of life as a couple (Bodenmann, 2005). Accordingly, dyadic coping can be supportive (i.e., when one partner supports the other by expressing understanding, solidarity, or giving advice), common (i.e., when partners cope together with a joint stressor), and delegated (i.e., when one partner asks the other to take over certain tasks and duties in an effort to reduce his/her personal stress). Recent studies have demonstrated that partners' positive dyadic coping behaviors are strong predictors of couple's relational and personal well-being (e.g., Donato, Parise, Iafrate, Bertoni, Finkenauer, & Bodenmann, 2015; Rusu, Hilpert, Beach, Turliuc, & Bodenmann, 2015). Coping as a couple significantly reduces partners' distress, fosters marital satisfaction (e.g., Ruffieux, Nussbeck & Bodenmann, 2014; Herzberg, 2013; Rusu, et al., 2015), increases relationship stability (Ruffieux

et al., 2014), and buffers the effects of stress on relationship quality (Falconier, Nussbeck, & Bodenmann, 2013). Additionally, partners' joint ability to cope with stress can improve psychological and physical well-being (e.g., Rusu et al., 2015).

The concept of dyadic coping is found in the Holy Qur'an that speaks of loyalty, altruism, care, and cooperation in marriages (Laluddin et al., 2014). Indeed, Allah created man and woman to become counterparts of each other. Therefore, providing support, helping each other to be good and righteous, and competing with each other in good works are found in many verses in the Qur'an. The following surahs: "*Our Lord! Grant unto us wives and offspring who will be a source of comfort, happiness, consolation, and give us (the grace) to lead the righteous*" (25:74) and "...*He created for you from yourself mates that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy...*" (30:21) refers to spouses as companions who complement each other. Additionally, the concept of Shura (mutual consultation) and cooperation during difficult times as emphasized in Sura Al-Asr, "...*counsel each other to the truth, and counsel each other to fortitude and patience,*" is characteristic of mutual coping strategies. Islam posits that these skills help maintain the welfare of marriages, increase communication, and develop emotional bond. The concept of dyadic coping is thus a resource for Muslim couples that may protect from the potential negative consequences of experiencing discrimination. Couples that are more collaborative in their coping may be better able to deal with discrimination and maintain their relational stability and happiness in the face of such discrimination.

Purpose of this Study

Despite the rise in discrimination against Muslims, there is a dearth of research on experiences of Muslim couples and their relationship outcomes. Understanding how religion-

based couple discrimination may affect these couples and potential buffering agents can better equip clinicians working with Muslim couples. Extrapolating from previous research on the effects of race-based discrimination on relationship outcomes for other minority groups such as interracial couples, and the ability of these couples to buffer the effects of discrimination on their relationship, this study proposes to examine how Muslim couples in the U.S. cope with experiences of religion-based couple discrimination targeted at the couple and how these experiences affect their romantic relationships. The goal of this study is to contribute to the scarcity in literature on Muslim couples and provide important information that can potentially better prepare mental health professionals working with Muslim couples. Based on current literature and informed by the race-based traumatic stress theory and stress process model, the model in Figure 1 was proposed to examine the following hypotheses:

H1: Religious congruity and clothing style will be linked to perceived religion-based couple discrimination.

H2: Perceived religion-based couple discrimination will be positively linked to couples' destructive communication patterns.

H3: The effects of perceived religion-based couple discrimination on couples' relationship satisfaction is mediated by communication quality that in turn is moderated by couples' joint dyadic coping.

Chapter 3 - Methods

Participants

A total of 129 couples were included in this study. Detailed demographic characteristics of participants are provided in Table 1. While, 123 couples (95%) were identified themselves as Muslims, only 6 couples (5%) reported having interfaith relationships with a Muslim partner. The majority (95%) of participants were married and had been in a relationship with their partner for an average of 11.81 years ($SD = 8.95$; Range = 1 to 42.75 years). The mean age was 39.10 ($SD = 9.65$; Range = 18 to 70) for men and 35.50 ($SD = 8.14$; Range = 18 to 61) for women. The majority of participants were born in North America (45% for women and 42% for men), with smaller numbers in Middle Eastern (16% for women and 20% for men), and Asian countries (22% of women and 21% of men). Regarding education, 61% of women had completed a four-year college or higher and 58% were employed. The majority of men (78%) were employed full-time and 71% had completed a four-year college or higher. The average annual household income of participants was between \$60,000 to \$69,999 with men earning higher wages compared to women.

Data Collection

Participants were recruited only from the U.S. based on the following criteria: 1) heterosexual couples that identify as a Muslim couple, 2) ages 18 and older, and 3) both partners reside in the U.S., and 4) both partners are able to read and comprehend English and complete an online survey. This study utilized cross-sectional dyadic data on relationship resilience that was collected online.

Participants recruited from two sources – Qualtrics Panel (120 participants) and through acquaintances residing in the U.S. (9 participants). Qualtrics Panel is useful for groups that are

otherwise hard to reach and allow researchers access to a more representative national sample. Qualtrics guaranteed complete data eliminating problems that can arise with missing data. Qualtrics charged for each couple they recruited from their panels. Based on funding, 120 couples were recruited by Qualtrics to participate in this study. Payments to the participants (undisclosed) were made by Qualtrics. After the contracted number of participants were met (i.e., 120 couples), the data was provided to the researcher who then clean and prepared the data for analysis.

Participants were instructed to read an online Informed Consent (Appendix A) and provide their initial agreeing to volunteer for the study. After one partner completed the survey, he/she was instructed to hand over the computer to their partner to complete the partner portion of the survey. The survey did not time out. However, based on computer ID, each computer was allowed to only complete the survey once, which prevented duplication of data. After, Partner 1 complete the first section of survey, Partner 2 could use the same link to complete the second half. However, previous responses from the first section could not be to be seen. This study was funded by the School of Family Studies and Human Services of College of Human Ecology at Kansas State University.

Measures

In addition to demographic data, the following measures were used to assess perception of religion-based couple discrimination, clothing style, religious congruity, couple negative interaction, dyadic coping skills, and relationship satisfaction.

Religious Congruity

Cultural congruity scale (CCS; Gloria & Kurplus, 1996) assessed the degree to which participants feel that they religiosity fit their surroundings and perceive their differences were

made salient within the environment. Originally, the CCS was developed to measure Latino students' sense of cultural congruity or cultural fit within the collage environment with 13 items using seven Likert-type responses. In original scale, items include the words related to "ethnicity" and "school" such as "I feel that I have to change myself to fit at school," "I try not to show the part of me that are "ethnically" based," and "I feel that my ethnicity is incompatible with other students." These words were changed to "Muslim" and "society" such that items now read as "I feel that I have to change myself to fit in society," "I try not to show the parts of me that are Muslim," and "I felt that my religion is incompatible with society." Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement to each statement using a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (a great deal). The scale's score ranges from 13 to 91 with higher scores indicating increased religious congruity. Cronbach's alpha for the original scale of CCS was reported as .89 (Gloria & Kurplus, 1996). Cronbach alphas of the adapted scale were $\alpha = .86$ for women and $\alpha = .83$ for men.

Clothing Style

Participants' clothing style was assessed having participants identify their most frequent clothing style by selecting from series of images. Men had four clothing styles to choose from. The first represented the most traditional -- long bread, white dress and turban on the head. The second represented a less traditional style -- long shirt, short beard and religious cap. The third represented western style with facial hair and the fourth was also western style but without facial hair.

Women had six clothing styles to choose from. The first was the most traditional -- long dark dress covers all of a woman's body including eyes, which are covered with a mesh screen. The second was long dark dress with niqab (i.e., covering all the face apart from eyes). The third

was some represent traditional -- long dress, long hijab and face is not covered. The fourth image was less traditional but modest -- jeans, shirt and hijab cover whole hair. The fifth image represented western style with hijab partially covering hair. The last image also represented western style dress but without hijab. Images 1, 2 and 3 were coded as 1 and the rest were coded as 2, 3 and 4 respectively. Lower numbers reflected more traditional/religious style and higher numbers reflected western/modern style dress.

Perceived religion-based couple discrimination

The Everyday Discrimination Scale (EDS, Williams, Yan, Jackson, & Anderson, 1997) modified by Trail, Goff, Bradbury and Karney, (2012) in their study on couples was used in this study. The modified scale included six of the nine original items. This scale that was originally used to assess racial discrimination was adapted to assess religion-based couple discrimination. Participants were asked “*How often have you experienced the following examples of discrimination by virtue of being a Muslim couple?: 1) being treated as inferior, 2) people acting fearful of you, 3) being treated with less respect than others, 4) people treating you as if you have been dishonest, 5) being insulted or received name-calling, and 6) being threatened or harassed*” based on a Likert scale of 1 (Never) to 4 (Often). Total scale ranges from 6 to 24 with higher scores indicating more perception of discrimination. The original nine-item scale demonstrated strong convergent validity with distress, anger and hostility scales (coefficients of .17 to .19, $p < .001$; Gonzales et al., 2016). Cronbach’s alpha was $\alpha = .96$ for both women and men, reflecting high reliability. In terms of frequency, for each form of discrimination assessed, 24% to 35% of men and 30% to 39% of women reported having perceived discrimination either rarely, sometimes or often. In contrast, for each type of discrimination assessed, between 65% to 76% of men and 61% to 70% of women reported having never perceived discrimination.

Couple negative interaction

The 4-item Communication Danger Signs Scale (Markman, Stanley, & Blumberg, 2010) was used to assess couple negative interactions within the couple relationship, including escalation, negative interpretation, withdrawal, and invalidation. Sample items include: “Little arguments escalate into ugly fights with accusations, criticisms, name calling, or bringing up past hurts,” and “My partner seems to view my words or actions more negatively than I mean them to be.” Higher scores indicate higher levels of couple negative interaction. Responses range from *never* (1) to *all the time* (6). The internal consistency for this scale was .80 (Markman et al., 2010). Cronbach’s alpha for this study was .89 for men and .87 for women.

Dyadic Coping

The 5-item common dyadic coping subscale of the Dyadic Coping Inventory (DCI; Bodenmann, 2005) was used to assess how couples collaborate as they manage stressful situations. Participants were asked to indicate how often they experience situations such as “*We try to cope with the problem together and search for ascertained solutions*” and “*We help each other to put the problem in perspective and see it in a new light,*” using a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*very often*). Scale score ranges from 5 to 15 with higher scores indicating higher dyadic coping skills. Internal consistency of this subscale was reported in previous studies as .83 (Bodenmann et al., 2004; Bodenmann et al., 2006). Cronbach’s alpha was $\alpha = .90$ for men and .91 women, reflecting high reliability.

Relationship Satisfaction

The Couple Satisfaction Inventory (CSI-4; Funk & Rogge, 2007), a four-item scale was used to measure relationship satisfaction. Participants responded to each statement about their relationship using a 6-point Likert scale from 1 (Not at all) to 6 (Completely). Sample statements

include, “In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?” and “How rewarding is your relationship with your partner?” Scale scores range from 4 to 24 with higher scores indicating greater relationship satisfaction. The CSI was found to demonstrate strong convergent and construct validity with other satisfaction measures and good reliability ($\alpha = .94$) (Funk & Rogers, 2007). Cronbach’s alpha was $\alpha = .94$ for women and $\alpha = .90$ for men, reflecting high reliability.

Religiosity. Religiosity was measured using the 5-item version of the Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS; Huber & Huber, 2012). Participants were asked to indicate the frequency they practiced their religion (e.g., “How often do you think about religious issues”) and the degree of their religious conviction (e.g., “To what extent do you believe that God or something divine exists?”). Items were recoded to develop a total scale score of 1 to 6 such that greater values indicated greater religiosity. Cronbach’s alpha was $\alpha = .75$ for men and $\alpha = .68$ for women. Participants’ mean level of religiosity was 4.26 (SD = .92) for men and 4.23 (SD = .88) for women. Given that the scale ranged from 1 to 6, participants’ average level of religiosity suggested that they consider religion an important part of their lives.

Covariates

The model was controlled for possible confounding effects of duration of relationship (in months), income level (in increments of \$10,000), age (in years), education level and number of children which have been found to be significantly associated with relationship satisfaction (e.g., Bryant et al., 2010). It is anticipated that geographical location in the U.S. may influence the extent of perceived religion-based couple discrimination. Such differences are found from the preliminary analysis, the variable was included in the model as a control.

Data Analysis

Preliminary Analysis

SPSS Version 25 (IBM Corporation, 2017) was used to run descriptive statistics, correlations, *t*-tests to examine group (men and women) differences on all variables, and analysis of variances (ANOVAs) to examine group differences based on appearance due to attire and geographical location in the U.S. It is anticipated that reports on couples' perception of religion-based discrimination, couple negative interaction, dyadic coping, and relationship satisfaction was highly correlated given the interdependence within romantic relationships.

Measurement Model

Mplus 8 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2017) was used to test if the common-fate latent moderation structural equation model in Figure 1 fits the observed data. Full information maximum likelihood estimation was used to account for any missing data, although this was highly unlikely given that the project would only pay for completed datasets. All dependent and independent variables were mean centered to avoid probability of high multicollinearity with the interaction variable (Aiken, West, & Reno, 1991).

Analysis began with estimating a measurement model to ensure model fit. Evidence of acceptable fit between the model and the observed data can be determined by a non-significant Chi-square, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) values of above .95, and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) of below .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Perceived religion-based couple discrimination, relationship satisfaction, couple negative interaction, and dyadic coping were modeled as joint measures through a common-fate method to capture the interdependence within couple relationships. This method measures the shared variance within the couple dyad (Ledermann & Kenny, 2012), which is reflected by the factor

loadings of the latent construct. Religious congruity and clothing style was specified by two indicators, one each for women and men.

Structural Model

To test the moderating effects of dyadic coping on the relationship between perceived religion-based couple discrimination and relationship satisfaction, a structural equation model with interaction terms analyzed. The measurement model without the latent interaction terms (Model 1) was compared with the structural model with latent interaction terms (Model 2) (Satorra & Bentler, 2010) to determine model fit. Because latent moderation structural equations do not generate model fit indices, overall model fit was measured using a chi-square difference test (TRd) based on log-likelihood values and scaling correction factors obtained with the robust maximum likelihood estimator. Akaike information criterion (AIC) and Bayesian information criterion (BIC) indices further helped determine model fit, whereby lower AIC and BIC values indicate better fit of the model to the data (Little, Bovaird, & Widaman, 2006).

Chapter 4 - Results

Preliminary Analysis

Correlations and Non-independence

Correlations were assessed to identify associations between study variables and are reported in Table 2. Based on correlation results for men and women, the couples' dyadic coping ($r = .79, p < .001$), relationship satisfaction ($r = .67, p < .001$), couple negative interaction ($r = .81, p < .001$) and perceived religion-based couple discrimination ($r = .80, p < .001$) variables were highly correlated. This indicated that the couples were interdependent, hence justifying the use of a common-fate latent model to capture the shared variance within the couple relationship.

Overall, correlations results were as expected. For both men and women, perception of religion-based couple discrimination was positively related to couple negative interaction (Men: $r = .42, p < .001$; Women: $r = .38, p < .001$), and negatively related to religious congruity (Men: $r = -.50, p < .001$; Women: $r = -.40, p < .001$). Additionally, relationship satisfaction was significantly associated with dyadic coping (Men: $r = .60, p < .001$; Women: $r = .69, p < .001$) and couple negative interaction (Men: $r = -.29, p < .001$; Women: $r = -.35, p < .001$). Perceived religion-based couple discrimination and relationship satisfaction were not related for either men or women.

Group Differences

Table 3 presents descriptive statistics of study variables and *t*-test results comparing group differences. Results of *t*-tests indicated no significant differences between men and women for relationship satisfaction, couple negative interaction, perceived religion-based couple discrimination, religious congruity and religiosity. Results suggested men reported higher levels

of dyadic coping compared to women and men in this study tended to adorn more western clothing style compared to women.

Differences in perception of religion-based couple discrimination across clothing style and regions of the U.S. were examined using ANOVAs. Results indicated perception of religion-based couple discrimination differed across clothing style for men, $F(3,123) = 5.23, p = .002$. Post hoc analyses using the Games-Howell post hoc criterion for significance indicated that perception of discrimination was significantly higher in men who had long beard and wore long dress and rounded skullcap ($M = 16.89, SD = 5.08$) than in men with no facial hair who wore Western-styled clothing ($M = 10.43, SD = 5.53$). Interestingly, there was no statistically significant differences in perception of religion-based couple discrimination across women's clothing style $F(4,122) = 1.76, p = .14$. Additionally, there was no statistically significant difference across the regions of the U.S. in the perception of religion-based couple discrimination for both men $F(4,122) = 1.72, p = .15$ and women $F(4,122) = 1.04, p = .37$.

Measurement Model

Results of the analysis estimating the model fit of the measurement model (with no interaction terms) indicated poor model fit (CFI = .91, TLI = .88, Chi-square ($df = 117$) = 185.26, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .07). Because discrimination had no direct effect on satisfaction ($\beta = -.70, p = .34$), this path was removed. This however, did not change the model fit (CFI = .91, TLI = .88, Chi-square ($df = 118$) = 186.52, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .07). Subsequently, control variables were sequentially removed to further improve model fit beginning alphabetically with age. Model fit improved after removing age (CFI = .95, TLI = .94, Chi-square ($df = 96$) = 127.43, $p = .02$, RMSEA = .05). The fit indices suggested that the model fit was acceptable for the observed data. Results of this measurement model (Model 1) is presented in Table 6. Because the measurement

model was a good fit to the data, analysis proceeded to the structural model.

Structural Model

Model 1 was compared with the structural model (Model 2) with interaction terms. TRd was computed using the log-likelihood values of -1800.61 (Model 1) and -1796.76 (Model 2), scaling correction factors of 1.31 (Model 1) and 1.32 (Model 2) and free parameters of 54 (Model 1) and 55 (Model 2). The TRd of 3.91 for 1 *df* was statistically significant at the .05 level, suggesting that Model 2 better fit the observed data compared to Model 1 making Model 2 the final model. The structural model produced lower AIC (3703.52) and BIC (3860.81) than the measurement model, making the former a better fitting model. Model 2 accounted for 74% ($p < .001$) of the variance in couples' relationship satisfaction, 25% ($p = .002$) of the variance in couple negative interaction, and 41% ($p < .001$) of the variance in perceived religion-based couple discrimination. Unstandardized and standardized results of the proposed model are presented in Table 6.

Main Analysis

H1: Religious congruity and clothing style will be linked to perceived religion-based couple discrimination. H1 was fully supported for men and partially supported for women. For both men and women, feeling that one's religious values fit with that of the community's was negatively linked to their perception of religion-based couple discrimination (Men: $\beta = -.28$, $p = .008$, 95% CI = -.46, -.11; Women: $\beta = -.31$, $p = .004$, 95% CI = -.48, -.13). Additionally, perceiving discrimination was found to negatively relate to men's clothing ($\beta = -.21$, $p = .02$, 95% CI = -.37, -.06). In other words, men who wore more Western-style clothing perceived less discrimination compared to men who wore more traditional-styled clothing. Women's clothing style was not related to perceived discrimination.

H2: Perceived religion-based couple discrimination will be positively linked to couples' destructive communication patterns. H2 was fully supported. Results revealed that holding

education, income, number of children and length of relationship constant, perceiving more religion-based couple discrimination is associated with more couple negative interactions between couples ($\beta = .50, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI} = .36, .63$). In other words, couples' interactions was negatively impacted by couples' perception of religion-based couple discrimination.

H3: The effects of perceived religion-based couple discrimination on couples' satisfaction is mediated by communication quality that in turn is moderated by couples' joint dyadic coping. H3 was partially supported. On average, couples who experienced more couple negative

interactions reported lower relationship satisfaction ($\beta = -.24, p = .018, 95\% \text{ CI} = -.40, -.07$).

The evidence that this relationship varied based on dyadic coping was significant and varied based on level of dyadic coping ($\beta = .21, p = .04, 95\% \text{ CI} = .04, .38$). In other words, the effect of couple negative interaction on relationship satisfaction depends on the level of couples' dyadic coping.

A formal test of the indirect effect is measured by the index of moderated mediation, which is significant ($b = .10, Z = 1.83, p = .07, 95\% \text{ CI} = .01, .09$) at the .01 level (presented in Figure 2). The CI does not include a zero; meaning that the indirect effect of perceived religion-based couple discrimination on relationship satisfaction through couple negative interaction is an increasing function of dyadic coping. Results further indicate statistically significant indirect effects of religion-based couple discrimination on relationship satisfaction through couple negative interaction when dyadic coping was low ($b = -.20, Z = -2.04, p = .04, 95\% \text{ CI} = -.35, -.04$) (presented in Figure 3) or medium/moderate ($b = -.09, Z = -2.08, p = .04, 95\% \text{ CI} = -.17, -.02$), but not high ($b = .01, Z = .20, p = .85, 95\% \text{ CI} = -.05, .06$). Couples that report higher levels

of dyadic coping appear to be more resilient and able to ward off the negative effects of perceived religion-based couple discrimination compared to couples' that report low or average levels of dyadic coping.

Chapter 5 - Discussion

This study examined the relationship between religious congruity and clothing style with perceived religion-based couple discrimination and how dyadic coping moderates the indirect effect of this discrimination on relationship satisfaction through couple negative interaction. First, it would be important to preface this discussion with the fact that although the participants in this study indicate that religion was important to them (based on their religiosity scores), participants may interpret the teachings of the Quran differently. The discussion below is based on the premise that Quranic teachings are interpreted as a resource that can strengthen relationships.

The results suggest that when couples experience their community as accepting of their Muslim culture, they are less likely to perceive themselves as targets of discrimination. This finding supports previous studies where having a Muslim identity that is accepted by society-at-large may buffer the odds of perceiving religion-based couple discrimination (Jasperse, Ward, & Jose, 2012). Feeling a sense of belongingness and acceptance by society that fosters support and confidence in oneself may contribute to reduced vigilance of actions that are intended to discriminate or increased likelihood of brushing off discriminatory acts, not believing that such actions could have ill intent. The Holy Quran stresses collective identity and inclusion of Muslims to society (Bengtsson, 2018). Thus, it is likely that in order to maintain their relationships, Muslim couples may tend to perceive that others hold a positive view of them that in turn, could prompt the denial or hesitation to consider any unjust treatment as discrimination.

Further, acknowledging and accepting the faith and opinions of all people is encouraged as stated in the Surat ai-Ma'ida: "*We have appointed a law and a practice for every one of you. Had God willed, He would have made you a single community, but He wanted to test you*

regarding what has come to you. So compete with each other in doing good....” Because intolerance, violence, and holding grudges are against Islamic teachings, Muslims who regulate their life based on Quran and Sunnah may be more likely to excuse any perceived discrimination or brush aside their encounters with discriminatory acts.

The results further suggests that men who tend to adorn western-styled clothing as oppose to traditional-styled clothing, and as such do not outwardly reveal their affiliation with Islam, perceive less discrimination. This finding is consistent with previous research where overt markers of Islam were found to be more likely targets for discrimination (e.g., Fozdar, 2011). This could be related to media’s promotion and the profiling of men dressed in traditional Muslim attire as potential terrorists (Hoewe, 2014). Interestingly, unlike previous studies that found Muslim women perceive more acts of discrimination than men (Jasperse, Ward, & Jose, 2012; Rahmath, Chambers, & Wakewich, 2016), the present study, found that women’s clothing style is not linked to their perception of discrimination. This finding may be related to the extent women interact with the general public which is reflected by women’s employment status. Unlike the men, the majority of the Muslim women in the present study do not work full-time outside the home. Muslim women may be inadvertently protected from overt discrimination because their encounters with the general public could be constrained by their employment status. Reduced encounters with the general public may mean less opportunities to meet persons who are outwardly discriminatory towards Muslims. Another possible explanation for this finding might be that many participants in this study are from the Northeast (42 women), a culturally and religiously diverse part of the U.S. (e.g., New York, New Jersey, Maryland and Massachusetts). Women who wear the hijab may not be a novelty in this region of the country. These women are less likely to not stand out in the crowd or attract undue attention.

As expected, feeling discriminated as a couple was negatively related to couples' interaction with each other meaning that it may contribute to couples having more argumentative communication patterns. This result is consistent with the literature on stress in intimate relationships and relationship functioning (e.g., Feinstein et al., 2018). It appears that partners' perception of discrimination is related to lower quality of interactions (e.g., Lau et al., 2019). Previous studies on minority couples indicate that prejudice and discrimination impairs intimate relationships that then adversely affect the quality of romantic relationships (e.g., Lavner et al., 2018; Cui et al., 2010). Discrimination, a form of stress, when experienced by either partner can contribute to interpersonal conflict that in turn can lead to more frustration and negativity, less warmth (e.g., Bodenmann et al., 2006; Randall et al., 2009) and effort to maintain a close bond when more stress is encountered (Gaines et al., 2005). Both the Stress Process Model (Pearlin et al., 1981) and Race-based Traumatic Stress theory (RBTST; Carter, 2007) support this finding. From the RBTST (Carter, 2007) perspective, discrimination, a form of psychological trauma, can lead to reactions such as avoidance, isolation, opposition, and irritability. Such reactions can spill over into couples' relationships and lead to negative responses and interpretations such as anger, helplessness, fear, hostility, verbal aggression, and frustration that can be destructive to relationships. This destructive interaction can exacerbate the harmful effects of discrimination, which ultimately would result in poorer intimate relationship outcomes. In other words, couples' strained interactions may contribute to other relationship problems and lower overall satisfaction with their relationship. It is important to note that while couple negative interactions within the couple relationship was related to lower relationship satisfaction, perceiving discrimination was not directly linked to satisfaction in the present study. It is possible that direct effects might emerge in a larger sample or in a test of a less complex model, with more statistical power.

Another important finding of the present study is the partner's engagement of dyadic coping strategies. The results suggest that dyadic coping moderates the negative effects of perceived discrimination on relationship satisfaction through couple negative interaction. The degree of moderation appear to vary based on level of dyadic coping. Only when dyadic coping is low or moderate, does the effects of couple negative interaction on satisfaction vary. Specifically, when dyadic coping is low or moderate, variation in the level of coping (either increased or decreased) changes the extent couple negative interactions between couples is linked to satisfaction with their relationships. On the hand, when dyadic coping is high, a slight variation in coping levels does not change the ability to buffer the impact of couple negative interaction on satisfaction. In other words, couples with low or moderate dyadic coping skills appear to pay a higher price when their coping levels fluctuate. These couples would be more likely to feel the impact of even the slightest variations in coping levels. Couples with high dyadic coping skills appear to be more resilient to perceived discrimination.

Couples with high coping skills appear to be less likely affected when their coping level fluctuate. Congruent with the SPM, the findings suggest that couples with high dyadic coping skills are able to manage conflict together and possibly change the personal meaning of either the stressful experience or situation itself (Pearlin et al., 1981). For couples who perceive discrimination, dyadic coping may serve as a protective mechanism by promoting trust, support and care, provided the level of coping is sufficiently high. The findings of this study are consistent with the few previous investigations in this area (e.g., Rosenthal & Starks, 2015). The current findings confirm that couple negative interactions can be deleterious to intimate relationships for Muslim couples, but high levels of joint coping skills can help maintain relationship quality as oppose to low or moderate levels.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study has several limitations. First, the measure for religion-based couple discrimination includes frequency, but not intensity. Future studies should assess both the intensity and frequency in order to provide a more accurate assessment of stressful experiences and their impacts (Schimmack & Diener, 1997). Second, because no time frame was indicated in the scale, it may not have adequately captured the cumulative effects that discrimination can have on relationship outcomes. More sophisticated measures of perceived religion-based couple discrimination should be employed in future research.

Third, cross-sectional designs provide only a snapshot in time that makes the causal relationship problematic between variables. Further, couples' perception of discrimination might be different over time in response to various social events. Therefore, using longitudinal designs in future research would be valuable. Fourth, the small sample in this study limits the ability to examine additional paths and include other relevant variables. Replicating this study with a larger sample would allow inclusion of other relationship processes (e.g., positivity, openness, commitment, problem solving) that could contribute to Muslim couples' ability to preserve their relationships and cope with stress from discrimination.

Implications

The results provide important information for interventions with Muslim couples seeking to enhance their relationships and counter the effects of perceived religion-based couple discrimination. It is important for clinicians working with Muslim couples to be aware of the adverse consequences of discrimination and its potential to strain relationships. It may be particularly important to be aware that men who dress in traditional Muslim clothing may experience more discrimination especially if they do not feel accepted by their community.

Because feeling accepted as a Muslim in the U.S. can potentially reduce perceptions of being discriminated, assessing for belongingness is recommended to ascertain clients' needs. Muslim clients who present with low belongingness and are new to the U.S. could benefit from being connected to other Muslims in the community as well as with resources that are Muslim-friendly such as community centers and grocery stores that offer opportunities to connect with others.

Second, perceiving discrimination can negatively impact couples' relationship processes by increasing conflict. It becomes important for clinicians working with Muslim couples to assess their perception of discrimination that could be the precursor to their conflict and create a safe environment for couples to share their perception of discrimination. Third, developing couples' collaborative coping skills can serve as a protective mechanism for the relationship against the indirect effects of discrimination. Clinicians working with Muslim couples could help enhance couples' dyadic coping strategies, such as being empathic towards each other and helping each other to engage in problem-solving to reduce discrimination stress and increase their relationship satisfaction. In addition to collaborative coping techniques, couples can be coached to use more constructive means of communication to resolve conflicts more effectively.

The findings have implications for local religious leaders and organizations who can play an important roles in advocating for improved acceptance and understanding of diversity. Local places of worship for Muslims (i.e., mosques) can, through their imams, promote integration of Muslims into the U.S. society. Likewise, local churches can facilitate interreligious dialogue as a means to educate and embrace fellow Muslims into their community. Schools and medical centers can better educate their staff, teachers and providers to identify signs of distress and provide appropriate referrals. These institutions can assist with improving religious congruity for Muslims by providing designated prayer rooms, literature in various Middle-eastern languages

and access to interpreters, and displaying artwork that are meaningful and represent Muslim culture. Communities can recognize their Muslim residents by celebrating religious Muslim holidays and providing time off to their Muslim staff to attend religious gatherings on those days.

Training programs have a responsibility to provide training and exposure to Muslim culture and lived experiences in the U.S. Clinicians need to be trained to be in-tune to their own perceptions and stand on Islam and Muslims in order to ensure that services provided do not perpetuate oppression. Because prejudicial treatment can often be covert and manifest as macroaggressions, it would be important for clinicians to be hyper aware of how they come across when working with Muslims. Identifying commonalities with the Muslim community in order to demystify general rhetoric propagated by the media about Islam and Muslims could be a first step towards acceptance and understanding the group. Immersion experiences that provide opportunities to connect with Muslims and experience the group's lifestyle and religious practices can help reduce anxiety, increase comfort, the ability to empathize and be fully present when working with Muslims.

Conclusion

This study provides insight into how Muslim couples' perception of discrimination is associated indirectly with relationship satisfaction. The findings provide preliminary evidence that perceiving that one's religion is accepted by the community and men adorning western-styled clothing for men was related to less perception of religion-based couple discrimination. Additionally, this study suggests that the perception of discrimination is directly related to conflictual interaction between couples which can reduce their relationship satisfaction. In other words, discrimination has an indirect effect on satisfaction through negative couple interaction. This indirect effect has the potential to be buffered by couples' dyadic coping skills only when

these skills are sufficiently high. This study makes an important contribution to the literature while concurrently providing a foundation for others to build upon.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N=129)

Variables		Men		Women	
		<i>M or %</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M or %</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age [R = 18 to 71 (men) and 18 to 61(women)]		39.35	9.65	34.5	8.14
Education:	Less than high school	1.6%	-	3.1%	-
	High School Diploma	7.8%	-	7.1%	-
	Some College	8.5%	-	17.1%	-
	2 year degree	10.9%	-	11.6%	-
	4 year degree	38.8%	-	41.1%	-
	Graduate Degree	32.5%	-	21.2%	-
Employment Status:	Full-time	79.8%	-	37.2%	-
	Part-time	10.1%	-	20.2%	-
	Unemployed	3.9%	-	33.3%	-
	Retired	3.1%	-	1.6%	-
	Student	3.1%	-	7.0%	-
Income Level:	Less than 19,999	6.2%	-	8.0%	-
	\$20,000-\$39,999	21.8%	-	23.3%	-
	\$40,000-\$59,999	12.4%	-	17.1%	-
	\$60,000-\$79,999	25.6%	-	22.5%	-
	\$80,000-\$99,999	7.0%	-	8.6%	-
	\$100,000 or Above	27.1%	-	21.8%	-
Birth Country:	North America	41.9%	-	45%	-
	Central/South America	2.3%	-	3.1%	-
	Asia	20.9%	-	21.7%	-
	Middle East	20.2%	-	16.3%	-
	Africa	7.0%	-	7.8%	-
	Europe	7.8%	-	5.5%	-
Age moved to the U.S.:	Before 18 years old	24.0%	-	34.7%	-
	Between 18-26 years old	29.3%	-	33.3%	-
	Between 27-36 years old	32.0%	-	26.4%	-
	37 years old and older	14.6%	-	6.3%	-
Clothing:	Very traditional	7 %	-	13.2%	-
	Moderately traditional	11.6 %	-	41.1%	-
	Moderately western	28.7 %	-	22.5%	-
	Western	52.7 %	-	23.3%	-

Table 2. Summary of Intercorrelations of Study Variables (N = 129)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Relationship Satisfaction	.67***	-.29***	.60***	-.05	.11	.06
2. Negative Interaction	-.35***	.81***	-.27**	.42***	-.42***	-.05
3. Dyadic Coping	.69**	-.30***	.79***	.06	-.11	.02
4. Discrimination	-.04	.38***	.10	.80***	-.44***	-.29***
5. Religious Congruity	.03	-.40***	-.14	-.50***	.67***	.05
6. Clothing style	.09	-.10	.11	-.18*	-.001	.46***

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p \leq .001$. (two-tailed). Men = above the diagonal. Women = below the diagonal. Intercorrelations between men and women across the diagonal.

Discrimination = Perceived religion-based couple discrimination. Negative Interaction = Couple negative interaction.

Table 3. Results of Group Comparison of Study Variables and Descriptive Statistics (N = 129).

	Women		Men		95% CI	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Relationship Satisfaction	5.04	1.21	5.08	1.25	-.26, .34	.266	256
Negative Interaction	2.50	1.40	2.52	1.37	-.31, .36	.143	256
Discrimination	1.85	.93	1.86	.95	-.22, .24	.066	256
Dyadic Coping	3.75	1.04	4.52	1.27	.53, 1.10	5.65*	246
Religious Congruity	13.19	.65	13.18	.88	-.20, .17	-.171	236
Clothing Style	2.56	.99	3.27	.92	.47, .94	5.97*	256
Religiosity	4.23	.87	4.25	.91	-.19, .24	.222	256

Note. * $p < .001$. Discrimination = Perceived religion-based couple discrimination. Negative Interaction = Couple negative interaction.

Table 4. Results for ANOVAs for Perceived Religion-based Couple Discrimination across Regions in the U.S. (N = 129)

	Northeast		Midwest		Southeast		West		Southwest		<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			<i>F</i>
Men	1.97	1.05	1.86	.91	1.63	.75	2.17	1.19	1.58	.75	1.26	4	.31
N	41		35		23		14		16				
Women	2.00	1.06	1.83	.88	1.78	.74	1.90	1.10	1.55	.86	.730	4	.57
N	42		35		24		12		16				

Note: $p < .05$ level.

Table 5. Results of ANOVAs for Perceived Religion-based Couple Discrimination across Clothing Style (N = 129)

	1		2		3		4		<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Men	2.57^a	1.02	2.15	1.24	1.97	.84	1.63^a	.87	3.76	3	.01
Women	2.09	1	1.90	.93	1.95	.97	1.51	.83	1.45	4	.22

Note: Superscripts indicate significant differences between groups based on clothing.

Tukey post-hoc at the $p < .05$ level. Clothing style: 1 = Men in long flowing outfit, religious cap and long beard and women in long dark dress and long hijab, 2 = Men in long shirt, short beard and religious cap and women in western clothing and hijab, 3= Men with beard and in western clothing and women in western clothing and partially covered head, 4 = Men without beard in western clothing and women dressed in western clothing without hijab.

Table 6. Results of Moderated Mediated Model of Perceived Religion-based Couple Discrimination on Relationship Satisfaction

	Model 1			Model 2			95% CI	
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	β		
Couple Discrimination : Men	1.00	.00	.88	1.00	.00	.87***	.78, .96	
Women	1.04	.13	.91	1.05	.13	.91***	.81, 1.01	
Relationship Satisfac.: Men	1.00	.05	.74	1.00	.00	.72***	.58, .87	
Women	1.16	.16	.87	1.18	.18	.87***	.80, .95	
Dyadic Coping: Men	1.00	.00	.87	1.00	.00	.86***	.79, .93	
Women	1.06	.10	.92	1.07	.09	.92***	.86, .98	
Couple negative interaction: Men	1.00	.00	.99	1.00	.00	.95***	.86, 1.05	
Women	.82	.10	.81	.89	.11	.85***	.75, .95	
Paths to Couple Discrimination:						$R^2 = .41, p < .001$		
Men Clothing Style	-.20	.09	-.21*	-.20	.09	-.21*	-.37, -.06	
Women Clothing Style	-.09	.06	-.11	-.09	.06	-.11	-.25, .02	
Men Religious Congruity	-.25	.09	-.29**	-.24	.09	-.28**	-.46, -.11	
Women Religious Congruity	-.26	.09	-.30***	-.27	.09	-.31***	-.48, -.13	
Control Variables:								
Men Education Level	-.002	.07	-.003	-.001	.06	-.001	-.18, .17	
Women Education Level	-.005	.05	-.01	-.004	.05	-.007	-.14, .13	
Number of Children	-.11	.13	-.07	-.10	.13	-.07	-.21, .08	
Household Income	.04	.02	.14	.04	.02	.14	.00, .28	
Duration of Relationship	-.003	.01	-.03	-.003	.01	-.03	-.16, .10	
Paths to Couple Negative Interaction:						$R^2 = .25, p = .002$		
Couple discrimination	.56	.11	.49***	.55	.12	.50***	.36, .63	
Paths to Relationship Satisfaction:						$R^2 = .74, p < .001$		
Couple negative interaction	-.13	.05	-.18*	-.17	.08	-.24*	-.40, -.07	
Dyadic Coping	.70	.09	.83***	.81	.18	1.01***	.77, 1.29	
Couple negative interaction × Dyadic Coping	-	-	-	.18	.10	.21*	.04, .38	
Fit Indices:		AIC			3709.22			3703.52
		BIC			3863.65			3860.81
		$\chi^2(96)$			127.42 ($p = .02$)			
		RMSEA			.05			
		CFI			.95			
		TLI			.94			

Note. Satisfac. = Satisfaction. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. Couple Discrimination = Perceived religion-based couple discrimination.

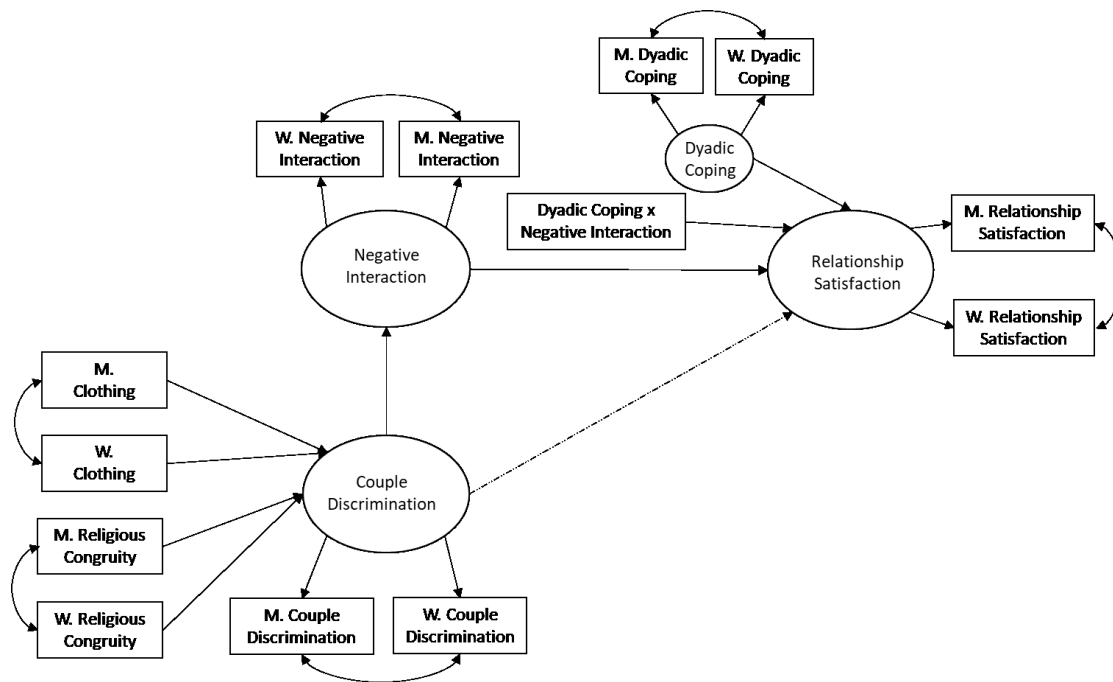


Figure 1. Common-fate moderated mediation model of perceived religion-based couple discrimination on relationship satisfaction.

Note: W = Women. M = Men. Path with dotted line was omitted in the final model.

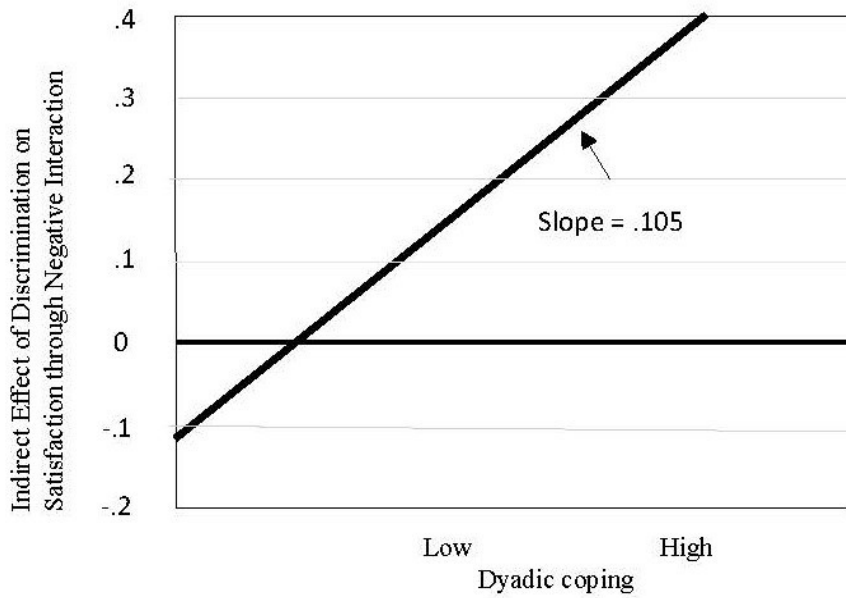


Figure 2. A visual representation of the linear function relating dyadic coping to the indirect effect of perceived religion-based couple discrimination to relationship satisfaction through couple negative interaction.

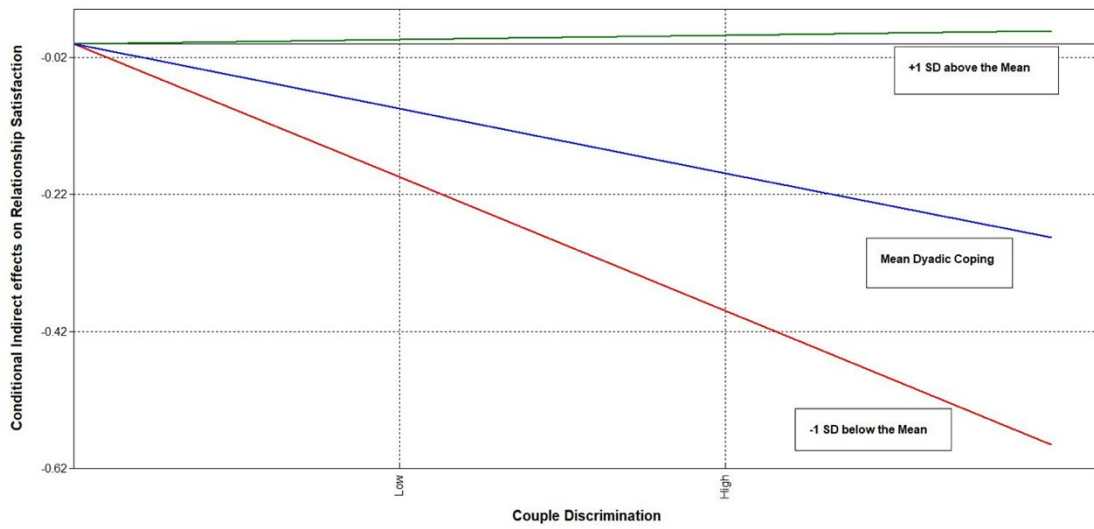


Figure 3. Levels of dyadic coping on the indirect effects of perceived religion-based couple discrimination on relationship satisfaction.

References

- Abdelkader, E. (2016). *When Islamophobia turns violent: The 2016 U.S. presidential elections*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University. Retrieved from https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2779201
- Abu-Ras, W. M., & Suárez, Z. E. (2009). Muslim men and women's perception of discrimination, hate crimes, and PTSD symptoms post September 11. *Traumatology, 15*(3), 48-63. doi: 10.1177/1534765609342281
- Ahmed, S. (2012). Adolescents and emerging adults. In S. Ahmed, M. M. Amer, S. Ahmed & M. M. Amer (Eds.), *Counseling Muslims: Handbook of mental health issues and interventions* (pp. 251–280). New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.
- Ahmed, S. R., Kia-Keating, M., & Tsai, K. H. (2011). A structural model of racial discrimination, acculturative stress, and cultural resources among Arab American adolescents. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 48*, 181–192.
- Aroian, K., J. (2012). Discrimination against Muslim American adolescents. *The Journal of School Nursing, 28*, 206-203.
- Awad, G. H. (2010). The impact of acculturation and religious identification on perceived discrimination for Arab/Middle Eastern Americans. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 16*(1), 59–67.
- Azzaoui, M. (2009). Similarities in difference: the challenge of Muslim integration in Germany and the United States. *AICGS Issue Brief, 33*, 1–8.
- Bagasra, A., & Mackinem, M. (2014). An exploratory study of American Muslim conceptions of mental illness. *Journal of Muslim Mental Health, 8*(1), 57-76.

- Bakalian, A., & Bozorgmehr, M. (2011). Middle Eastern and Muslim American studies since 9/11. *Sociological Form*, 26(3), 714-728.
- Baptist, J., Craig, B., Nicholson, B. (2018). Black–White marriages: The moderating role of openness on perception of religion-based couple discrimination and marital satisfaction. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 00, 1–15.
- BBC News (2018, June 26). *Trump travel ban: What does this ruling mean?* Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-39044403>
- Bell, G. C., & Hastings, S. O. (2011). Black and white interracial couples: Managing relational disapproval through facework. *The Howard Journal of Communications*, 22, 240-259.
- Bengtsson, S., 2018. Building a Community: Disability and identity in the Qur'an. *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research*, 20(1), pp.210–218. doi:<http://doi.org/10.16993/sjdr.18>
- Berry, J.W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation and adaptation. *Applied Psychology*, 46, 5–68.
- Berry, J.W. (2003). Conceptual approaches to acculturation. In K. Chun, P. Balls-Organista, & G. Marin (Eds.), *Acculturation: Advances in theory, measurement and applied research* (pp. 17– 37). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Bodenmann, G. (2005). *Dyadic coping and its significance for marital functioning*. In T. A. Revenson, K. Kayser, & G. Bodenmann (Eds.). *Couples coping with stress: Emerging perspectives on dyadic coping* (pp.35-50). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Bodenmann, G., & Shantinath, S. D. (2004). The Couples Coping Enhancement Training (CCET): A new approach to prevention of marital distress based upon stress and coping. *Family Relations*, 53, 477- 484.

- Bodenmann, G., Pihet, S., & Kayser, K. (2006). The relationship between dyadic coping, marital quality and well-being: A two year longitudinal Study. *Journal of Family Psychology, 20*, 485–493.
- Boss, P., Bryant, C. M., & Mancini, J. A. (2017). *Family stress management* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Bordes, V., & Arredondo, P. (2005). Mentoring and 1st year Latina/o college students. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 4*, 114-133.
- Bratter, J. L., & King, R. B. (2008). But will it last?: Marital instability among interracial and same-race couples. *Family Relations, 57*(2), 160–171.
- Bryant, C. M., Wickrama, K. A. S., Bolland, J., Bryant, B. M., Cutrona, C. E., Stank, C. E. (2010). Race matters, even in marriage: Identifying factors linked to marital outcomes for African Americans. *Journal of Family Theory and Review, 2*, 157–174.
- Canary, D. J., & Stafford, L. (1992). Relational maintenance strategies and equity in marriage. *Communication Monographs, 59*, 243–267.
- Cano, M. A., Castillo, L. G., Castro, Y, de Dios, M. A., & Roncancio, A. M. (2014). Acculturative stress and depressive symptomatology among Mexican and Mexican American students in the US: Examining associations with cultural incongruity and intragroup marginalization. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling, 36*, 136–149.
- Carter, R. T. (2007). Racism and psychological and emotional injury: Recognizing and assessing race-based traumatic stress. *The Counseling Psychologist, 35*, 13-105.

- Cerezo, A., & Chang, T. (2013). Latina/o Achievement at Predominantly White Universities the Importance of Culture and Ethnic Community. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 12*, 72-85.
- Chaves, M. (2010). SSSR presidential address rain dances in the dry season: Overcoming the religious congruence fallacy. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 49*(1), 1-14.
- Connor, P., & Krogstad, J. M. (2016). About six-in-ten Syrians are now displaced from their homes. Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/06/13/about-six-in-ten-syrians-are-now-displaced-from-their-homes/>
- Cui, M., Durtschi, J. A., Donnellan, M. B., Lorenz, F. O., & Conger, R. D. (2010). Intergenerational transmission of relationship aggression: A prospective longitudinal study. *Journal of Family Psychology, 24*, 688–697.
- De Jong Gierveld, J., Van, der Pas, S., & Keating, N. (2015). Loneliness of older immigrant groups in Canada: Effects of ethnic-cultural background. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology, 30*(3), 251-268.
- Dellal, H. (2004). Of ‘middle eastern appearance’: Police and Muslim communities in Australia. *Around the Globe, 1*(3), 14-17.
- DeSilver, D. (2015). U.S. public seldom has welcomed refugees into country. Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/11/19/u-s-public-seldom-haswelcomed-refugees-into-country/>

- Donato, S., Parise, M., Iafrate, R., Bertoni, A., Finkenauer, C., & Bodenmann, G. (2015). Dyadic coping responses and partners' perceptions for couple satisfaction: An actor-partner interdependence analysis. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 32*(5), 580-600.
- Edman, J. L., & Brazil, B. (2007). Perceptions of campus climate, academic efficacy and academic success among community college students: an ethnic comparison. *Social Psychology of Education, 12*, 371-383.
- Falconier, M. K., Nussbeck, F., & Bodenmann, G. (2013). Immigration stress and relationship satisfaction in Latino couples: The role of dyadic coping. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 32*, 813-843.
- Feinstein, B. A., McConnell, E., Dyar, C., Mustanski, B., & Newcomb, M. E. (2018). Minority stress and relationship functioning among young male same-sex couples: An examination of actor-partner interdependence models. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 86*(5), 416-426. doi:<http://dx.doi.org.er.lib.k-state.edu/10.1037/ccp0000296>
- Fozdar, F. (2011). Social cohesion and skilled Muslim refugees in Australia: Employment, social capital and discrimination. *Journal of Sociology, 48*(2), 167-186.
- Frost, D. M. (2011). Social stigma and its consequences for the socially stigmatized. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 5*, 824-839.
- Funk, J. L., & Rogge, R. D. (2007). Testing the ruler with item response theory: Increasing precision of measurement for relationship satisfaction with the Couples Satisfaction Index. *Journal of Family Psychology, 21*, 572-583.
- Gamarel, K. E., Reisner, S. L., Laurenceau, J. P., Nemoto, T., & Operario, D. (2014). Gender minority stress, mental health, and relationship quality: A dyadic investigation of

- transgender women and their cisgender men partners. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 28, 437–447.
- Ghaffari, A., & Cifci, A. (2010). Religiosity and self-esteem of Muslim immigrants to the United States: The moderating role of perceived discrimination. *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 20, 14-25.
- Gloria, A. M., Castellanos, J., & Orozco, V. (2005). Perceived educational barriers, cultural fit, coping responses, and psychological well-being of Latina undergraduates. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 27(2), 161-183.
- Gloria, A., Castellanos, J., Scull, N., & Villegas, F. (2009). Psychological coping and well-being of male Latino undergraduates. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 31(3), 317-339.
- Gloria, A. M., & Robinson Kurpius, S. E. (1996). The validation of the cultural congruity scale and the university environment scale with Chicano/a students. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 18(4), 533-549.
- Haddad, Y. Y. (2004). *Not quite American?: The shaping of Arab and Muslim identity in the United States*. Waco, TX: Baylor University.
- Haddad, Y.Y., Senzai, F., & Smith, J.L. (2009). *Educating the Muslims of America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Herzberg, Y. P. (2013). Coping in relationships: the interplay between individual and dyadic coping and their effects on relationship satisfaction. *Anxiety, Stress & Coping: An International Journal*, 26, 136-153.
- Hoewe, J. (2014). Memory of an outgroup: (mis)identification of middle eastern-looking men in news stories about crime. *Journal of Media Psychology: Theories, Methods, and*

Applications, 26(4), 161-175. doi:<http://dx.doi.org.er.lib.k-state.edu/10.1027/1864-1105/a000121>

Hohmann-Marriott, B. E., & Amato, P. (2008). Relationship quality in interethnic marriages and cohabitations. *Social Forces*, 87, 825–855.

Huber, S., & Huber, O. (2012). The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS). *Religions*, 3, 710-724.

Jasperse, M., Ward, C., & Jose, P. E. (2012). Identity, perceived religious discrimination, and psychological well-being in Muslim immigrant women. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 61(2), 250-271.

Kalmijn, M., & Kraaykamp, G. (2018). Determinants of cultural assimilation in the second generations. A longitudinal analysis of values about marriage and sexuality among Moroccan and Turkish migrants. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(5), 697-717.

Kamen, C., Burns, M., & Beach, S. R. H. (2011). Minority stress in same-sex male relationships: When does it impact relationship satisfaction? *Journal of Homosexuality*, 58(10), 1372-1390.

Kaplan, J. (2006). Islamophobia in America?: September 11 and Islamophobic hate crime. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 18(1), 1-3.

Kim, E., & Wolpin, S. (2008). The Korean American family: Adolescents versus parents acculturation to American culture. *Journal of Cultural Diversity*, 15(3), 108-116.

Kruzykowski, K. (2007). Reconciling two cultures: The experience of immigrants and first generation Americans from non-Western countries. *Social Sciences Journal*, 7(1), 11-22.

- Kunst, J. R., Tajamal, H., Sam, D. L., & Ulleberg, P. (2012). Coping with Islamophobia: The effects of religious stigma on Muslim minorities' identity formation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 36(4), 518-532.
- Lavner, J. A., Barton, A. W., Bryant, C. M., & Beach, S. R. H. (2018). Racial discrimination and relationship functioning among African American couples. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 32(5), 686-691.
- Leslie, L. A., & Letiecq, B. L. (2004). Marital quality of African American and white partners in interracial couples. *Personal Relationships*, 11(4), 559–574.
- Lorente, Javier Rosón (2010) "Discrepancies around the use of the term “Islamophobia”, *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge*, 8(2). 115-128.
- Love, E. (2009). Confronting Islamophobia in the United States: Framing civil rights activism among Middle Eastern Americans. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 43, 401–425.
- Lueck, M., & Wilson, M. (2011). Acculturative stress in Latino immigrants: The impact of social, socio-psychological and migration-related factors. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35(2), 186-195.
- Malone, S. (2018, April 23). U.S. anti- Muslim hate crimes rose 15 percent in 2017: Advocacy group. Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-islam-hatecrime/u-s-anti-muslim-hate-crimes-rose-15-percent-in-2017-advocacy-group-idUSKBN1HU240>
- Markman, H., Stanley, S., & Blumberg, S. L. (2010). *Fighting for your marriage: Positive steps for preventing divorce and preserving a lasting love* (3rd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Marsiglia, F. F., Booth, J. M., & Baldwin, A. (2013). Acculturation and life satisfaction among immigrant Mexican adults. *Advances in Social Work*, 14(1), 49-64.

- Moradi, B., & Hasan, N. T. (2004). Arab American persons' reported perception of discrimination and mental health: The mediating role of personal control. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 51*, 418–428.
- Padela, A. I., & Heisler, M. (2010). The association of perceived abuse and discrimination after September 11, 2001, with psychological distress, level of happiness, and health status among Arab Americans. *American Journal of Public Health, 100*(2), 284-291.
- Paradies, Y., Ben, J., Denson, N., Elias, A., Priest, N., Pieterse, A., Gupta, A., Kelaher, M., ... Gee, G. (2015). Racism as a Determinant of Health: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *PloS one, 10*(9), e0138511. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0138511
- Pearlin, L. I., Menaghan, E. G., Lieberman, M. A., & Mullan, J. T. (1981). The stress process. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 22*, 337-356.
- Pew Research Center (2017). *Muslims and Islam: Key findings in the U.S. and around the world*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/08/09/muslims-and-islam-key-findings-in-the-u-s-and-around-the-world/>
- Phalet, K., Baysu, G., & Van Acker, K. (2015). Ethnicity and migration in Europe. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 8*, 142–147.
- Pyke, K. D. (2010). What is internalized racial oppression and why don't we study it? Acknowledging racism's hidden injuries. *Sociological Perspectives, 53*, 551-572.
- Rahmath, S., Chambers, L., & Wakewich, P. (2016). Asserting citizenship: Muslim women's experiences with the hijab in Canada. *Women's Studies International Forum, 58*, 34-40. doi:<http://dx.doi.org.er.lib.k-state.edu/10.1016/j.wsif.2016.06.001>

- Randall, A. K., & Bodenmann, G. (2009). The role of stress on close relationships and marital satisfaction. *Clinical Psychology Review, 29*, 105–115.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2008.10.004>
- Rosenthal, L., & Starks, T. J. (2015). Relationship stigma and relationship outcomes in interracial and same-sex relationships: Examination of sources and buffers. *Journal of Family Psychology, 29*(6), 818-830. doi:<http://dx.doi.org.er.lib.k-state.edu/10.1037/fam0000116>
- Rousseau, C., Hassan, G., Moreau, N., & Thombs, B. D. (2011). Perceived discrimination and its association with psychological distress among newly arrived immigrants before and after September 11, 2001. *American Journal of Public Health, 101*, 909–915.
- Runnymede Trust. (1997). *Islamophobia: A challenge for us all*. London, UK: Runnymede Trust. Retrieved from
<https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/islamophobia.pdf>
- Ruffieux, M., Nussbeck, F. W., & Bodenmann, G. (2014). Long-term prediction of relationship satisfaction and stability by stress, coping, communication, and well-being. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage, 55*(6), 485–501.
- Rusu, P. P., Hilpert, P., Beach, S. R. H., Turliuc, M. N., & Bodenmann, G. (2015). Dyadic coping mediates the association of sanctification with marital satisfaction and well-being. *Journal of Family Psychology, 29*, 843–849.
- Samari, G. (2016). Islamophobia and public health in the United States. *American Journal of Public Health, 106*, 1920-1925.
- Saroglou, V., & Galand, P. (2004). Identities, values, and religion: A study among Muslim, other immigrant, and native Belgian young adults after the 9/11 attacks. *Identity, 4*, 97–132.

- Schimmack, U., & Diener, E. (1997). Affect intensity: Separating intensity and frequency in repeatedly measured affect. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *73*, 1313–1329.
- Schmitt, M. T., Branscombe, N. R., Postmes, T., & Garcia, A. (2014). The consequences of perceived discrimination for psychological well-being: A meta-analytic review. *Psychological Bulletin*, *140*, 921–948.
- Sheridan, L. (2006). Islamophobia Pre- and Post-September 11th, 2001. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *21*, 317-36.
- Sullivan, S., & Zezima, K. (2016, March 22). Cruz’s call to “patrol and secure Muslim neighborhoods” spurs outrage. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/cruzs-call-to-patrol-and-secure-muslim-neighborhoods-spurs-outrage/2016/03/22/f3773192-f044-11e5-89c3-a647f9ce95e0_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.c8843f9fb3a0
- Trail, T. E., Goff, P. A., Bradbury, T. N., & Karney, B. R. (2012). The costs of racism for marriage: How racial discrimination hurts, and ethnic identity protects, newlywed marriages among Latinos. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*, *38*, 454-65.
- Troy, A.B., Lewis-Smith, J. & Laurenceau, J. P. (2006). Interracial and interracial romantic relationships: The search for differences in satisfaction, conflict, and attachment style. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *23*(1), 65–80.
- Yasmeen, S. (2007). Muslim women as citizens in Australia: Diverse notions and practices. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, *42*(1), 41-54.

Appendix A - Informed Consent

Thank you for your interest in our study titled "Resilience in Muslim Couples." Please review the following before beginning the survey. By proceeding, you agree to voluntarily participate in the study.

The study is conducted by Joyce Baptist, Associate Professor (jbaptist@ksu.edu, 7855326891) and Emel Genc, Doctoral Student (genc@ksu.edu) at Kansas State University. You may contact us for any questions pertaining to the study.

The study is approved by Kansas State University's Institutional Regulatory Board (9545). The contact person is Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 5323224.

The purpose of the study is to identify factors that contribute to resilience in Muslim relationships. For this, we require both partners in the marriage to complete an anonymous survey that asks general demographic, and individual and relationship process questions. To participate, you and your partner will need to: be able to complete this survey, identify as Muslim, in a romantic relationship, above 18 years old, have access to the internet, be able to read English and residing in the U.S. Qualtrics pays a compensation fee for completion of the survey. Once data collection is completed by Qualtrics, the data will be made available to us with no identifying information. Hence, your identity will not be known to the researchers at Kansas State University.

It is possible that by discussing relationship or individual social experiences you may become mildly uneasy or question specific experiences in your relationship. It is not our intention to elicit distressful responses, however self-reflection regarding some of the topics about identity and relationship may cause emotional discomfort.

It is possible that by completing the survey, you may recognize or discover new aspects of your identity and the interactions in their relationship. Your participation can help contribute to greater understanding of Muslim couple relationships in the U.S. and ways to promote their success.

By proceeding to the survey, you agree to voluntarily participate in the study. Please answer all the questions as best as you can.

In this survey, you will complete the first section and your partner will complete the second section. You will be instructed when it is time to hand the computer/device to your partner. Please indicate that he/she will be available to take the survey after you have completed your section.

- Yes, my partner will be able to complete the survey when I have completed my section.
- No, my partner is not available.