



Muslim Americans: A National Portrait
An in-depth analysis of America's most diverse religious community

The Muslim West Facts Project

What the People Really Think

A partnership between Gallup® and the Coexist Foundation

*"We know that our patchwork heritage is a strength, not a weakness.
We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus -- and
nonbelievers."*

U.S. President Barack Obama
January 20, 2009

Foreword

The national conversation about Muslim Americans went from a whisper to a roar as the United States attempted to protect itself and heal after the horrific terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001. Suddenly, a group that had long been overlooked became a subject of scrutiny. However, viewing the diverse Muslim American community primarily through the prism of national security would be an unfortunate oversimplification of a great American story.

In the first-ever nationally representative study of a randomly selected sample of Muslim Americans that was derived from more than 300,000 interviews of U.S. households, Gallup's Center for Muslim Studies offers a snapshot of this community.

Gallup's Center for Muslim Studies is dedicated to offering nonpartisan data-driven research and advice on the diversity and complexity of Muslim views around the world, from emotional well-being to faith and politics. The Center draws its analysis and insights from the Gallup World Poll, a mammoth, ongoing Gallup research endeavor that surveys residents in more than 140 countries with coverage that is representative of 95% of the world's population. We are proud to add this study of Muslim Americans to our research work on Muslims that we conduct in more than 40 countries, including our studies of Muslim minorities in Europe, Russia, and India.

Like all of our research, our study of the Muslim American community is ongoing. *Muslim Americans: A National Portrait* is meant as a foundational document to highlight Muslim American ethnic, economic, and political diversity and set the stage for future research.

One risk of survey research is that it can lack context. To address this issue, our research team felt that a short history of Muslims in the American experience was an important backdrop to this analysis. We are very grateful to Dr. Sulayman Nyang of Howard University, one of the leading scholars on Muslim history in the United States, for writing the opening essay for this report.

We would like to recognize **The Muslim West Facts Project** for supporting the dissemination of Gallup's independent research, including this report. The Muslim West Facts Project (www.MuslimWestFacts.com) is a not-for-profit partnership between Gallup and The Coexist Foundation, a U.K.-based charity focused on engagement among the Abrahamic faiths, as well as the secular world through education.

In addition to our own analysis of the survey, Gallup called on Muslim American thought leaders from all walks of life to answer this question: *What is the most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years?* Their responses are threaded throughout the report, giving the reader a national portrait of Muslim American thought as well as survey statistics. We are tremendously grateful to them for contributing their vision to this report.

In addition, we would like to thank Gallup's entire team of senior scientists, especially John L. Esposito, for their invaluable advice and guidance on this report. We are also indebted to Nick Arture, Dr. Gale Muller, Steve Hanway, Dr. Jim Harter, Julie Ray, Samantha Allemang, and Trista Kunce for their tremendous help with analyzing the data and editing the report.



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Executive Summary

Muslim Americans: A National Portrait represents the first-ever nationally representative study of a randomly selected sample of Muslim Americans. The results shed light on one of the most diverse religious groups in the United States, reflecting the economic, racial, and political diversity within America itself. This study allows the reader to better understand the perspectives of Muslim Americans on “kitchen table” issues, from the economy to emotional well-being, while comparing them with other religious and racial groups in American society.

The Gallup Poll

The data in this report come from three sources: the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index, which provides important health and well-being information, the Gallup Poll Daily tracking survey, and the Gallup World Poll. Results for the Muslim American population as well as those for other religious groups are based on the Gallup Poll Daily tracking survey. A total sample of 319,751 respondents were interviewed in the Daily tracking survey, and of this sample, 946 respondents self-identified as Muslims. The interviewing period covered most of 2008. The data were aggregated and the margin of sampling error for the overall sample is less than ± 0.2 percentage points. In the Muslim American sample, the maximum margin of error is ± 4 percentage points adjusted for design effect. Unlike earlier reports about Muslims in America, this study did not oversample immigrant populations, nor did it attempt or intend to provide a projected number of Americans who are Muslim.

Who Are Muslim Americans?

Muslim Americans are the most racially diverse religious group surveyed in the United States. African Americans represent the largest racial group (35%) within the national U.S. Muslim population, more than a quarter of Muslim Americans classify themselves as “white,” and about one in

five identify themselves as “Asian.” Another large group (18%) classifies itself as “other,” which may reflect identification with more than one racial group or people’s discomfort with conventional racial categories. Finally, 1% of Muslim Americans volunteered they are “Hispanic.”

Although religion plays an important role in the lives of many Americans (65%), Muslim Americans (80%) are even more likely to acknowledge the importance of faith in their lives. Of the major faith groups surveyed in the United States, only Mormon Americans (85%) are more likely than Muslim Americans to say religion plays an important role in their lives, while Jewish Americans are the least likely group to say religion is important (39%). When asked about religious service attendance, 41% of Muslim Americans say they go to their place of worship at least once a week, which is similar to what Protestant Americans (41%) report and slightly higher than what Catholic Americans (37%) report.

Using a “ladder” scale with steps numbered from 0 to 10, where “0” indicates the worst possible life and “10” indicates the best possible life, Gallup asked Americans across religious groups to evaluate their current lives and their expectations of where they think they will be in five years. Americans classified as “thriving” say that they *presently stand on step 7 or higher of the ladder and expect to stand on step 8 or higher* in five years. “Suffering” Americans are those who say they *presently stand on steps 0 to 4 of the ladder and expect to stand on steps 0 to 4* five years from now. Americans who fall neither in the “thriving” nor the “suffering” category are considered “struggling.”

Muslim Americans (41%) are the least likely religious group surveyed to be “thriving,” especially when compared with Jewish Americans (56%) and Mormon Americans (51%). At the same time, 56% of Muslim Americans say they are “struggling.” Catholic Americans are the only other religious group where a majority reported to be “struggling,” while

Jewish Americans (41%) are the least likely group to say the same. Only 3% of Muslim Americans report to be “suffering,” which is on par with other religious groups.

Muslim Americans are as likely as the rest of the American population to be engaged in some labor activity, with 70% of Muslim Americans saying they have a job (either paid or unpaid), compared with 64% of Americans overall. Among those employed, Muslim Americans (30%) are as likely as the U.S. general population (26%) to say they work in professional occupations. Overall, Muslim Americans express satisfaction with their current standard of living, but they are less likely to do so than the general population.

Many Muslim Americans (38%) fall in the middle of the political ideological spectrum, describing their political views as moderate. Roughly equal percentages fall on either side of this middle group, with 29% saying their views are either liberal or very liberal and 25% describing their views as either conservative or very conservative. But contrary to their socially conservative image and high degree of religiosity, Muslim Americans are the least likely religious community, after Jewish Americans, to describe themselves as conservative, and the most likely, after Jewish Americans, to call themselves liberal. Muslim Americans are also the religious group most evenly spread out along the political spectrum, which provides another example of the community’s diversity.

Gender

Muslim American women are one of the most highly educated female religious groups, second only to Jewish women. As a group, Muslim Americans have the highest degree of economic gender parity, with a quarter of men and women reporting to have monthly household incomes of \$1,999 or less. At the higher end of the income spectrum (\$5,000 or more per month), men and women are also on the same

footing. At the lower end of the household income scale, Protestant Americans and Catholic Americans report the largest gender differences, and at the higher end of the scale, Protestant Americans and Jewish Americans report the largest gender differences.

One of the most striking findings in the Gallup survey focuses on religious attendance. Muslim American women are as likely as Muslim American men to report attending mosque at least once a week. This is in sharp contrast with the gender pattern observed in many predominantly Muslim countries, where men are more likely than women to say they attended a religious service in the last week.

Muslim American women (85%) are slightly less likely than Muslim American men (91%) to say they were treated with respect the day before they were surveyed, although Muslim men and women exhibit no gender differences in reported experiences of enjoyment and happiness. Lower female levels of perceived respect are, however, not observed in most religious groups.

Race

The reported socioeconomic diversity across Muslim American racial groups reflects that of the U.S. general population. Asians and whites are the most educated racial groups among Muslims and the general public. Muslim Asian Americans and their racial peers are equally likely to say they have attained high levels of education. Muslim African Americans are similar to their racial peers overall in their level of education, but they are significantly less likely than Asian, white, or “other” race Muslim Americans to report having at least a college degree. Muslim white Americans are significantly more likely than their racial peers in the U.S. general population to have attained high levels of education, as more than one-half of Muslim white Americans report having at least a college

degree. As a point of comparison, about one-third of whites in the general population say the same.

Muslim Americans also reflect America in their income disparities along racial lines: Muslim Asian Americans are among the most likely groups to live in high-income households, while Muslim African Americans are the least likely group.

Unlike for income and education, Muslim Americans of different racial backgrounds generally resemble one another more than they do their racial counterparts on the issue of religion. This is especially true for Muslim African Americans and Muslim Asian Americans who contrast sharply in monthly income and education level, but who are roughly identical in levels of the importance of religion in their lives. In general, Muslim Americans are more religious than their racial peers in the general population, with the exception of African Americans, who are the most religious racial group in America. The largest difference between Muslims and their racial peers in level of religious importance is between Asian Americans (57%) and Muslim Asian Americans (86%).

Regarding participation in the electoral process, Muslim Americans are less likely than their racial peers in the U.S. general population to say they are registered to vote. The biggest racial differences in voter registration are between Muslim white Americans (66%) and whites in the U.S. general population (84%) and also between Muslim African Americans (69%) and African Americans in the U.S. general population (84%).

Youth (18- to 29-year-olds)

At first glance, young Muslim Americans present a fairly positive profile. But when their attitudes are compared with those of youths in other religious groups, a more nuanced portrait of Muslim youth emerges.

When asked to evaluate their lives, young Muslim Americans (40%) are the least likely group of young respondents to be classified as “thriving,” while young Jewish Americans (69%) and Protestant Americans (61%) are the most likely groups to fall under the “thriving” category. Unlike all other groups in which young people surpass their elders, young Muslim Americans are as likely as their older counterparts to be classified as “thriving” in life.

Just as is the case for youths in most other faiths surveyed, religion is an important aspect in the lives of a majority of Muslim American youth. The percentage of young Muslims (77%) who say religion is an important aspect in their lives is similar to the percentage of young Protestants (74%) who say this. Young Muslim Americans are, however, far more likely than young Jewish Americans (42%) and Catholic Americans (57%) to say that religion plays an important role in their daily lives. Muslim American youth are also similar to their elders in their level of religiosity, in contrast to Catholic American youth who are significantly less religious than their older counterparts.

Most young Muslim Americans are engaged in some form of work activity. About two-thirds of respondents (67%) say they currently have a job, either paid or unpaid. The results also show that about one in four young Muslim Americans are professional workers such as doctors, lawyers, and engineers, for which specialized training is required. They are the least likely group of youths surveyed to report being satisfied with their jobs, although a majority of young Muslim Americans say they are.

While a majority of young Muslim Americans (71%) are satisfied with their standard of living, they hold negative views about the economy. When asked to rate the current state of the national economy, about one-half of Muslim American youths (51%) perceive economic conditions to be poor; they

are the only group of young people surveyed among which a majority holds this view. Young Muslim Americans are, however, as likely as other young respondents to consider economic conditions to be worsening.

A bare majority of young Muslim Americans (51%) say they are registered to vote in their district, which is among the lowest levels reported by young respondents. At the other end of the scale, young Protestant Americans (78%) and young Jewish Americans (73%) are the two groups who report the highest levels of voter registration.

Global Context

When compared with Muslims in other Western societies and those in a host of predominantly Muslim countries around the world, Muslim Americans (41%) are among the highest in their life evaluation reporting “thriving.” Additionally, 56% of Muslim Americans are classified as “struggling” and 3% fall under the “suffering” category. Such results contrast sharply with life evaluations of some Muslims living in Europe. Among Muslims who live in France, 23% fall under the “thriving” category and two-thirds are “struggling.” Muslims who live in Germany are more similar to Muslim Americans: 47% are considered “thriving.” Among Muslims who live in the United Kingdom, the thriving figure is just 8%, while 69% of respondents rate their lives as “struggling.” Muslim Americans’ ratings of life satisfaction are far higher than

those reported by respondents in majority Muslim countries, although Saudi Arabia is the exception. Roughly similar proportions of Saudis (51%) and Muslim Americans fall under the “thriving” category. Overall, such findings suggest that Muslim Americans look far more similar to Americans as a whole, at least in terms of their life evaluation, than they do to Muslims in predominantly Muslim countries.

In terms of employment, Muslim Americans also look more like the U.S. population, where a strong majority reports having a job, than respondents in Muslim countries. Among Muslims living in other Western countries and those in the predominantly Muslim nations surveyed, the percentage of respondents who say they have a job, either paid or unpaid, ranges from a low of 31% in Pakistan to a high of 59% in Indonesia.

Although Muslim Americans are more religious than the general population in the United States, they are less likely to say that religion plays an important part in their lives than are residents of predominantly Muslim countries. The role of faith is important for all or virtually all in Egypt (100%), Indonesia (99%), Indonesia (99%), Bangladesh (99%), and Morocco (98%). Furthermore, Muslim Americans (80%) and Muslims living in Germany (82%) are far more likely to say that religion is important to them than Muslims living in France (69%) and those living in the United Kingdom (70%).

Report Methodology

The Gallup Poll

The data in this report are culled from three sources: the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index, the Gallup Poll Daily tracking survey, and the Gallup World Poll. The Muslim American data are pulled from the Gallup Poll Daily tracking survey. Within the poll, the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index is a crucial source of key information related to the well-being of Muslim Americans as they compare with people of other faiths and the general population. The Gallup World Poll data are used to draw comparisons among Muslims living in the West and in predominantly Muslim countries. As the Gallup Poll Daily tracking survey is the chief source for data on Muslim Americans, this will be the key focus of this methodology section. The World Poll methodology can be found in the Appendix.

The Gallup Poll Daily Tracking Survey

Within the Gallup Poll Daily tracking survey, the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index tracks a variety of questions related to the well-being of U.S. residents every day. For this ongoing survey, Gallup interviews no fewer than 1,000 U.S. adults nationwide daily. Participants are contacted via landline phones and cellular phones using random-digit-dialing (RDD). Gallup uses a dual-frame design for the RDD method. For landline phones, Gallup uses list-assisted RDD. For cell phones, we sample cell phone exchanges to include the cell-only population. The maximum margin of sampling error is ± 3 percentage points for the largest samples and ± 8 percentage points for the smallest.

Interviews are conducted with respondents on landline telephones (for respondents with a landline telephone) and cellular phones (for respondents who are cell phone only). When the data are weighted, 14% of the total data set comes from interviews conducted over a cell phone. Because 98% of the U.S. population has either a landline or a cell phone, Gallup is confident in the representative nature of this sampling methodology. The sample itself comes from Survey Sampling International. Beginning on Jan. 2, 2008, this study completed 1,000 surveys daily. Individuals are called between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., seven days a week, with additional afternoon hours on the weekends. The interview takes participants an average of 14 minutes to complete. Of the total number of individuals who are contacted, 25% declined to participate. Gallup polling in the United States is conducted in English and Spanish, leaving room for a possible gap among the population of Muslims and others who speak different languages. Of the sample, 2% of the individuals called could not complete the survey because of a language barrier, including deafness.

Incentives for Participation

As a standard practice, Gallup does not offer respondents incentives for completing an interview. The chief methodological concern with offering incentives is the potential for inducing socially desirable responses. Socially desirable responding occurs when a participant feels he or she should answer an item in the way that he or she perceives the interviewer wants to hear -- or feels others may want to hear

later. This current study diminishes this issue because it does not include incentives for participation.

Gallup Interviewers

Gallup interviewers are trained according to rigorous practices that have proved successful over the past 70 years of the company's polling work. All interviewers take part in six weeks of structured and intensive full scope training on how to conduct the interviews. Interviewers also participate in annual quality recertification. The average length of stay for our interviewers is 2 1/2 years. There is continuous training that takes place throughout the year. This training, combined with the experience of these callers and their above-average tenure, allows them to be uniquely successful at gaining trust and achieving participation from the population. For the current survey, interviewers made three attempts per number in effort to reach an individual before moving to a subsequent number.

Non-Participation

Despite excellent interviewer training and multiple attempts to interview each individual, there are a variety of reasons why a person may opt not to participate in a poll. As the questions in this poll do not target Muslims specifically, it is reasonable to assume that there is no compelling reason for Muslims to decide not to respond. Minority populations in general may have a lower response rate because of sensitivity to being asked personal questions over the phone or their individual or cultural preferences or familiarity with polling. It is reasonable to assume that the number of Muslims identified within this

study is a representative portrait of the American population; however, this general rule of representation should not be confused with the sampling errors and population response preferences of the general population and those of minority groups.

The Weighting

Standard methods to develop post-stratification weights rely on data from external sources that show the distribution for the whole population. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls. Weighting is one method to correct for some of this error. For the Gallup Poll, the data were weighted based on the Current Population Survey (CPS) conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics for landline sample weighting. We also use the National Health Interview Survey's statistics from the National Center for Health Statistics to calibrate the cell-only proportion. Deriving targets from these two instruments, Gallup weights the data based on geography, gender, age, education, race, and ethnicity. This weighting provides for a more representative view of the data and ensures that the data are an accurate representation of Americans.

The Muslim American Sample

Results in this report are based on an aggregate of daily telephone interviews with no fewer than 1,000 adults, aged 18 and older, conducted through most of 2008. The total

sample used in this report is 319,751 adults. Of the total sample, 946 self-identified themselves as Muslim. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is less than ± 0.2 percentage points. For results based on the sample of 946 Muslim Americans, the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 4 percentage points adjusted for design effect. Unlike earlier reports on Muslims in America, this study did not focus on immigrant populations, nor does it attempt nor intend to provide a projected number of Americans who are Muslim.

The 946 Muslims in America within the Gallup Poll Daily tracking survey are a randomly selected, nationally representative sample who will be used to describe this diverse population and examine how it is similar to and different from the general American public. Only a census-style study that includes every household and inquires about religious affiliations, which is currently prohibited by law, would be able to provide such an estimate. Without the rigor of that model, we are limited to describing Muslim Americans without providing the much-debated and discussed topic of the total number of Muslims living in America.

Polling Muslim Americans

There are two general methods used to sample Muslim Americans within the United States. The first is a targeted survey of the population. Targeted surveys use a variety

of specialized techniques for locating and oversampling a minority group with the hopes of creating a large enough sample to be able to generalize to the overall population of interest. This technique is typically deployed because of the substantial cost and time involved with doing the alternative. This form of polling tends to be far more efficient; however, by its very design, it reduces the ability to be representative of the minority population by focusing on specific pockets.

The alternative method to target the Muslim American population is to conduct a survey that is so large that it extensively covers the entire population. Then, within that survey, the minority population of interest is selected out for study. Because of the large sample needed to obtain a reasonable representation of the target group, the expenditure of resources to complete such a study is prohibitive for most research firms. The Gallup Poll has overcome this hurdle with its daily tracking of American households. This study of Muslim Americans is the first study to use data gathered from this methodology. The result is the first-ever nationwide representative random sample of Muslim Americans.

The Gallup Poll's continuous sampling, 1,000 new participants each day, combined with our rigorous methodology of using both landline and cell phones allows for the most comprehensive random population sample of Muslim Americans.

Comparing Muslim American Polls

Only a few extensive studies claim to have tackled the exciting topic of examining Muslim Americans, the most recent and wide-scale study was conducted by the Pew Research Center in the early 2007. There are several key differences between the Pew study and Gallup's study.

The first is sample design. The Pew study used several tools to find Muslims in America, including Census data on country of origin and spoken languages and lists of Muslim-sounding surnames. A specific instrument was then fielded that polled this sample on their views about life as a Muslim living in America. Rather than target Muslims in America, this Gallup study polled a large random sample of U.S. households on items of well-being, and then pulled Americans who identified themselves as Muslim.

	Pew	Gallup
Incentive	\$50	None
Languages used	English, Arabic, and Urdu	English, Spanish
Phone	Landline	Landline and cell phone
Sampling	Random-Digit-Dial based on geographic density and Muslim surname. Previously identified Muslim households	Random-Digit-Dial for landline and cell phones targeting total U.S. population
Focus	Native and foreign-born Muslim Americans	Total U.S. population

The Pew study offered respondents an incentive of \$50, while the Gallup study did not. Although Gallup offered respondents an interview in English and Spanish, Pew offered the interview in English, Arabic, and Urdu. Pew's sample consisted of only landline phones, while Gallup's included landline and cell phone-only households.

Islam in the American Experience

Islam, along with Judaism and Christianity, is the third Abrahamic religion to arrive on the American scene. Some observers, whose knowledge of the entire historical narrative about Islam is limited to the religious articulations and political propaganda of American leaders during the Cold War, the unfortunate consequences of the Middle East crisis, and the Iranian Revolution, consider the arrival of Islam in the United States to be a recent development. These events have affected the understanding of a sizable portion of the American population regarding what Islam is and how it relates to them. This narrow lens has also prevented many from developing the capacity to make the footnotes in historical narratives of religion dealing with Islam and Muslims a meaningful part of the main text of American history. This narrative is designed to address issues relating to this misunderstanding of Islam and to the marginalization of Islam and Muslims in the American experience.

To start, let me state that Islam is built upon five pillars, which scholars have taken as shorthand for the communication of faith and belief among Muslims around the planet. As a part of what scholars call the Abrahamic religions, it should be noted that central to the Islamic worldview is the belief in a radical monotheism that asserts that One God is the source of life and death, who created humans and Jinn specifically to serve now in anticipation of a hereafter.

Meaningfully related to this first articulation of Muslim belief in One God is the declaration of the prophethood of Muhammad Ibn Abdullah of Arabia. This combination of monotheism and prophethood has given Islam theological similarities and dissimilarities with Judaism and Christianity. For Muslims, the Prophet Muhammad was the last in a chain of prophets sent by God. There is the hadithic narrative that asserts that the Prophet Muhammad was the last of these 124,000 prophets. Related to these claims of belief in

One God and belief in the Prophet Muhammad as the last messenger is the affirmation of four other pillars: *salat*, *zakat*, fasting during the month of Ramadan, and pilgrimage during the *hajj* season.

In addition to the five pillars of Islam, one should say that Islam is both a religion and a way of life. This characterization of Islam makes its existence among Americans a serious call and challenge for negotiation between Muslim and American identities. Not alone and singular in this situation, Islam as a religion and Muslims as faithful adherents to its teachings are put in the same social, psychological, and political conditions as Christians, Jews, and others protected by the U.S. Constitution and its amendments. Most significantly for our discussion of the Muslim context in the United States is the First Amendment and its influence in the historical dialogue between state and religion in American history. It is against this background that the story of Islam and Muslims in the United States is told.

Starting with evidence from the pre-Colombian era and ending with the tragic events of 9/11, six distinct stages of the Muslim experience in America can be defined.

The first stage deals with the possible contact between Native Americans and African Muslims before Columbus. Though this stage offers the least available evidence, the discovery of early West African Arabic sources in the second half of the 20th century offered a new window into this period. For example, these sources talked about the story of Mansa Musa, the famous African ruler from Mali who told his Egyptian hosts on his pilgrimage to Mecca that a predecessor by the name of Mansa Abubaker had already undertaken an expedition to cross the sea of darkness, as the Atlantic Ocean came to be known in European sources.

The second phase, which covers the age of slavery in Colonial and post-Colonial America, connects Islam, slavery, and the black experience. During the slave trade, thousands of Africans were captured and sold into slavery. Although scholars and writers differ in terms of how many millions were captured, there is some agreement that at least **10%** were Muslims. We now know that African Americans constitute at least one-third of the Muslim community, and for this and other related issues, it is dangerous and unwise in our narrative to deny or not pay attention to this aspect of the Muslim heritage.

The third phase is marked by the immigration of Muslims to the United States during the post-Civil War era, mostly from the Arab world. These immigrants were peddlers or laborers in manufacturing plants, settling at first in New York, and then migrating to the Midwest. The oldest mosque in America, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, was established by this wave of immigrants in the late 19th century.

In the fourth phase, Arab immigration would be followed during the past two decades of the 19th century by the South Asian migration, mostly from the Punjab in India. These immigrants, unlike their Arab counterparts, settled on the West Coast. The Punjabi presence on the West Coast resulted in the creation of a new ethnic group in American society, which scholars who write about South Asian Muslims have come to identify as Punjabi Mexicans. Coming to the United States by way of the Philippines, these Muslims worked on the agricultural lands of the West Coast and many took Chicana wives among the Mexicans. The South Asians increasingly entered the American mainstream and many of these Muslims would become medical doctors, engineers, and scientists.

The fifth period goes back to the Cold War era and the importation of thousands of university students from the Muslim world as part of the U.S. campaign against the Soviet

Union. This period inspired a number of people, whom I call “children of the Cold War,” who were greatly affected by America and proceeded to build institutions seeking attention and support in the name of Islamic solidarity and Islamic survival in American society. This moment in Muslim history in America could be seen as a mixed bag of domestic and international events. Domestically, the migration of blacks from the South would coincide with the arrival of Muslim immigrants from the Middle East, South Asia, and Eastern and Southern Europe. Resulting from this encounter would be the development and rise of the Nation of Islam (NOI) in the 1930s and the creation of Muslim student organizations across the country.

The sixth phase is significant for several reasons. First, this period, which starts with the events of 9/11, has exploded the myth of return. It has also planted the seeds of fear and hate between assimilating Muslim Americans and older and more Americanized Christian and Jewish Americans. Further, it has created an institutional imperative for Muslim Americans to organize, articulate, and aggregate Muslim sources of social, economic, and political power to gain representation at the American table.

-- Dr. Sulayman Nyang is a professor of African and Islamic Studies at Howard University. He is the author of the book *Islam in the United States of America*.

Chapter 1: Who Are Muslim Americans?

Key Findings

- Thirty-five percent of Muslims in the United States identify themselves as African Americans, which represents the largest racial group within the community.
- Eight in 10 Muslim Americans say religion is an important part of their daily lives; only Mormon Americans (85%) are more likely than Muslims to say this.
- Forty-one percent of Muslim Americans are classified as “thriving,” which is a lower percentage than what is found among other religious groups.
- Seventy percent of Muslim Americans report having a job (either paid or unpaid), compared with 64% of the overall U.S. population.
- Nearly one-half of Muslim Americans (49%) identify themselves as Democrats, 37% say they are independents, and 8% say they are Republicans.

1a. Demographics

The Muslim American population is the most racially diverse religious community surveyed in America. Muslim Americans tend to be younger and are among the most highly educated of all religious groups surveyed.

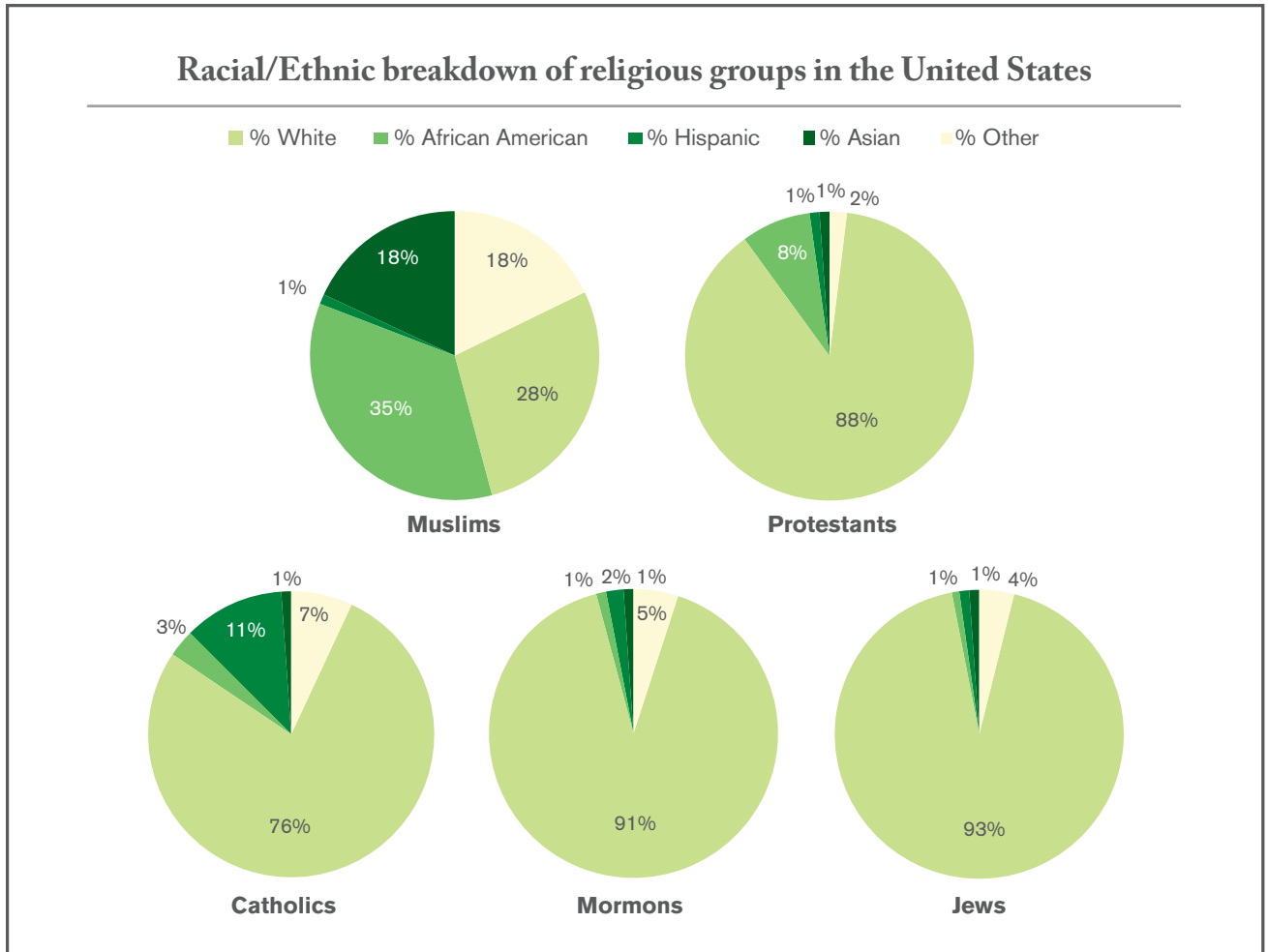
Racial Composition

Muslim Americans are the most racially diverse religious group surveyed in the United States. African Americans (who are, for the most part, converts to Islam and children of converts) represent the largest racial group (35%) within the national Muslim population. The significant proportion of native-born converts to Islam is a characteristic unique to the United States and not found in the makeup of Muslim populations living in other Western countries.

More than a quarter of Muslim Americans (28%) classify themselves as “white.” However, the findings do not show whether such Muslims are of European, Middle Eastern, or other geographical origins.

Nearly one in five Muslim Americans identify themselves as “Asian.” Another large group (18%) classifies itself as “other,” which may reflect identification with more than one race or people’s discomfort with conventional racial categories. Finally, just 1% of Muslim Americans volunteered “Hispanic” as their answer.

Figure 1



What is your race? Are you white, African American, Asian, or some other race?

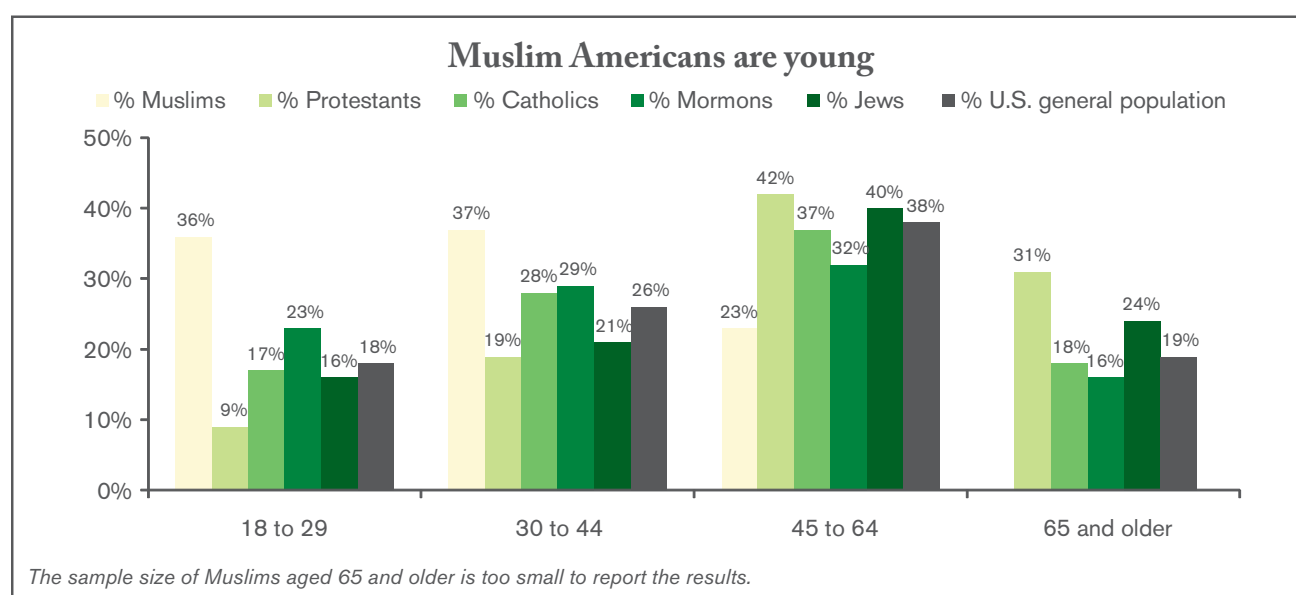
What is your religious preference -- are you Protestant, Roman Catholic, Mormon, Jewish, Muslim, another religion, or no religion?

Age

Of the major faith groups, Muslim Americans have the highest proportion of young adults in the 18 to 29 age range. More than a third of Muslims (36%), versus 9% of Protestants and about 20% of members of other faiths, are between the ages of 18 and 29. In the general population, 18% of Americans are in this age group.

Muslims also have the highest proportion of individuals in the 30-to-44 age cohort, at 37%. As points of comparison, 19% of Protestants, 28% of Catholics, and 26% of Americans overall are between the ages of 30 and 44.

Figure 2

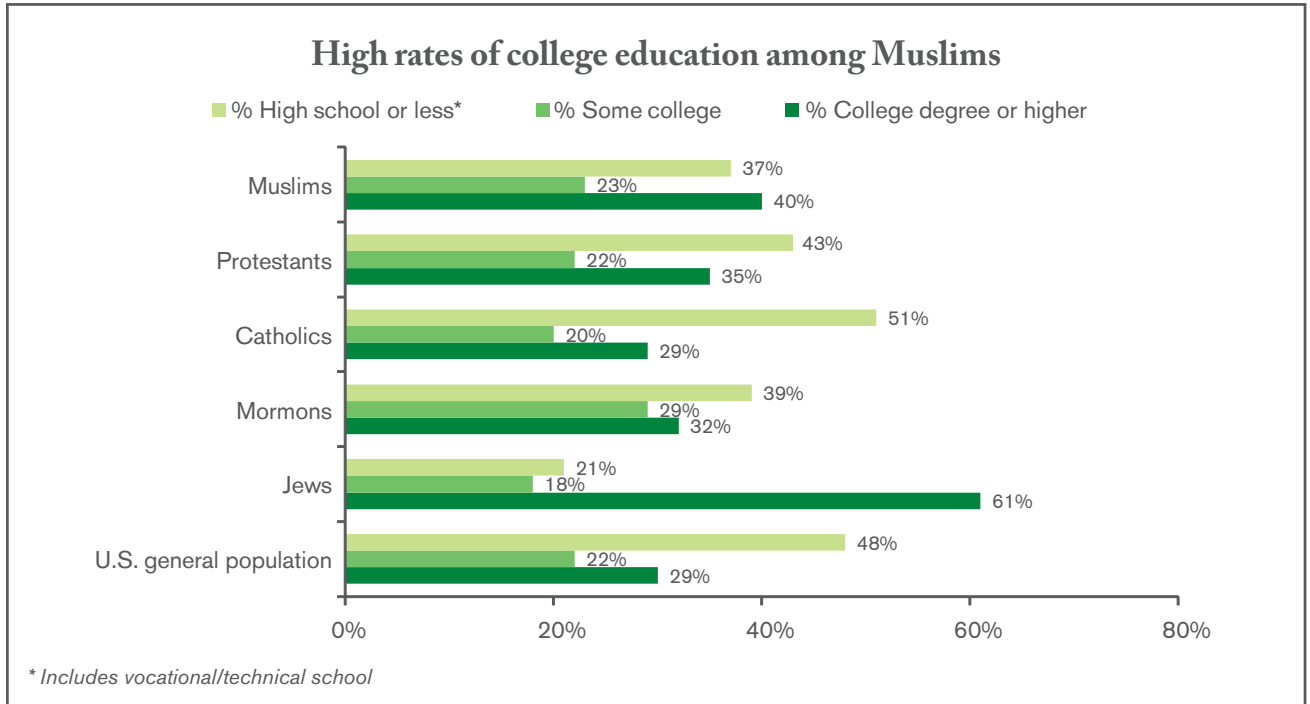


Please tell me your age.

Educational Attainment

Muslim Americans are less likely than those who affiliate with other religious groups to say they have a high school degree or less. However, 40% of Muslims say their highest level of educational achievement is a college degree or higher, which makes them the second most highly educated religious group surveyed after Jews (61% say they have at least a college degree). As a point of comparison, 29% of Americans overall say they have a college degree or higher.

Figure 3



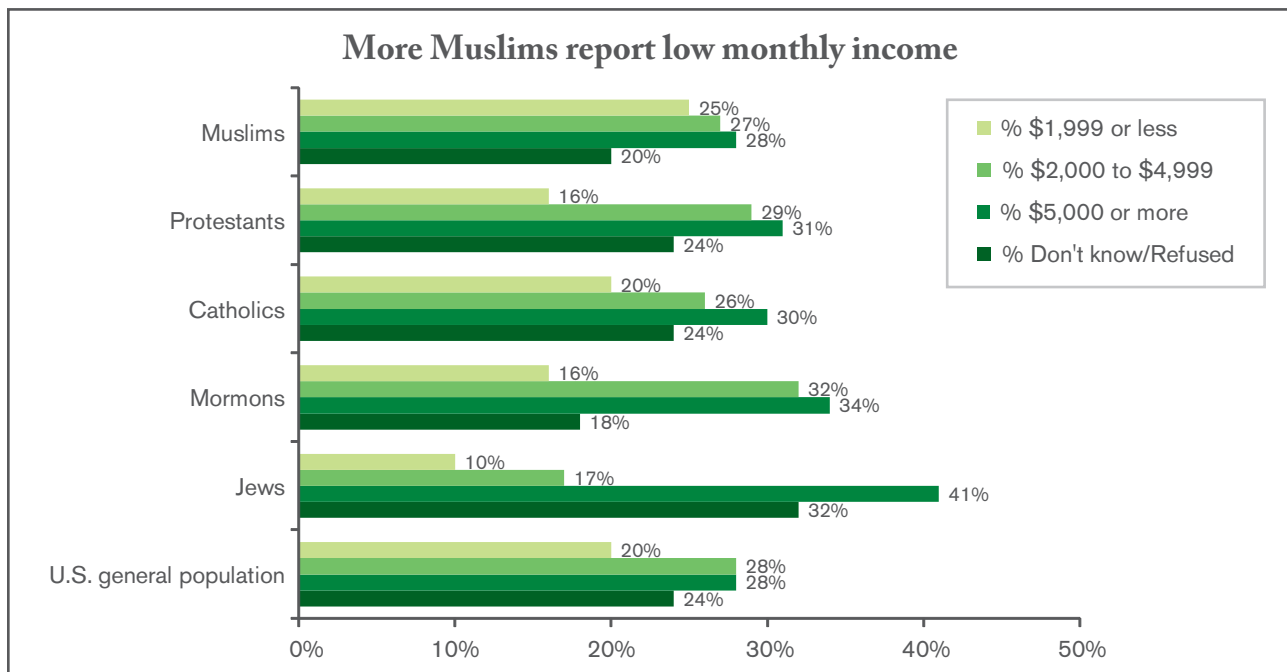
What is your highest completed level of education?

Income

As a group, Muslim Americans (25%) are more likely than those who affiliate with any other religious group to report a total monthly household income of \$1,999 or less. However, 27% of Muslims say their monthly incomes are between \$2,000 and \$4,999, which is on par with figures for other religious groups and the overall U.S. population.

At the other end of the spectrum, more than a quarter of Muslim Americans (28%) report monthly incomes of \$5,000 or more, which is similar to the percentages other religious groups report. But this proportion is also significantly lower than the percentages of Jews (41%) and Mormons (34%) who say their monthly household incomes are \$5,000 or more. As a point of comparison, 28% of the U.S. population says the same.

Figure 4

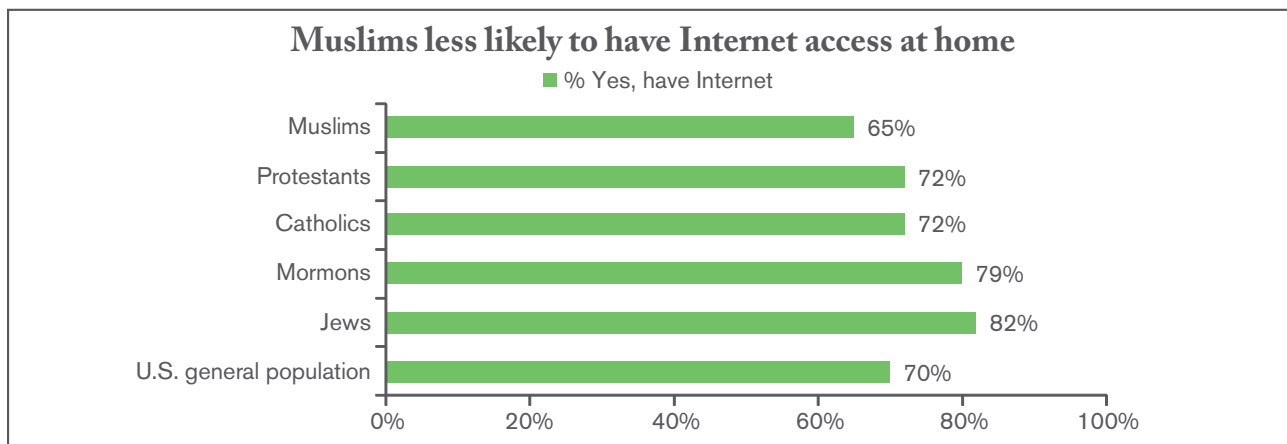


What is your total MONTHLY household income, before taxes? Please include income from wages and salaries, remittances from family members living elsewhere, farming, and all other sources.

Home Internet

Although a majority of Muslim Americans (65%) say they have Internet access in their homes, they are less likely than those in other religious groups, and the public at large, to say this. This may be attributable to the higher percentage of Muslim Americans with lower monthly incomes.

Figure 5



Do you have Internet access at home?

1b. Family

Compared with the general U.S. population and those in other religious groups, Muslim Americans have relatively large households, with the greatest average number of children. Muslims are as likely as Americans from other faiths to say they help care for another relative or even a friend. But their support network appears to be less far-reaching than those reported by other religious groups.

Marital Status

Muslim Americans (32%) are far more likely to report being single than are those in the general population (21%) and other religious groups. When compared with those in other faith groups, Muslim Americans are less likely to report being married. They are somewhat less likely than the U.S. public to say they are married, 51% versus 55%, respectively.

Ten percent of Muslim Americans report being separated or divorced, which is similar to figures among other religious groups (including Catholics) and on par with the U.S. population (12%). Muslim Americans are also less likely to report being widowed than are those in most other religious groups. Four percent of Muslim Americans report being in a domestic partnership, which is similar to figures in most other religious groups and the general U.S. population.

What is the most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years?

To move forward and attain our aspirations in all spheres, Muslim Americans need to first achieve unity. The Muslim American community is one of the most diverse communities in the world. It has a remarkable range of ethnicities, with every school of Islamic thought, many different frames of reference, and all levels of religious observance. While this presents certain challenges, it provides us with the unique opportunity to be a powerful beacon of peaceful diversity. It also gives us access to an amazing array of ideas and insightful solutions. Superimposing the cultural elasticity of Islam on the cultural elasticity of the United States, we can not only respect the diversity in our community, but leverage it to mine our various talents and springboard our agenda. Unity does not demand uniformity, it values human dignity.

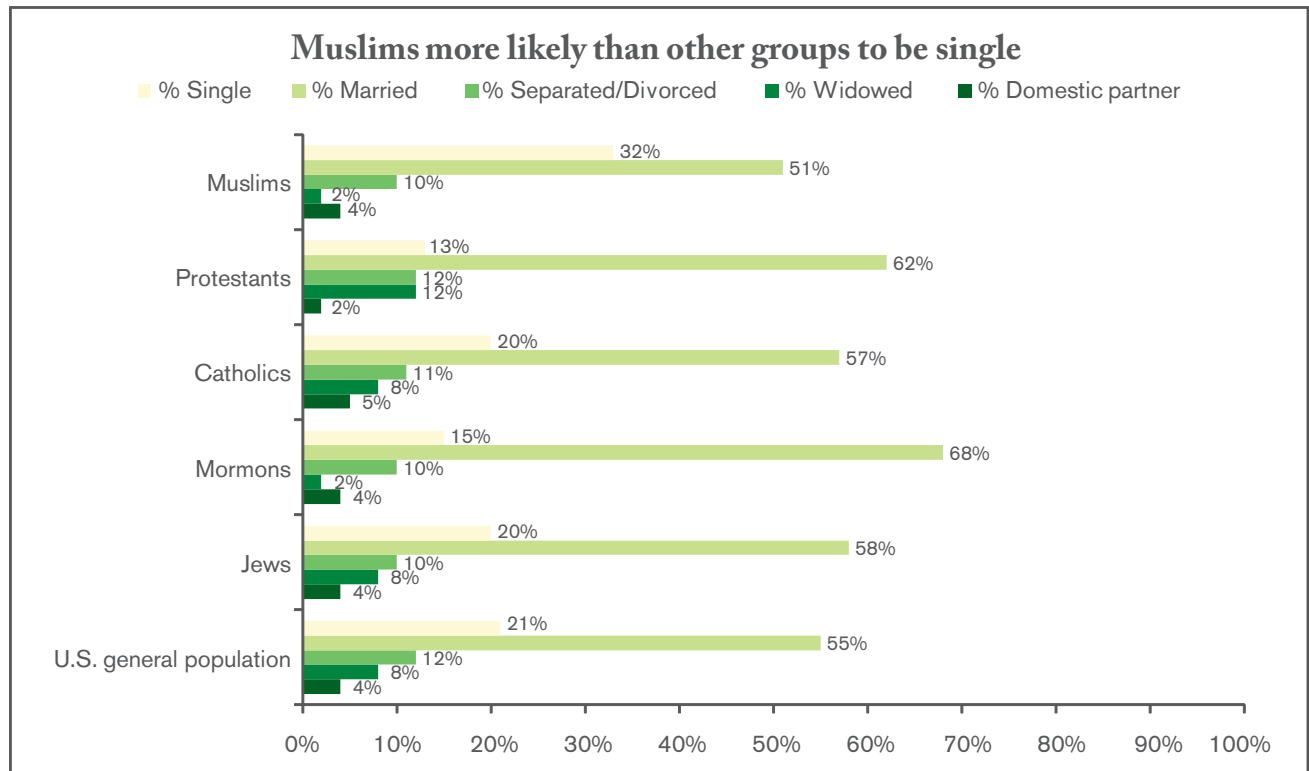
To remain in fractured enclaves means impeding our progress. Sunni on one side, Shi'a on the other, Sufi versus Salafi; U.S.-born against immigrant -- South Asians and Arabs apprehensive about fully embracing African Americans and Muslims of culture uneasy with Muslims of conscience. At the 2008 Muslim Alliance of North America Conference, the executive committee announced plans to create town hall meetings across the nation in which we can begin dialogues of reconciliation and healing. Addressing the divides, be they historical, fabricated, or arbitrary, will be an essential stage in the evolution of our community, an important step in the realization of our agenda.

It is an exciting time to be an American. It is a wonderful time to be a Muslim. It is a fantastic time to be a Muslim American. Instead of seeing our differences as negatives, we can experience the full scope of being Muslims in America.

Tayyibah Taylor, Ph.D.

Tayyibah Taylor is the founding editor in chief and publisher of Azizah Magazine. She presently sits on the board of the Faith Alliance of Metro Atlanta and the board of directors of Atlanta Interfaith Broadcasters and she has also served on the board of trustees for the Georgia Council for International Visitors.

Figure 6



What is your current marital status?

Household Size

Of the groups studied, Muslim Americans have the largest households. On average, 3.81 people live in Muslim households. This is far higher than the household sizes calculated for Protestants and Jews, although Mormons' and Catholics' average household sizes top three individuals. As a point of comparison, the average U.S. household has 2.90 people.

Figure 7

On average, Muslim Americans have the largest households

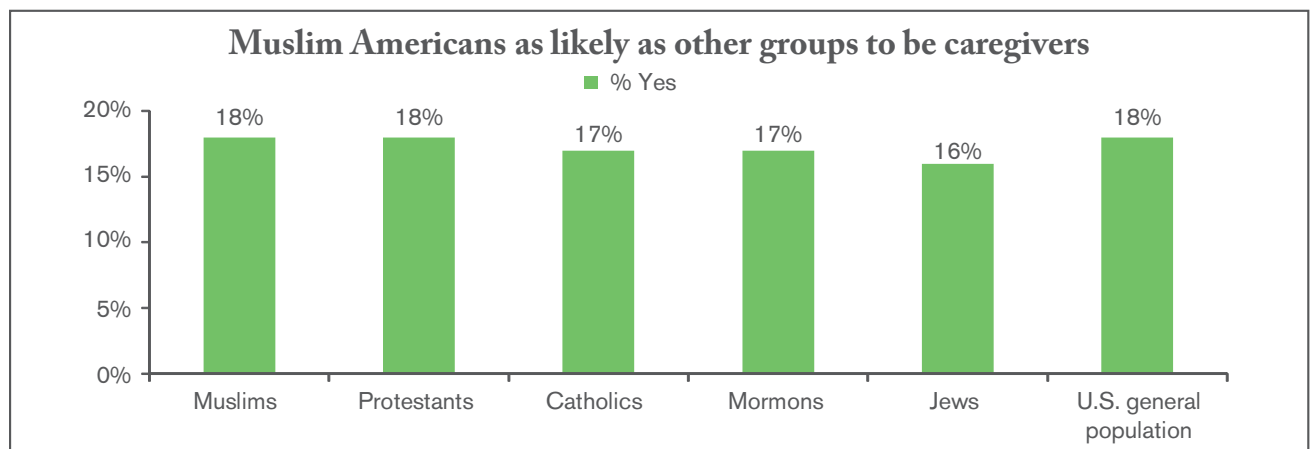
	Average household size	Average number of children under the age of 18 living in the household
Muslims	3.81	1.33
Protestants	2.6	0.54
Catholics	3.05	0.85
Mormons	3.61	1.24
Jews	2.78	0.64
U.S. general population	2.90	0.75

Muslim households also have, on average, the largest number of children under the age of 18 living with them, or 1.33 children, followed by Mormon households (1.24 children). Protestants and Jewish households have the lowest number of children living at home with them, 0.54 and 0.64 children, respectively.

Caregiving and Support Network

When asked whether they are currently helping to care for an elderly or disabled relative or friend, 18% of Muslim Americans say they are. Muslims are as likely as those in other religious groups to say this.

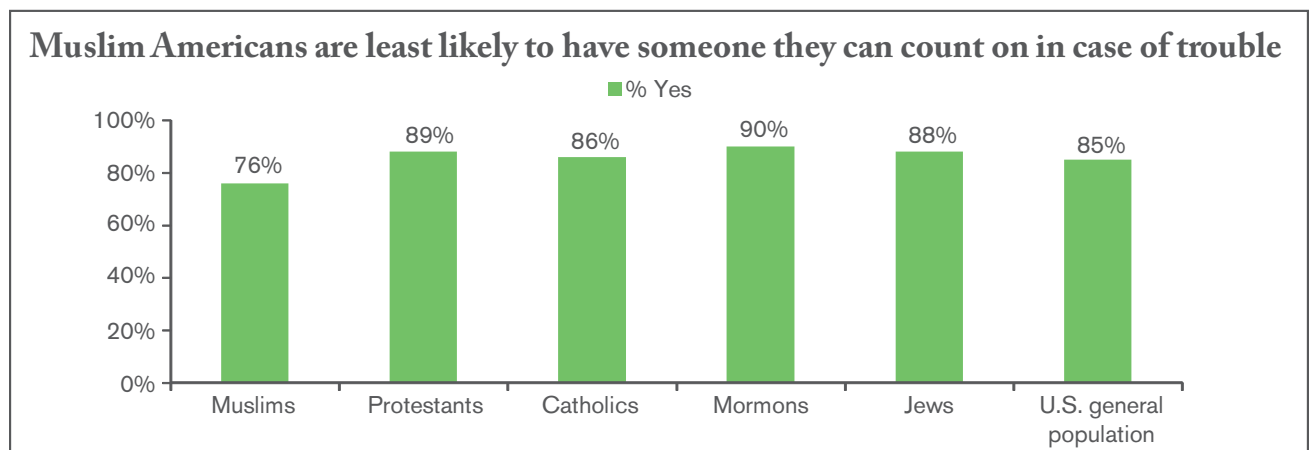
Figure 8



Do you currently help care for an elderly or disabled family member, relative, or friend, or not?

In terms of support networks, a majority of Muslim Americans (76%) say they have people, either relatives or friends, they can count on to help them whenever they need. However, Muslims are the least likely of the religious groups studied to think they can count on someone when they are in trouble. Mormons, on the contrary, are the most likely group to say they can count on a friend or a relative if they need any help.

Figure 9



If you were in trouble, do you have relatives or friends you can count on to help you whenever you need them, or not?

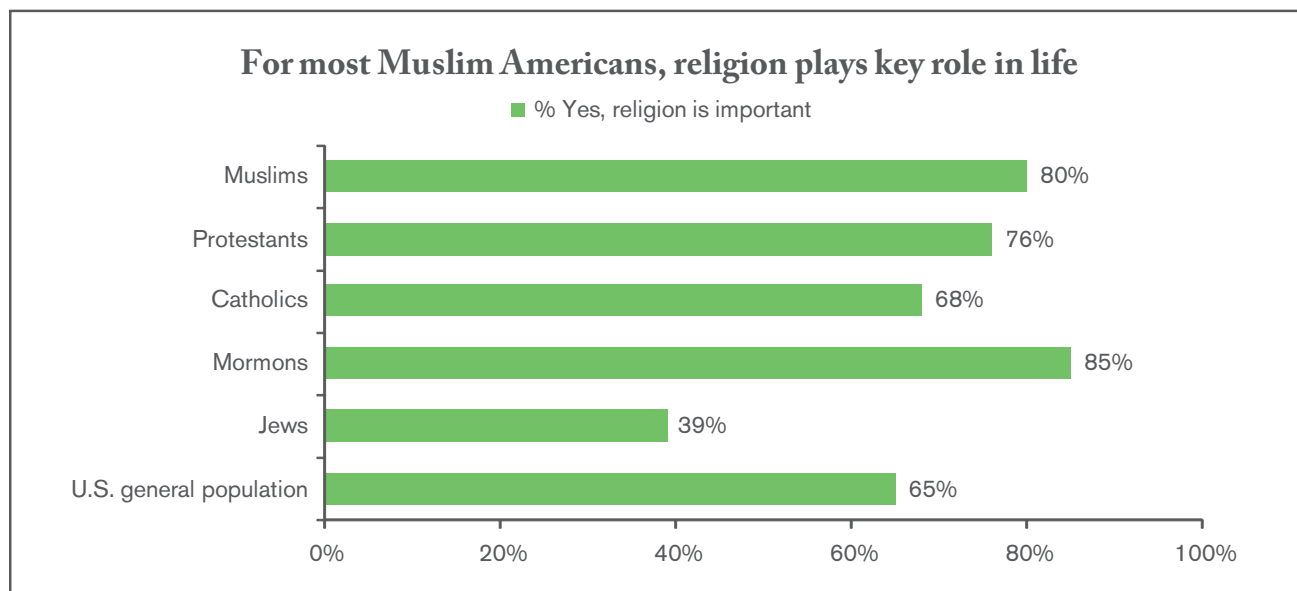
1c. Religion

Across the Islamic world, religion looms large in the lives of people, and Muslim Americans are no exception. Eight in 10 say religion plays an important role in their daily lives, which is higher than the American population as a whole, but roughly similar to what some Christian groups report. The role of the mosque is central to the faith and community life. A plurality of Muslim Americans told Gallup they attend mosque at least once a week.

Role of Faith

Although religion plays an important role in the lives of many Americans (65%), Muslim Americans (80%) are even more likely to acknowledge the importance of faith in their lives. Of the major faith groups studied, only Mormons (85%) are more likely than Muslims to say religion plays an important role in their lives, while Jews are the least likely to say this is important.

Figure 10

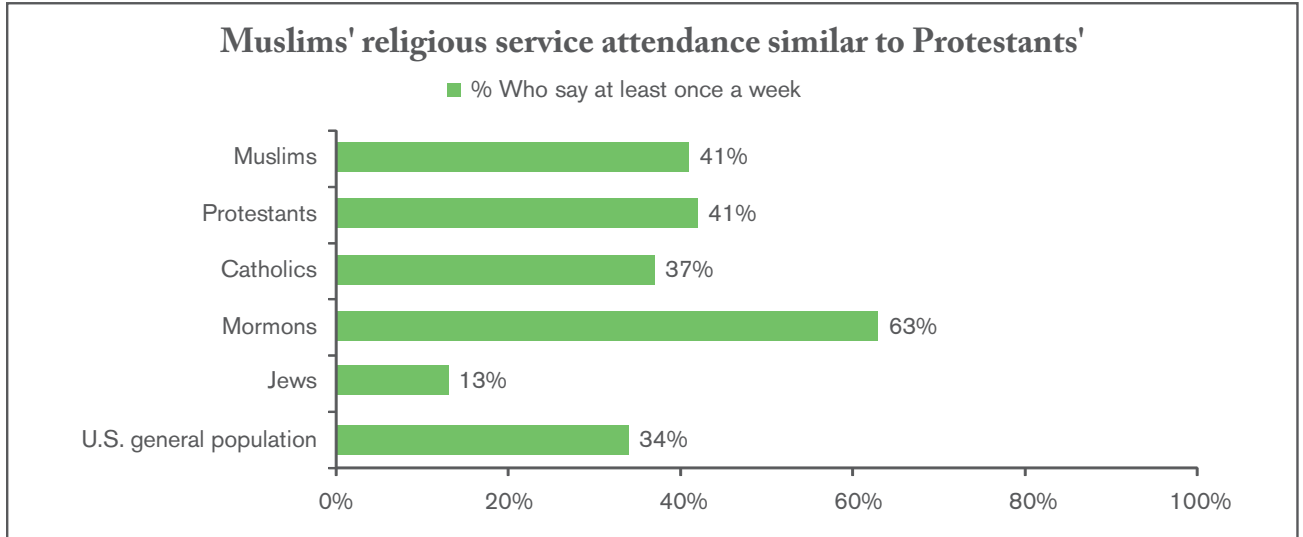


Is religion an important part of your daily life?

Religious Service Attendance

When asked how often they go to mosque, 41% of Muslims say they attend at least once a week, which is similar to the percentage of Protestants (41%) who report attending church this often and slightly higher than the percentage of Catholics (37%). Out of the major religious groups, Mormons (63%) are the most likely to report attending a worship service at least once a week.

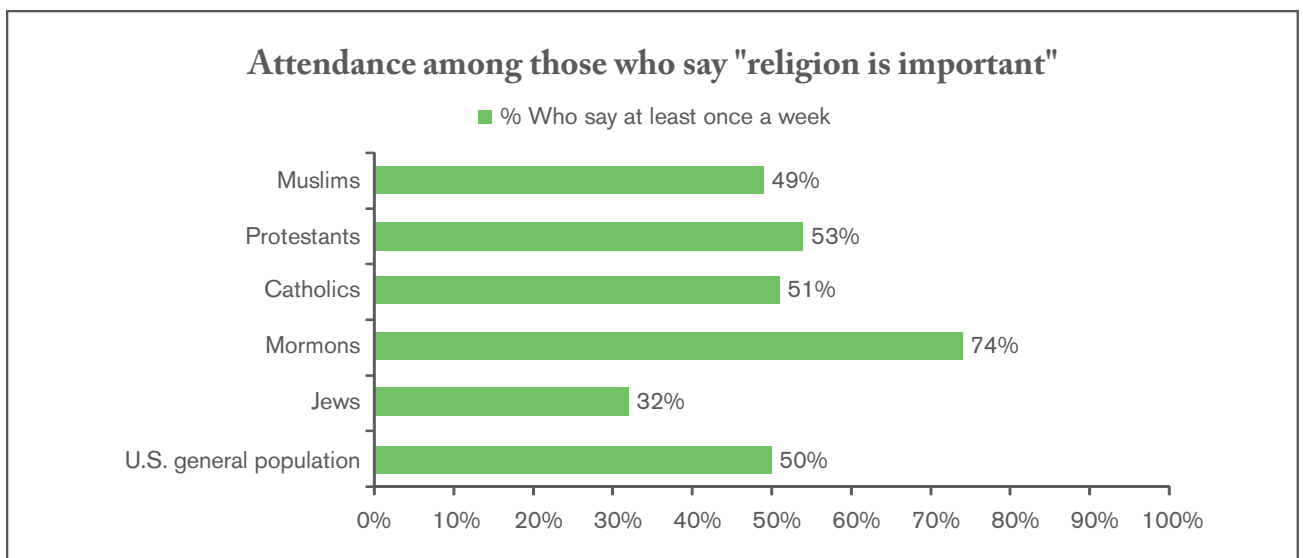
Figure 11



How often do you attend church, synagogue, or mosque -- at least once a week, almost every week, about once a month, seldom, or never?

Among those who say religion is an important part of their lives, about one-half of Muslim Americans (49%) report they go to mosque at least once a week, which is roughly on par with the figures for Catholic Americans and the general U.S. public. Jews (32%) and Mormons (74%) who say religion is important are the least and most likely religious groups, respectively, to say they attend a religious service at least once a week.

Figure 12



How often do you attend church, synagogue, or mosque -- at least once a week, almost every week, about once a month, seldom, or never? Is religion an important part of your daily life?

As the day of prayer for Muslims is on a traditional work day, the finding suggests that either Muslim Americans feel free to leave work on Friday, attend evening services, or they go to the mosque on weekends to attend the religious service and other functions.

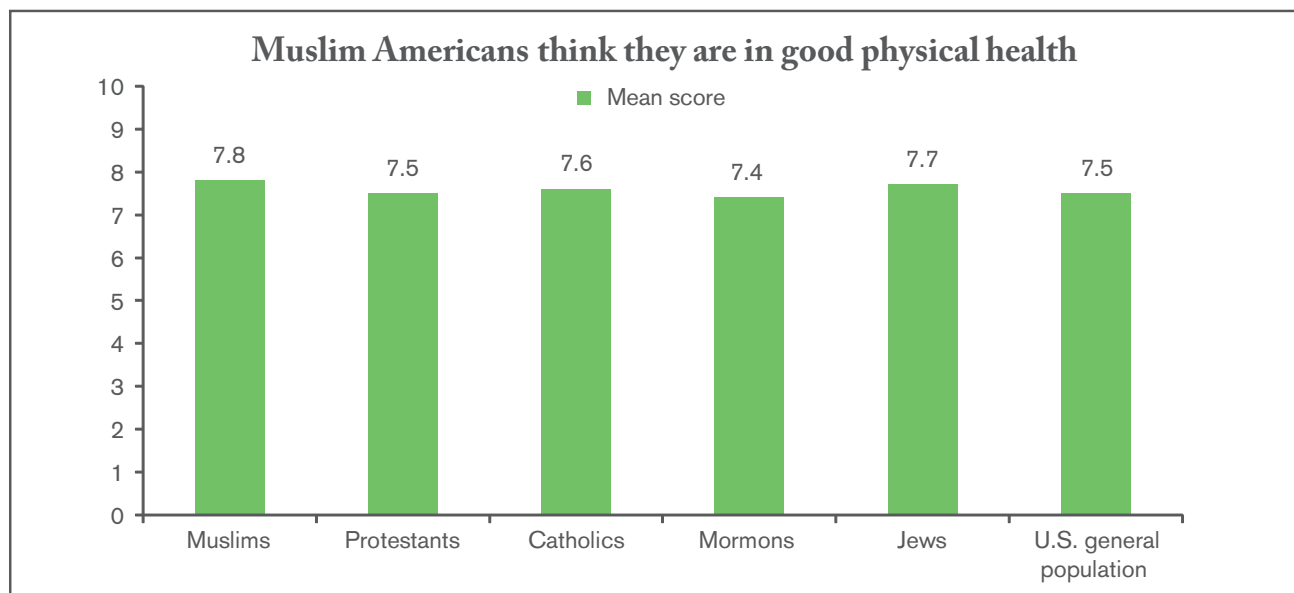
1d. Health and Well-Being

Overall, Muslim Americans consider themselves to be in good physical health. Based on their self-reported height and weight, they have lower rates of obesity, although they are as likely as other groups to be considered overweight. When asked to rate their life satisfaction, Muslim Americans are less likely than other groups to feel they are thriving. They are also less likely to report positive experiences, especially in terms of learning or doing interesting things and having a lot of enjoyment and happiness during the day. They also tend to experience more negative emotions, especially stress and anger, than many other groups surveyed.

Physical Health

When asked to rate their physical health using a ladder scale with steps numbered from 0 to 10, where “0” indicates the worst possible health and “10” the best possible health, Muslim Americans report a mean score of 7.8, which is similar to what most other religious groups surveyed report.

Figure 13



Please rate your physical health today, on a 0-to-10 scale.

Body Mass Index, Diet, and Energy

Gallup also asked respondents about their height and weight to calculate a Body Mass Index (BMI). The BMI measures body fat and it is used as a screening tool to identify possible weight problems.

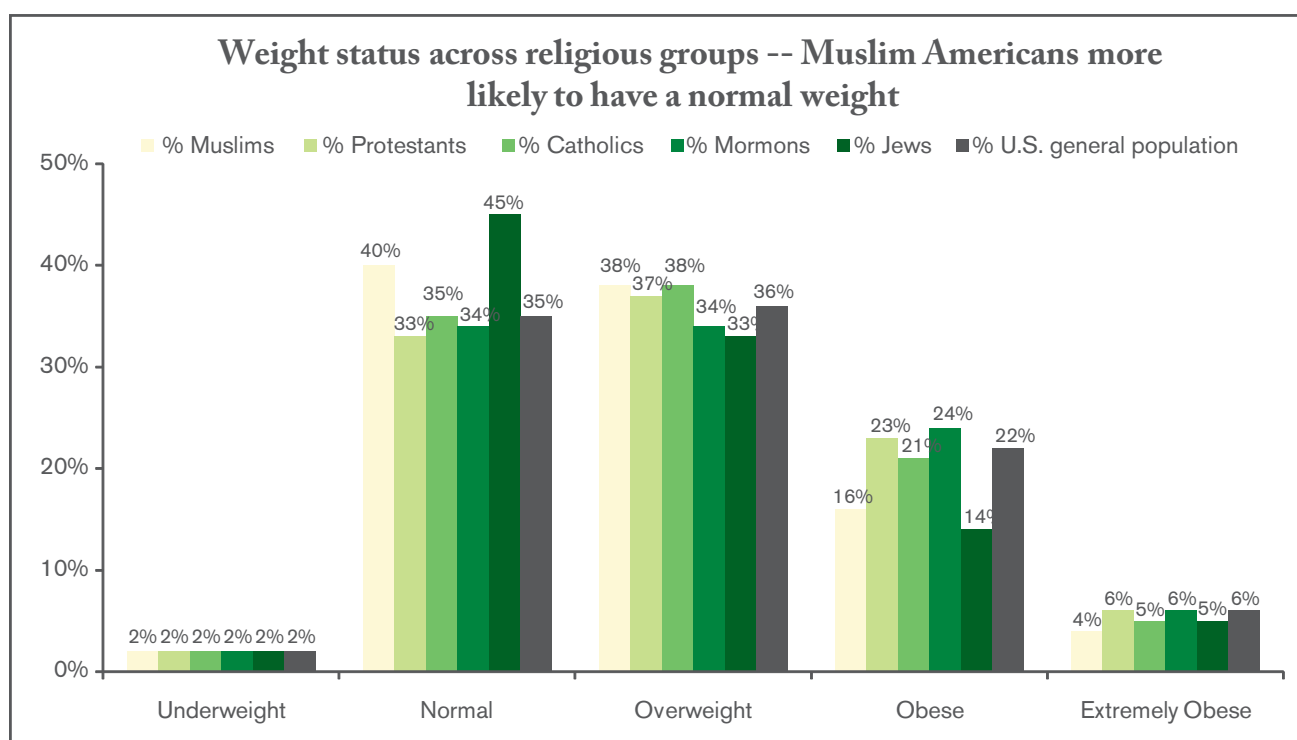
Adults with a BMI of less than 18.5 are considered “underweight.” Across all religious groups surveyed, the percentage of individuals whose BMI falls under the “underweight” category is steady at just 2%.

Those whose BMI falls between 18.5 and 24.9 are considered “normal,” while those with a BMI that is between 25.0 and 29.9 are deemed to be “overweight.” Forty percent of Muslim Americans have a BMI that is considered to be “normal,” or slightly higher than the U.S. population (35%) or other religious groups, except for Jews (45%). But Muslims (38%) are as likely as Catholics (38%) and Protestants (37%) to fall under the overweight category.

Obese adults have a BMI that is between 30.0 and 39.9 and those with a BMI of at least 40.0 are considered to be “extremely obese.” With Jewish Americans (14%), Muslim Americans (16%) are the least likely religious groups to fall under the “obese” category. As points of comparison, between one-quarter and one-fifth of Mormons (24%), Protestants (23%), and Catholics (21%) are considered to be obese. Overall, 22% of the U.S. population surveyed falls under this category.

Just 4% of Muslims are considered to be “extremely obese,” which is statistically slightly lower than Protestants (6%) and Mormons (6%), but similar to Catholics (5%) and Jews (5%). In the general population, 6% fall under the “extremely obese” category.

Figure 14



What is your approximate weight?

What is your height in feet and inches?

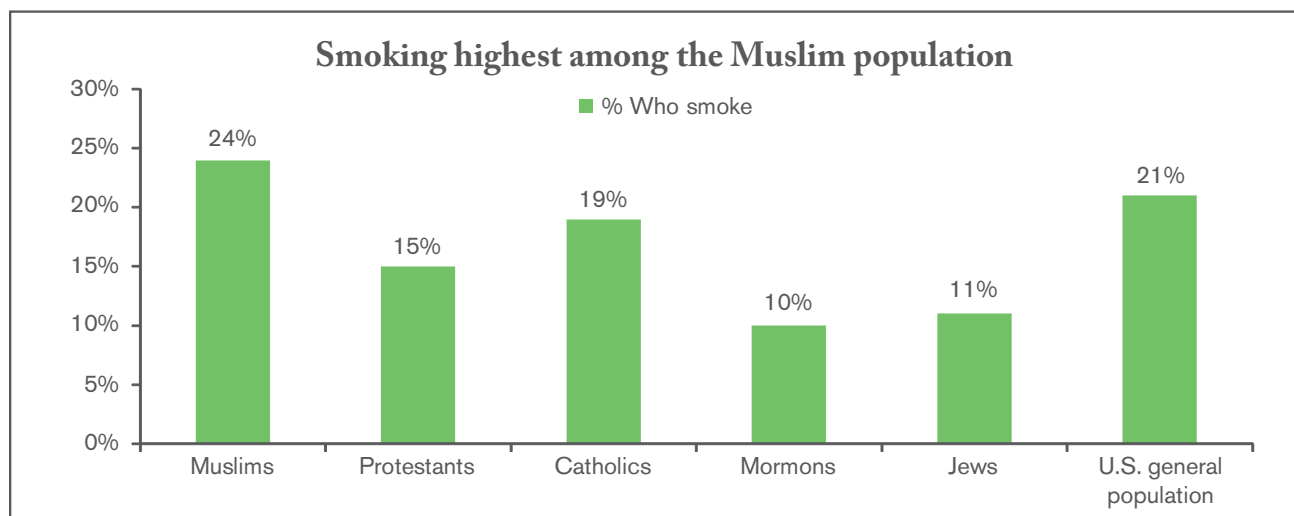
Slightly more than two-thirds of Muslim Americans (68%) report eating healthily the day before the survey, which is similar to what Jewish Americans (69%) and Protestant Americans (69%) report. Among the general population, 67% of respondents say the same.

Overall, respondents in all religious groups (at least 85%) say they had enough energy to get things done the day before the survey. Muslim Americans (85%) are as likely as Jewish Americans (87%) and those who affiliate with Christian faiths to report having enough energy.

Smoking and Alcohol

Nearly one in four Muslim Americans tell Gallup they smoke, which is slightly higher than the percentage among the U.S. general population. However, Muslims are far more likely than other religious groups surveyed to say they smoke. Mormons (10%) and Jews (11%) are the least likely to say they smoke.

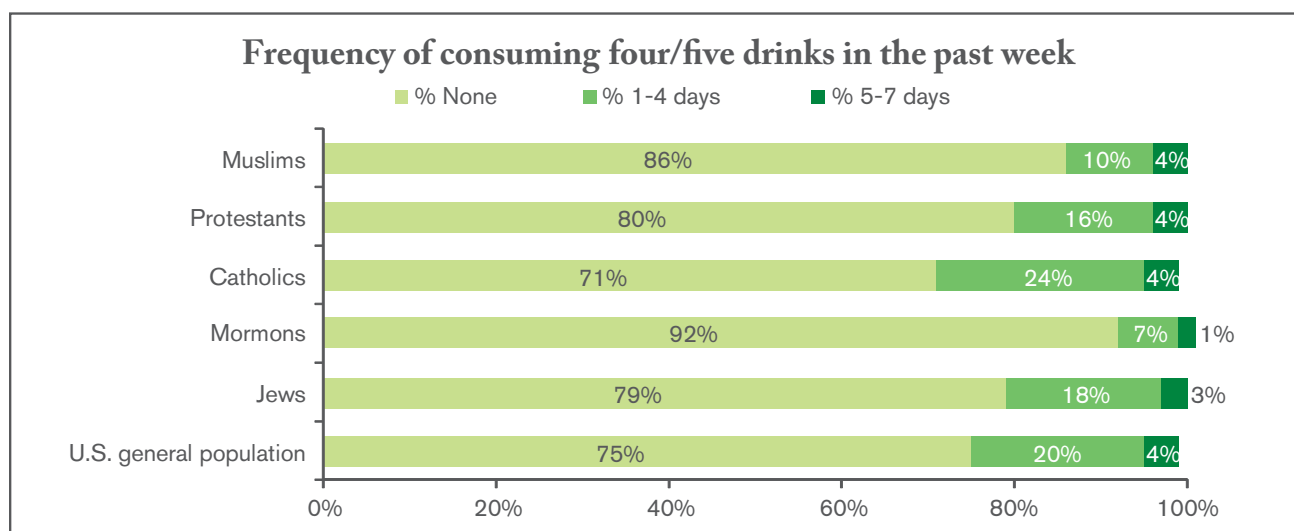
Figure 15



Do you smoke?

Gallup also asked respondents about the frequency of binge drinking during the week prior to the survey. Binge drinking, which the CDC defines as four to five alcoholic drinks consumed in one session, is used as a predictor of chronic illnesses. A majority of Muslims report they did not consume that many drinks any day during the previous week.

Figure 16



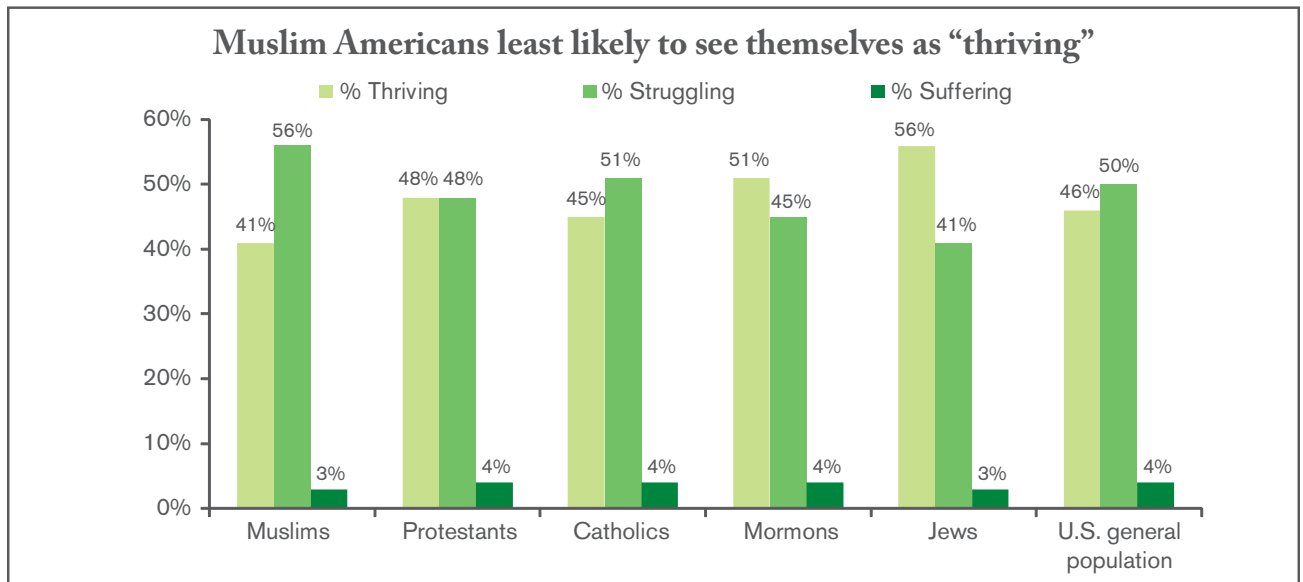
In the last seven days, on how many days did you: Consume at least five/four drinks containing alcohol?

Well-Being -- Life Satisfaction

Gallup asked Americans across religious groups to evaluate their current lives as well as their expectations of where they think they will be in five years using a ladder scale with steps numbered from 0 to 10, where “0” indicates the worst possible life and “10” indicates the best possible life. Americans classified as “thriving” say that they *presently stand on step 7 or higher of the ladder* and *expect to stand on step 8 or higher* about five years from now. “Suffering” Americans are those who say they *presently stand on steps 0 to 4 of the ladder* and *expect to stand on steps 0 to 4* five years from now. Americans that Gallup does not classify as thriving or suffering are considered to be “struggling.”

The 41% of Muslim Americans considered to be “thriving” is the lowest percentage among the religious groups studied. At the same time, 56% of Muslim Americans are classified as “struggling.” Catholics are the only other religious population in which a majority of respondents are considered “struggling.” As a point of comparison, the 41% of Jews considered “struggling” is the lowest percentage among the religious groups. Just 3% of Muslim Americans are classified as “suffering,” which is on par with respondents in other religious groups.

Figure 17



Please imagine a ladder, with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder do you feel you personally stand at the present time?

Please imagine a ladder, with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. Just your best guess, on which step do you think you will stand on in the future, say about five years from now?

Emotional Health -- Positive Experience

To gauge levels of positive experiences, Gallup also asks respondents to think about their day before the survey and remember whether they experienced a wide range of emotions and feelings.

Self-reports of feeling well-rested are highest among Protestants (73%) and Catholics (72%), while Muslims (65%) and Jews (67%) are less likely to report the same. Among the U.S. general population, 70% report feeling well-rested the day before the survey.

When asked about feeling respected, Muslim Americans (88%) are less likely than Americans in other religious groups, especially Protestants (93%) and Catholics (92%), to report feeling respected all day on the day before the survey, while 91% of the general public say the same.

Nearly 8 in 10 Muslim Americans (79%) report smiling or laughing a lot the day before the survey, which is on par with the proportion of Jewish Americans who say the same. Across all religious groups surveyed, Catholics (84%), Protestants (83%), and Mormons (82%) are the most likely to report smiling or laughing. Among the general population, 82% say they smiled a lot.

What is the most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years?

As American Muslims hope for better civil liberties protections, increased inclusion in society, and improved relations with the Islamic world in the next decade, that hope must be balanced with the reality that Muslims and Islam are often viewed with suspicion in the post-9/11 era.

American Muslims should continue to demonstrate to their fellow citizens that Islam is a vital and productive part of our nation's social and religious fabric.

This can be accomplished by taking our dinner table conversations about healthcare, education, and the economy into the public sphere. Our faith preaches charitable giving. That value can become manifest by joining with like-minded partners to end hunger in America and around the world.

Our community should partner with the new administration to help project the best of our nation's universal values of freedom and justice to the world. This includes continuing to speak out forcefully against those who falsely claim religious justification for un-Islamic acts.

Our youth should focus on entering the public service sector, whether working on Capitol Hill, in the media, or running free clinics.

Islamophobia must be confronted. An anti-Muslim fear industry has flourished in America in recent years. All Americans must repudiate these hatemongers with the same determination that won American women the right to vote, challenged McCarthyism, and ended racial segregation.

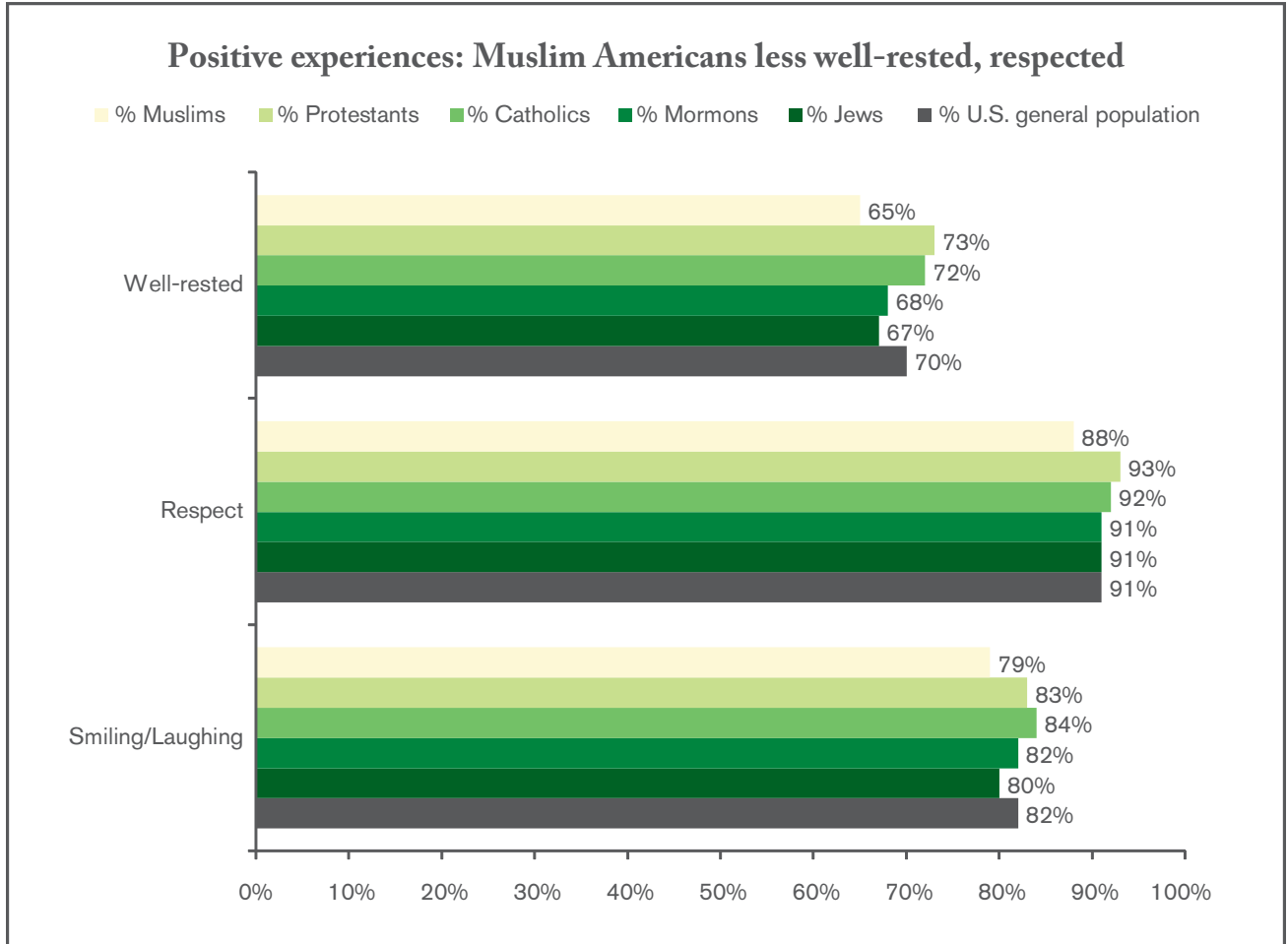
The rights enjoyed in our nation are part of what creates long lines of hopeful immigrants around American embassies worldwide. Some post-9/11 laws have eroded these rights. Muslims must not be shy or hesitant about protecting civil liberties.

These actions, which are designed to promote common values and prevent conflicts, are certain to help move American Muslims from being a suspect community to one that is celebrated for its positive contributions.

Nihad Awad

Nihad Awad is the Executive Director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Washington, D.C.-based grassroots membership organization that seeks to empower the North American Muslim community through political and social activism. Awad helped found CAIR in June 1994.

Figure 18



Did you feel well-rested yesterday?

Were you treated with respect all day yesterday?

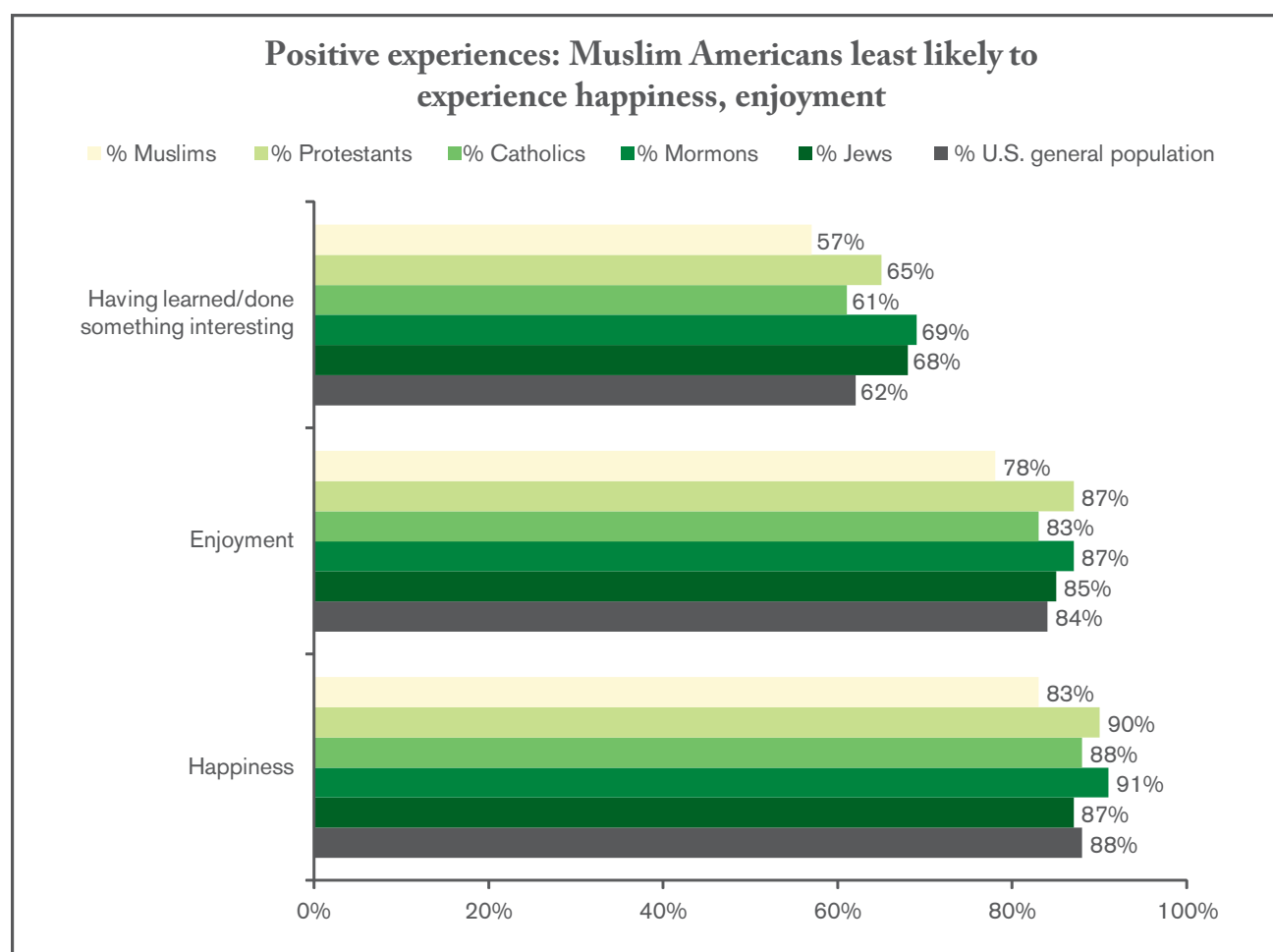
Did you smile or laugh a lot yesterday?

Compared with all other religious groups surveyed, Muslim Americans (57%) are the least likely to report having learned or done something interesting the day before the survey. Mormon (69%) and Jewish Americans (68%) are the most likely to report that they did. Muslim Americans are also less likely than the general population (62%) to say they learned or did something interesting.

Although a strong majority of Muslim Americans (78%) say they experienced enjoyment during a lot of the day before the survey, they are the least likely group to report experiencing this. Mormon (87%), Protestant (87%), and Jewish (85%) Americans are the most likely groups to say they experienced a lot of enjoyment. Muslim Americans are also less likely than the general public (84%) to say they experienced a lot of enjoyment the previous day.

Muslim Americans (83%) are also the least likely group to say they experienced happiness a lot that day. Mormons (91%) and Protestants (90%) are the most likely to report experiencing such a feeling. Among the general population, 88% say the same.

Figure 19



Did you learn or do something interesting yesterday?

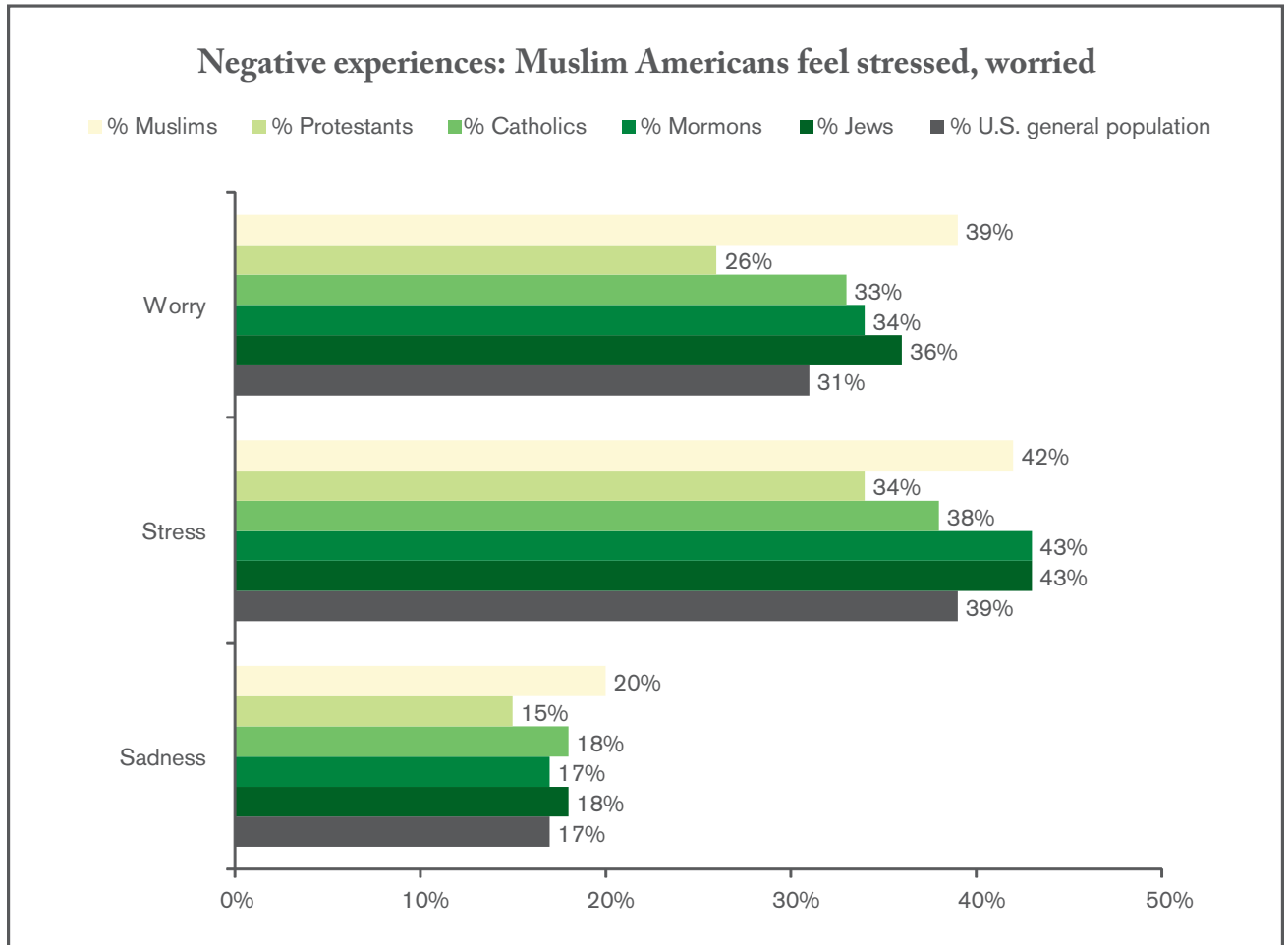
*Did you experience the following feelings during **A LOT OF THE DAY** yesterday? How about enjoyment?*

*Did you experience the following feelings during **A LOT OF THE DAY** yesterday? How about happiness?*

Emotional Health -- Negative Experience

Across all religious groups surveyed, Muslim Americans are more likely than respondents in several groups to report experiencing negative feelings and emotions the day before the survey.

Figure 20



*Did you experience the following feelings during **A LOT OF THE DAY** yesterday? How about worry?*

*Did you experience the following feelings during **A LOT OF THE DAY** yesterday? How about stress?*

*Did you experience the following feelings during **A LOT OF THE DAY** yesterday? How about sadness?*

Almost 4 in 10 Muslims (39%) say they experienced a lot of worry, which is relatively similar to what Jews (36%) report. Protestants, however, are the least likely religious group surveyed to say the same. Among the U.S. general population, 31% of Americans say they worry a lot.

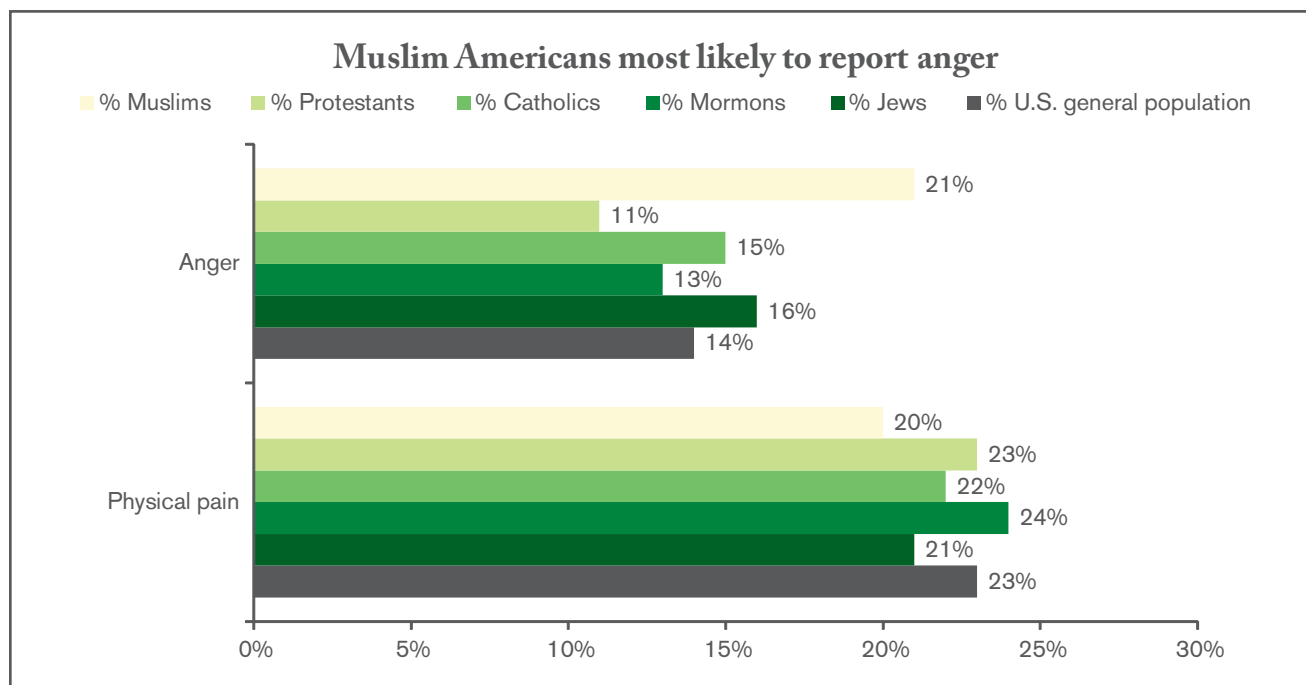
Muslims (42%) are among the most likely groups to report experiencing stress during a lot of the day prior to the survey, while Protestants (34%) are the least likely group. But almost 4 in 10 Americans (39%) say they experienced stress a lot of the day.

About one in five Muslim Americans report having felt a lot of sadness, which is similar to what Catholic Americans (18%) and Jewish Americans (18%) report. Out of all religious groups, Protestants (15%) are the least likely to say they experienced a lot of sadness the day before the survey. Among the U.S. population, 17% say they felt sadness.

Muslims are also the most likely group to report feeling anger (21%), compared with the overall population (14%). Once again, Protestants (11%) are the least likely religious group to report experiencing this negative emotion.

Twenty percent of Muslim Americans reported experiencing physical pain during a lot of the day, which is roughly on par with what a number of respondents in other religious groups report: Jews (21%) and Catholics (22%). Nationally, 23% of Americans say they experienced physical pain during a lot of the day before the survey.

Figure 21



*Did you experience the following feelings during **A LOT OF THE DAY** yesterday? How about anger?*

*Did you experience the following feelings during **A LOT OF THE DAY** yesterday? How about physical pain?*

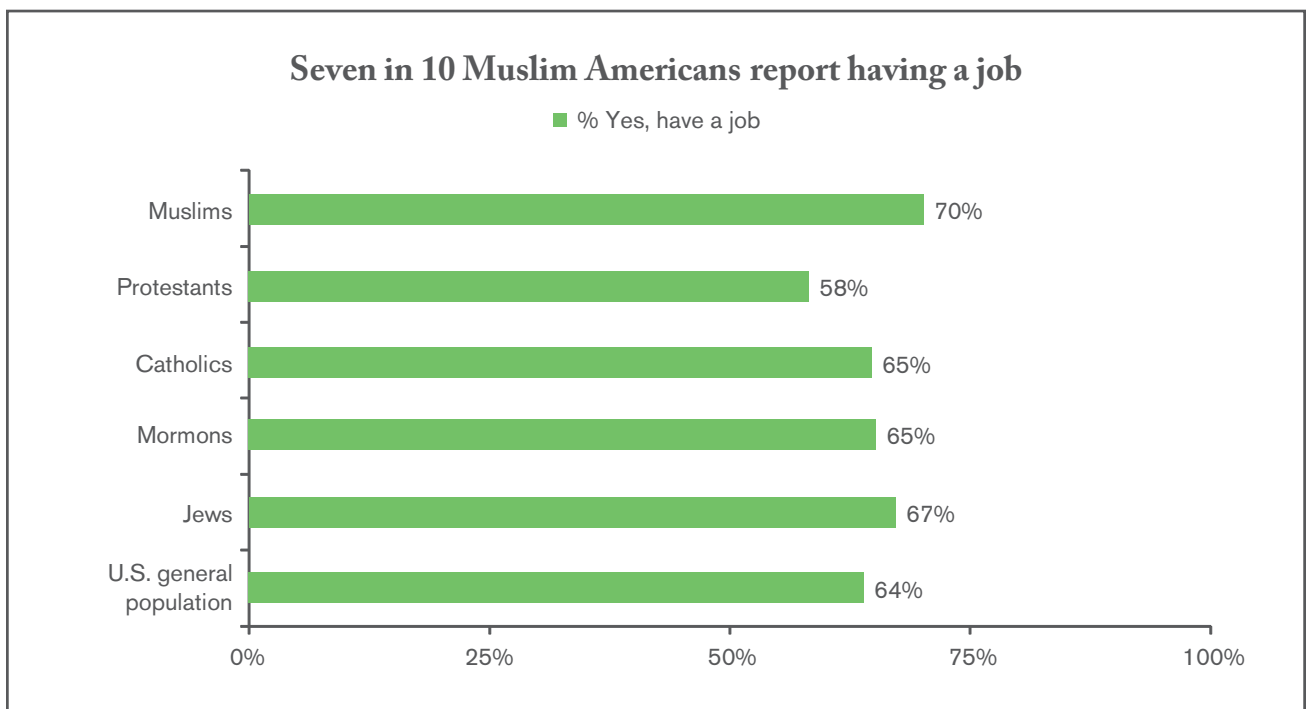
1e. Economic Conditions and Employment

A strong job market and economy are at the forefront of Americans' minds, and that concern is exaggerated in the Muslim American population. Related to their employment picture, Muslim Americans look like much of the rest of the U.S. population in their participation in work activity. But they are also somewhat unique in the high proportion that report to be self-employed and the large proportion of Muslims who are students. Their engagement at work is largely similar to that of the general population of workers. This strong employment picture is somewhat clouded by a less positive view of the national economy. While most Muslim Americans are satisfied with their current standard of living, far fewer feel that their standard of living is improving. One-third of all Americans indicate they worry about money, but nearly one-half of Muslims report the same concern. The general lack of optimism, financial concerns, and negative, if not realistic, views about the state of the U.S. economy characterize the Muslim American population.

Employment

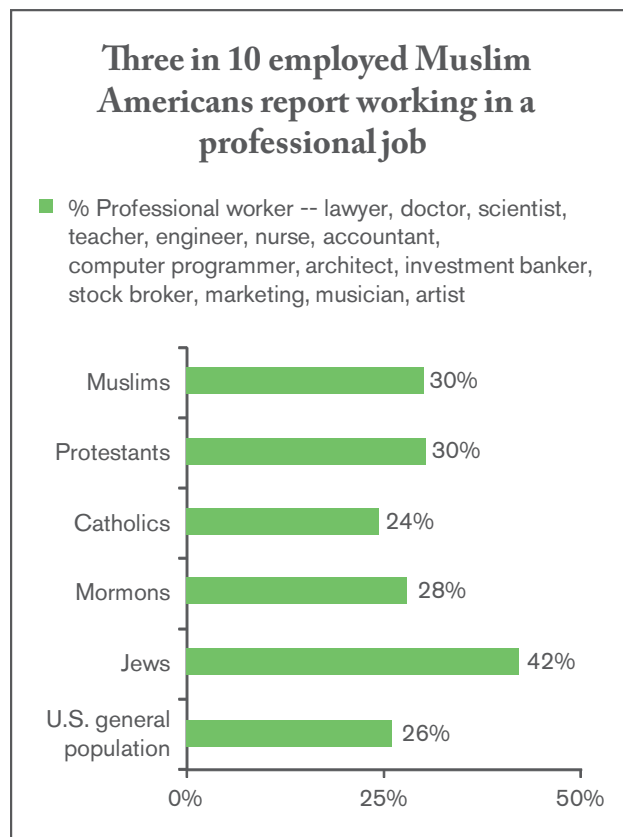
Muslim Americans are more likely than the general U.S. population to report working, with 70% reporting having a job (either paid or unpaid), compared with the U.S. population at 64%. Among those who say they have a job, Muslim Americans are also slightly more likely than the general public (26%) to work in professional occupations (30%). However, they are far less likely than Jewish Americans (42%) to say the same.

Figure 22



Do you currently have a job or work (either paid or unpaid work)?

Figure 23



Could you tell me the general category of work you do in your primary job?

Three-quarters of Muslim Americans who say they have a job are full-time paid employees and slightly more than one in five say they have paid part-time positions. Among Americans who work, 77% and 19%, respectively, say the same.

What is the most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years?

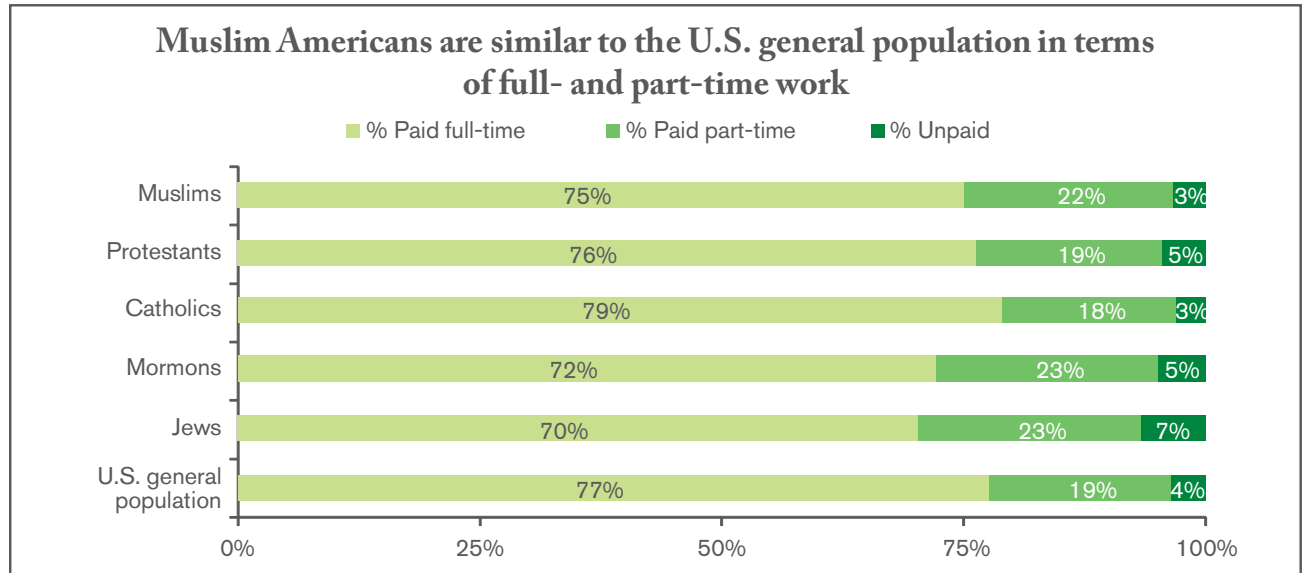
Muslim Americans must focus on developing and supporting a professional class of Islamic “practitioners,” working in well-functioning institutions. We must accelerate the training and placement in our community of Muslim counselors, chaplains, imams, youth leaders, Sunday school teachers, social workers, and others who understand basic Islamic ethics. Some of these professionals will work in mainstream public and private institutions, but it is important that others are supported by Islamic institutions such as large Islamic centers or Muslim community resource centers. Our religious institutions have to be places where real people with real problems can feel comfortable, welcomed, and supported.

There is a huge gap between the theory and practice of Islam in the modern world. The idea that scholars are going to offer all the solutions to our challenges is flawed. However, scholars can support practitioners by offering more realistic assessments of Islamic history. By acknowledging the flaws, as well as the triumphs of our leaders, we can keep our youth from falling mindlessly behind charismatic individuals who might lead them to destruction. When we examine the low points, and not just the triumphs of Islamic civilization, we will imbue our community with a humility that will allow us to see what is good in others -- this will diminish potential intolerance and divisiveness. We need to deconstruct utopian discourses and construct ethical frameworks. American Muslim scholars who have many more resources and freedoms than their colleagues in other parts of the world must establish deeper relationships with practitioners to develop materials and programming that will support a balanced, compassionate, and ethical approach to Islam.

Ingrid Mattson, Ph.D.

Ingrid Mattson, is a professor and activist and the current president of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA). She is also director at Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations. Mattson studied philosophy and fine arts at the University of Waterloo, Ontario, and earned her Ph.D. in Islamic studies from the University of Chicago in 1999.

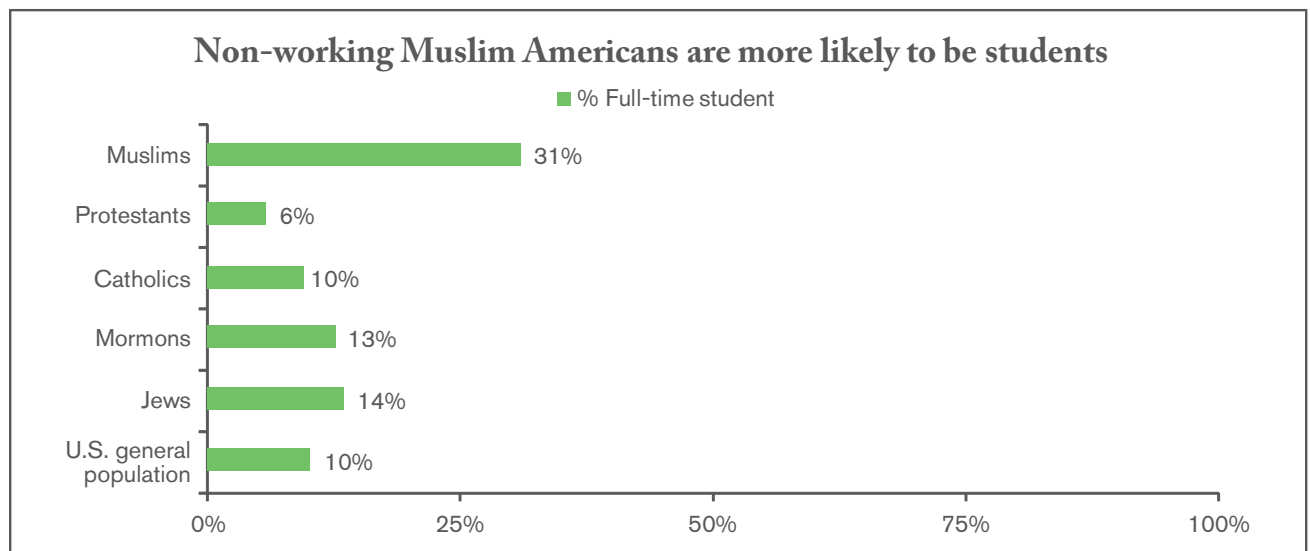
Figure 24



Is this a paid full-time job, a paid part-time job, or is it unpaid?

Fewer than one in five Muslim Americans who say they are currently not working report being retired, compared with almost one-half of Americans who say they do not have a job. On the other hand, the proportion of full-time students among non-working Muslim Americans is far higher (31%) than that of the general population (10%) or any other religious group.

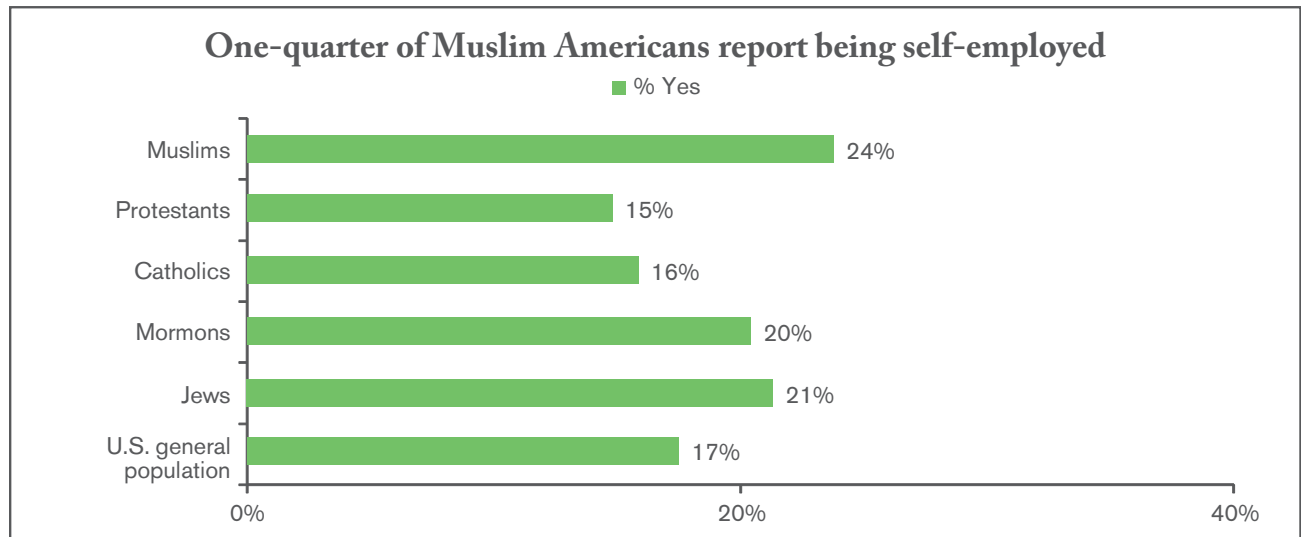
Figure 25



Please tell me whether each of the following applies to you, or not. Are you a full-time student?

Compared with the U.S. general population and other religious groups, Muslim Americans are more likely to report being self-employed.

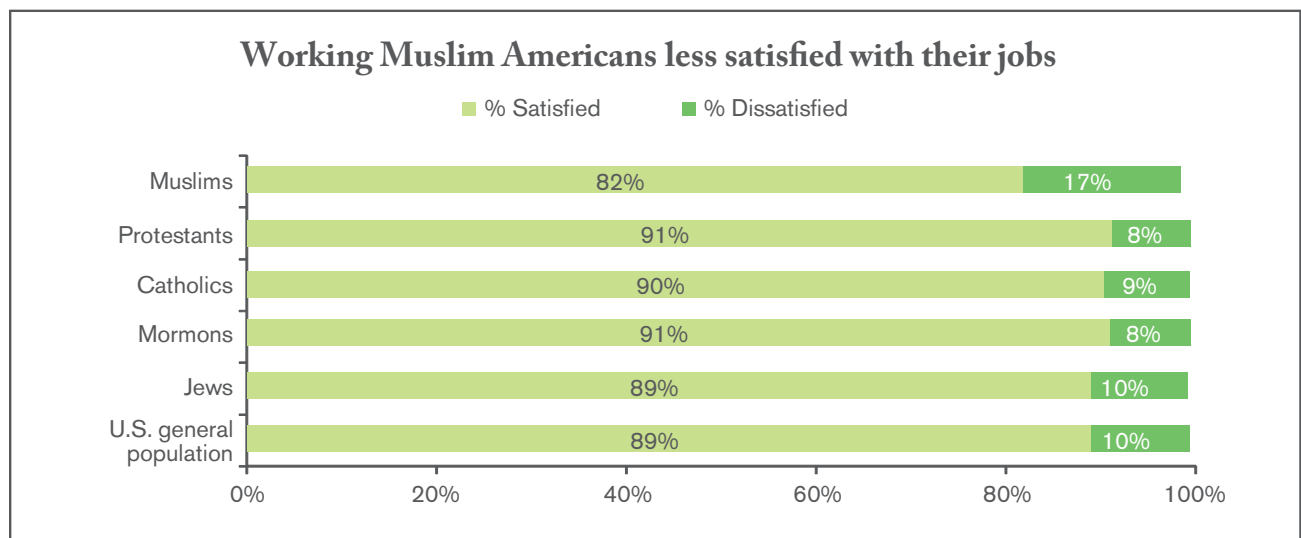
Figure 26



Please tell me whether each of the following applies to you, or not. Are you self-employed or make money or barter by working for yourself by doing domestic work, farm work, odd jobs, or working for your own business?

Muslims Americans who say they have a job report lower ratings of overall job satisfaction compared with their peers in other religious groups. Gallup has a rich history in the study of talent and employee engagement. Gallup's science points directly at talent, and the ability to use it, as a key contributor to engagement with one's workplace.

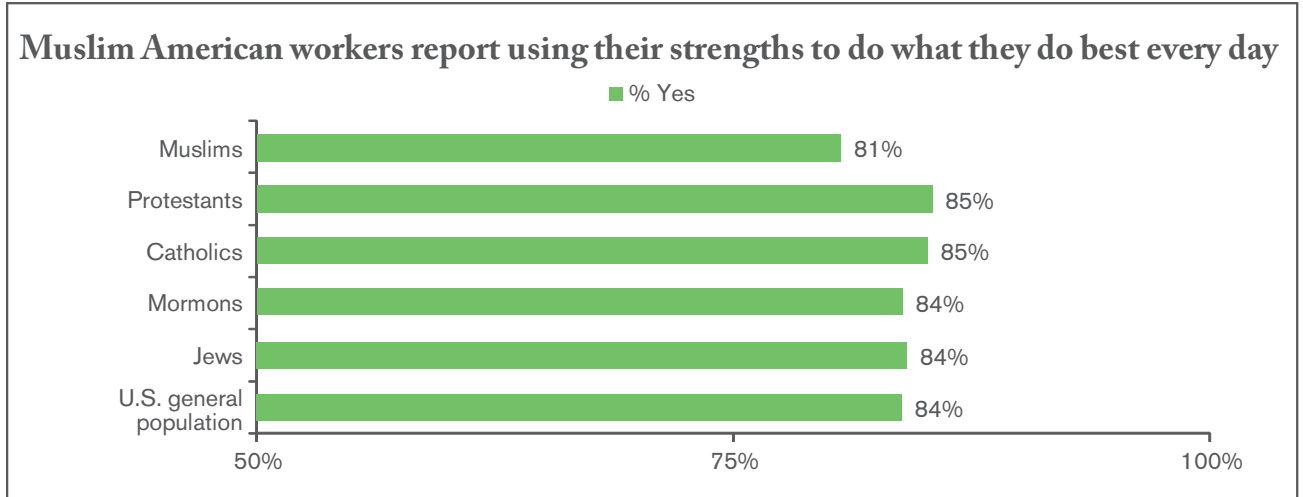
Figure 27



Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your job or the work you do?

Muslim Americans who say they have a job are similar to their peers, with a strong majority (81%) reporting opportunities to use their strengths to do what they do best every day at work.

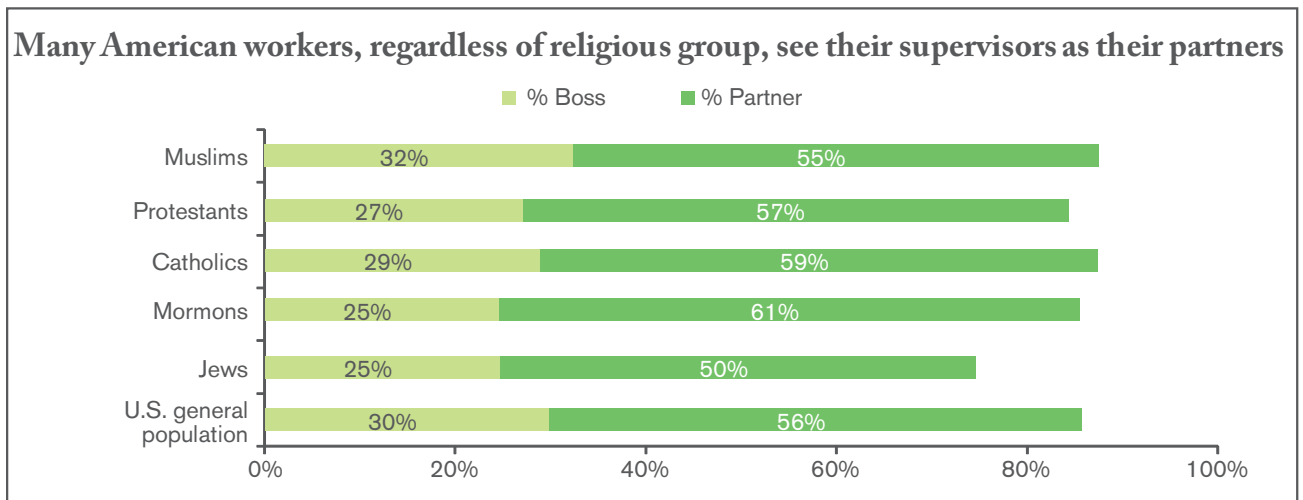
Figure 28



At work, do you get to use your strengths to do what you do best every day, or not?

One's direct supervisor can be a deciding factor in an individual's decision to take or leave a job. Muslim Americans who say they have jobs report similar relationships with their supervisors as workers in other religious groups do. Fifty-five percent of Muslim Americans who work say their supervisor treats them more as a partner and 32% say their supervisor treats them more as their boss, which is roughly similar to what working Americans among the general public report.

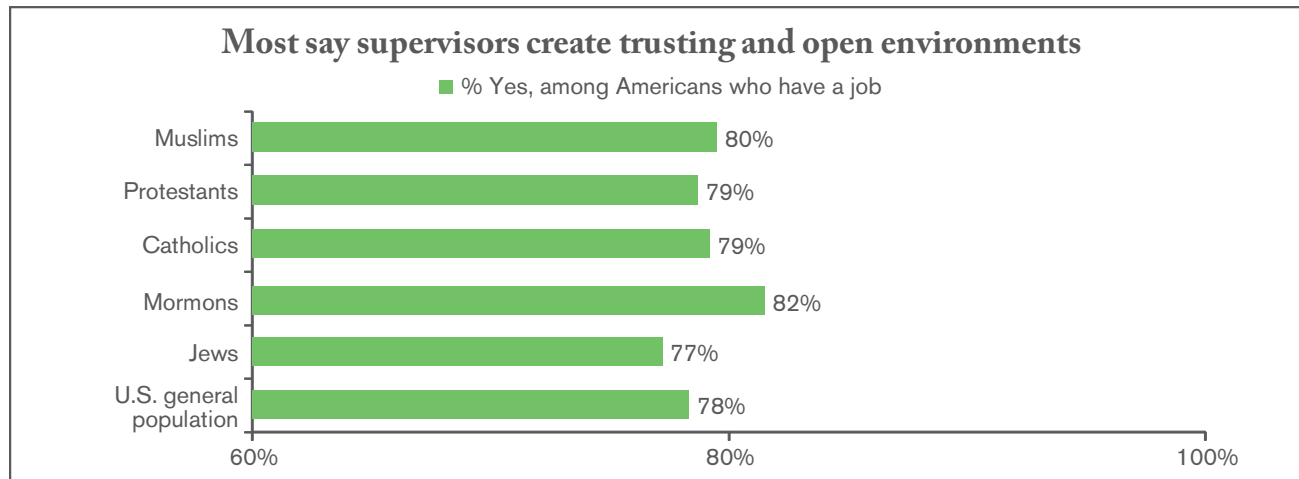
Figure 29



Does your supervisor at work treat you more like he or she is your boss or your partner?

When asked about their supervisors' behavior, most working Americans reported that their supervisors created an open and trusting environment. Muslim American workers are on par with the general population, with 8 in 10 indicating that the environments their supervisors create are trusting and open.

Figure 30

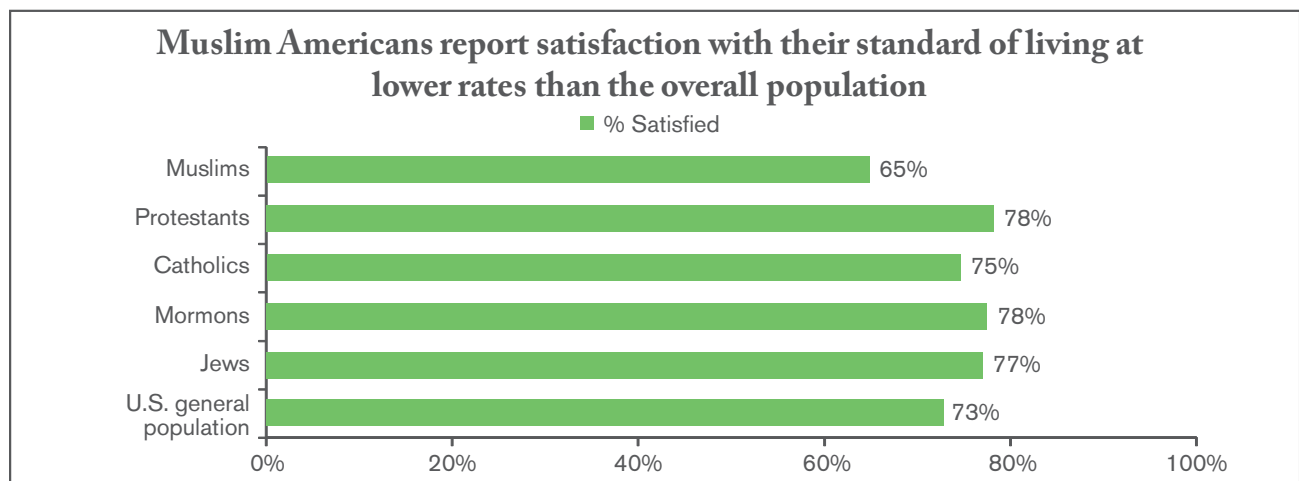


Does your supervisor always create an environment that is trusting and open, or not?

Economic Outlook

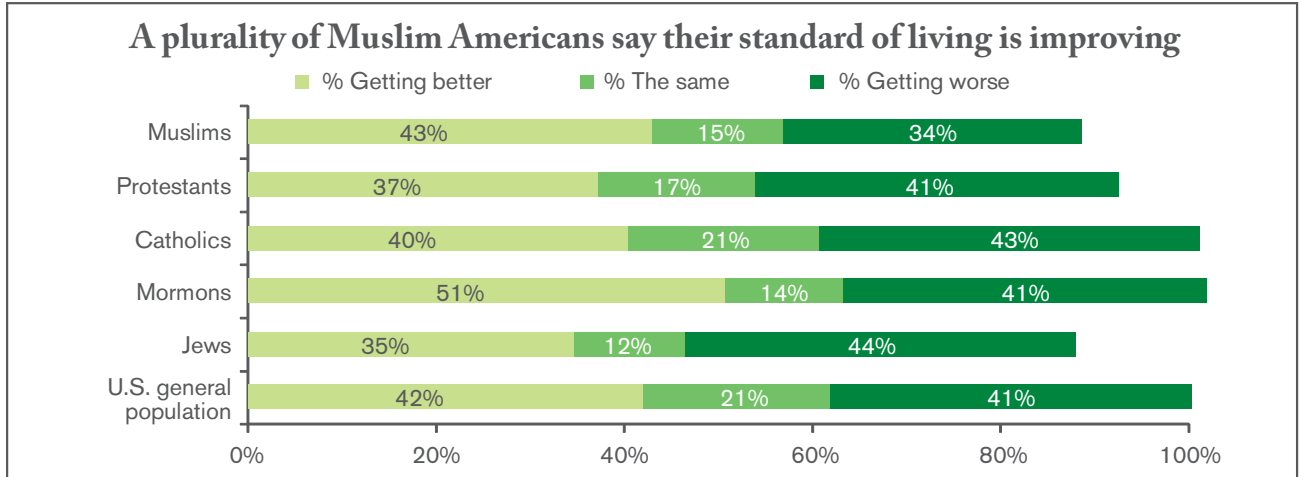
Muslims Americans express elevated concerns regarding the national economy and their personal economic situations. Despite being generally positive about their current standard of living, fewer Muslim Americans (65%) reported satisfaction than did the general population (73%). About 4 in 10 Muslims say their standard of living is getting better. Muslims' responses are similar to those of the U.S. general population, but they are less positive than Mormons on this issue, of whom 51% say their standard of living is improving.

Figure 31



Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your standard of living, all the things you can buy and do?

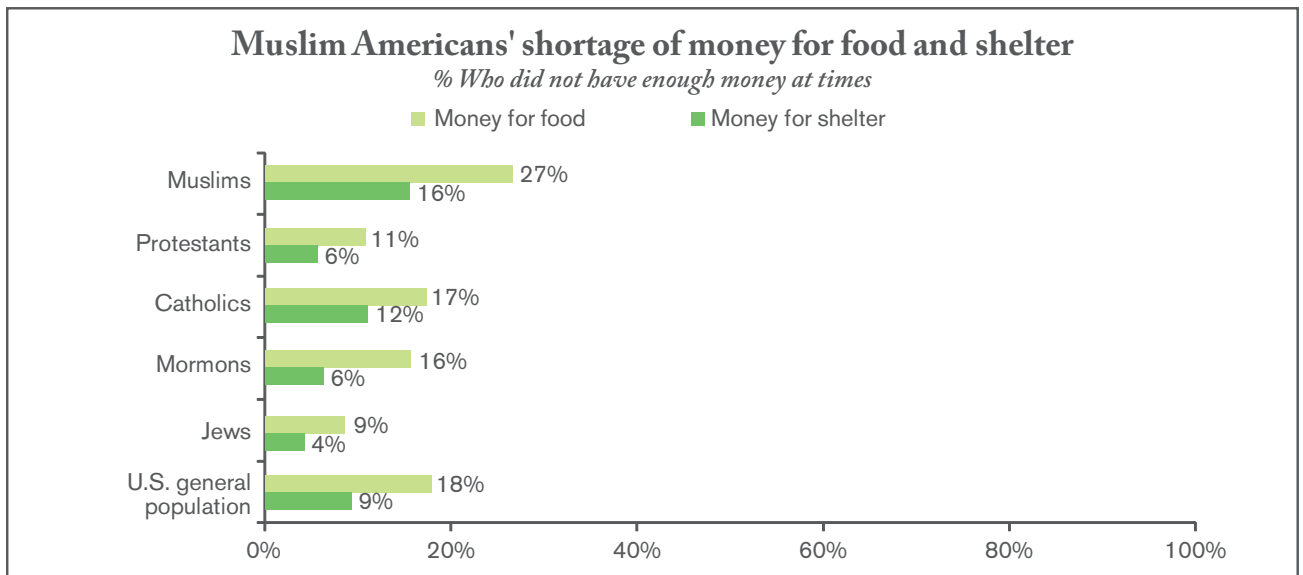
Figure 32



Right now, do you feel your standard of living is getting better or getting worse?

Individual perceptions of standard of living are related to personal income and wealth. When asked if there had been times in the past 12 months when they had lacked money to buy certain necessities, slightly more than one-quarter of Muslim Americans say they had lacked money to buy food and 16% say they did not have enough money to afford adequate shelter. Out of all religious groups surveyed, Muslims are the most likely to report being unable to afford these basic necessities.

Figure 33

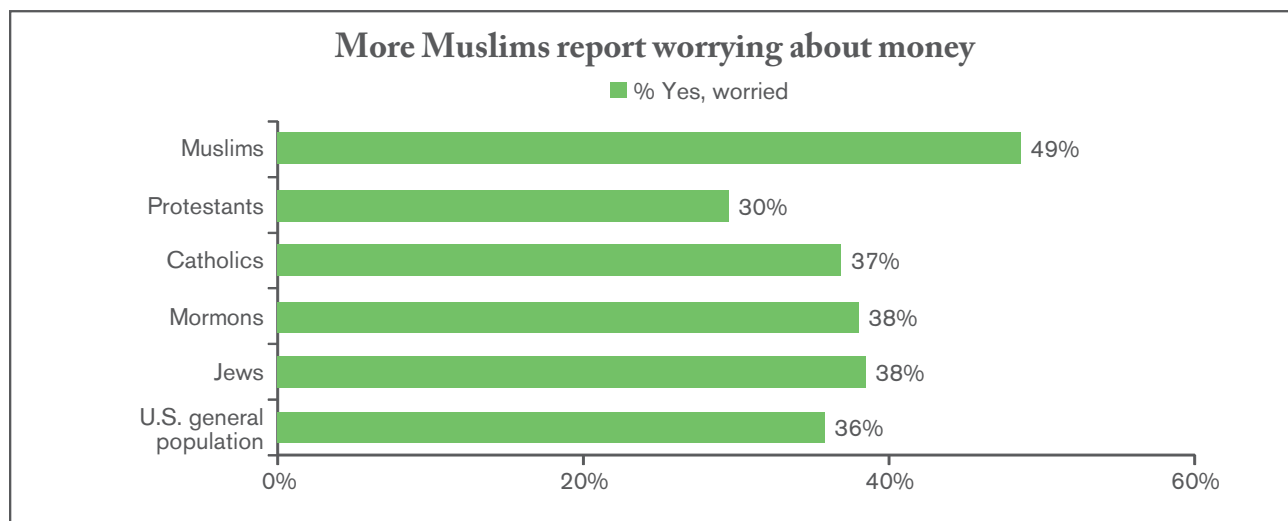


Have there been times in the past 12 months when you did not have enough money: To buy food that you or your family needed?

Have there been times in the past 12 months when you did not have enough money: To provide adequate shelter or housing for you and your family?

While no demographic group is immune to financial concerns, a far greater proportion of Muslims (49%) report having worried about money versus 30% of Protestants and 38% of Jews and Mormons. Among the general population, 36% say the same.

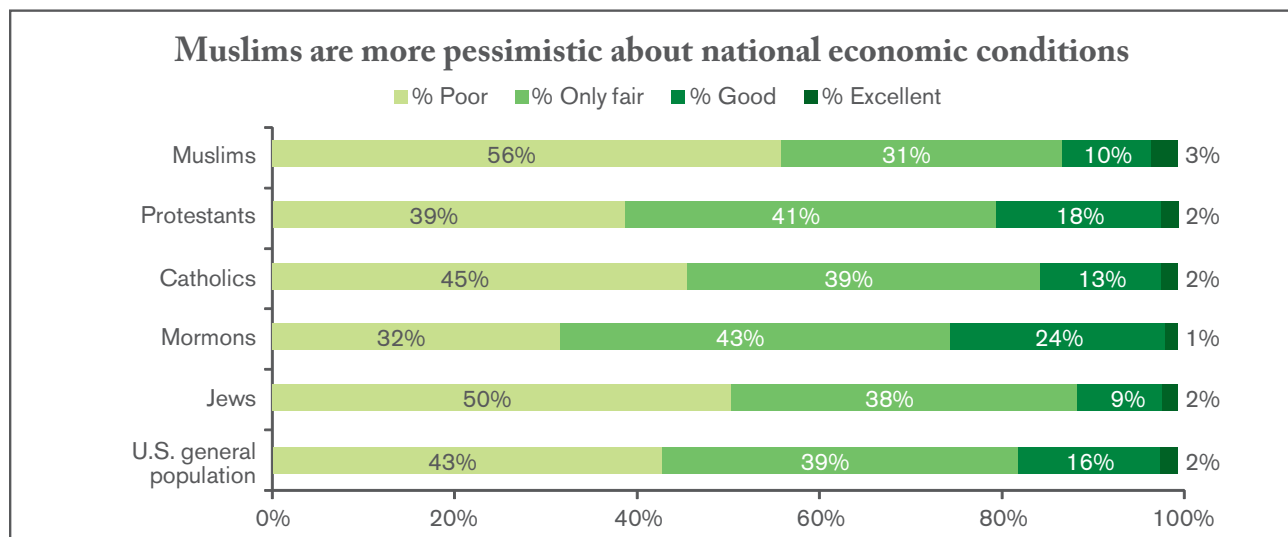
Figure 34



Did you worry about money yesterday?

The general concern about money translates into a concern regarding the overall economy. More than half of Muslim Americans believe that the U.S. economy is poor. This is in contrast to the most positive group -- about a third of Mormon Americans rate the economy as poor. The general population is more moderate, with more than 4 in 10 rating the U.S. economy as poor.

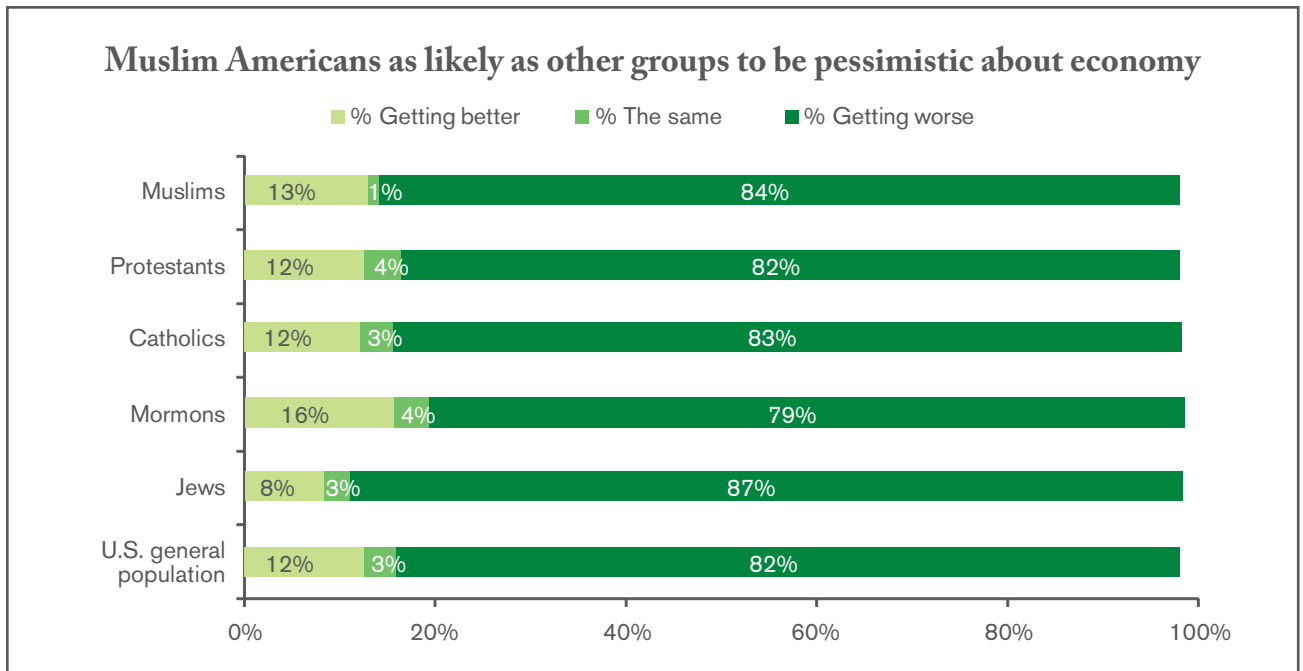
Figure 35



How would you rate economic conditions in this country today -- as excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

Although Muslim Americans are more likely than other religious groups surveyed to view current economic conditions as poor, they are equally likely to be pessimistic about the direction of the national economy. Eighty-four percent of Muslims say economic conditions are getting worse, which is roughly on par with Catholics (83%) and Protestants (82%).

Figure 36



Right now, do you think that economic conditions in the country as a whole are getting better or getting worse?

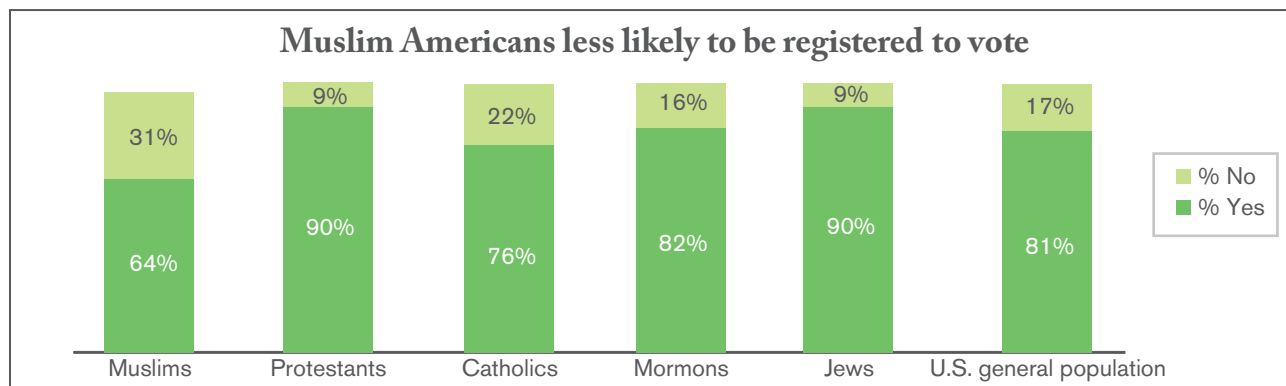
1f. Politics and Civic Engagement

Muslim Americans overwhelmingly favored Barack Obama in the presidential race, though less than half consider themselves Democrats. Muslim Americans' volunteerism is on par with the U.S. general population and they are slightly more likely to give to charity, but their degree of political participation is behind the general population and all other religious groups studied. The Republican Party has an opportunity to win over right-leaning Muslims that voted Democratic in the last election and may consider themselves independents. The Democratic Party also has an opportunity to win over more Muslims who currently consider themselves independents by leveraging the momentum of the overwhelming Muslim support for Barack Obama.

Registration to Vote

While the majority of Muslim Americans (64%) say they are registered to vote, this is the lowest percentage among the religious groups studied. This result may be partially explained by the younger average age of the community members or new immigrant or non-citizen populations. Citizenship status was not asked.

Figure 37



Are you registered to vote in your precinct or election district or not?

Party Affiliation

Muslim Americans look most like their Jewish counterparts in terms of political affiliation and most different from Mormons. The plurality of Muslim Americans considers themselves Democrats, with only 8% identifying as Republicans, in sharp contrast to Mormon Americans who are the only religious group where a majority are Republicans. Muslim Americans are the least likely religious group studied to identify as Republicans, and the second most likely to consider themselves Democrats after Jewish Americans.

What is the most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years?

Step out of the shadows of your own world, and step forthrightly into a participatory America -- an America you have helped build, strengthen, and prosper.

For too long -- and particularly after 9/11 -- Muslims have withdrawn into their own mosque-defined communities, denying themselves their rightful place in the fabric of America.

It is time we assume our place at the table. We do so by living our lives as we have but with an eye toward transforming perceptions of what "being Muslim" is. "Being Muslim" shouldn't need to be explained, but rather be observed by how each of us lives our lives, and the values we espouse. However defined we are by our religion, we are equally defined by our nationalism; we are Americans.

As Americans, we share the pride and suffer the sorrows of all Americans. We grieved with the nation on 9/11, and we cheered with many Americans at the election of Barack Hussein Obama as president.

We must become participatory citizens in the American experiment. I want to see our community give back to their country -- not make the mistake that so many insular and immigrant communities make. I want to see many more Muslims serving in the U.S. Congress -- instead of the two there are now. I want to see hundreds of thousands of teachers who "happen" to be Muslim. There should be senators and mayors, state legislators, and city council members who "happen" to be Muslim. And each of you should wear a hijab or a jilbab if you so choose; pray when you pray -- and have it perceived as a demonstration of your faith, and not a threat to your country.

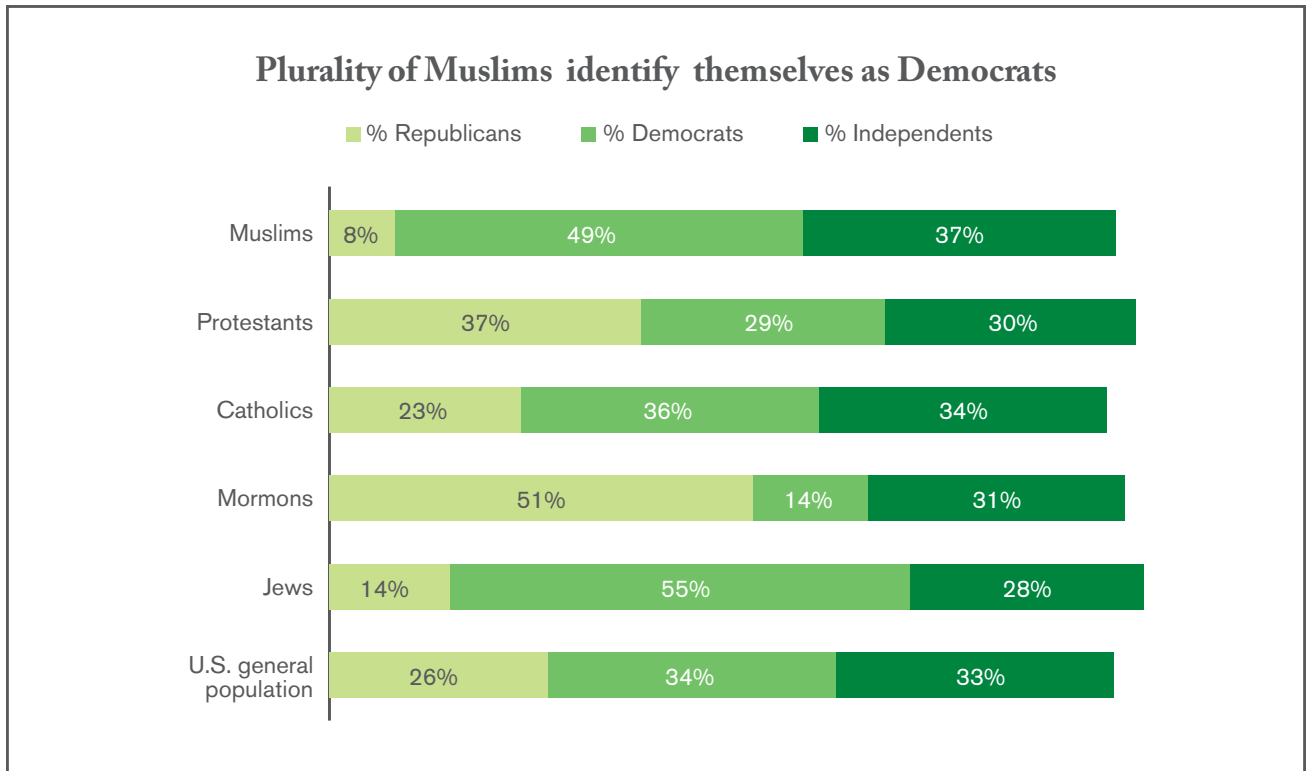
I want to see an America that embraces our faith as its own -- if we step out of the shadows.

Congressman Keith Ellison (D-MN)

Keith Ellison has represented the Fifth Congressional District of Minnesota in the U.S. House of Representatives since taking office on Jan. 4, 2007. Congressman Ellison made history as the first African American from Minnesota to serve in the U.S. Congress. He also made history by becoming the first person of the Muslim faith in America to serve in Congress. Congressman Ellison attended the University of Minnesota Law School, where he earned his law degree in 1990.

Muslim Americans are slightly more likely than those in other religious groups to identify as independents.

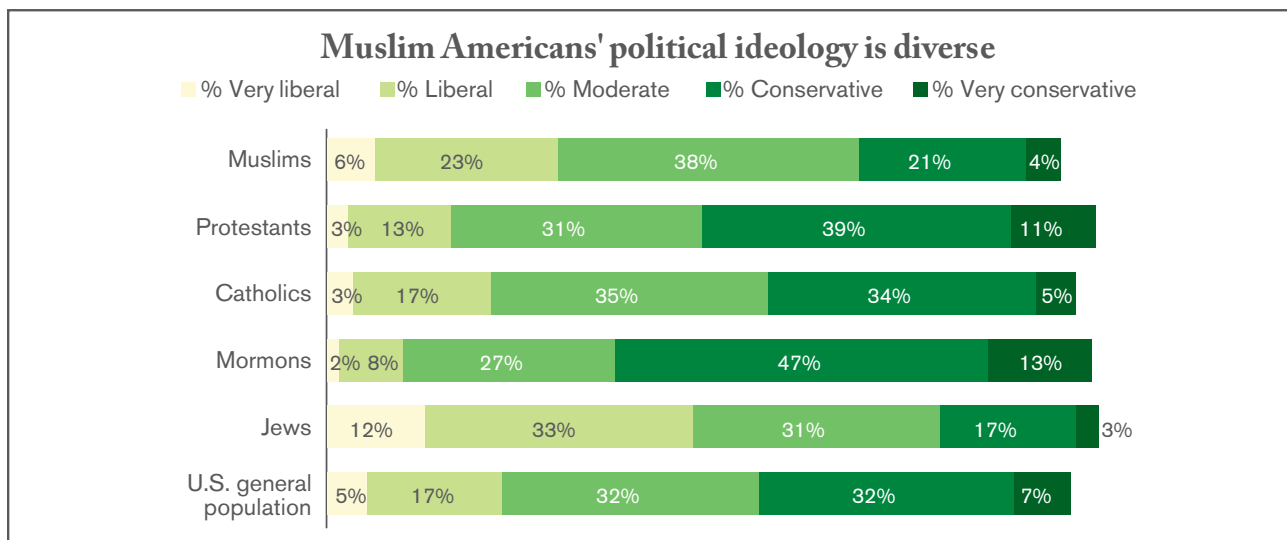
Figure 38



Do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

The bulk of Muslim Americans fall in the middle of the political ideological spectrum, with 38% describing their political views as moderate. Roughly equal percentages fall on either side of this middle group, with 29% identifying as either liberal or very liberal and 25% describing themselves as conservative or very conservative. Contrary to their socially conservative image and degree of religiosity, Muslims are least likely, after Jews, to describe themselves as conservative, and most likely, also after Jews, to call themselves liberal. Muslim Americans are also the religious group most evenly spread out along the political spectrum, another example of the community's diversity.

Figure 39

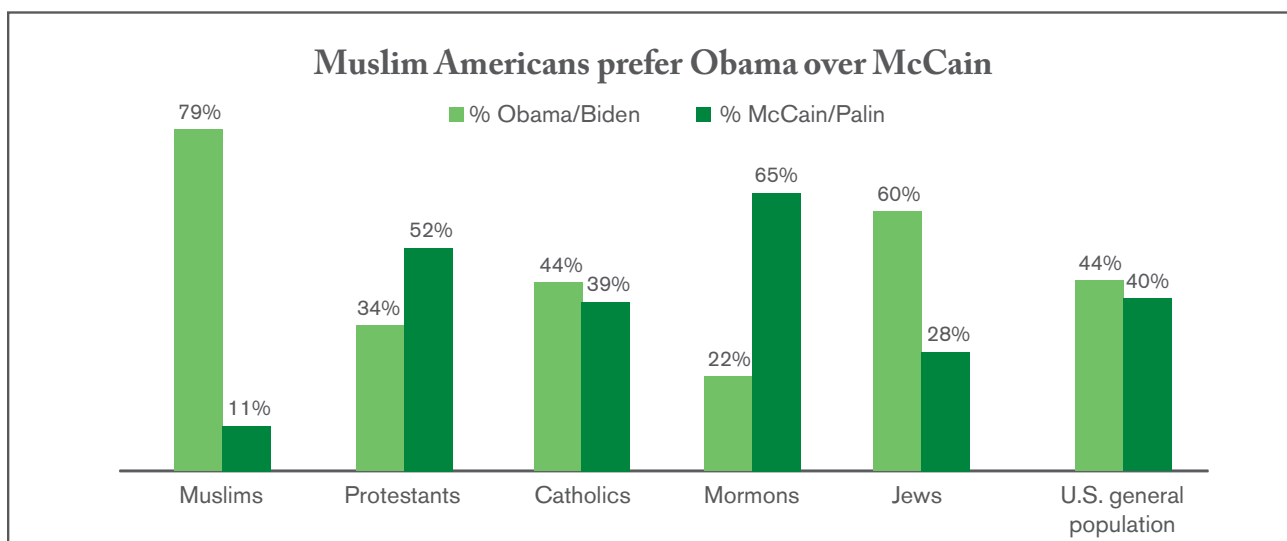


How would you describe your political views?

Obama/Biden vs. McCain/Palin

Despite a long election campaign punctuated by anti-Muslim jabs at Obama, Muslim Americans prefer him over John McCain by 8 to 1.

Figure 40

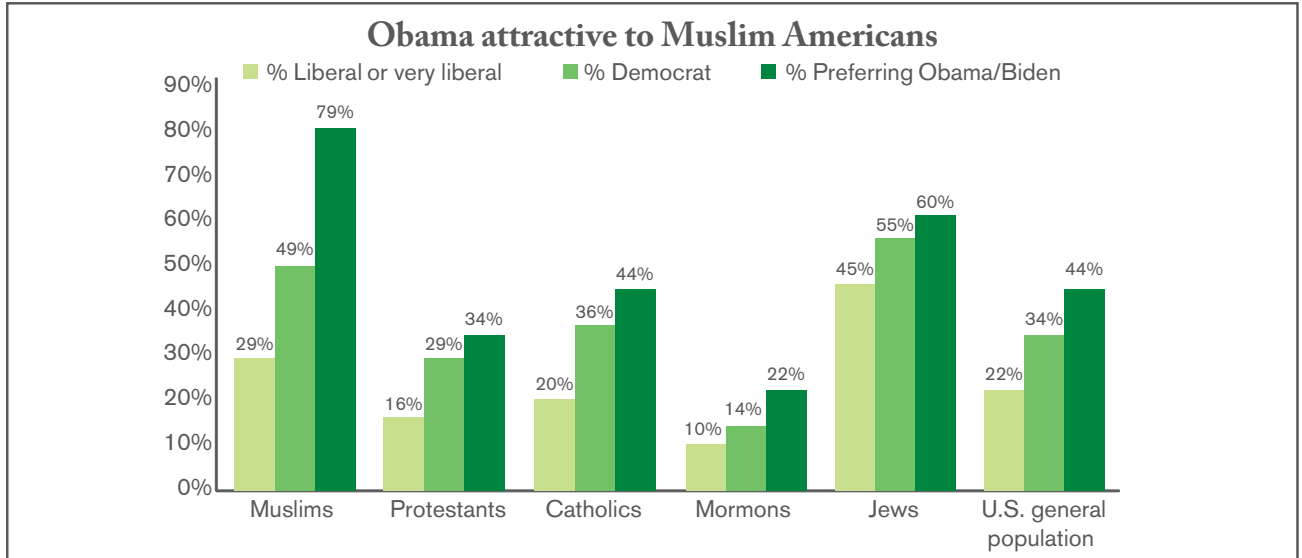


If the presidential election were held today, would you vote for Barack Obama and Joe Biden or John McCain and Sarah Palin?

Though only roughly half of Muslim Americans consider themselves Democrats, nearly 8 in 10 said they prefer Obama over McCain in the presidential election, the highest percentage favoring the Democratic ticket of all religious groups studied.

Though Muslims are less likely than Jews to identify their political views as either very liberal or liberal or to identify as Democrats, Muslims are more likely than Jews to prefer the Democratic ticket. This implies that Obama was especially attractive to Muslim Americans -- more than can be explained by political leanings or party affiliations.

Figure 41

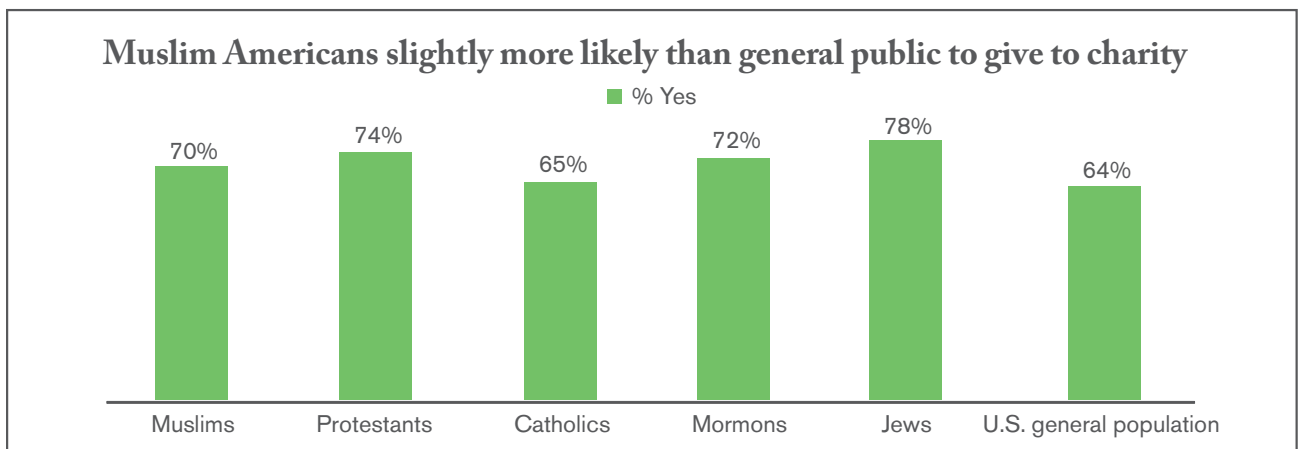


*If the presidential election were held today, would you vote for Barack Obama and Joe Biden or John McCain and Sarah Palin?
Do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?
How would you describe your political views?*

Civic Engagement

Seven in 10 Muslim Americans report giving money to a charity in the previous month, slightly higher than the general population.

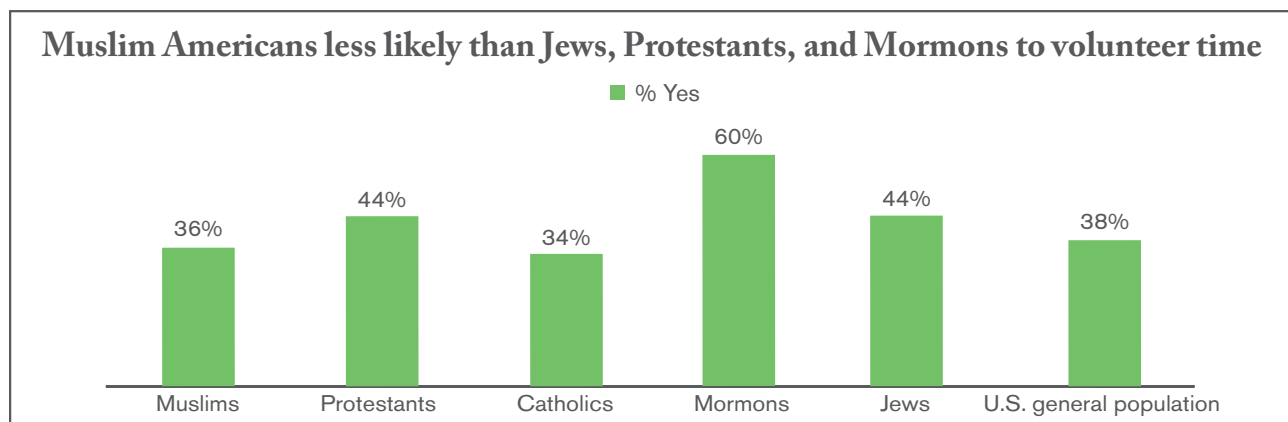
Figure 42



Have you done any of the following in the past month? How about donated money to a charity?

Muslims are on par with the general population and Catholics in their rate of volunteerism, but significantly less likely to volunteer time to an organization than Jews, Protestants, and Mormons.

Figure 43



Have you done any of the following in the past month? How about volunteered your time to an organization?

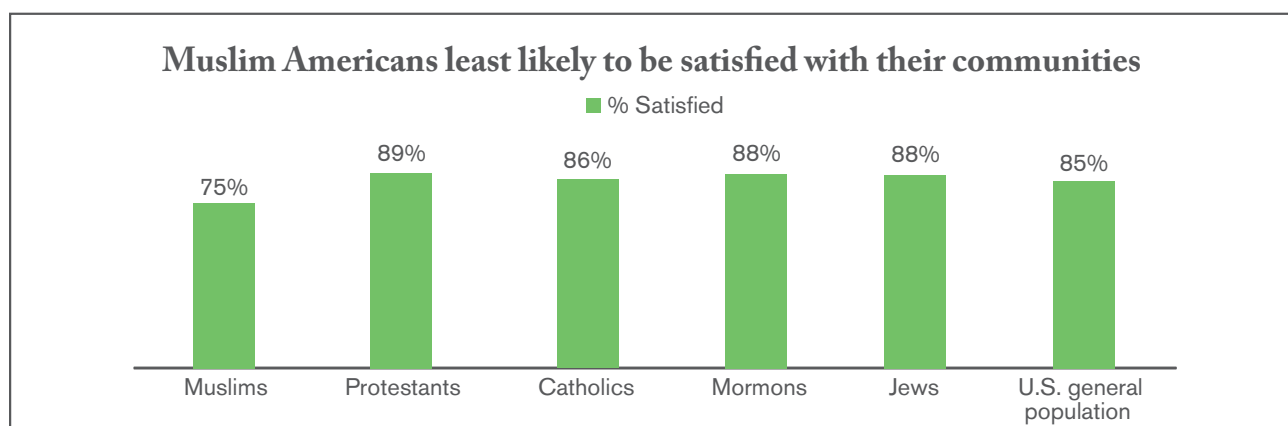
1g. Community Satisfaction

While a majority of Muslims express satisfaction with their local communities, they are the least likely religious community to say so. They also express more pessimism than other groups do about the future of their communities. Muslim Americans are also slightly less likely to feel safe walking alone at night.

Quality of Life

Muslim Americans are the least likely to say they are satisfied with the area or city where they live.

Figure 44



Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the city or area where you live?

What is the most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years?

The Muslim American community has great opportunities and great challenges ahead of it. The opportunity lies in the harbinger of changes ushered in by the last election. The change is a shift from exclusion to inclusion and from confrontation to cooperation, both domestically and globally. Muslim Americans now have the chance to take their place at the American table. The challenge is to avoid irrelevancy. Groups become irrelevant when they fail to adapt to change.

Muslim Americans must change their psyche and their attitude. We must move from the perception imposed after the tragedy of 9/11 where the issues defined us and the choices were withdrawal, defensiveness, or anger. It is time to change the framework to one of partnership and constructive engagement. This change will not be immediate; it will require persistence and assertiveness. These changes are a prerequisite for Muslim Americans over the next decade and beyond.

Muslim Americans must accomplish the following to adequately engage in the forthcoming dialogue.

The mandatory project of thought reform. True thought reform can only take place within the free marketplace of ideas such as in the United States. Furthermore, true reform from within requires a commitment to Islam as taught in the authentic sources, which truly allow Islamic values to contribute to modern societies.

Muslim Americans must go beyond requesting inclusion to actualizing inclusion. Qualified Muslims must participate in civic society whether at the local, state, or federal level. Inclusion will inspire younger generations of American Muslims.

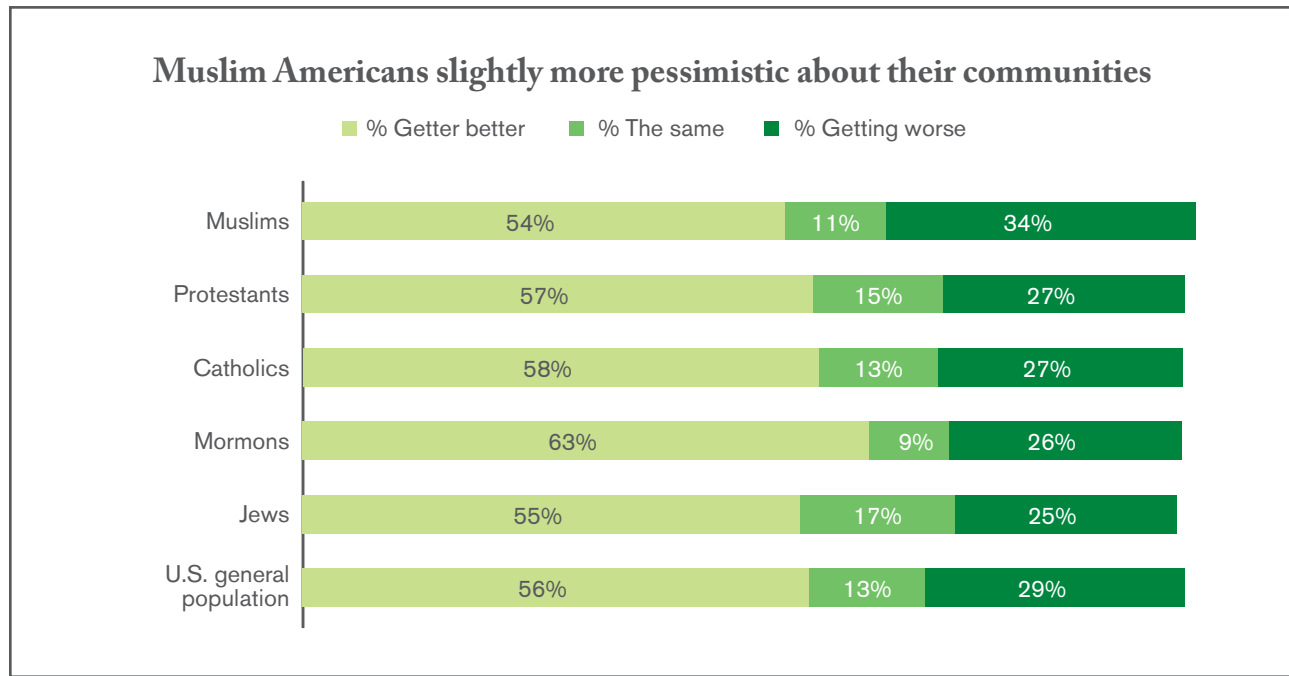
Muslim Americans must also play a critical role in shaping foreign policy issues. The United States cannot have a positive international image, especially in the Muslim world, without the participation of American Muslims.

Maher Hathout, M.D.

Dr. Maher Hathout, a retired physician, is a prominent leader of the American Muslim community. He has written numerous articles in Arabic and English. He is the spokesman for the Islamic Center of Southern California, the senior advisor to the Muslim Public Affairs Council as well as the chairman of Multimedia Vera International.

The majority of Muslim Americans (54%) believe their city is getting better as a place to live, which is only slightly lower than several other religious groups. However, a larger percentage of Muslim Americans are pessimistic about their community than is observed in other groups. Roughly a third of Muslims believe their community is getting worse, which is slightly higher than all other studied religious groups.

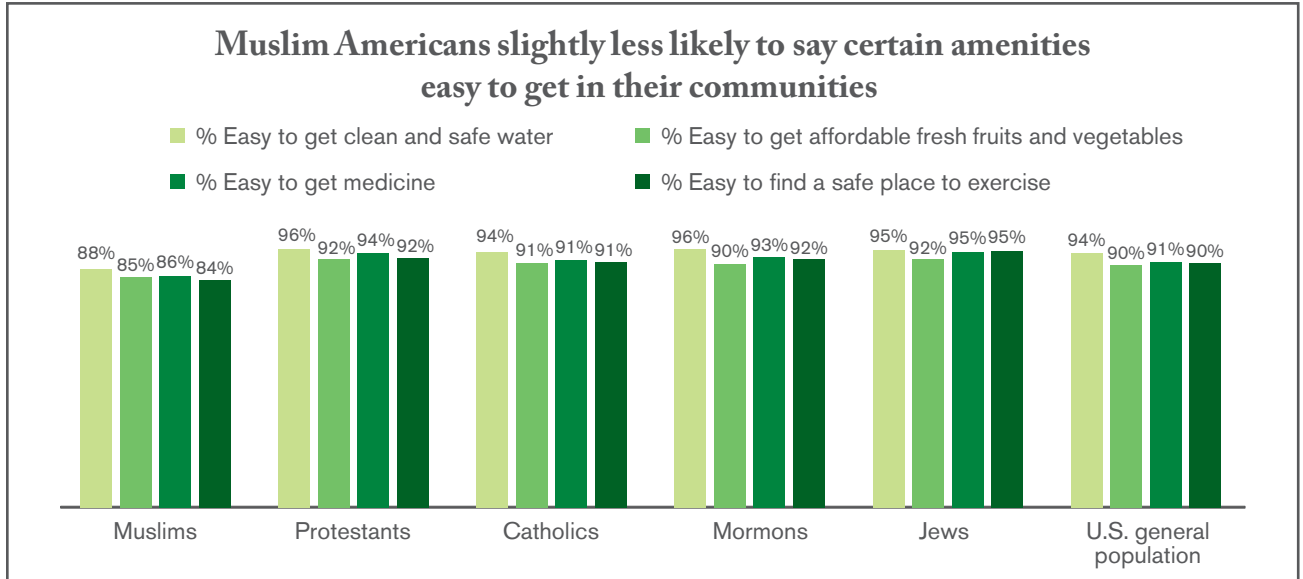
Figure 45



Is the city or area where you live getting better or getting worse as a place to live?

This concern for the community's future is reflected in Muslims' assessment of the availability within their city or areas of clean and safe water, fresh fruits and vegetables, medicine, and a safe place to exercise. On all four assessments of community quality of life, Muslim Americans rate theirs slightly lower than do other religious groups and the U.S. general population. Muslim Americans are slightly less likely than the general public and other religious communities to say they feel safe walking alone at night in their communities.

Figure 46



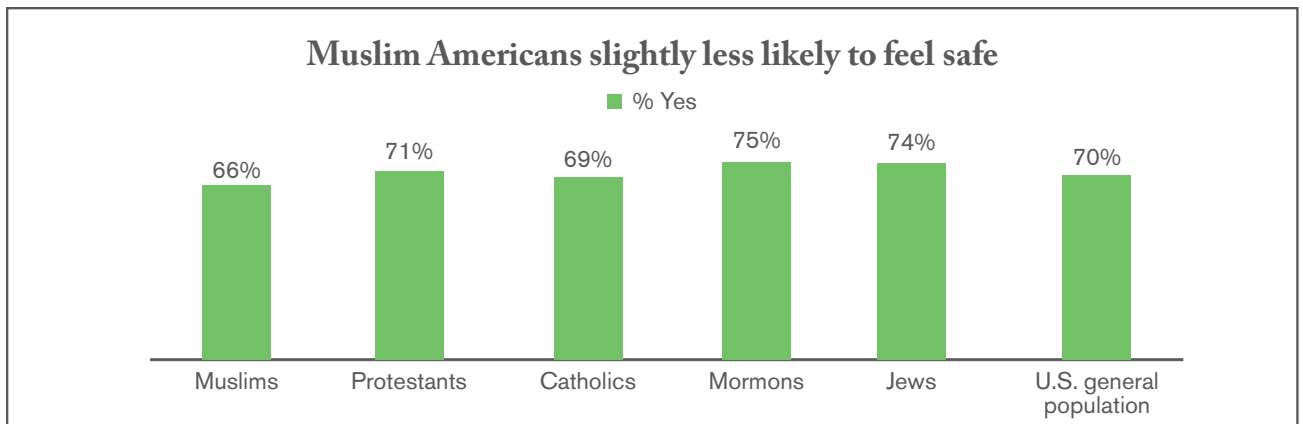
In the city or area where you live, is it easy or not easy to get: Clean and safe water?

In the city or area where you live, is it easy or not easy to get: Affordable fresh fruits and vegetables?

In the city or area where you live, is it easy or not easy to get: Medicine?

In the city or area where you live, is it easy or not easy to get: A safe place to exercise?

Figure 47



Do you feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where you live?

Chapter 2: Muslim Americans: Gender

Muslim American women are among the most highly educated female religious groups in the United States and are as likely as Muslim men to say they hold a professional job. Muslim women, in contrast to their female counterparts in other faith communities, are more likely than their male counterparts to express optimism about their lives and their jobs despite expressing similar pessimism about the overall economy.

Key Findings

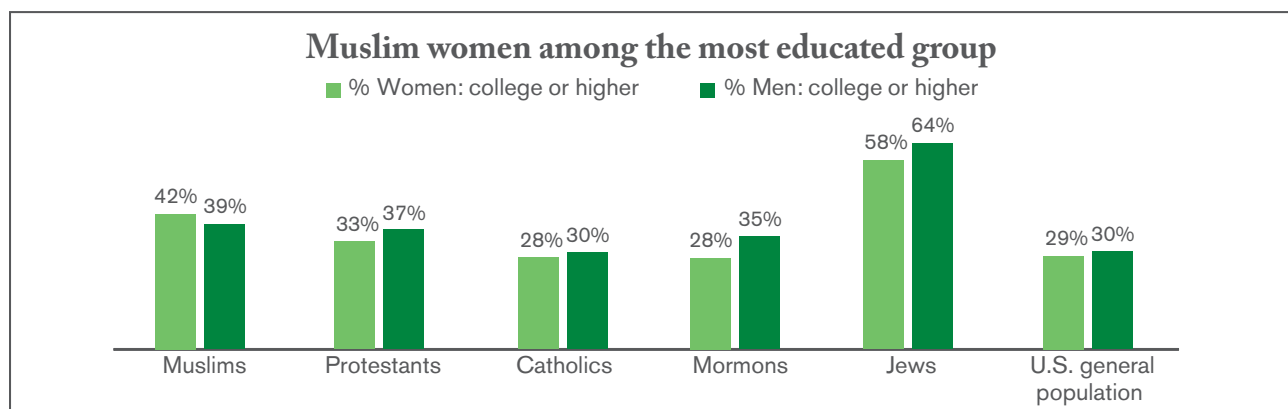
- Muslim women are at least as likely as Muslim men to hold a college or postgraduate degree.
- Muslims have a greater level of economic gender parity than any group studied.
- Muslim American women are roughly equal to Muslim men in frequent mosque attendance, in sharp contrast to women in many majority Muslim countries who are generally less likely than men to report attending a religious service in the last week.
- Muslim women and Mormon women are the only female groups in which fewer women than men report being treated with respect.

2a. Demographics

Education

After Jewish Americans, Muslim Americans are the most educated religious community studied. But Muslim women, unlike Jewish women, are statistically as likely as their male counterparts to say they have a college degree or higher education.

Figure 1



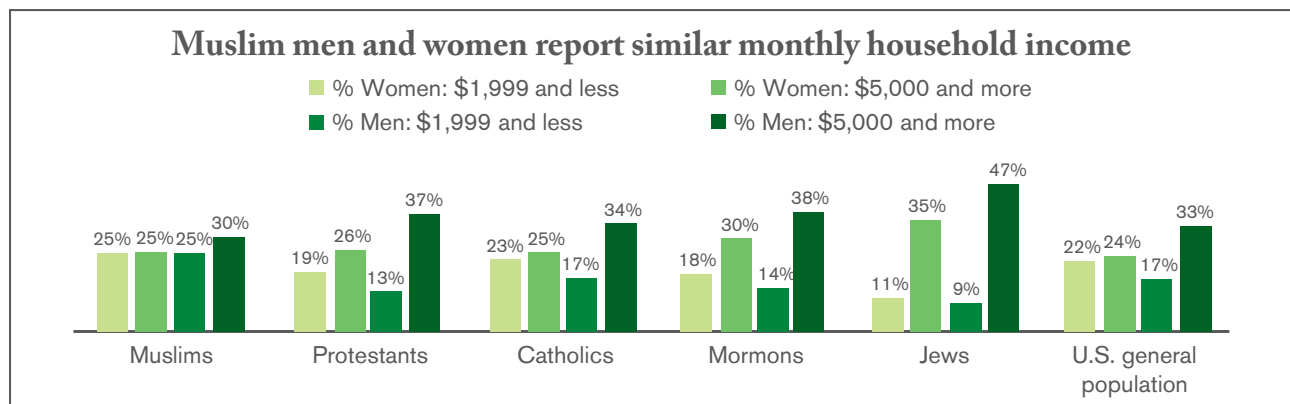
What is your highest completed level of education?

Income

Muslim Americans have the highest degree of reported economic gender parity, where a quarter of men and women report monthly household incomes of \$1,999 or less and men and women are also on the same footing in the higher income bracket. As a general trend in the United States, women make up the majority of those living with low incomes, and are less likely to report making higher incomes. Among the general public, 22% of women, compared with 17% of men, report monthly

household incomes of \$1,999 or less; while 33% of men compared with 24% of women say they have monthly household incomes of \$5,000 or more. The general trend is present among all religious groups studied, with Protestants and Catholics with the largest gender differences in the lower-income bracket, and Protestants and Jews with the largest difference between men and women in the higher-income bracket.

Figure 2

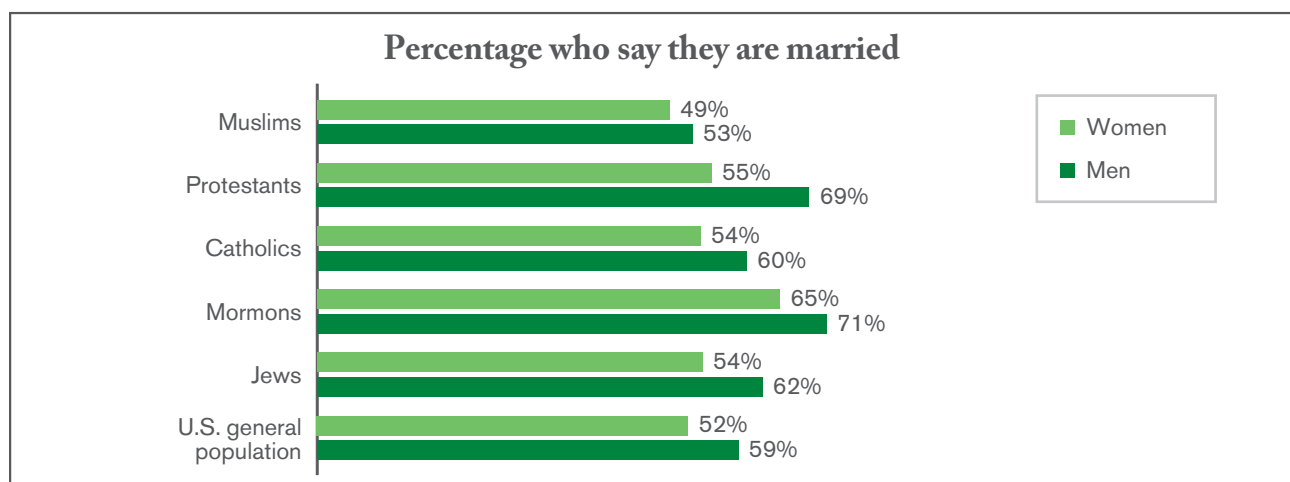


What is your total MONTHLY household income, before taxes? Please include income from wages and salaries, remittances from family members living elsewhere, farming, and all other sources.

Marital status

Across most religious groups, women are less likely than men to say they are married. Women also tend to be more likely than men to classify their marital status as “widowed.” However, this gender difference is absent or at least less pronounced among Muslim Americans. Though Muslim men and women are similar to their gender peers of other faiths in their likelihood to identify as divorced, they are both generally less likely to be widowed. Perhaps because of their relative youth as a community, only 1% of Muslim men and 3% of Muslim women say they are widowed. This compares with 5% of Protestant men and 18% of Protestant women, for example.

Figure 3



What is your marital status?

Figure 4

Percentage who say they are widowed or divorced

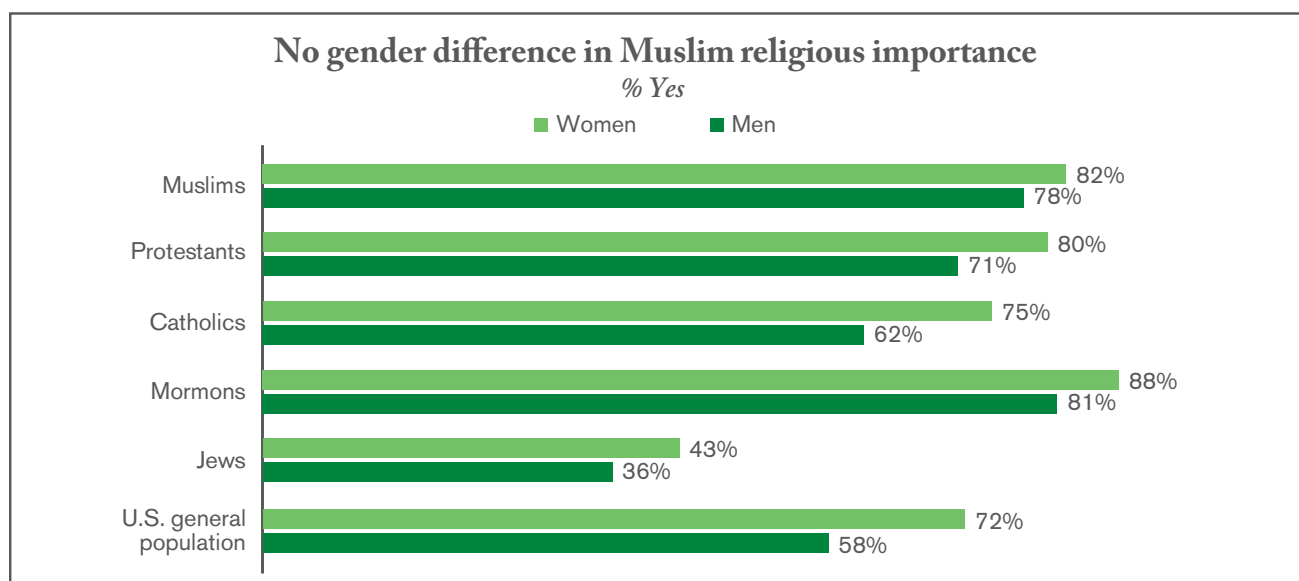
		Muslims	Protestants	Catholics	Mormons	Jews
Widowed	Women	3%	18%	12%	10%	12%
	Men	1%	5%	3%	2%	4%
Divorced	Women	9%	12%	10%	10%	10%
	Men	5%	8%	7%	5%	7%

What is your marital status?

2b. Religion

Across most religious communities studied, women are statistically more likely than men to say religion is an important part of their lives, but this is not the case among Muslim Americans.

Figure 5



Is religion an important part of your daily life?

Mormons', Catholics', and Protestants' frequency of religious service attendance roughly follows the gender trend observed in religious importance, where slightly more women than men report attending a religious service at least once a week. However, among Jews and Muslims, men are at least as likely as women to report weekly attendance. What is especially striking is Muslim men's and women's statistical equality in reported mosque attendance.

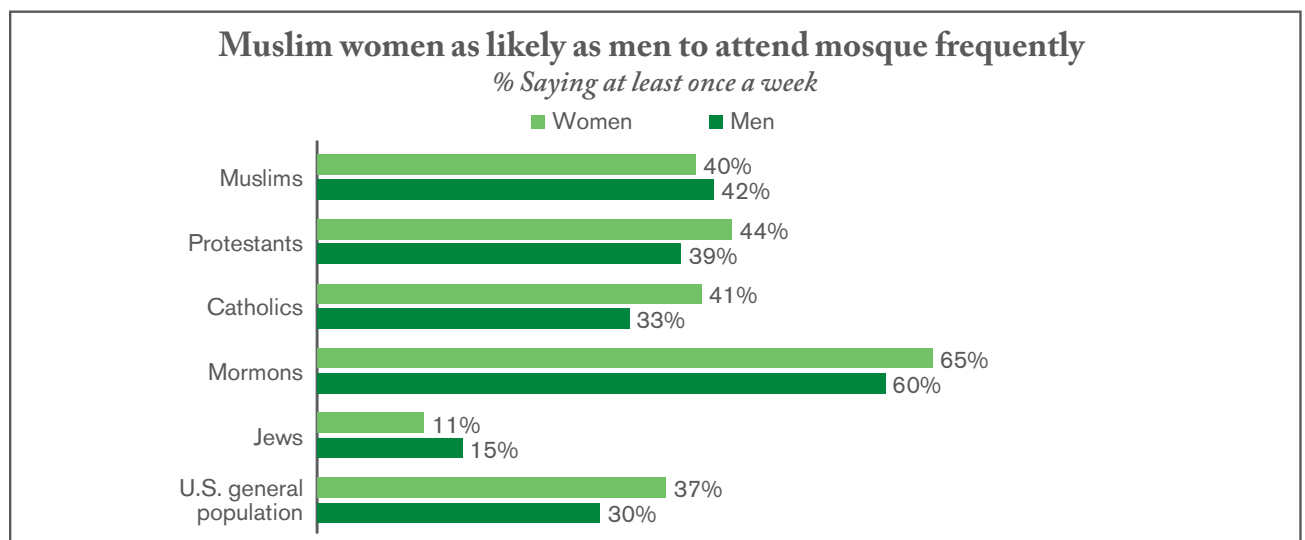
What is the most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years?

In the next 5 to 10 years, Muslim Americans must meet the challenge of establishing both our sense of ourselves as Muslims and Americans -- establishing institutions of all types that can facilitate the development of a rich, dynamic, and vibrant Muslim American culture. Through an unrelenting focus on civic engagement, we have tremendous potential to contribute to the betterment of American society through our strong emphasis on family and hard work, on protecting the environment, on establishing justice, struggling against injustice and oppression, and on serving and taking care of the most vulnerable in society. Even as a minority of our cohorts in near and distant parts of the world carry out acts of terror in the name of Islam, we must be undeterred in making ourselves worthy in word and deed of American support. We must redouble our efforts to establish our Muslim American identity in the fullest sense, instead of being targets of blind and unjustifiable condemnations of Islam and Muslims for heinous acts of terror. In the years to come, we must make a concerted effort to develop Islamic institutions of higher learning in America to educate future generations of Muslim Americans and to nurture and train Muslim religious scholars. These indigenous Muslim American scholars will be grounded in Islam and socialized as Americans. They will develop a distinctly Muslim American narrative; they will highlight the unique contributions of Muslims to American society as well as delineate the tremendous potential of the upcoming generations of Muslim Americans for the betterment of American society and the world. As a faith minority, but one whose religious values are at once universal, comprehensive, and timeless, the future of our community holds great promise as long as we maintain a majority mindset.

Altaf Husain, Ph.D.

Altaf Husain is executive assistant for academic affairs in the Office of the Provost at Howard University. He holds a Ph.D. in Social Work from Howard University, and among his research interests is the history and development of the Muslim community in the United States. Husain is the former national president of the Muslim Students' Association.

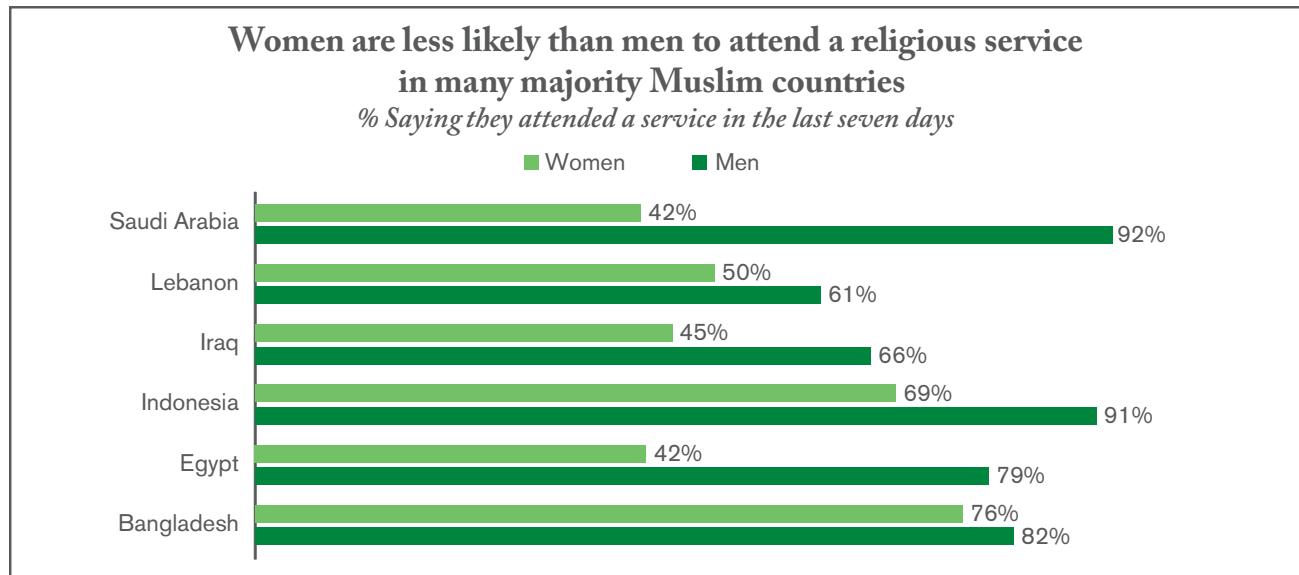
Figure 6



How often do you attend church, synagogue, or mosque -- at least once a week, almost every week, about once a month, seldom, or never?

This is in sharp contrast to the trend seen in some predominantly Muslim countries where men are much more likely than women to report attending a religious service in the last week.

Figure 7



Have you attended a place of worship or religious service within the last seven days?

Most interpret Islamic law to mandate male attendance at Friday congregational prayer, while making it only optional for women. This, along with a diverse range of cultural attitudes across the Muslim world pertaining to women at the mosque, helps to explain the sharp gender difference. However, our data suggest that a different dynamic exists in America, where women are as likely as men to be frequent mosquegoers. Mosques in America are used for social hubs, weekend religious schools, charity distribution centers, youth centers, as well as prayer spaces. Women may still be attending Friday prayer in smaller numbers because of the difference in religious obligation, but may be participating in other mosque functions.

With few exceptions, Muslim men and women are physically separate during prayer in the mosque. Many American mosques visited by the authors allot less prayer space for women than men. This allocation of space conforms to the attendance patterns prevalent in many majority Muslim societies, but not those uncovered by our research on Muslim Americans.

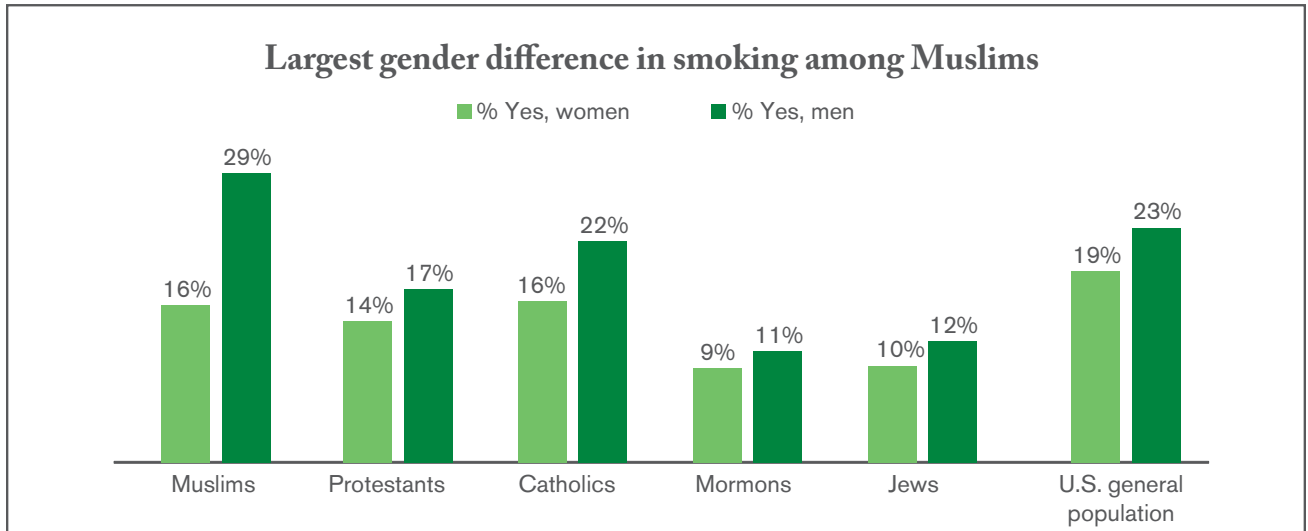
2c. Health and Well-Being

Physical Health

Smoking and Drinking

Of any group studied, Muslim men and women have the largest gender gap in their reported smoking. Sixteen percent of Muslim women say they smoke, which makes them more likely to say they smoke than Jewish and Mormon men and women, and only slightly less likely than women nationally (19%).

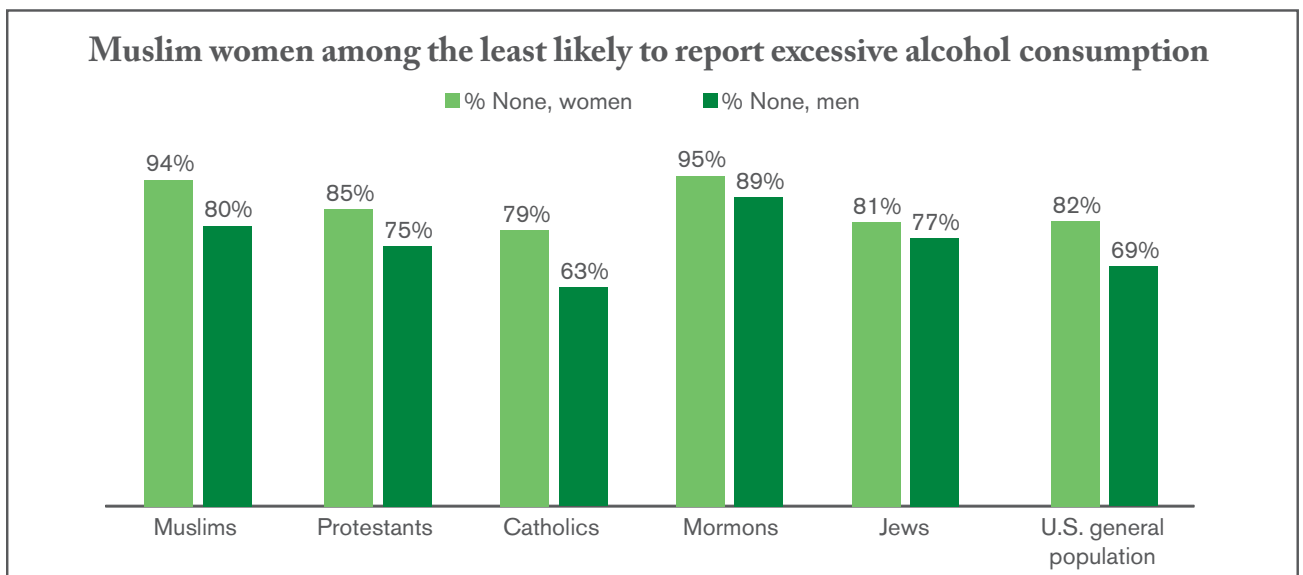
Figure 8



Do you smoke?

The Gallup survey shows that 80% of Muslim men and 94% of Muslim women report no days of binge drinking in the past week. A similar gender difference exists among Catholics and Protestants.

Figure 9

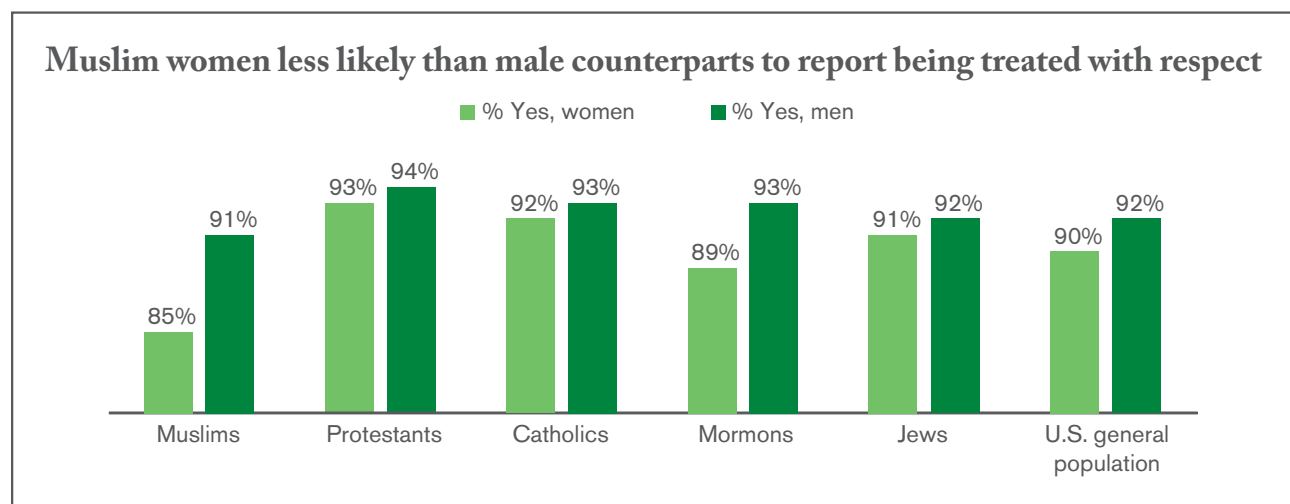


In the last seven days, on how many days did you: Consume at least five/four drinks containing alcohol

Emotional Health

Muslim American women (85%) are slightly less likely than Muslim men (91%) to say they were treated with respect the day before the survey, though Muslim men and women exhibit no gender differences in reported experiences of enjoyment and happiness. The gender difference in reported respect is not found between most genders in the religious groups surveyed or in the general U.S. population. Mormon women were also less likely than Mormon men to report being treated with respect. Their rate of experienced respect is similar to Muslim African Americans as a whole (86%).

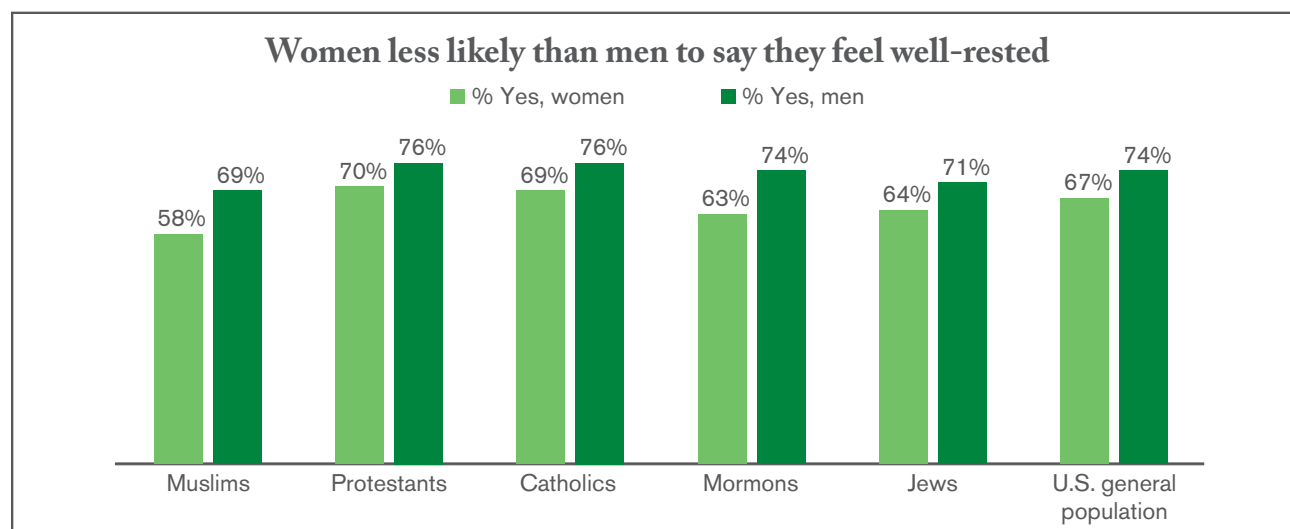
Figure 10



Were you treated with respect all day yesterday?

Muslim American men (69%) are more likely than Muslim women (58%) to report feeling well-rested, a pattern that is also observed among the general population, where 74% of men and 67% of women say the same.

Figure 11



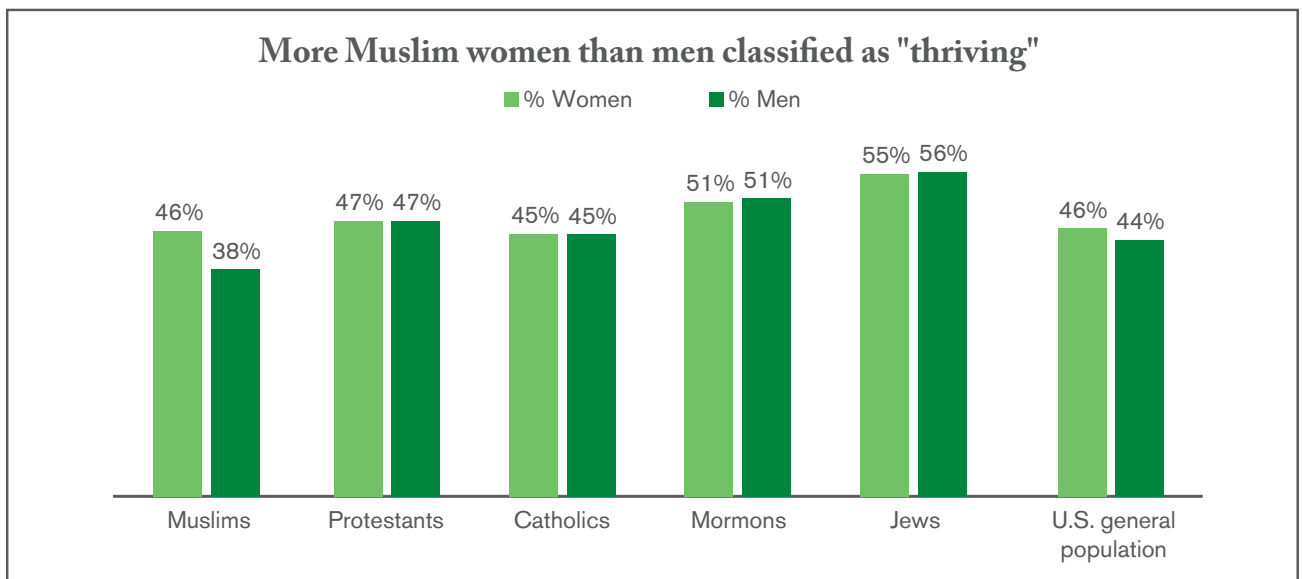
Did you feel well-rested yesterday?

Muslim men and women are equally likely to say they experienced worry, sadness, and even anger the day previous to the survey, but Muslim women are more likely to report experiencing stress. Almost one-half of Muslim American women (47%) say they have a lot of stress, compared with 39% of Muslim men. However, a similar gender pattern is observed in the population as a whole, with 42% of women and 36% of men reporting that they experienced stress.

Life Satisfaction

Despite being more likely than their male peers to report experiencing stress, more Muslim women are likely to fall into the category of “thriving” (46%) based on their assessment of the quality of their lives overall than are Muslim men (38%). Muslim Americans are the only religious group that Gallup studied to show a significant gender difference in this measure.

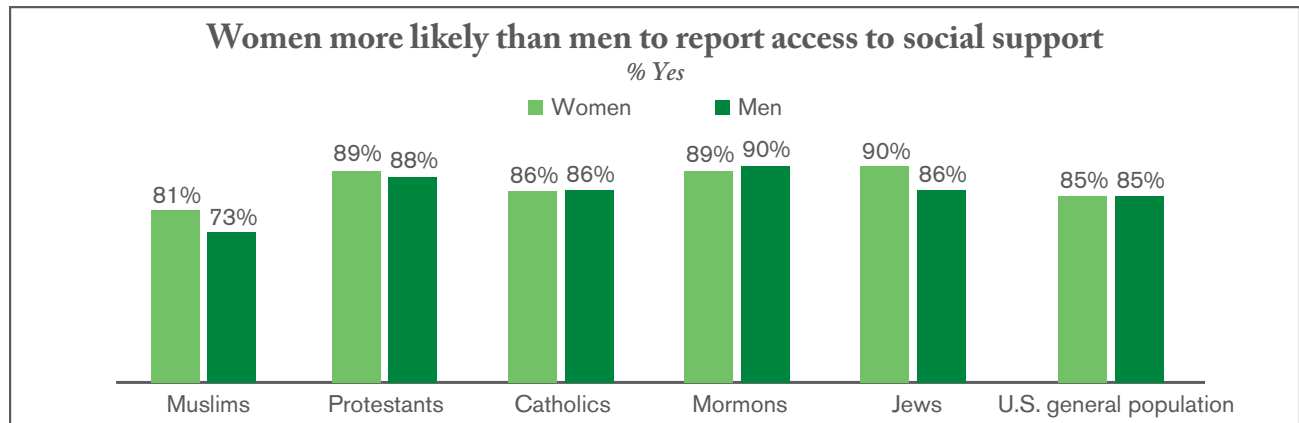
Figure 12



Please imagine a ladder, with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder do you feel you personally stand at the present time?

Please imagine a ladder, with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. Just your best guess, on which step do you think you will stand on in the future, say about five years from now?

Figure 13



If you were in trouble, do you have relatives or friends you can count on to help you whenever you need them, or not?

That Muslim women surpass Muslim men on the “thriving” scale may partially be explained by this finding: Muslim women feel more socially supported than do Muslim men. Muslim women are more likely than Muslim men (81% vs. 73%) to report having relatives or friends they could count on for help if they were in trouble. This significant gender difference is unique to Muslims in comparison to all other studied groups.

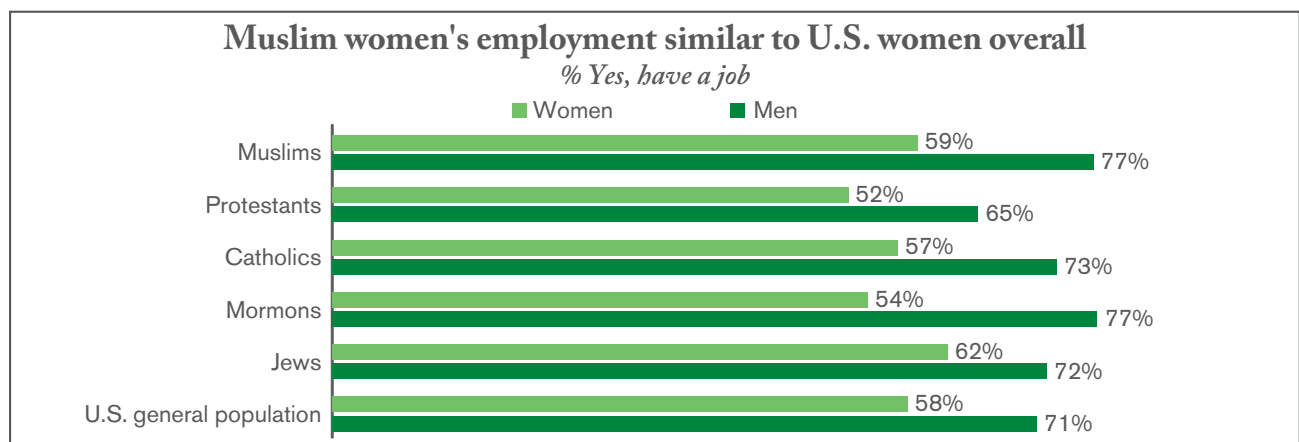
2d. Economic Conditions and Employment

Employment

Nearly 6 in 10 Muslim American women report having a job, which is on par with the 58% of women in the general population. However, despite being more likely to attain higher education, Muslim women are as likely as Catholic (57%) and Mormon (54%) women to say they work. Muslim American men have one of the highest employment rates.

Muslim women who say they work are statistically as likely as Muslim men to say they work in a professional job (35% vs. 27%).

Figure 14



Do you currently have a job or work (either paid or unpaid work)?

What is the most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years?

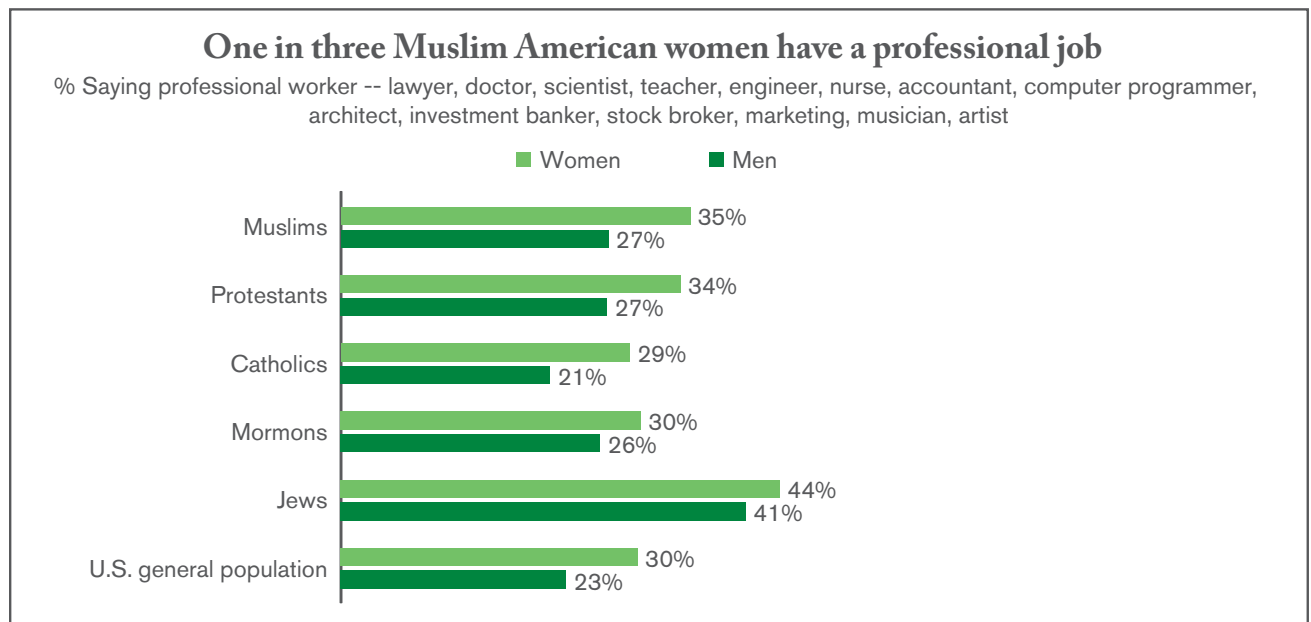
The most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years is to become fully integrated into the public sphere in America. This goal can only be achieved by a transformation of thought and action within American Muslim communities. Muslim Americans must prioritize developing a generation of lawyers, journalists, social and political science scholars, and politicians. Our communities should support media training, independent think tanks, and unreserved engagement in American political life on both domestic and foreign policy issues. To further our influence and confidence in our ability to engage and debate as equals, we should promote bilingualism, public speaking training, internal venues for debate, produce objective research and scholarship, and many more Muslim voices in mainstream media.

In addition to developing human resources from within our communities, we should also focus on developing supporting institutions funded from within our communities. Examples would include funding chairs in Islamic Studies, Religion, Politics of the Middle East, and Politics of the Muslim World in top-tier universities. We should develop the equivalent of a think tank such as the Brookings Institution and provide a solid base of influential and persuasive representatives to speak on the wide range of issues directly affecting Muslim Americans and their extended family networks around the world. We should set up training programs focusing on achieving these goals and we should consider how to develop an effective network of political action committees that can share their perspectives on the issues that most affect them. We should especially concentrate on developing and promoting a new generation of Muslim community leaders who are born and raised in America and who understand its political context and public life from intimate, firsthand knowledge.

Ausma Khan, Ph.D.

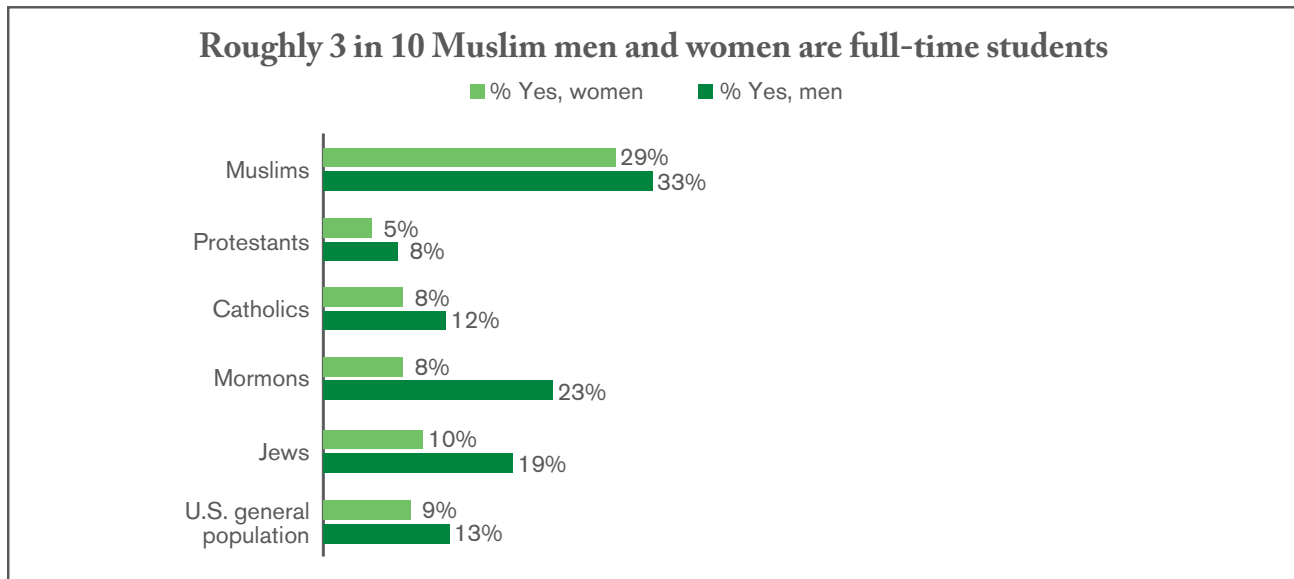
Ausma Khan is a writer and human rights lawyer and activist who left a teaching position at Northwestern University to become editor in chief of Muslim Girl Magazine. Khan holds a Ph.D. in International Human Rights Law from Osgoode Hall Law School.

Figure 15



Could you tell me the general category of work you do in your primary job?

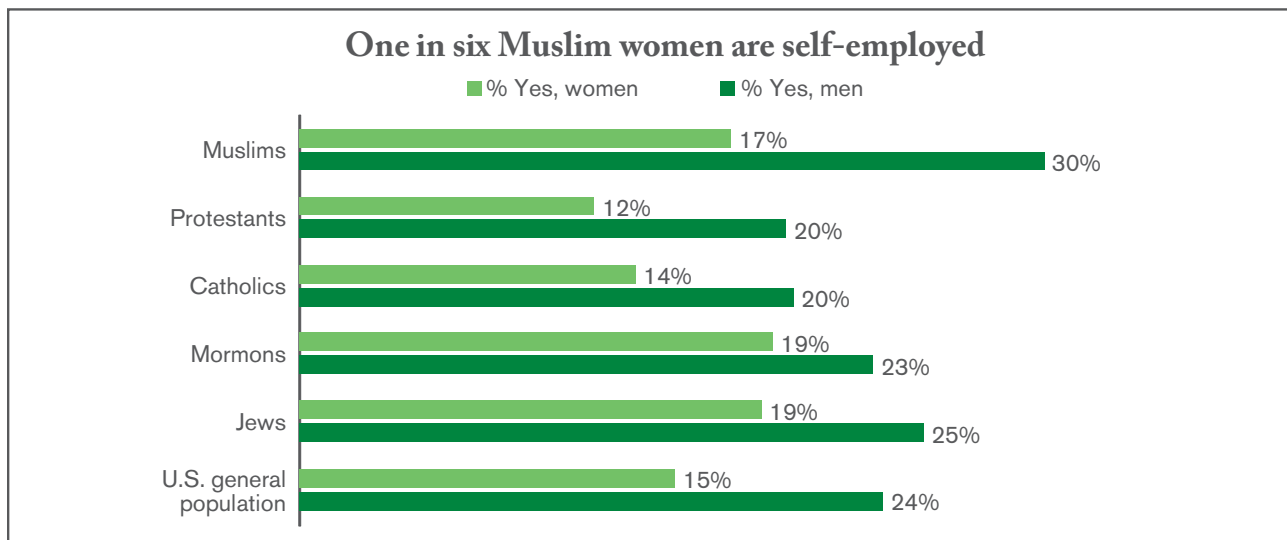
Figure 16



Please tell me whether each of the following applies to you, or not. Are you a full-time student?

Muslim men and women are roughly equally likely to report being full-time students (29% of women and 33% of men), in contrast with Jews (10% of women vs. 19% of men) and especially with Mormons who have a large gender difference (8% of women vs. 23% of men). This is reflected in Gallup's demographic information on higher education.

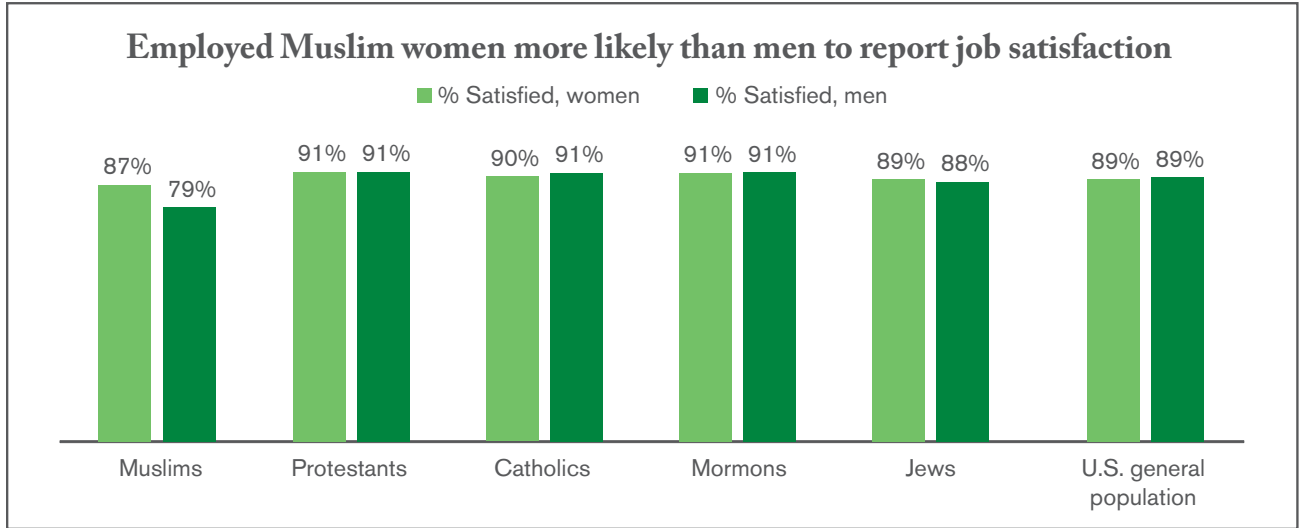
Figure 17



Please tell me whether each of the following applies to you, or not. Are you self-employed or make money or barter by working for yourself by doing domestic work, farm work, odd jobs, or working for your own business?

Self-employment among women is significantly lower than it is for men across religious groups and the U.S. general population, and Muslims are no exception. Muslim women are among the more likely of their fellow females to be self-employed (17%), but are significantly less likely than Muslim men (30%) who surpass all other men and women in this regard.

Figure 18



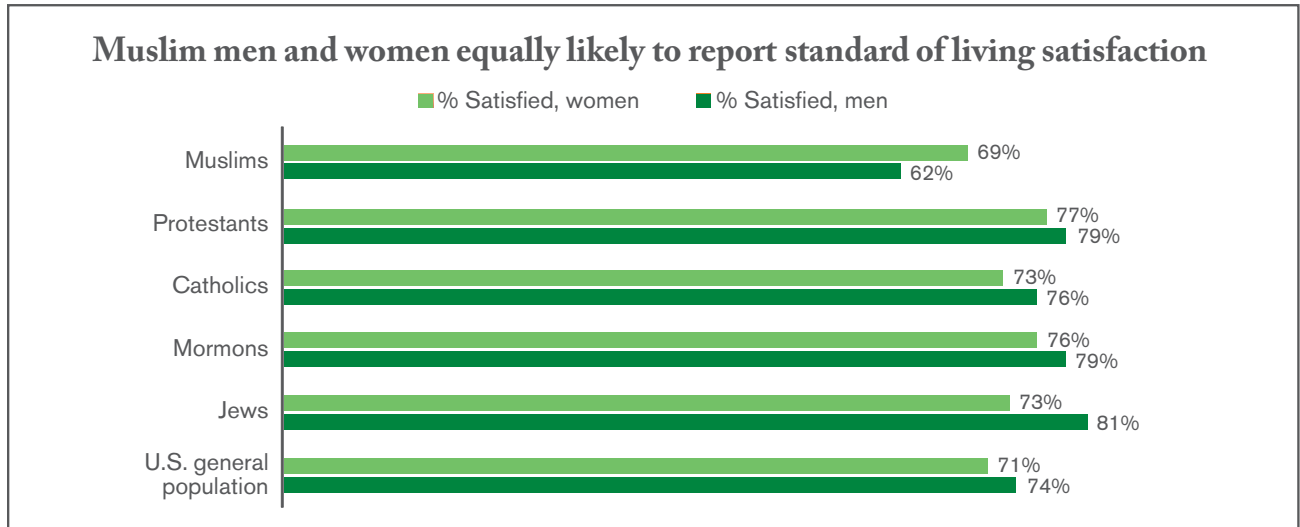
Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your job or the work you do?

Like with their overall life satisfaction, Muslim women are significantly more likely than Muslim men to report being satisfied with their jobs (87% vs. 79%). This gender difference is not found in other groups studied.

Economic Outlook

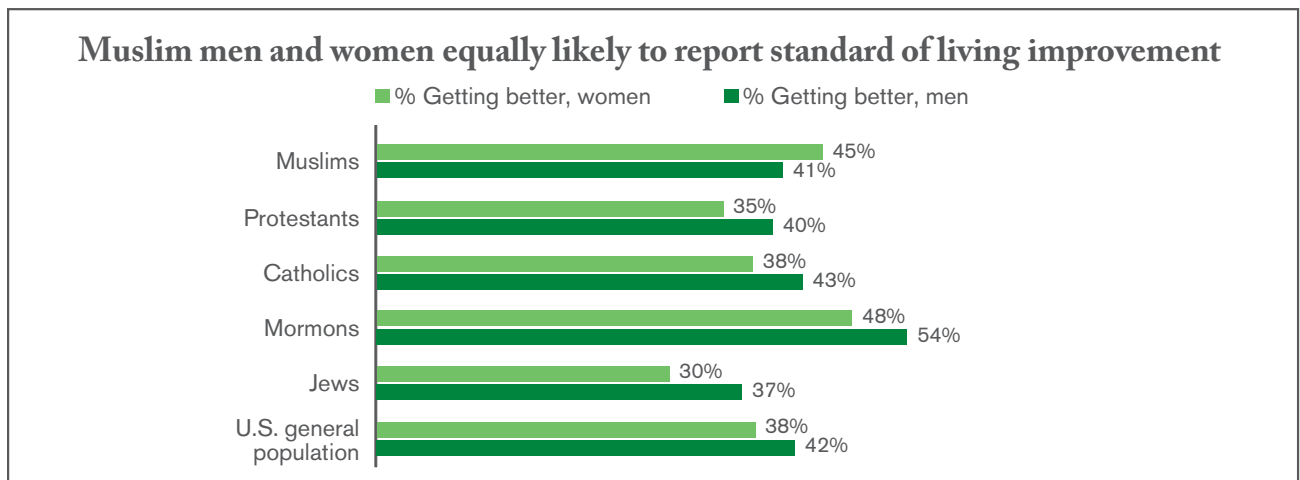
Muslim women are statistically as likely as Muslim men to say they are satisfied with their standard of living (69% vs. 62%), in contrast to the gender trend observed across other groups, where women tend to express less satisfaction with all the things they can buy and do. This same trend is observed in Muslim men's and women's assessment of whether their standard of living is improving. Nearly half of Muslim women (45%) believe their standard of living is getting better, compared with a statistically similar 41% of Muslim men. Again, the opposite gender pattern is observed among other groups, where men are more likely to express optimism about their living standards than are women. This same trend is observed in reported financial concern, where 46% of Muslim women and 50% of Muslim men said they worried about money yesterday.

Figure 19



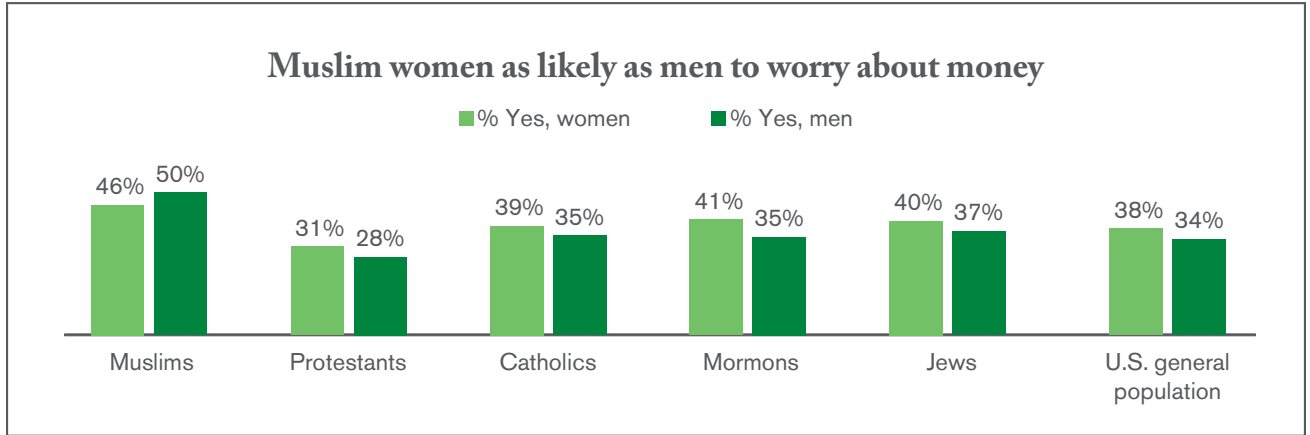
Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your standard of living, all the things you can buy and do?

Figure 20



Right now, do you feel your standard of living is getting better or getting worse?

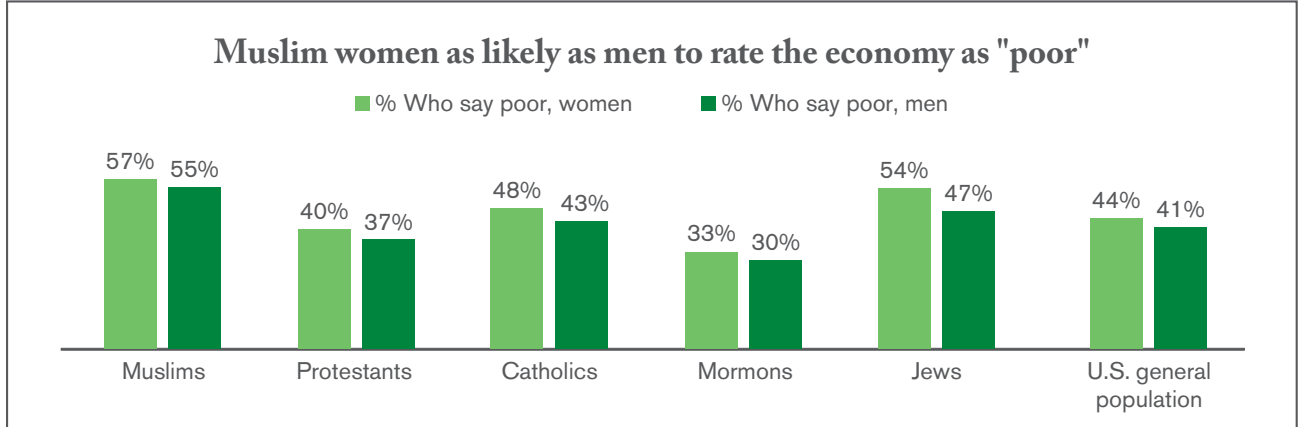
Figure 21



Did you worry about money yesterday?

Muslim women are as likely as Muslim men to view the economy as “poor.” This suggests that Muslim women’s relative satisfaction with their lives and their jobs is not the product of “blissful ignorance” of economic realities.

Figure 22



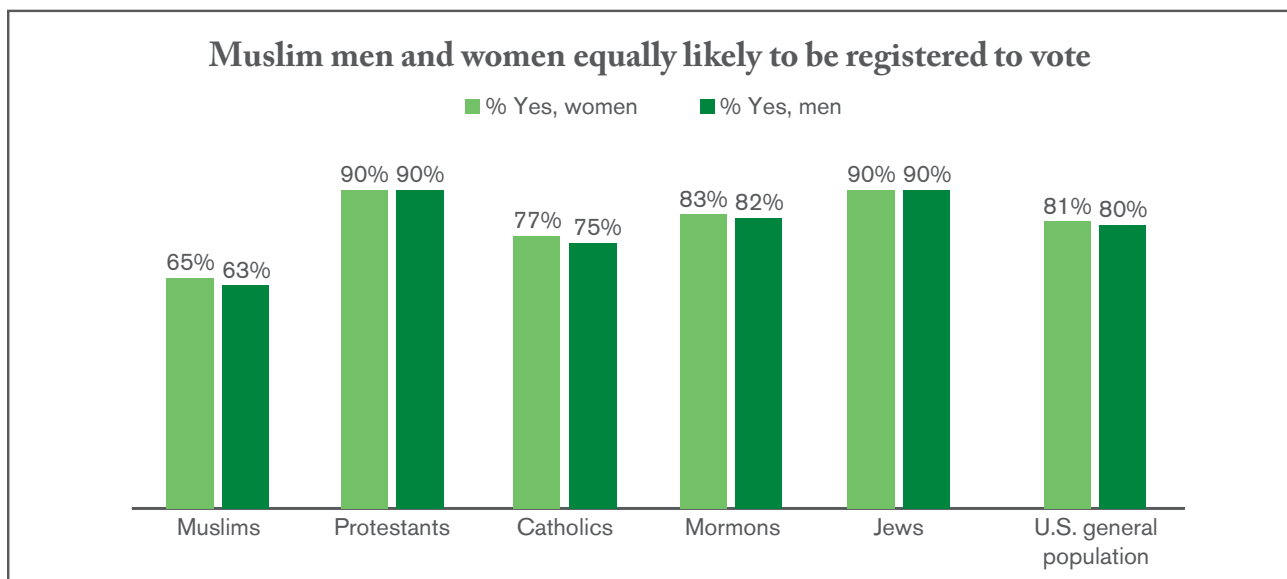
How would you rate economic conditions in this country today -- as excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

2e. Political Views

Registration to Vote

Similar to respondents in other religious communities, Muslim Americans have no gender gap in voter registration, with 65% of women and 63% of men saying they are registered to vote.

Figure 23

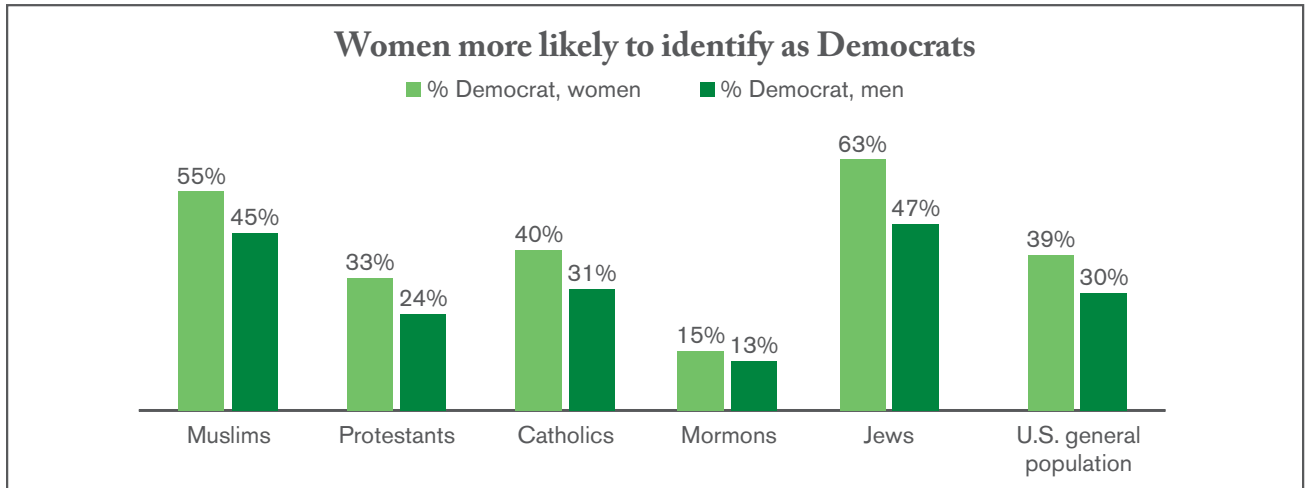


Are you registered to vote in your precinct or election district or not?

Party Affiliation

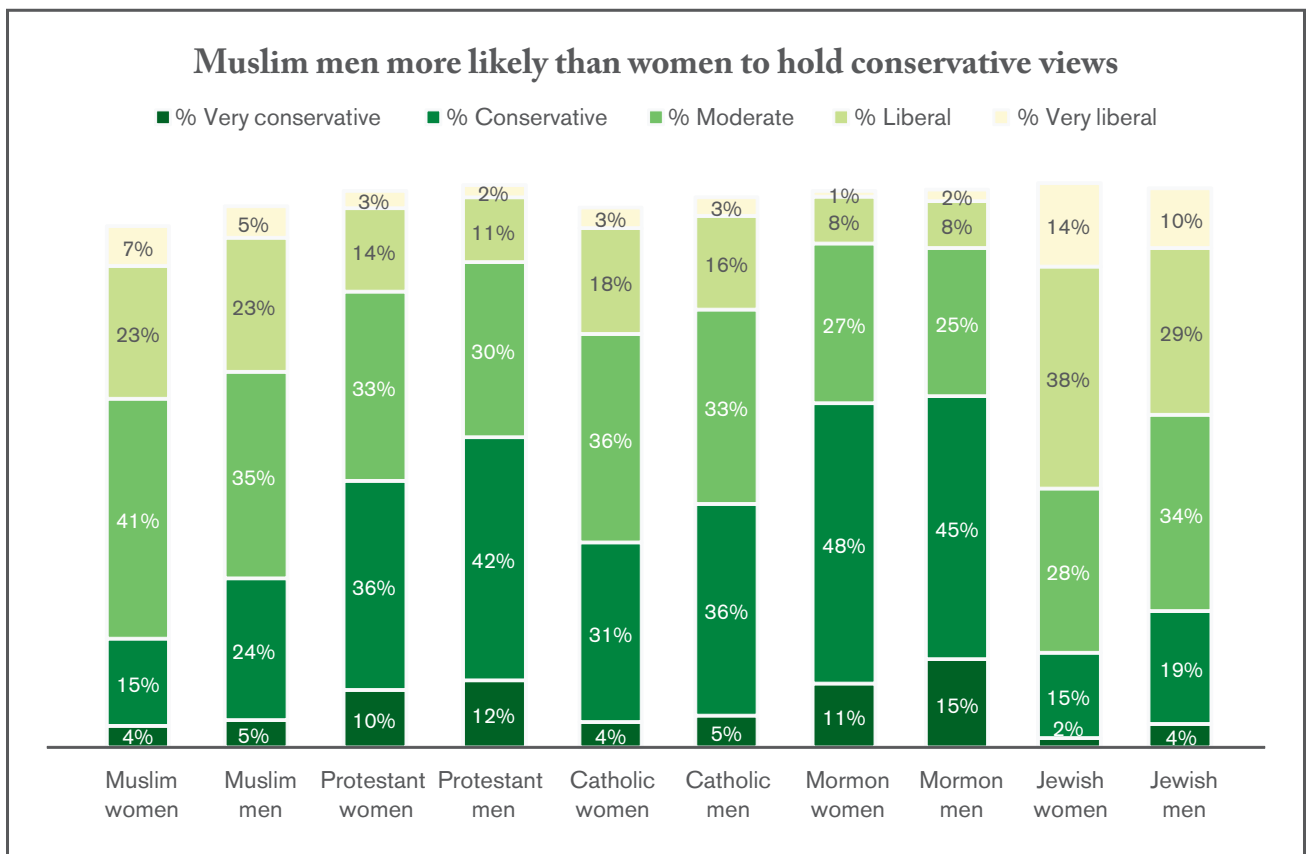
Like respondents in other religious groups, Muslim women are more likely than Muslim men to identify as Democrats. The gender difference among Muslim Democrats however does not translate into greater support for the Republican Party among Muslim men. Instead, Muslim men are more likely than Muslim women (41% vs. 33%) to identify as independents.

Figure 24



Do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

Figure 25

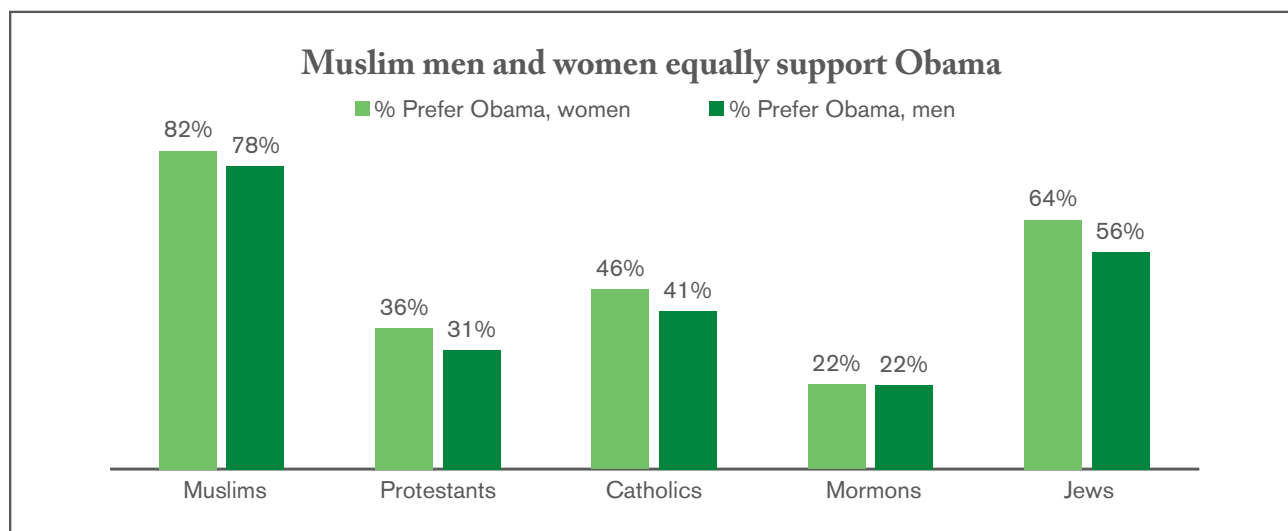


What are your political views?

Like Protestants, Jews, and Catholics in the United States, Muslims are slightly more likely to identify as conservative if they are male. Unlike Jews, Muslim women and Muslim men are roughly as likely to say they are liberal, but Muslim women surpass men in their identification with a moderate political outlook.

Obama/Biden vs. McCain/Palin

Figure 26



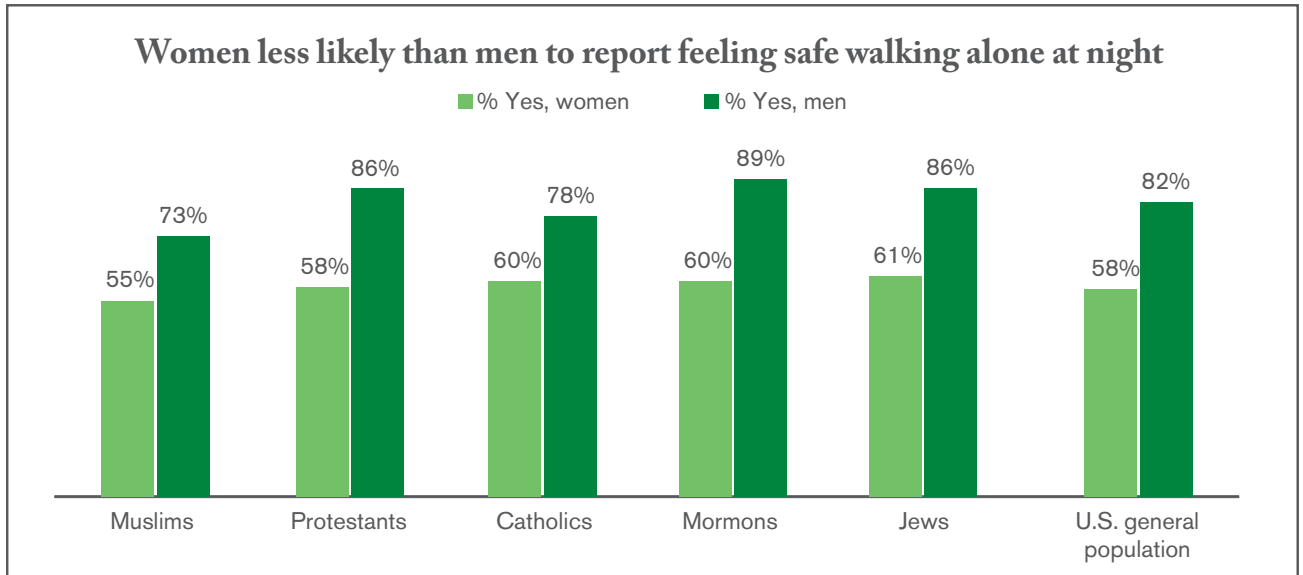
Suppose the presidential election were held today. Would you vote for Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, or John McCain and Sarah Palin the Republicans

While Muslim women are slightly more likely than men to call themselves Democrats, they are as likely as Muslim men to support Obama.

2f. Community Satisfaction

While Muslim American men and women are roughly equal in their assessment of their standard of living, they, like other groups, differ along gender lines in their assessment of personal safety. Muslim men (73%) are more likely than Muslim women (55%) to say they feel safe walking alone at night in their communities. Muslim women's perceptions of safety are roughly on par with those of women in other faith groups, but Muslim men's perceptions are lower than those of men in most other religious groups.

Figure 27



Do you feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where you live?

Topics for Further Research:

- Why are Muslim women less likely than Muslim men to feel respected?
- Why are Muslim women more likely than Muslim men to be classified as “thriving”?
- What implications could equal gender attendance have for mosques? How satisfied are women and men with their religious institutions?

Chapter 3: Muslim Americans: Race

Muslim Americans are the most socioeconomically and racially diverse religious group surveyed. The range that exists in their reported demographics reflects the country's overall economic racial disparity. Despite these differences, when it comes to the importance of religion, economic optimism, and political preferences, Muslim Americans of different racial backgrounds share much in common.

KEY FINDINGS

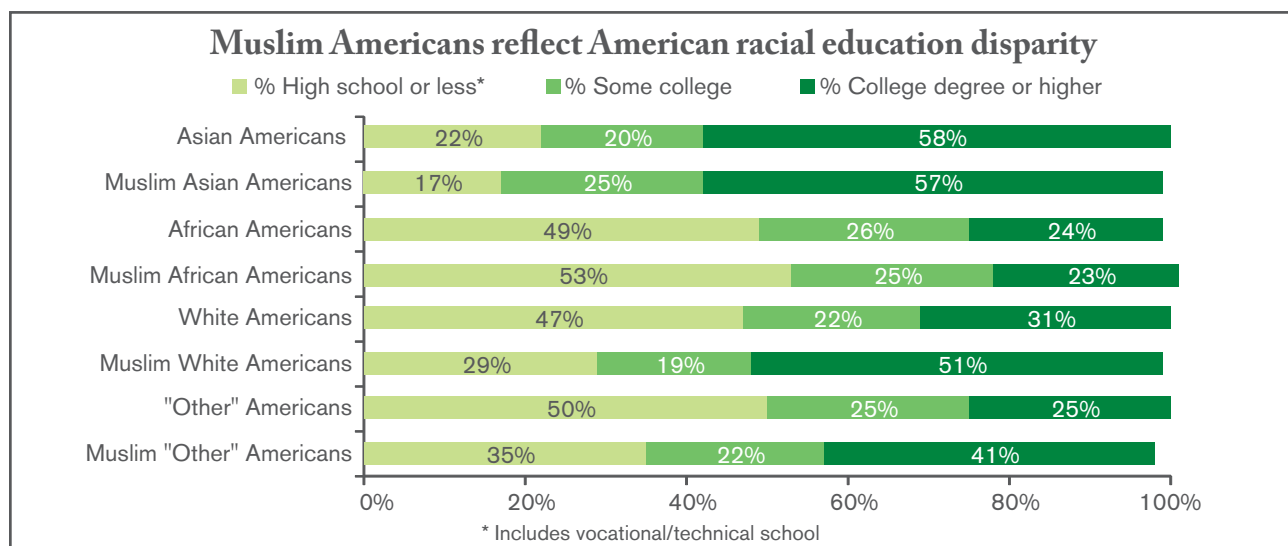
- Muslim Americans, for the most part, reflect the wider public's race-based education and income disparities, where Muslim Asian Americans are the most likely to report higher incomes and Muslim African Americans are the least likely.
- Muslim Americans across race groups are generally more concerned than their peers in the general public about their economic future, and generally report lower emotional well-being than do their racial peers. This is particularly true among Muslim African Americans, as 45% reported they did not have enough money to afford food at times in the past year, which is the largest percentage of any group studied.
- Muslim Americans are at least as religious, if not more religious than the general population of their respective racial peers.
- Majorities of Muslim Americans of all racial backgrounds support Barack Obama and generally are more likely than their racial peers in the general public to do so. However, voter registration is depressed among Muslim Americans, with the greatest difference between Muslim white Americans (66%) and the general white population (84%) and also between Muslim African Americans (69%) and African Americans in the U.S. general population (84%).

3a. Demographics

Muslim Americans surveyed reflect the wider public's race-based education and income disparities. Asian and white respondents are the most educated racial groups among Muslims and the general public. Muslim Asian Americans and their racial peers are equally likely to say they have college degrees or higher education. On the other hand, Muslim African Americans are similar to their racial peers in their level of education, but are significantly less likely than Muslim Asian Americans and Muslim white Americans or Muslim Americans who classify their race as "other" to say they have college degrees or higher education.

Muslim white Americans are significantly more likely than their racial peers in the U.S. general population to be highly educated. More than one-half of Muslim white Americans have at least a college degree. This compares with only a third of whites in the general population who have at least a college degree.

Figure 1

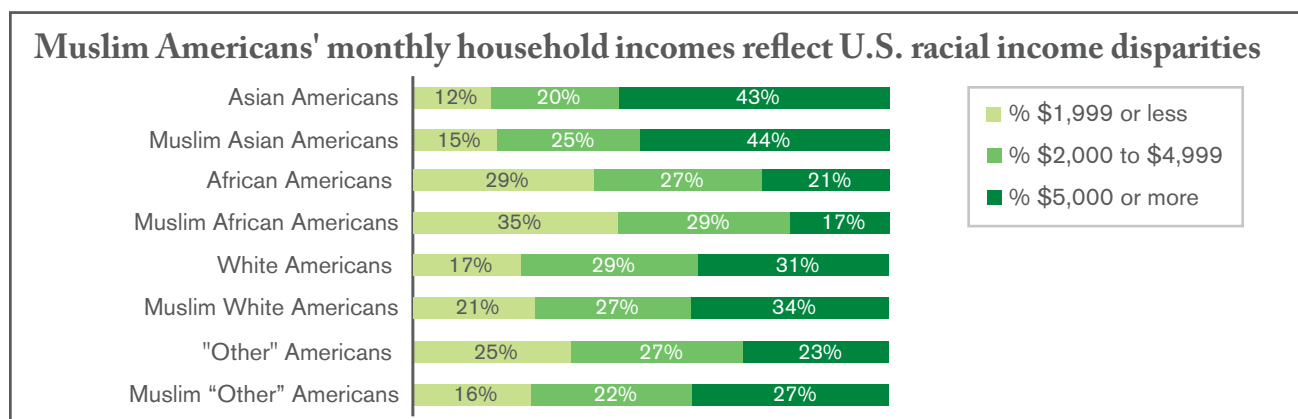


What is your highest completed level of education?

Muslim Americans' incomes differ by race, which is in line with trends in the national population. While Muslim Americans track closely with their racial peers on income (43% of Asian Americans overall and 44% of Muslim Asian Americans report a monthly household income of \$5,000 or more, for example), they vary significantly from Muslims of other races.

The largest difference is between Muslim Asian Americans and Muslim African Americans (44% vs. 17% with a monthly household income of \$5,000 or higher). Muslim Asian Americans are among the most likely to report higher incomes, while Muslim African Americans are the least likely. Muslim African Americans are also the only Muslim racial group that reports a slightly lower income than their racial peers in the general public (35% of Muslim African Americans report a monthly income of \$1,999 or less vs. 29% of African Americans overall). Race, rather than religious affiliation, is the stronger predictor of income in the United States.

Figure 2



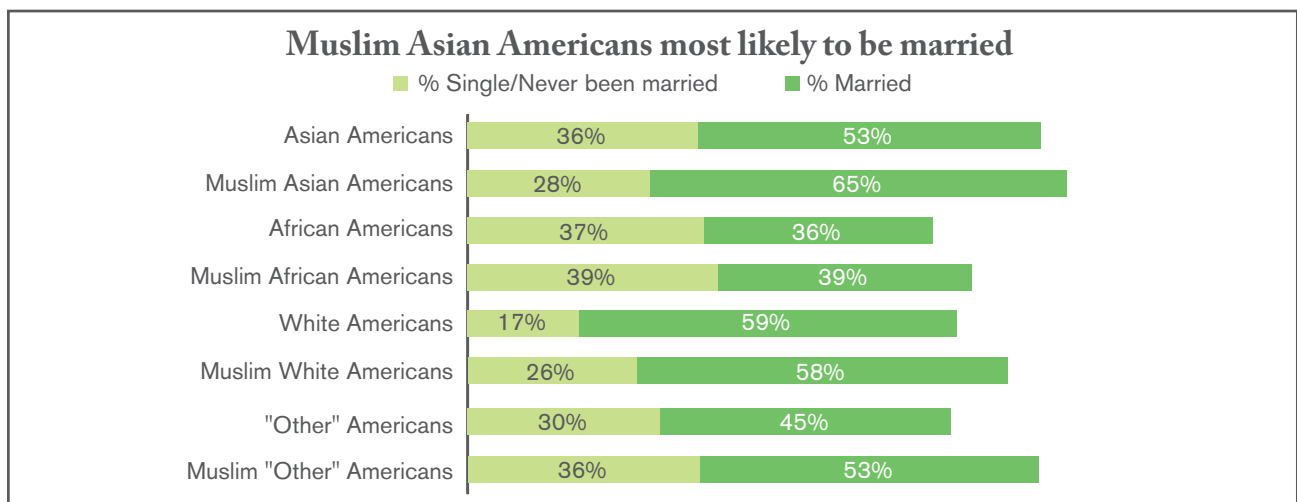
What is your total MONTHLY household income, before taxes? Please include income from wages and salaries, remittances from family members living elsewhere, farming, and all other sources.

3b. Family

Marital status

Muslim Americans' marital status varies among the different racial groups. More than a quarter of Muslim Asian Americans and Muslim white Americans say they are single and nearly 4 in 10 Muslim African Americans and Muslim Americans who say they are of "other" races also say they are single. The percentages of Muslim Americans who are married most closely align with percentages in their racial group, than to their religious group.

Figure 3

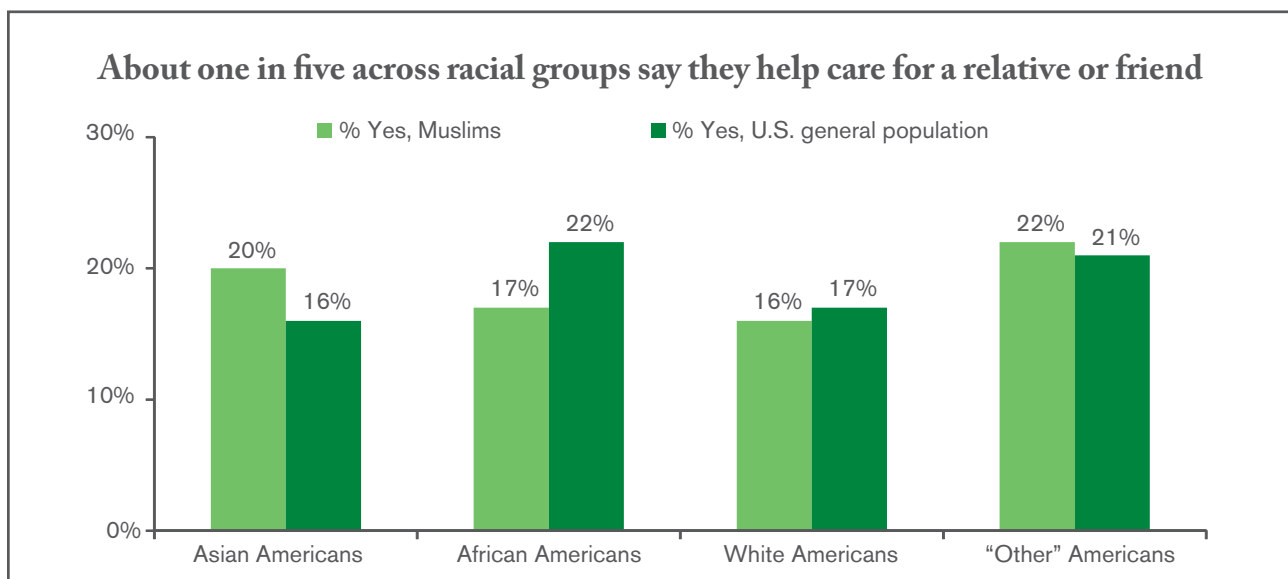


What is your marital status?

Caregiving and Support Network

Overall, roughly one in five Muslims across racial groups say they help care for an older or disabled relative or friend. Muslim Americans are statistically as likely as their racial counterparts to say they have caregiving responsibilities.

Figure 4

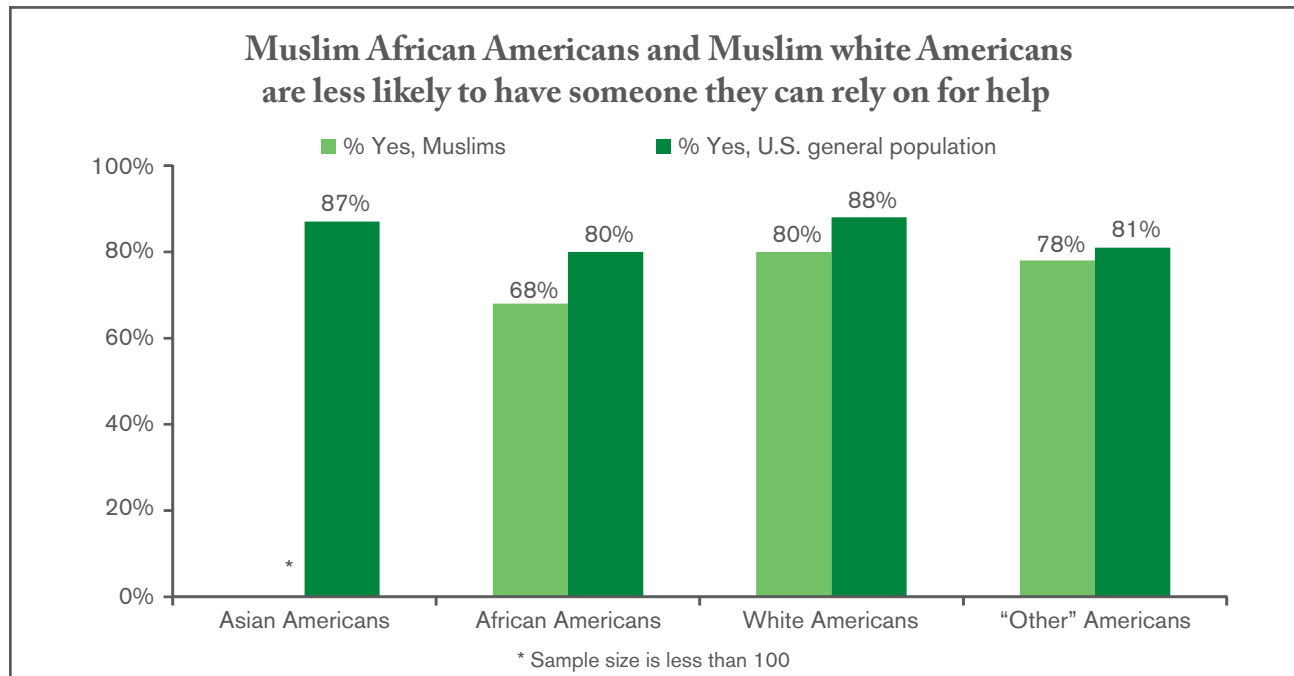


Do you currently help care for an elderly or disabled family member, relative, or friend, or not?

Among the Muslim American population, reliance on a support network is high across all racial groups. While a majority of Muslim African Americans report having the ability to tap their family and social network in case they needed help, they are also less likely than other racial groups within the Muslim population to say that they can rely on such help.

Additionally, Muslim African Americans and Muslim white Americans are less likely than their racial counterparts to say they can count on their social network if they needed it.

Figure 5



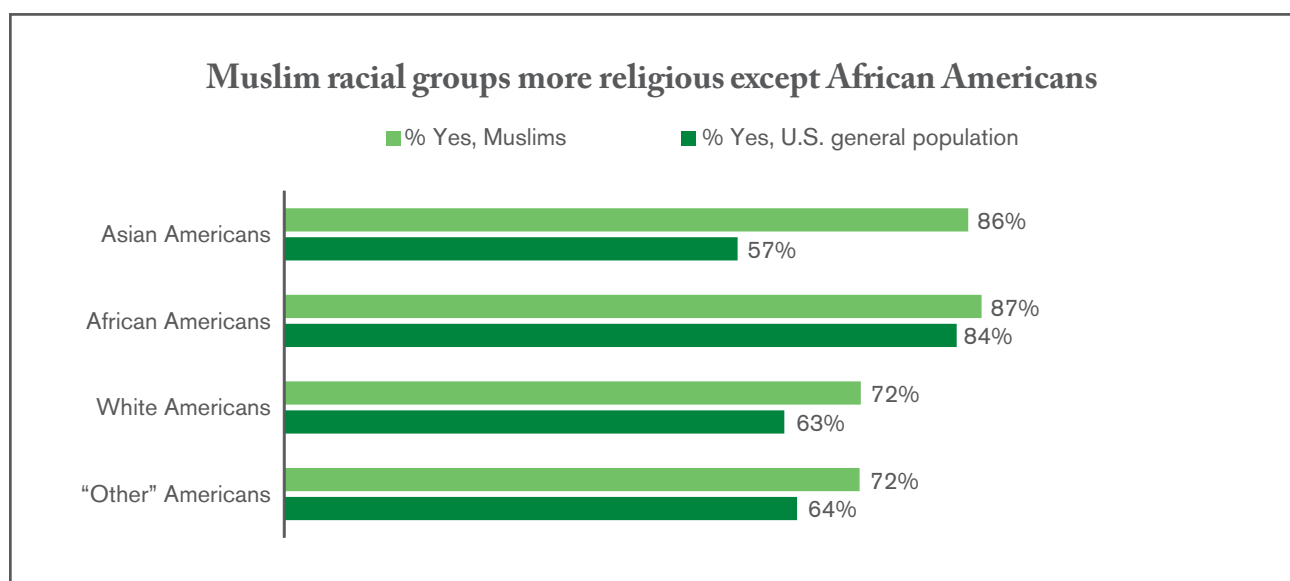
If you were in trouble, do you have relatives or friends you can count on to help you whenever you need them, or not?

3c. Religion

Unlike income and education, when it comes to religion, Muslim Americans of different racial backgrounds generally are more similar to each other than to their racial peers. This is especially true for Muslim African Americans and Muslim Asian Americans, who contrast sharply in average income and education level, but are nearly identical in level of religiosity (86% of Muslim Asian Americans and 87% of Muslim African Americans say religion is an important part of their lives).

In general, Muslim Americans are more likely to say religion is important in their lives than are their racial peers in the general population. The exception to this is African Americans, who are most religious racial group surveyed in America, whether they are Muslim or another faith. The largest difference between Muslims and their racial peers in terms of importance of religion is between Asian Americans overall (57%) and Muslim Asian Americans (86%) who are among the most likely to say religion is important in their daily lives.

Figure 6



Is religion an important part of your daily life?

Muslim Asian Americans are the most likely to say they attend a mosque at least once a week, followed by Muslim African Americans and Muslims of "other" race.

Like the importance of religion, Muslim African Americans' frequency of mosque attendance tracks closely to overall African American attendance of religious services. It is interesting to note the relative similarity between Muslim African Americans and African Americans in the general public in spiritual commitment because African Americans likely make up the lion's share of converts to Islam.

Muslim African Americans and Muslims of "other" race are similar to Protestant Americans in their likelihood to say they attend a religious service at least once a week.

What is the most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years?

I am not sure 5 or 10 years constitute the proper unit of measurement in thinking about the Muslim agenda in America. I am fairly certain, however, about the priority of three interrelated goals, as Muslim Americans look to the future.

First, Muslim Americans must establish, in their own hearts and minds and in the hearts and minds of non-Muslims, an uncontested sense of belongingness. This is not the same as assimilation and should not be confused with the latter. Belongingness simply means that Muslims are not merely American citizens but participants in the American *story*. They are not merely beneficiaries of American opportunity but part *owners* of America's failures. In this capacity, Muslims -- much like the Prophet in Mecca and Medina -- have a stake in America's redemption. Belongingness means that they have and are seen as having enough *understanding* and *empathy* to be invested in society's well-being. It also means that they have and are seen as having enough *ownership* to rightfully engage in Islamically principled critiques of America as *Americans*.

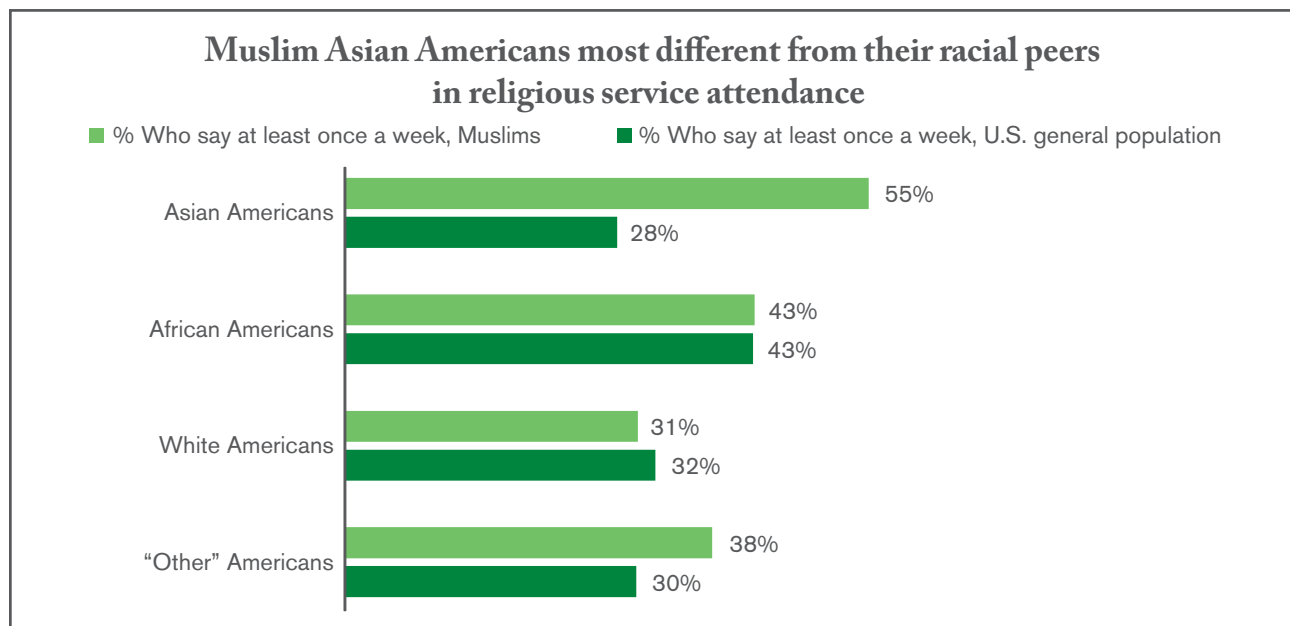
Second, Muslim Americans must adjust their conceptual framework such that America becomes the primary ground of their religious contemplation. In other words, it is in contemplation of *American* society and history that Islam must be made meaningful. This applies to Islamic law (*fiqh*), theology (*'aqidah*), and 'spirituality' (*tasawwuf*). It also connotes a readiness to replicate the example of the past in appropriating and re-inscribing as "Islamic" American customs, ideas, and aesthetics and even going beyond this to new amalgamations.

Finally, Islam in America must acquire the necessary learning and intellectual autonomy to confer upon Muslim Americans the ability to self-authenticate. This must include the recognition of *standards* that differentiate between bona fide Islamic thought and views and actions of intellectuals and others who simply bear Muslim names or come from Muslim countries. We cannot continue to rely on the Muslim world's understanding of America as the basis of what is accepted as Islamically authentic in America. Nor can we make the mistake of following the Muslim world in its tendency to judge America *solely* on the basis of foreign policy (though, again, we must speak truth to power). Nor can we afford to squander our moral capital in America though sheepish analyses of some of the more unfortunate occurrences that take place in the Muslim world.

Sherman A. Jackson, Ph.D.

Sherman A. Jackson is a professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies, a visiting professor of law, and a professor of Afro-American Studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He has served as Executive Director for the Center of Arabic Study Abroad (CASA) in Cairo, Egypt, is a member of the U.S.-Muslim World Advisory Committee of the U.S. Institute of Peace, and is a cofounder of the American Learning Institute for Muslims (ALIM).

Figure 7



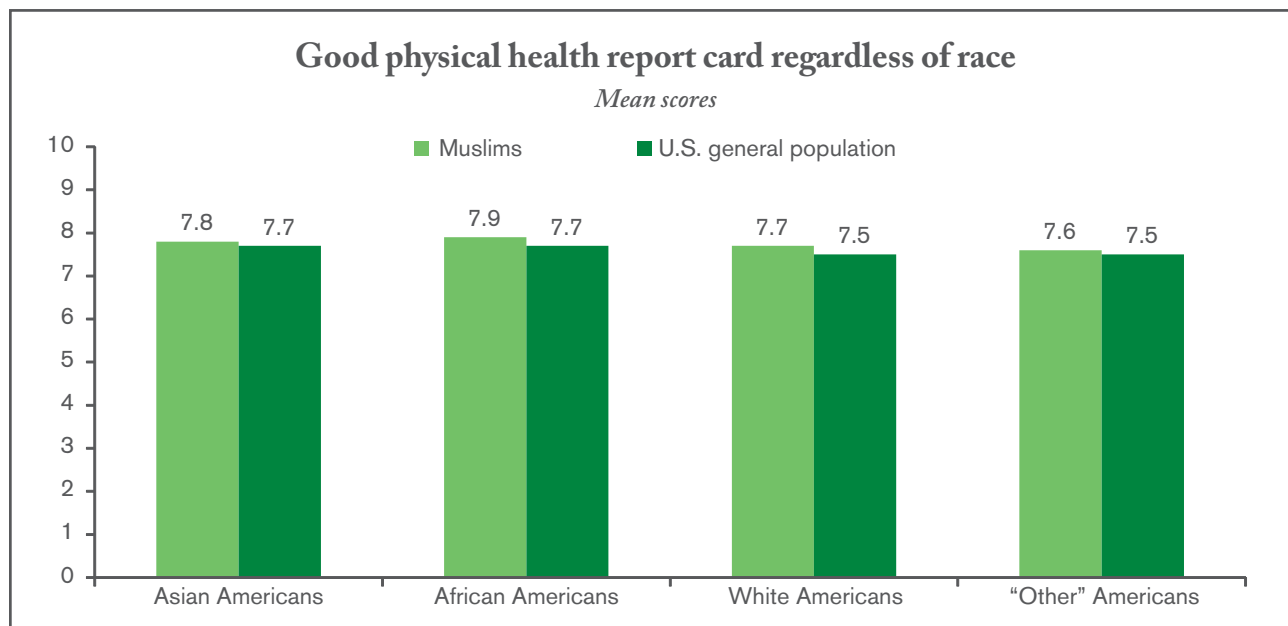
How often do you attend church, synagogue, or mosque -- at least once a week, almost every week, about once a month, seldom, or never?

3d. Health and Well-Being

Perceptions of being in good physical health cross the racial spectrum within the Muslim American population. When asked to rate their physical health using a ladder scale with steps numbered from 0 to 10, where “0” indicates the worst possible health and “10” the best possible health, Muslim African Americans, Asian Americans, white Americans, and respondents who do not identify with a specific race rate their physical health similarly.

Muslims Americans’ ratings of their personal health also compare favorably with those reported by their counterparts within each racial group.

Figure 8



Please rate your physical health today, on a 0-to-10 scale.

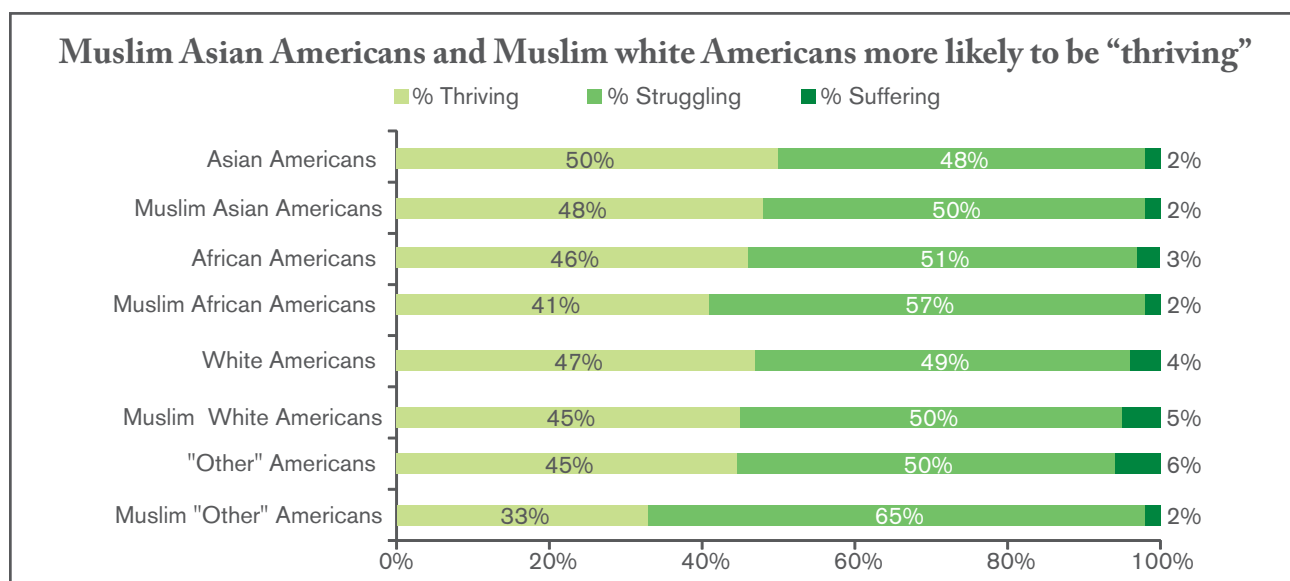
Among Muslim Americans, Asians and whites are the most likely racial groups (almost one-half) to be classified as “thriving,” while those who do not identify with a specific race are the least likely to be classified this way (just one-third). Respondents classified as “thriving” say that they *presently stand on step 7 or higher of a ladder* scale (with steps numbered from 0 to 10, where “0” indicates the worst possible life and “10” indicates the best possible life) and *expect to stand on step 8 or higher* about five years from now.

Except for those who identify their race as “other,” Muslim Americans are statistically on par with their racial counterparts in their assessments of being in the “suffering” category. Respondents classified as “suffering” are those who say they *presently stand on steps 0 to 4 of the ladder* and *expect to stand on steps 0 to 4* five years from now.

Muslim African Americans and those who do not identify with a specific race are more likely than respondents in their corresponding racial group to be considered “struggling.” Respondents who Gallup does not classify as thriving or suffering are considered to be “struggling.”

Muslim African Americans and Muslim Americans who classify their race as “other” are less likely than respondents in their corresponding racial group to be “thriving.”

Figure 9

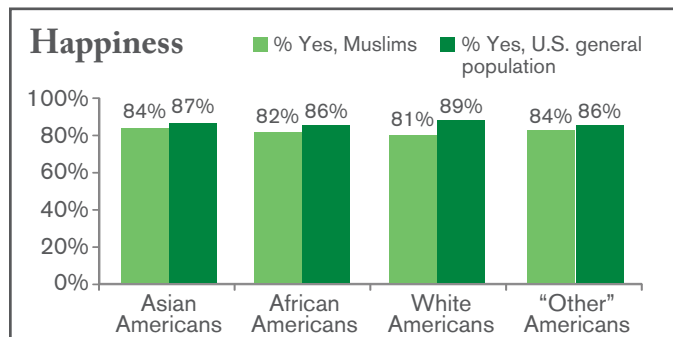


Please imagine a ladder, with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder do you feel you personally stand at the present time?

Please imagine a ladder, with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. Just your best guess, on which step do you think you will stand on in the future, say about five years from now?

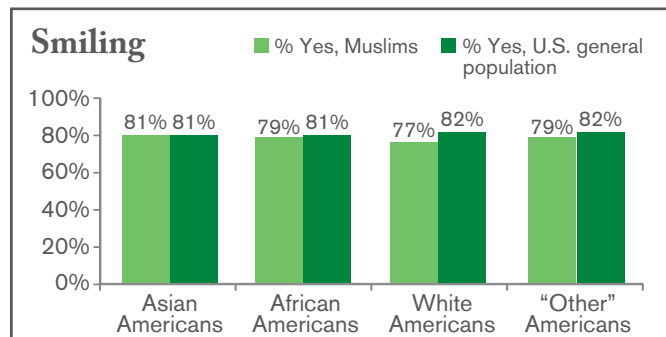
Overall, a majority of Muslims, regardless of race, report experiencing most of the positive emotions tested in the poll. Within each racial group, Muslim Americans and the general public tend to report similar levels of positive emotions. However, Muslim white Americans and whites in the general population tend to be most dissimilar in their assessments of positive experiences, especially when looking at happiness, enjoyment, and feeling well-rested.

Figure 10



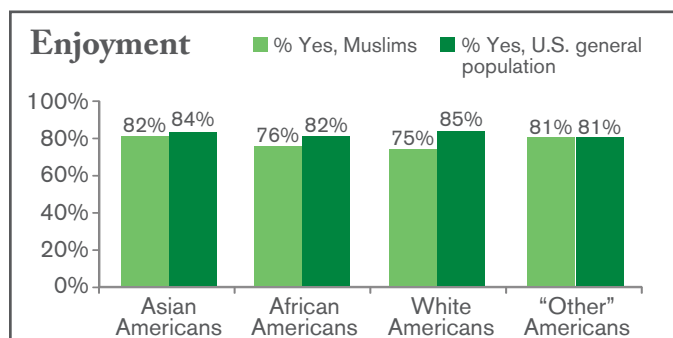
Did you experience the following feelings during A LOT OF THE DAY yesterday? How about happiness?

Figure 13



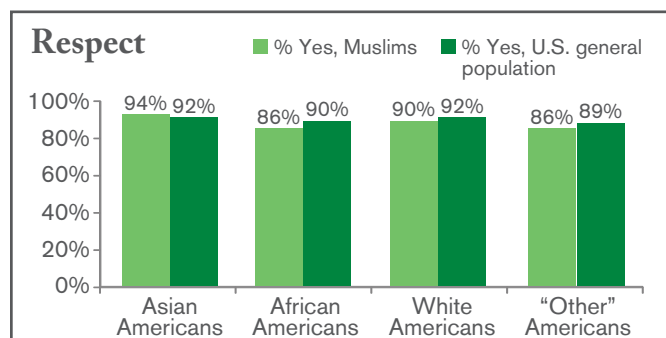
Did you smile or laugh a lot yesterday?

Figure 11



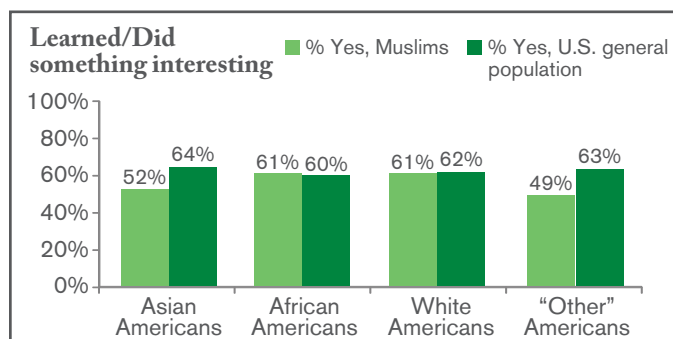
Did you experience the following feelings during A LOT OF THE DAY yesterday? How about enjoyment?

Figure 14



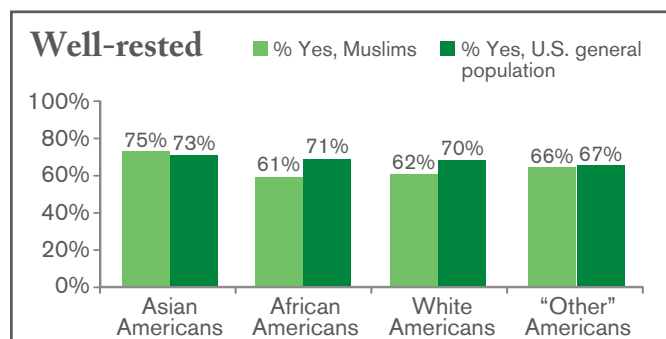
Were you treated with respect all day yesterday?

Figure 12



Did you learn or do something interesting yesterday?

Figure 15

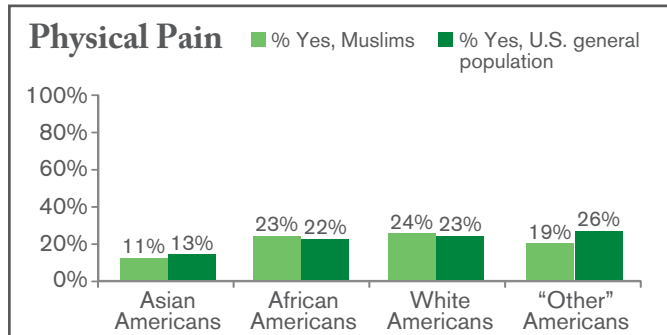


Did you feel well-rested yesterday?

In terms of negative emotions, Muslim Asian Americans are, for the most part, less likely than other groups of Muslim Americans to report having experienced negative feelings a lot on the day before the survey. Stress, in particular, is not reported as highly by Muslim Asian Americans (31%) as it is by Muslim white Americans or Muslim African Americans. Physical pain and sadness are two other experiences that Muslim Asian Americans are less likely than their African American and white counterparts to report.

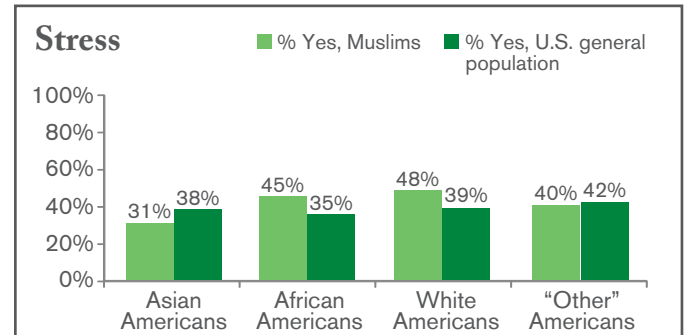
Furthermore, within each racial group, Muslim Americans and the general public tend to report similar levels of negative feelings tested in the poll. However, three feelings, anger, stress, and worry, are more likely to be reported by some groups of Muslim Americans than by their racial counterparts.

Figure 16



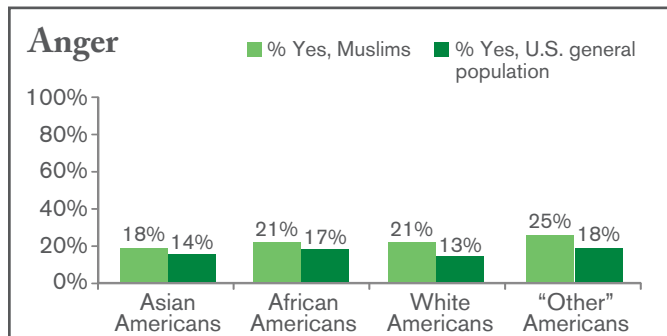
Did you experience the following feelings during A LOT OF THE DAY yesterday? How about physical pain?

Figure 19



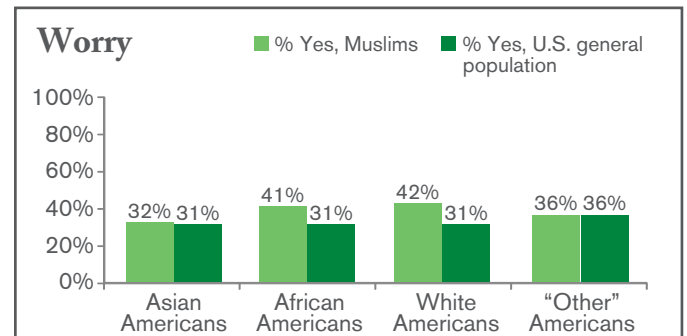
Did you experience the following feelings during A LOT OF THE DAY yesterday? How about stress?

Figure 17



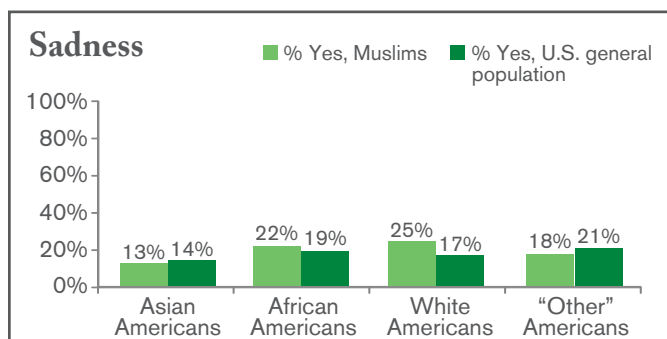
Did you experience the following feelings during A LOT OF THE DAY yesterday? How about anger?

Figure 20



Did you experience the following feelings during A LOT OF THE DAY yesterday? How about worry?

Figure 18



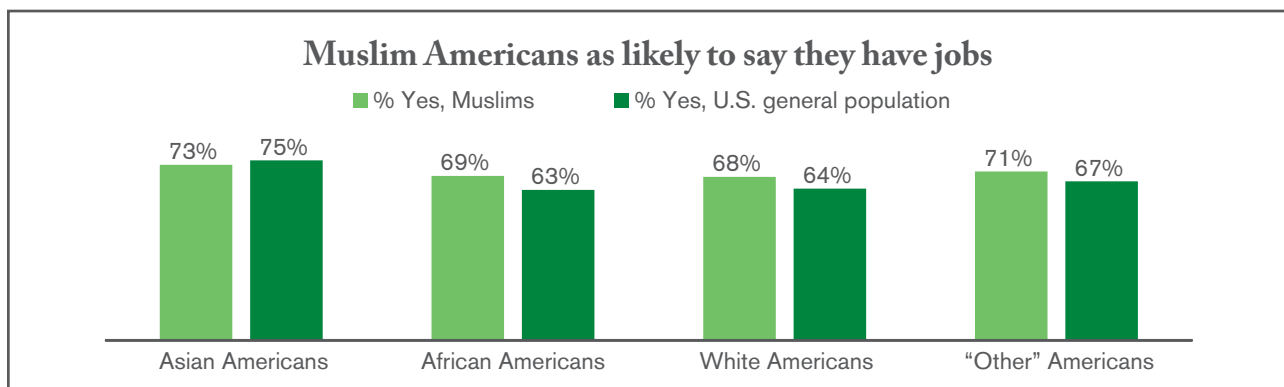
Did you experience the following feelings during A LOT OF THE DAY yesterday? How about sadness?

3e. Economic Conditions and Employment

Employment

There is no notable statistical difference among the Muslim American racial groups studied when asked whether an individual currently has a job or work. The same is noted for differences between Muslim Americans and their racial peers.

Figure 21

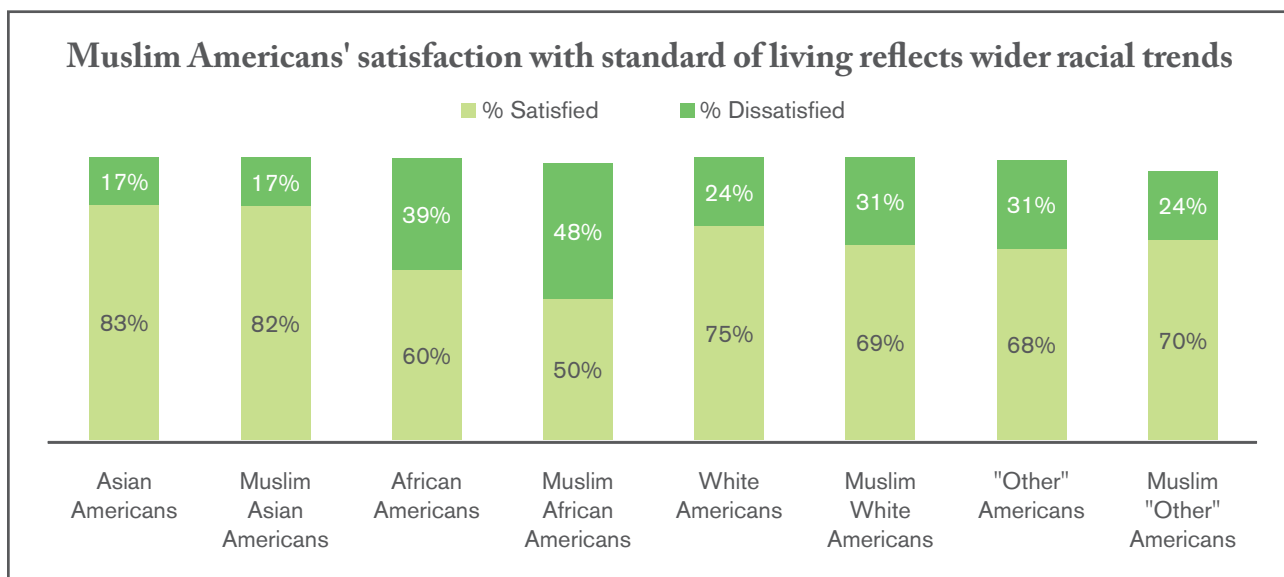


Do you currently have a job or work (either paid or unpaid work)?

Economic Conditions

Muslim Americans from different racial groups vary in their reported satisfaction with their current standard of living. The greatest amount of satisfaction among Muslim American race groups is expressed by Asians (82%). This contrasts the satisfaction expressed by Muslim Americans in the African American race group (50%).

Figure 22



Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your standard of living, all the things you can buy and do?

What is the most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years?

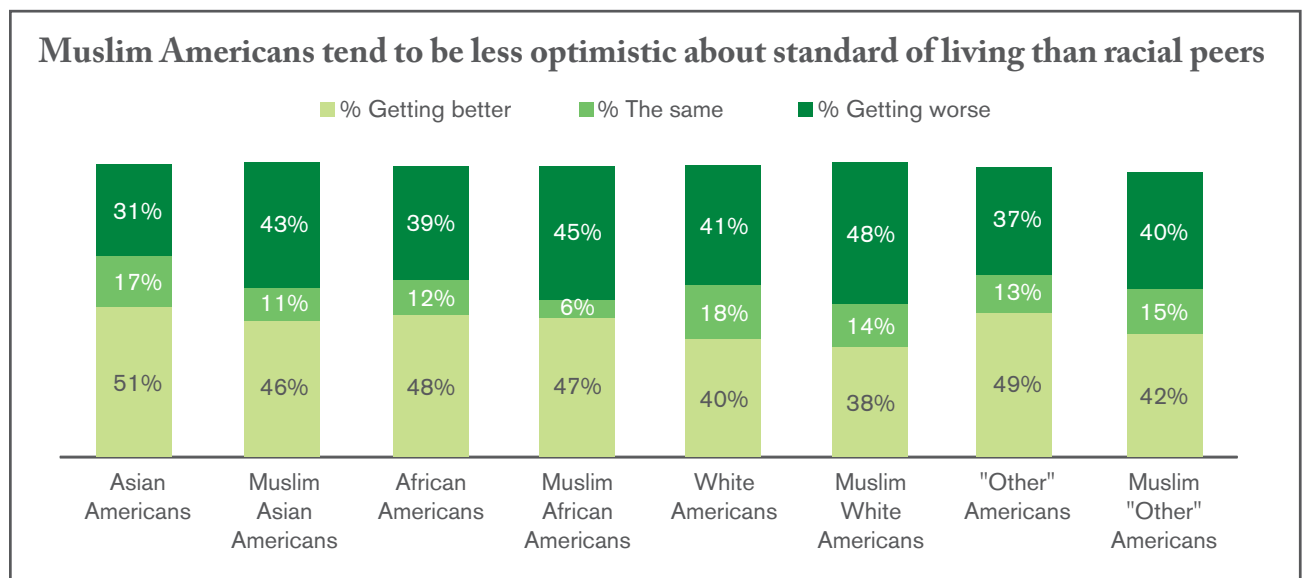
To not only be a part of change but hold accountable for those who are calling for it. We must be agents of change as our tradition mandates. Where our prayers and dreams of a better world go beyond the walls of our mosques and communities. To change with our hands first what we see as unjust and engage with our tongue the ongoing narrative defining who we are and what we believe in. A dialogue that must take place outside convention center halls, sound bites, op-eds, and sermons. A conversation that is brought to life where the Muslim American hand is present caring for the infirm, feeding the hungry, and developing policy for the downtrodden regardless of race, religion, and creed. Where our own self-reformation inspires the establishment of a new movement of Muslim American institutions that address all societal issues both in and out of our communities. Finally, it cannot be sufficient to only participate in the change of our country's direction, but also to hold accountable those who call for it.

Yasser Aman, MPH

Yasser Aman is the President and CEO of the University Muslim Medical Association (UMMA) Community Clinic, the first Muslim-founded community clinic in the United States, located in Los Angeles. He has received his degrees from UCLA with a bachelor's in Cell Molecular Biology and a master's in Public Health specializing in health services management. Aman is currently pursuing his doctoral studies at the UCLA School of Public Health with an emphasis in health access and health policy. Yasser also serves as the co-chair for California Senator Mark Ridley Thomas' Empowerment Congress Health Committee and the co-chair for the community core committee at the UCLA Center for Minority Health Disparities. He is also a cofounder of the Southside Coalition of Health Centers, a coalition of community clinics serving the South Los Angeles area. Finally, Yasser also serves on the Board of the Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County.

Muslim Americans vary somewhat in their perceptions of how their standard of living is changing. More than 4 in 10 Muslim Asian Americans believe it is getting worse, compared with only 3 in 10 reporting the same across the general population of Asians.

Figure 23

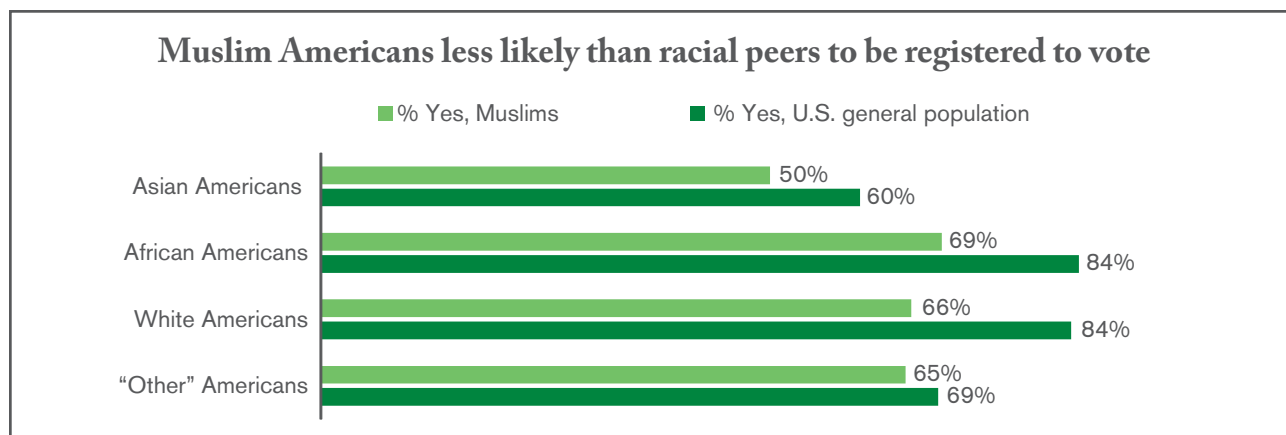


Right now, do you feel your standard of living is getting better or getting worse?

3f. Political Views

While reflecting their racial peers in education and income, Muslim Americans in most cases are less likely than their racial peers in the U.S. general population to say they are registered to vote. The biggest difference in voter registration is between Muslim African Americans (69%) and Muslim white Americans (66%) and their racial peers (84%). This suggests that while Muslim Americans are largely economically integrated, their political integration lags the general public.

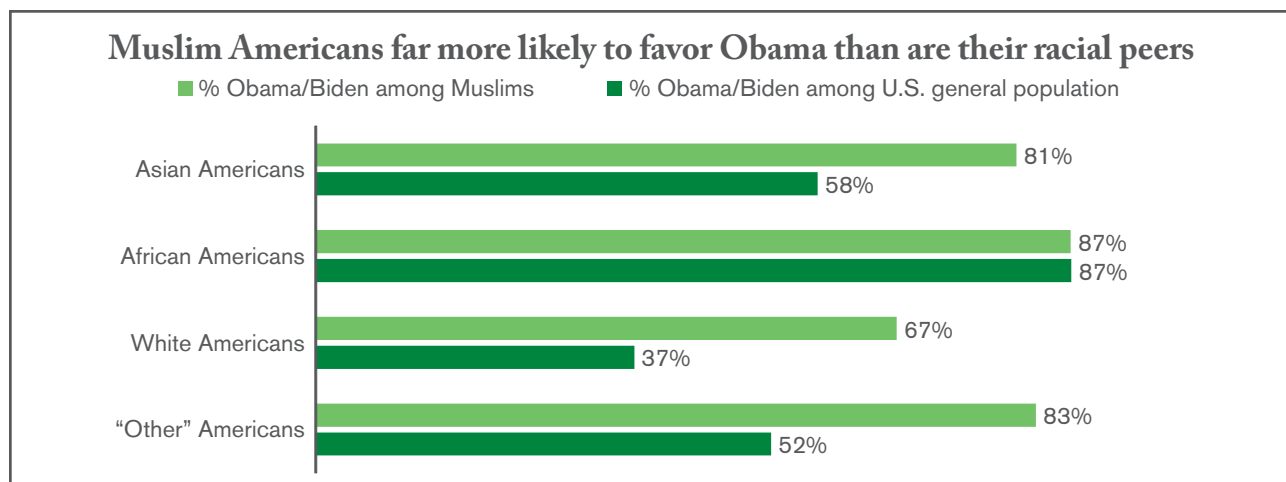
Figure 24



Are you registered to vote in your precinct or election district or not?

With the exception of Muslim African Americans who mirrored African Americans as a whole, Muslim Americans were significantly more likely than their racial peers to support Barack Obama over John McCain. Despite significant socioeconomic differences among Muslim racial groups, their voting patterns were nearly identical -- no fewer than 8 in 10 Asian, Africans, and "other" American Muslims said they supported Barack Obama.

Figure 25



Suppose the presidential election were held today. Would you vote for Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats or John McCain and Sarah Palin the Republicans?

3g. Community Satisfaction

While a majority of Muslim African Americans say they are satisfied with their local communities, they are also far less likely than African Americans overall to say they are.

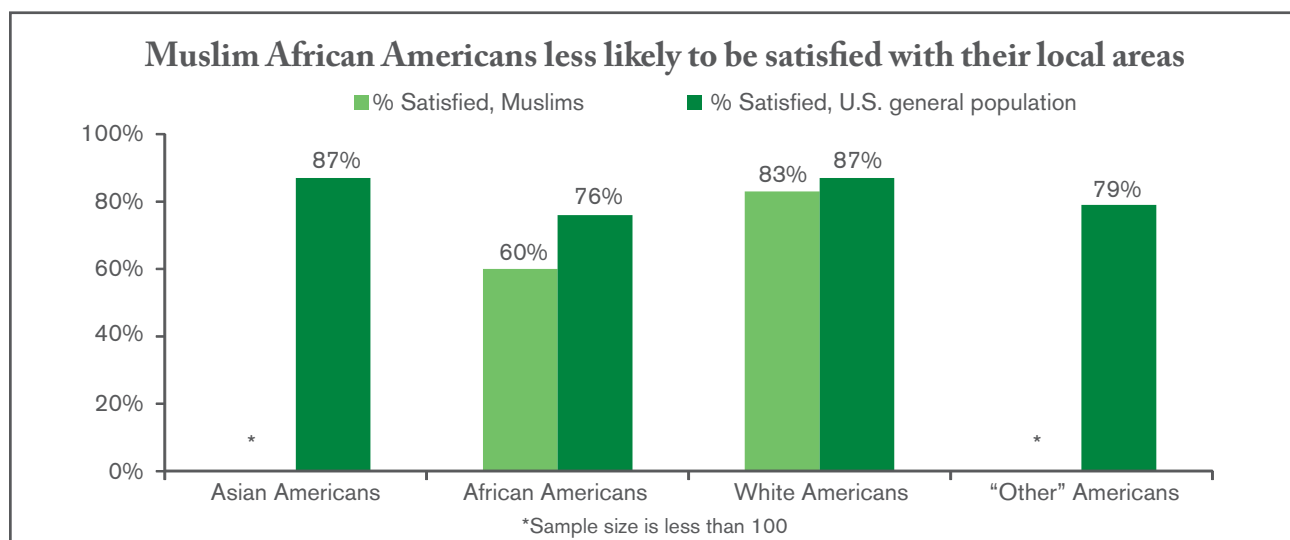
What is the most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years?

In the next five years, Muslim Americans need to find their distinctive mainstream voice and develop ways to tell their real stories, to introduce and blend this voice -- a part of the larger sound of America -- for everyone to hear. "Everyone" means majority Americans and Muslims too, both here and abroad. We are able to explore and express ourselves here in ways that others elsewhere are not. They will look to us, and listen for us. When we are asked questions, we need to answer them with the confidence of full-fledged participants in the American project. When we tell our varied stories, we need to have the courage of our convictions. There is a status quo that tries to control the thought and expression of every community; we need to move beyond that. Like everyone in the country, we are on the brink of a great opportunity, to reassert the promise of American pluralism, to find a social focus beyond materialism, and to redeem the vision of our founders. Their vision makes this nation, for all its dangerous shortcomings, one of Earth's leading experiments in how people may live together and grow. We can't let others sideline us, and we should not sideline each other. This is a time to step up and step forward, taking a lesson from earlier Muslims in dozens of other places, over the centuries, all around the world.

Michael Wolfe

Michael Wolfe is a poet, author, and the President and Executive Producer of Unity Productions Foundation. Wolfe codirects the MOST (Muslims on Screen and Television) Resource Center, a resource for the creative community on Islam and Muslims. He is also a frequent lecturer on Islamic issues at universities across the United States, including Harvard, Georgetown, Stanford, SUNY Buffalo, and Princeton. He holds a degree in Classics from Wesleyan University.

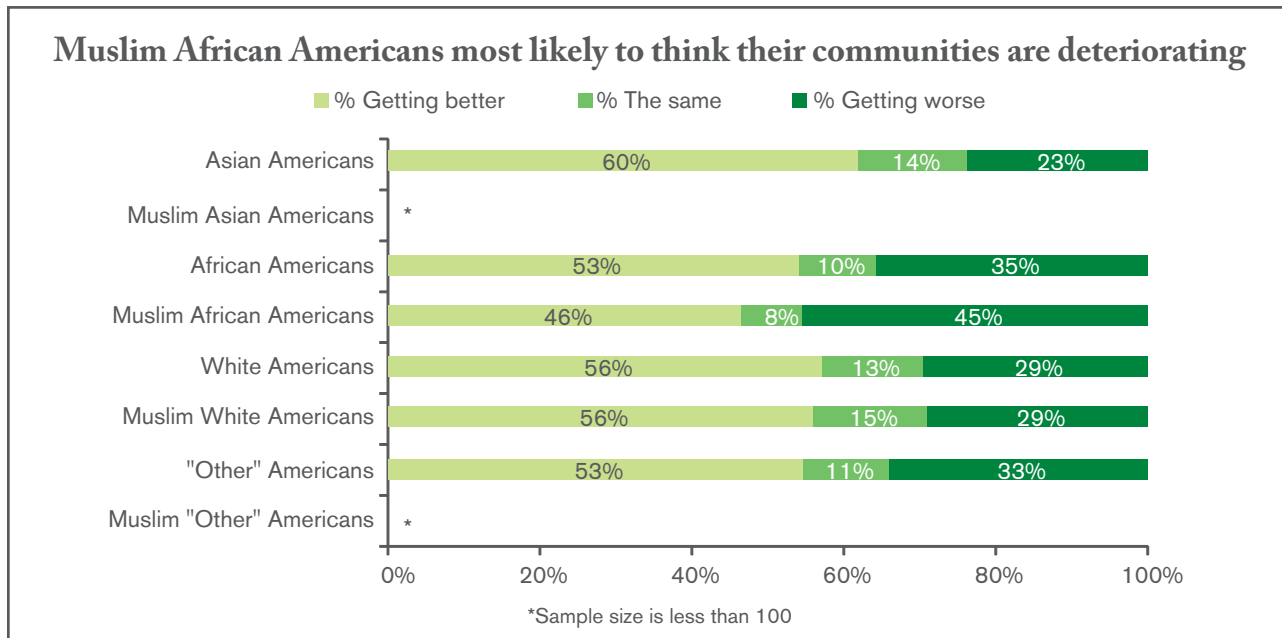
Figure 26



Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the city or area where you live?

Muslim African Americans paint a different picture of how their communities are evolving. They are the least likely group of Muslim Americans surveyed to perceive their cities to be getting better. Furthermore, they appear divided as to whether their communities are improving or deteriorating. A majority of Muslim white Americans, however, think their local areas are getting better.

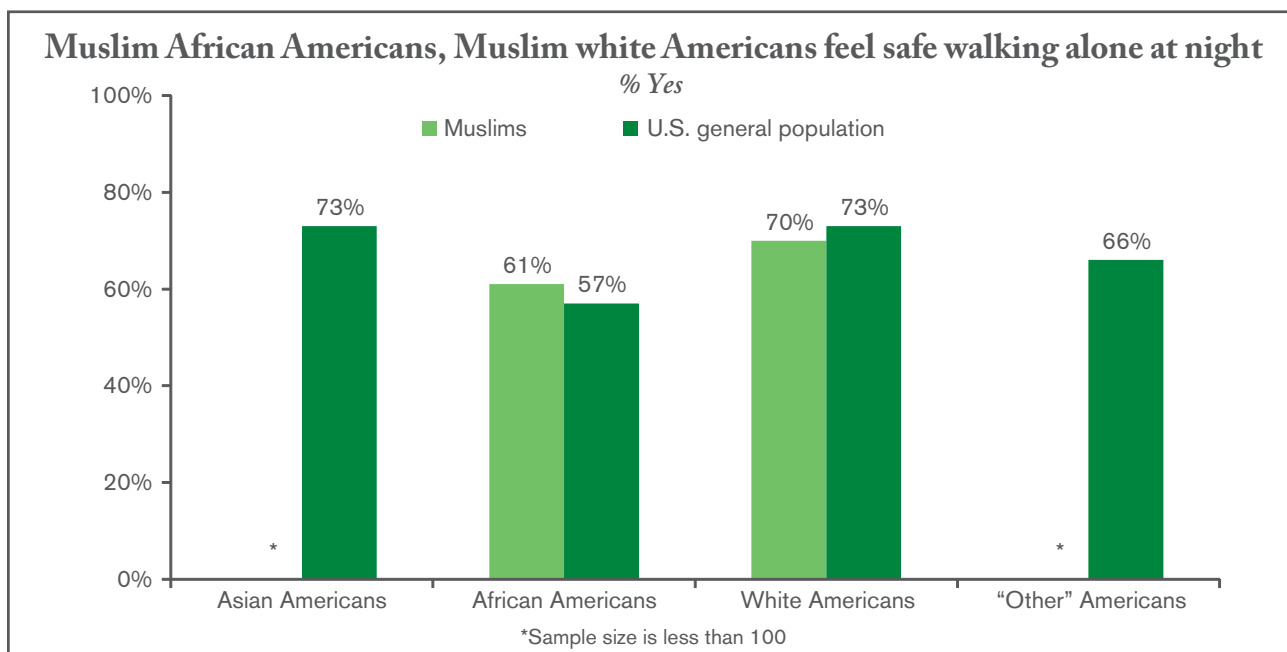
Figure 27



Is the city or area where you live getting better or getting worse as a place to live?

About 6 in 10 Muslim African Americans say they feel safe walking alone at night, as do 70% of Muslim white Americans.

Figure 28



Do you feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where you live?

Topics for Further Research:

- Continue to examine differences in emotional well-being between Muslim Americans and their racial peers. Why are Muslim Americans, regardless of racial background or economic situation, generally more likely to report stress and anger?
- Gain clarity on the “other” Muslim group and the population that composes it. This group is often distinct from the other racial groups, and more clarity on who perceived themselves as fitting into this category could be key to exploring these differences.
- Further explore the political and social implications of Muslim Americans being the most racially and economically diverse religious group surveyed in America. How do these differences affect Muslim Americans’ ability to mobilize as a cohesive group? How do these differences affect Muslim American identity and sense of belonging? How much race or class tensions are there in the Muslim American community and how does this compare with that within other religious groups? What can the wider public learn from Muslim American race relations?

Chapter 4: Muslim Americans: Youth

As a group, Muslim youth, those aged 18 to 29, paint a fairly positive portrait of their lives. Many say they engage in some type of work, either paid or unpaid, and they also express satisfaction with their jobs. And while many express concerns about money and the national economy, they are also satisfied with their standard of living. However, a more detailed portrait emerges when young Muslim Americans' perceptions are compared with not only those of other youths, but also with views of older Muslim respondents. The study reveals that young Muslims are less likely than young respondents in other religious groups to be considered "thriving" in life. They are also less likely to have a job and are more likely to rate the U.S. economy as poor. Young Muslims share with older Muslim Americans many attitudes and behaviors, such as their satisfaction with their local communities, the importance of the role that religion plays in their lives, and the frequency of mosque attendance. However, they differentiate themselves from older respondents in their political leanings.

KEY FINDINGS

- Roughly 8 in 10 Muslim Americans aged 18 to 29 say religion is an important part of their daily lives, similar to what older Muslim Americans say.
- Only 40% of Muslim American youth are considered to be "thriving," the lowest level among all youth groups surveyed.
- Two-thirds of young Muslim Americans say they have a job, either paid or unpaid.
- Young Muslims are the only group of young people where a majority (51%) rate current economic conditions as poor.
- Just 51% of young Muslim Americans say they are registered to vote, which is one of the lowest percentages among all youth groups surveyed.

What is the most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years?

1. To create a unified, inclusive vision for the Muslim community, one that respects its diversity.
2. To create an indigenous Muslim American culture that embodies Muslim and American values and contributes to society in concrete ways.

The Muslim community in America represents a mosaic of the Muslim world. It includes indigenous African American and immigrant Muslims; nowhere else in the world does this much diversity exist in a Muslim community. What we do with this diversity can be an example for the rest of the world.

To create a unified vision, we must embrace the idea of a "big tent" Islam, a community that welcomes all Muslims regardless of persuasion or background. It should be as concerned about the future of America as it is about the places of Islam's glorious past.

The pioneers of the Muslim American community built and institutionalized Islam in America. It is the responsibility of current and future generations of American Muslims to behave, not as an insular group, but as an indigenous community and a contributing member of a pluralist society. This means building institutions such as hospitals, which serve the needs of the broader community, making contributions to arts and culture by supporting people pursuing those career paths, and promoting interfaith cooperation and cross-cultural communication, focusing on the values we share as Americans.

America has a history of groups who found themselves on the margins and who had to struggle for their place. What made the struggle particularly American is that each community realized its freedom, equality, and dignity rested on an America where everyone had those rights.

Shaykh Hamza Yusuf stated in a recent speech, "It is the historical destiny of the Muslim community to help realize the historical destiny of America." It is our time now.

Eboo Patel, Ph.D.

Eboo Patel is the founder and Executive Director of the Interfaith Youth Core, a Chicago-based international nonprofit working to build mutual respect and pluralism among religiously diverse young people by empowering them to work together to serve others. He is the author of Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation, released by Beacon Press in June 2007. Patel holds a doctorate in the sociology of religion from Oxford University, where he studied on a Rhodes scholarship.

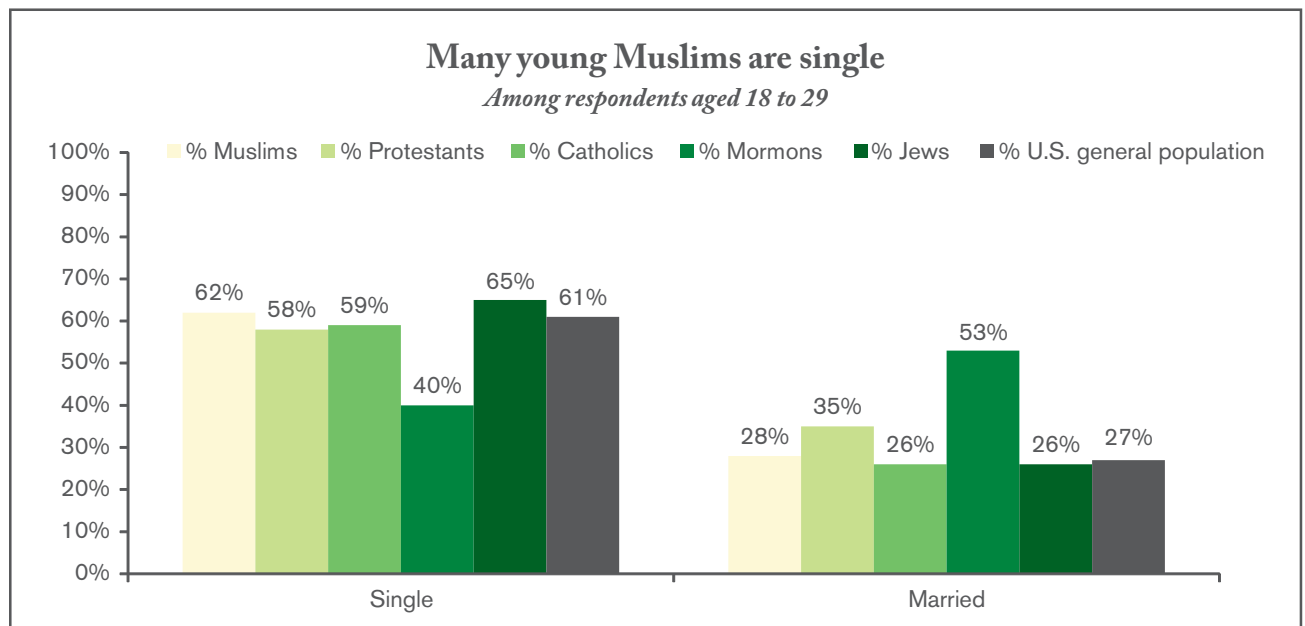
Shared Views and Differences With Other Youths

Although an overall profile of Muslim youth in America provides an important baseline from which to measure any demographic and behavioral changes over time, comparing young Muslims to youths across religious groups brings a richer context in which to analyze their perceptions.

4a. Demographics

Mirroring what young Muslim Americans report about their marital status, many young Jewish (65%),³ Catholic (59%), and Protestant (58%) Americans say they are single. However, young Muslims are far more likely than young Mormons to say the same, 62% versus 40%, respectively.

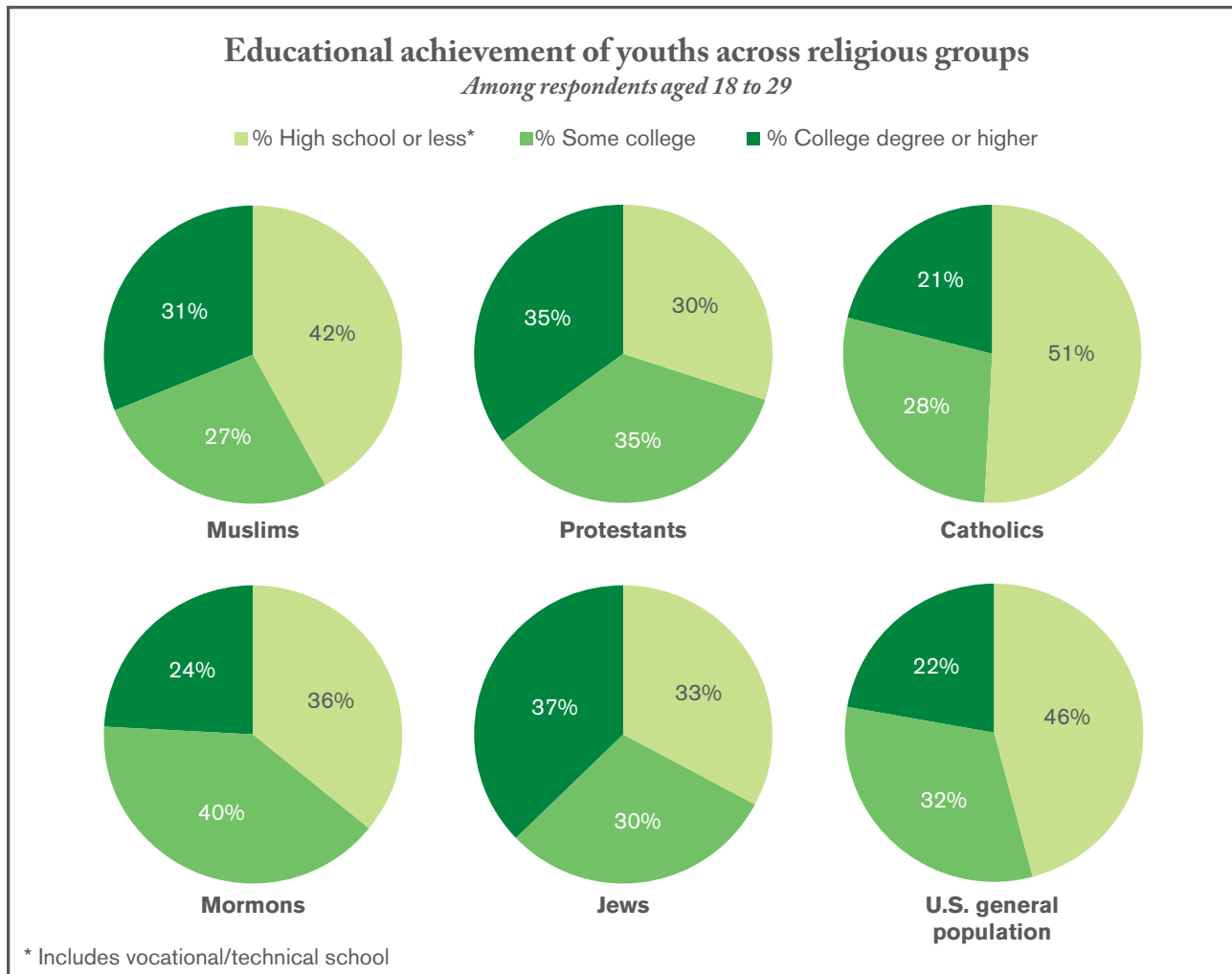
Figure 1



What is your marital status?

Although young Muslims (31%) are statistically as likely as Jews (37%), Protestants (35%), and Mormons (24%) in the same age group to say they have at least a college degree, they, however, report higher levels of educational achievement than young Catholics (21%).

Figure 2

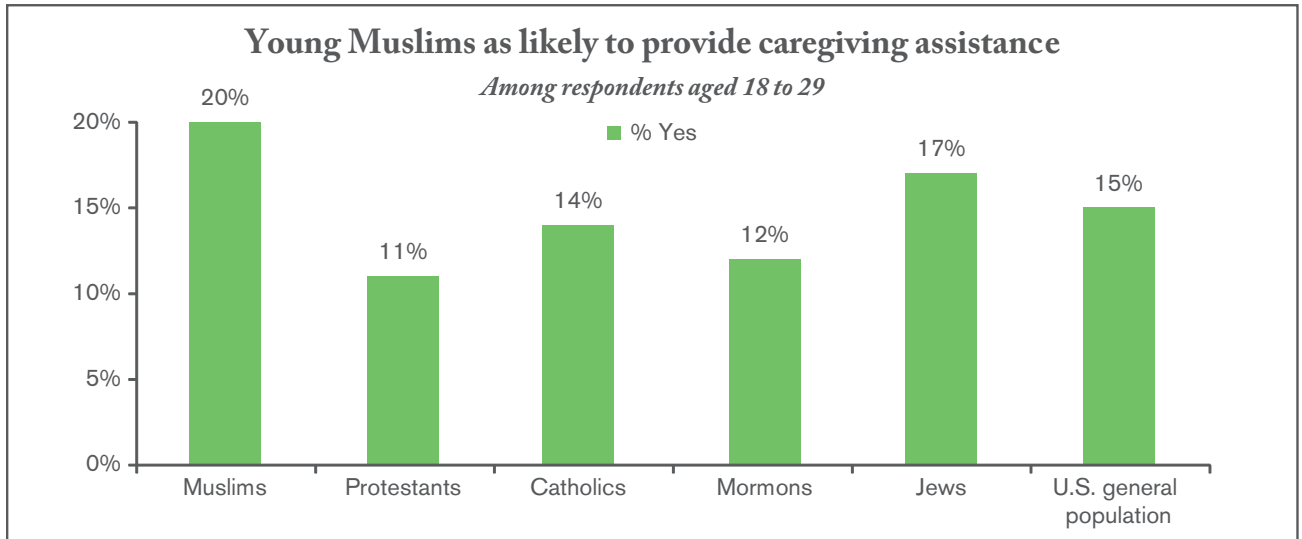


What is your highest completed level of education?

4b. Family

One in five Muslim youths say they help care for an older or disabled relative or friend, which is statistically similar to what Jews (17%) and Catholics (14%) in the same age group report. However, young Muslims are somewhat more likely to say they act as caregivers than Protestant and Mormon youths surveyed.

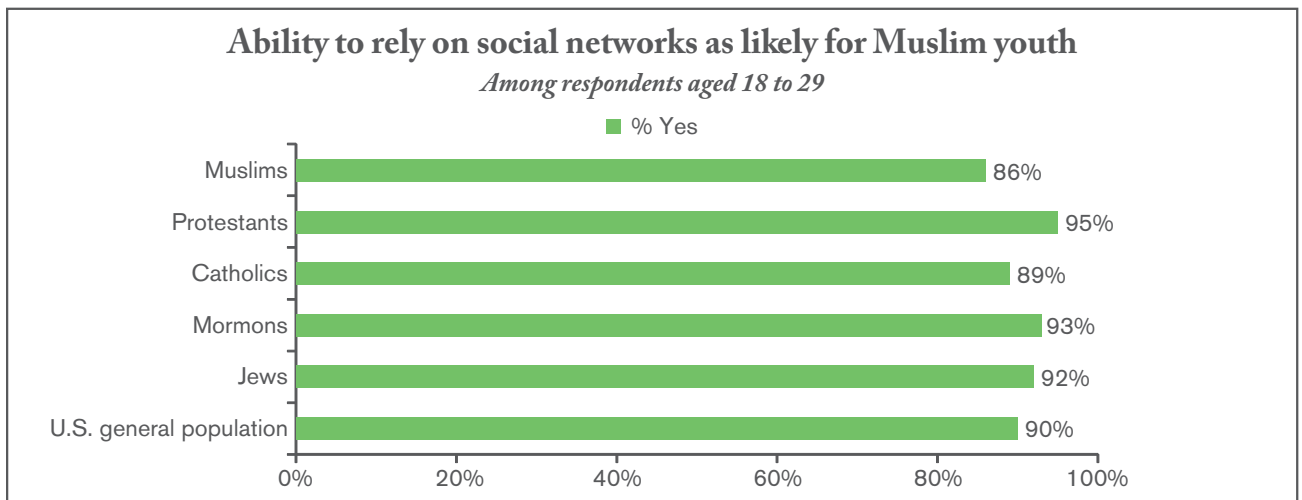
Figure 3



Do you currently help care for an elderly or disabled family member, relative, or friend, or not?

When asked about whether they can rely on a friend or relative helping them in case they were in trouble, young Muslims are as likely as respondents in several other groups surveyed to say they can. But they are less likely than young Protestants to say this.

Figure 4



If you were in trouble, do you have relatives or friends you can count on to help you whenever you need them, or not?

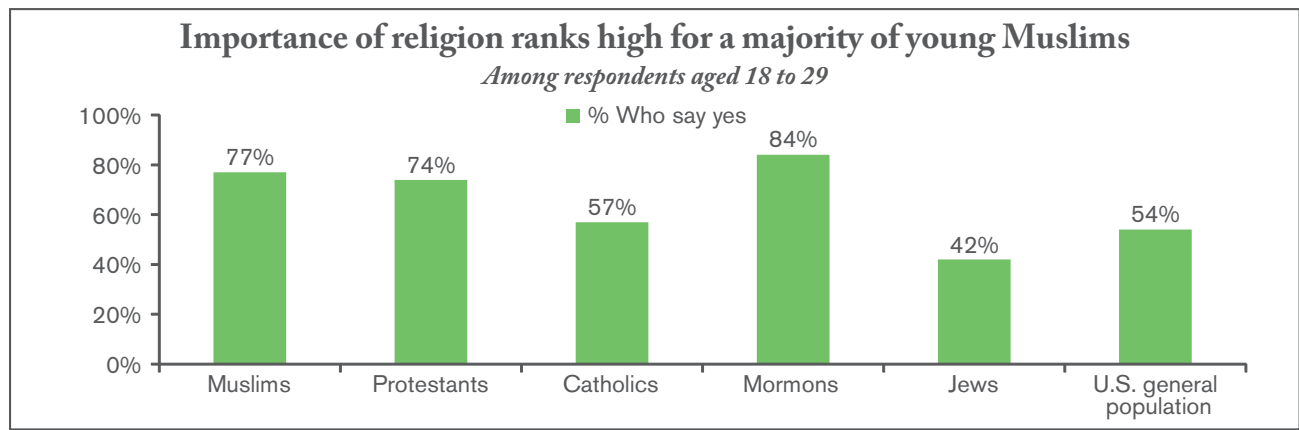
4c. Religion

Just like for youths in most other faiths surveyed, religion is an important aspect of life for a majority of Muslim youth. The percentage of young Muslims who say faith is important (77%) is roughly similar to the proportion of young Protestants

(74%). Young Muslims are, however, far more likely than young Jews (42%) and Catholics (57%) to say that religion plays an important role in their daily lives, but such views on the role of faith are even higher for young Mormons (84%).

Although young Mormons (68%) are the most likely group surveyed to say they attend a place of worship at least once a week, both young Muslims and young Protestants report similar levels of weekly religious attendance, or 41% each, while young Catholics and Jewish youth are the least likely to say the same.

Figure 5



Is religion an important part of your daily life?

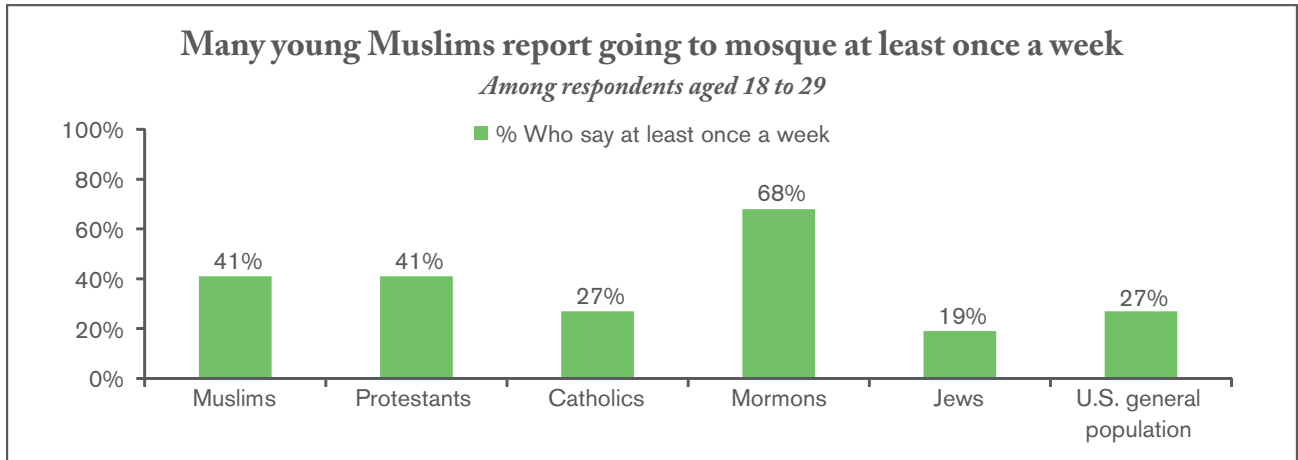
What is the most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years?

The most pressing challenge facing Muslim Americans in the next 5 to 10 years is to rise above the extremism, prejudice, and ignorance that distorts their image in the public consciousness. In the past eight years, Muslim Americans have come to realize they cannot afford to live their lives in isolation without regard for the welfare of their society or the public image of Islam. While they face the same concerns as all Americans, such as paying their mortgages and sending their children to college, they face the added responsibility of confronting increasing anti-Muslim sentiment, partially fueled by ignorance and partially incited by deliberate, malicious propaganda (such as the kind represented by *Obsession*). The most basic aspects about Islam remain obscure to many Americans: What do Muslims believe? What are their practices? What, if any, is their agenda? Muslim Americans continue to be perceived by fellow citizens through the lens of international events that do not reflect or speak to their reality here at home. In the subliminal consciousness of the American public, Islam is still equated with a foreign culture, and thus, any manifestation of Islam is perceived as an attempt to hold on to a foreign tradition and a reluctance to assimilate. This is one of the greatest dilemmas facing my generation of Muslim Americans. How do we demonstrate our commitment to Islam is integral to our American identity? How do Muslims demonstrate that acts of worship -- wearing headscarves, taking off work at noon on Friday to attend congregational prayers, building mosques, etc. -- do not undermine our patriotism or pride in being American? The path ahead is arduous and demanding. Through bridge-building, civic participation, and political empowerment, Muslim Americans must define their own identity within American culture.

Hadia Mubarak, M.A.

Hadia Mubarak was the first female elected president of the National Muslim Students Association, one of the oldest and largest Muslim American organizations. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Islamic Studies at Georgetown University and a senior researcher at the Center for Muslim Christian Understanding. Mubarak received her M.A. in Contemporary Arab Studies with a concentration in Women and Gender also from Georgetown University.

Figure 6

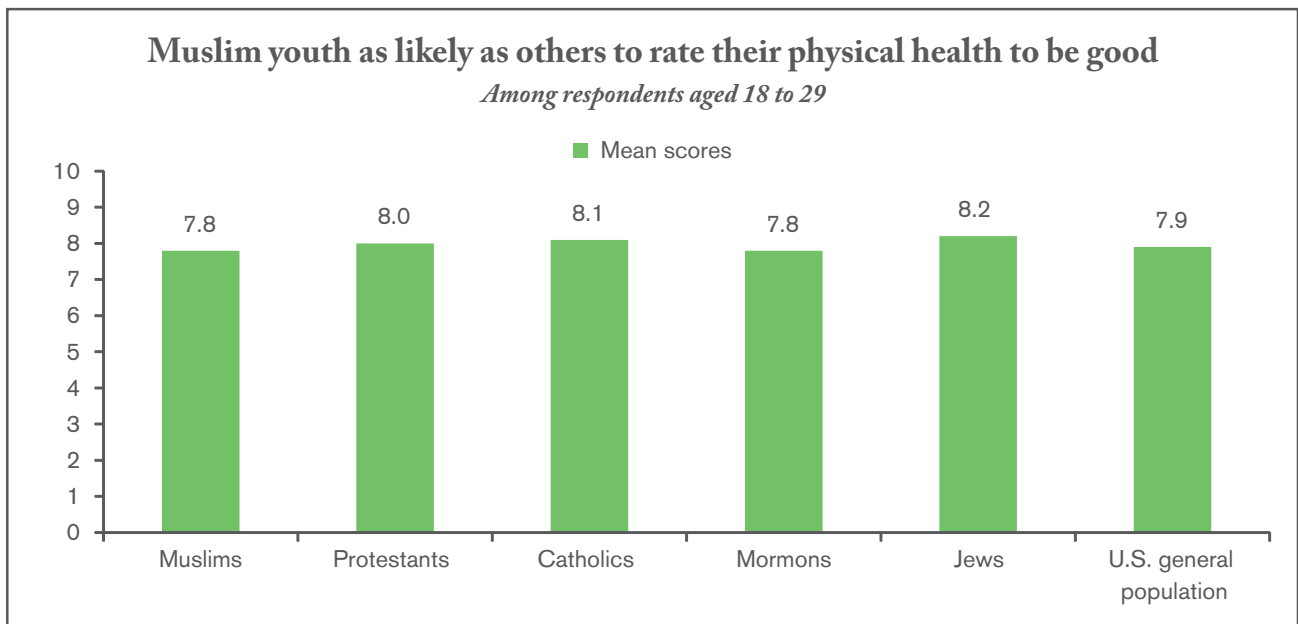


How often do you attend church, synagogue, or mosque -- at least once a week, almost every week, about once a month, seldom, or never?

4d. Health and Well-Being

When asked to rate their physical health using a ladder scale with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top, where “0” represents the worst possible health and “10” represents the best possible health, young Muslims have mean score of 7.8, which compares favorably with youth ratings across other religious groups surveyed.

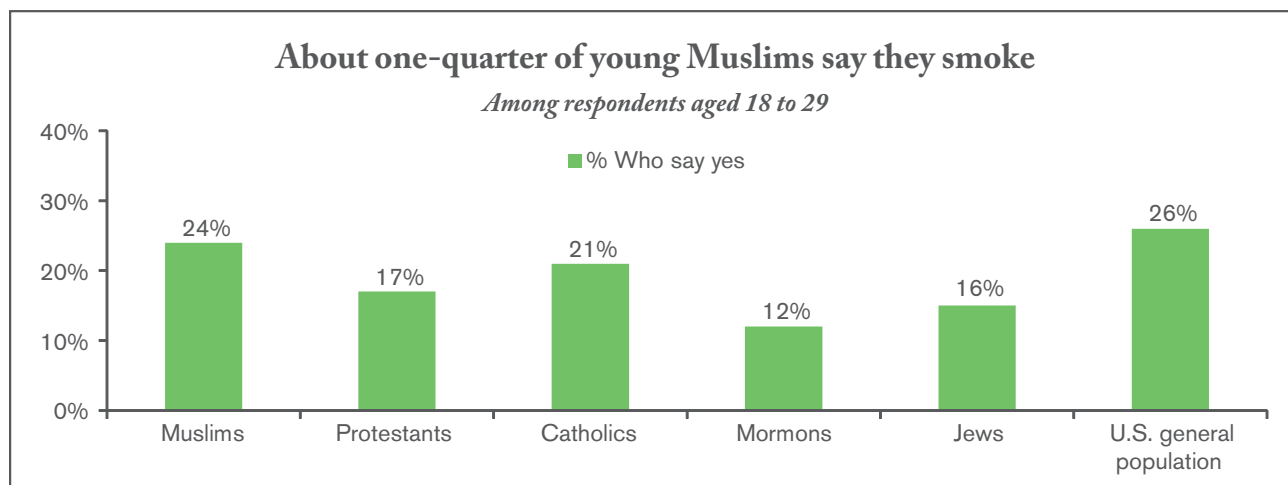
Figure 7



Please rate your physical health today, on a 0-to-10 scale.

Young Muslims are among the most likely religious groups surveyed to say they smoke. Twenty-four percent of Muslim youth say they do versus 12% of Mormons, 16% of Jews, and 17% of Protestants in the same age group. In the United States, 26% of young people between the ages of 18 and 29 say they smoke.

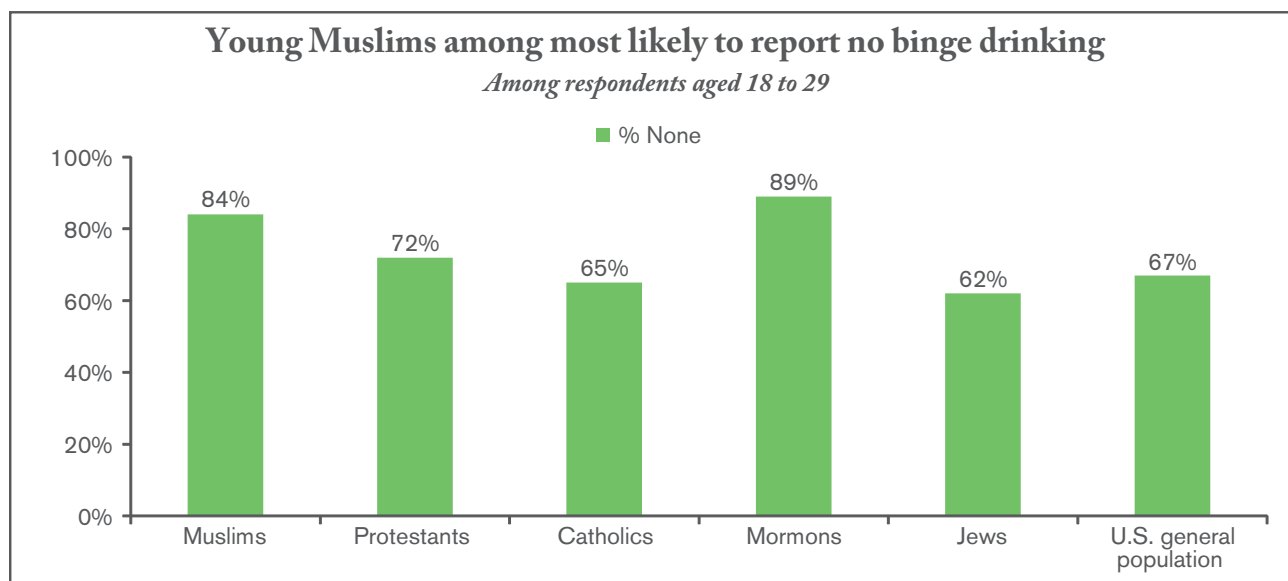
Figure 8



Do you smoke?

Gallup also asked young people across religious groups about the frequency of binge drinking in a given week. The poll findings show that young Muslims (along with Mormon youth) are the most likely to say they did not have four or five alcoholic beverages on any day in the week prior to the survey. Young Catholics and Jews are the least likely to say the same.

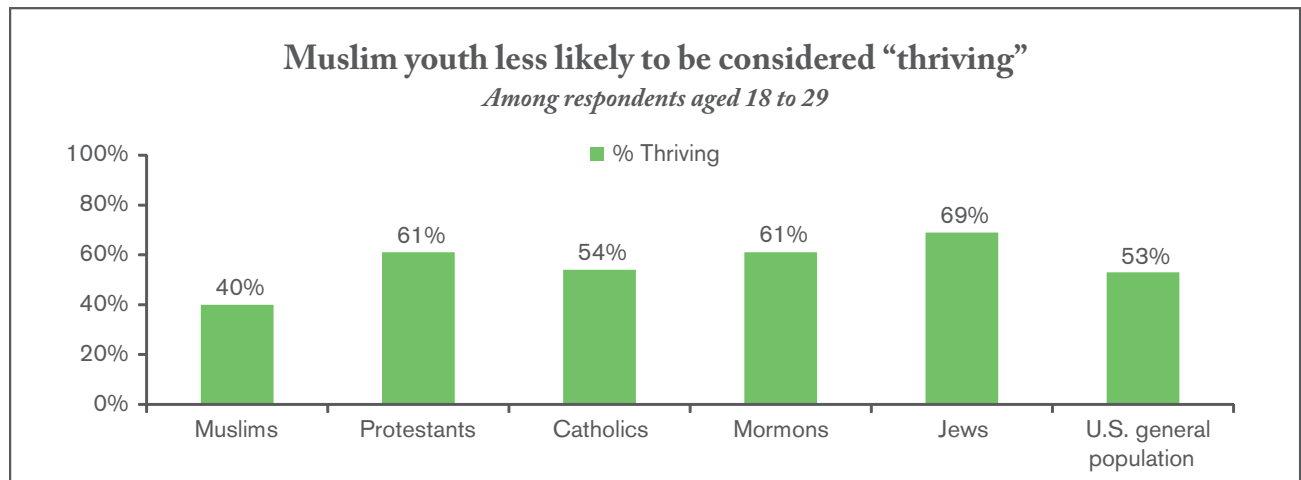
Figure 9



In the last seven days, on how many days did you: Consume at least five/four drinks containing alcohol?

Muslim youths are less likely than youths in other religious groups to be considered “thriving.” According to Gallup’s life satisfaction measures, 4 in 10 young Muslims are considered to be thriving, compared with almost 7 in 10 young Jews and 6 in 10 young Mormons. Nationally, slightly more than one-half of youth between the ages of 18 and 29 are considered to be thriving.

Figure 10

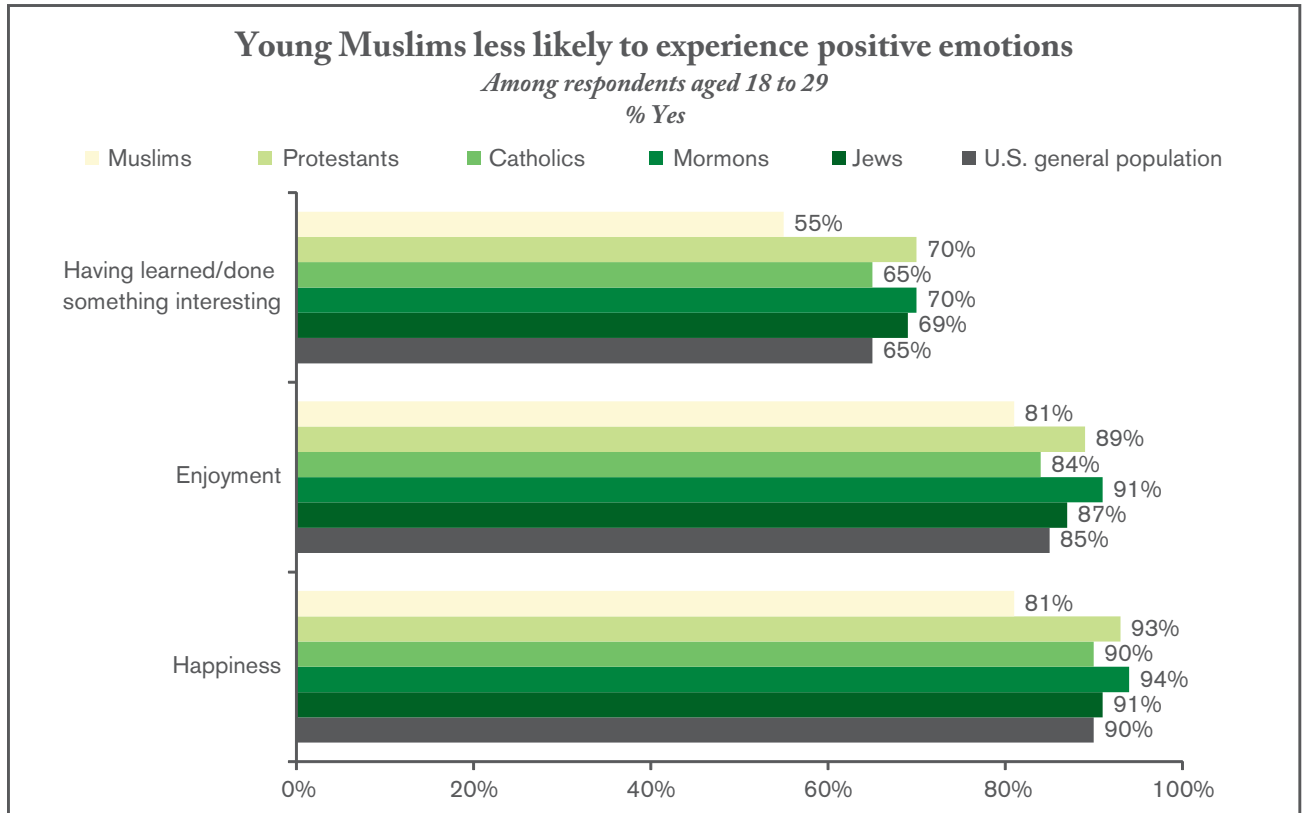


Please imagine a ladder, with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder do you feel you personally stand at the present time?

Please imagine a ladder, with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. Just your best guess, on which step do you think you will stand on in the future, say about five years from now?

While majorities of Muslim youth say they experienced a lot of the positive emotions tested in the poll, they are also less likely to say so than most groups of young respondents surveyed. Such differences are particularly noticeable when looking at Muslim youths’ experiences of happiness, enjoyment, learning or doing interesting things, and smiling or laughing.

Figure 11

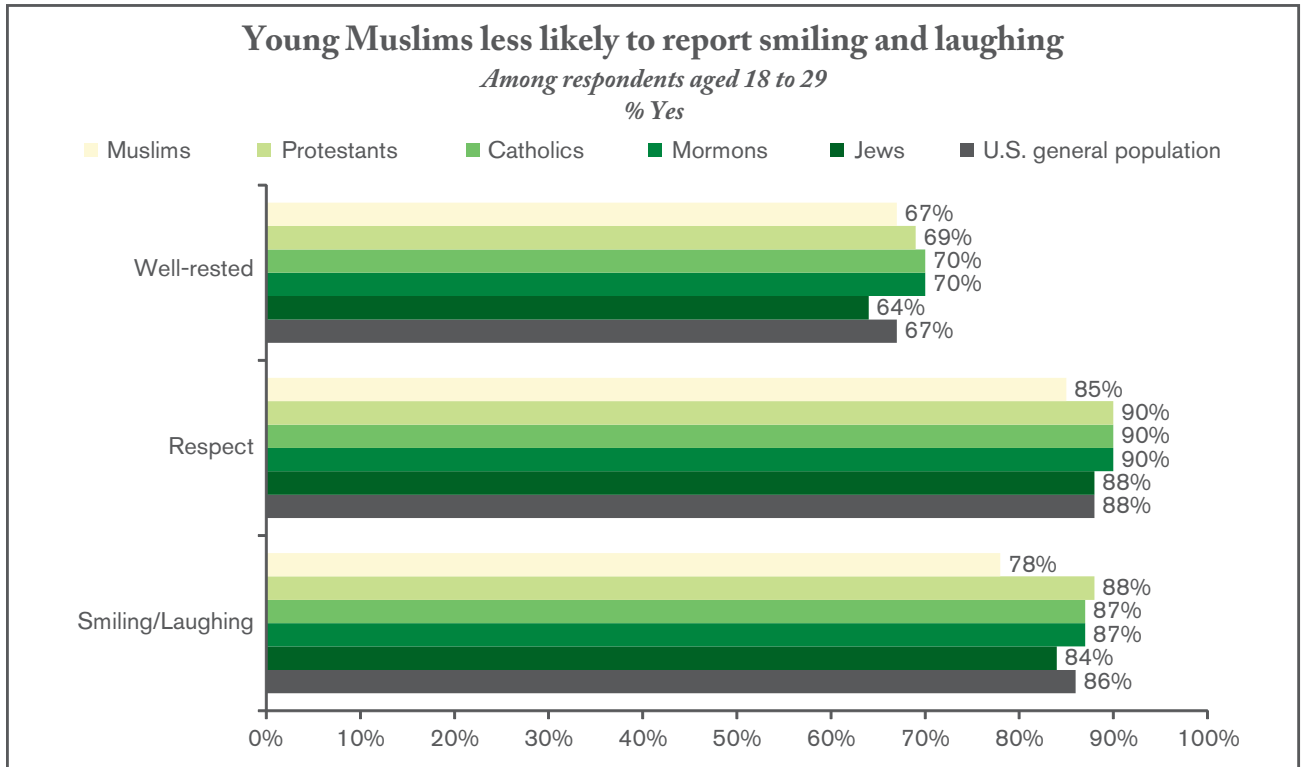


Did you learn or do something interesting yesterday?

*Did you experience the following feelings during **A LOT OF THE DAY** yesterday? How about enjoyment?*

*Did you experience the following feelings during **A LOT OF THE DAY** yesterday? How about happiness?*

Figure 12



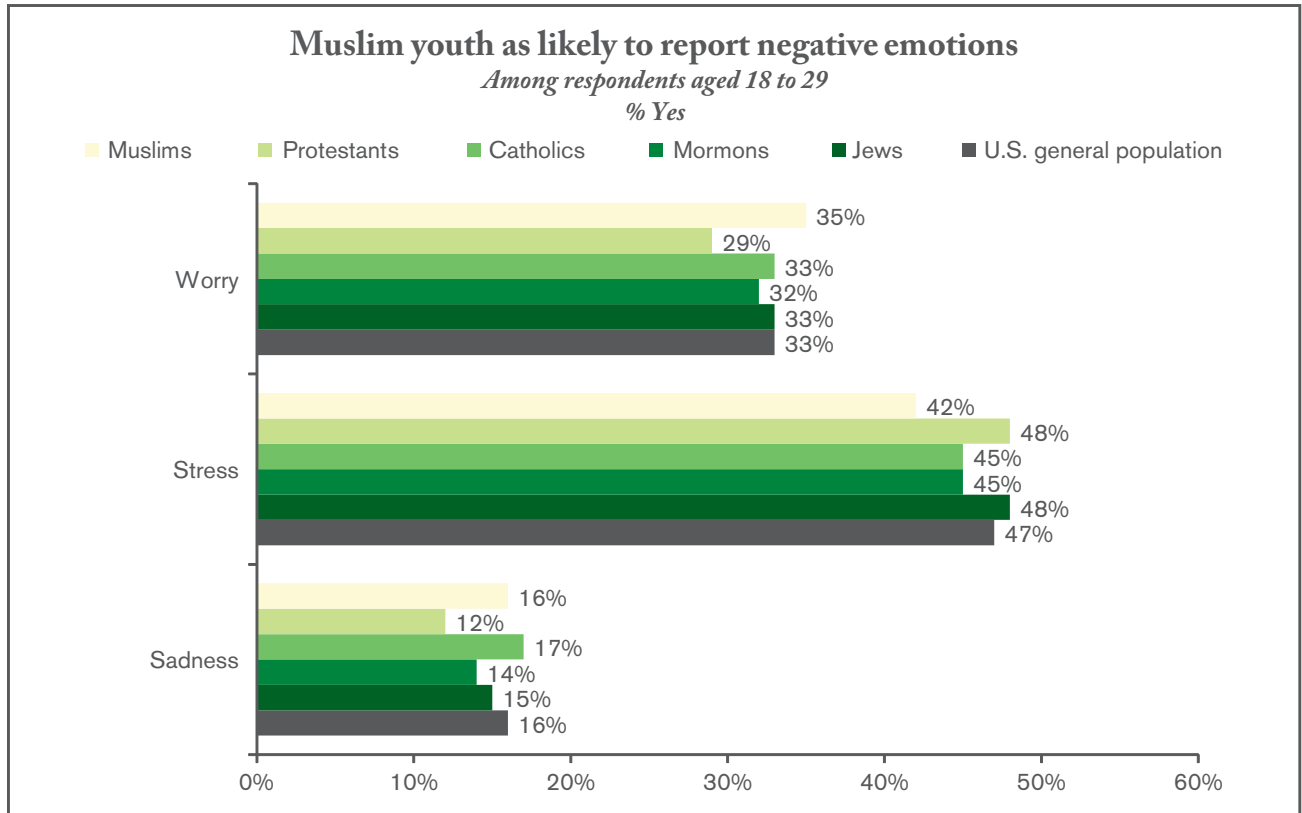
Did you feel well-rested yesterday?

Were you treated with respect all day yesterday?

Did you smile or laugh a lot yesterday?

Overall, Muslim American youth are as likely as young respondents in other religious groups to report experiencing negative emotions. However, they are the most likely group of young respondents to say they experienced a lot of anger the day before the survey. Twenty-six percent of young Muslims, compared with 14% each of young Protestants and Mormons, say they experienced anger.

Figure 13

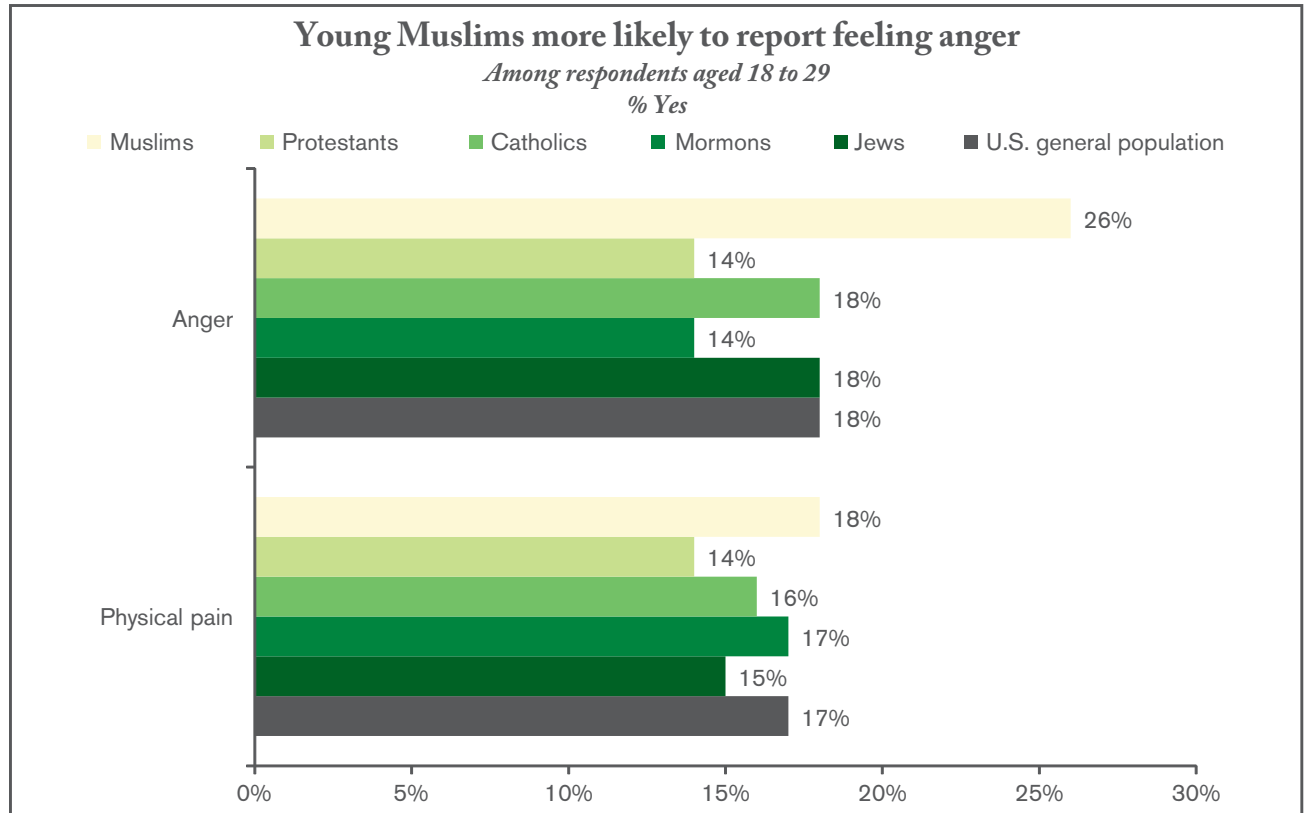


*Did you experience the following feelings during **A LOT OF THE DAY** yesterday? How about worry?*

*Did you experience the following feelings during **A LOT OF THE DAY** yesterday? How about stress?*

*Did you experience the following feelings during **A LOT OF THE DAY** yesterday? How about sadness?*

Figure 14



*Did you experience the following feelings during **A LOT OF THE DAY** yesterday? How about anger?*

*Did you experience the following feelings during **A LOT OF THE DAY** yesterday? How about physical pain?*

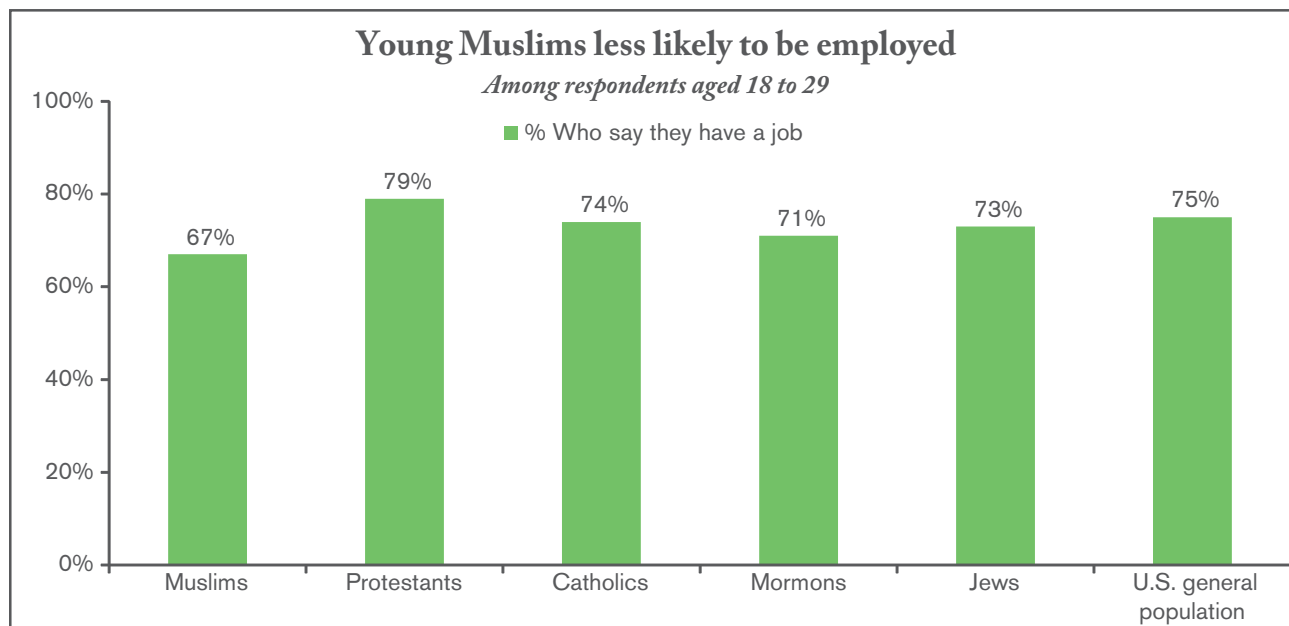
4e. Economic Conditions and Employment

Employment

When looking at work issues, the analysis of Muslim youth by itself paints a fairly positive portrait. But when their views are compared with those of other youths, a more nuanced picture is revealed.

While a majority of young Muslims say they have a job (either paid or unpaid), they are less likely to report being employed than young Protestants, Catholics, and Jews.

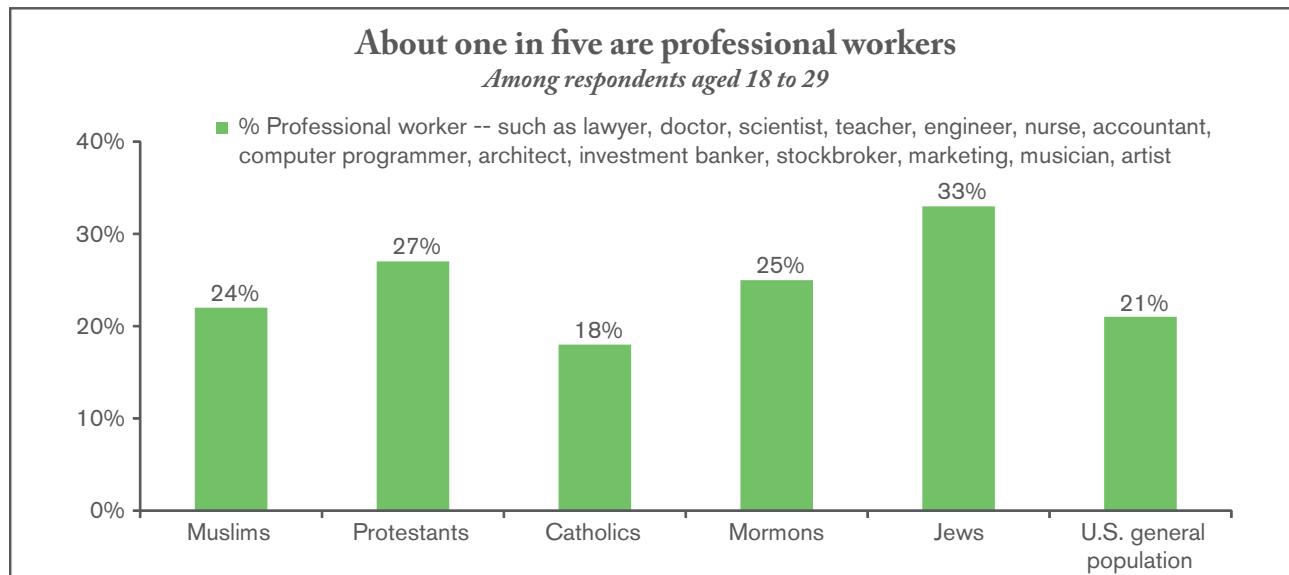
Figure 15



Do you currently have a job or work (either paid or unpaid work)?

Among those who are employed, young Muslim Americans are also the least likely group of youths surveyed to report being satisfied with their job. And while a significant proportion of young Muslims (24%) say they are professional workers, they are less likely than Jews in the same age group (33%) to report having a professional job. As a point of comparison, 21% of young Americans overall say the same.

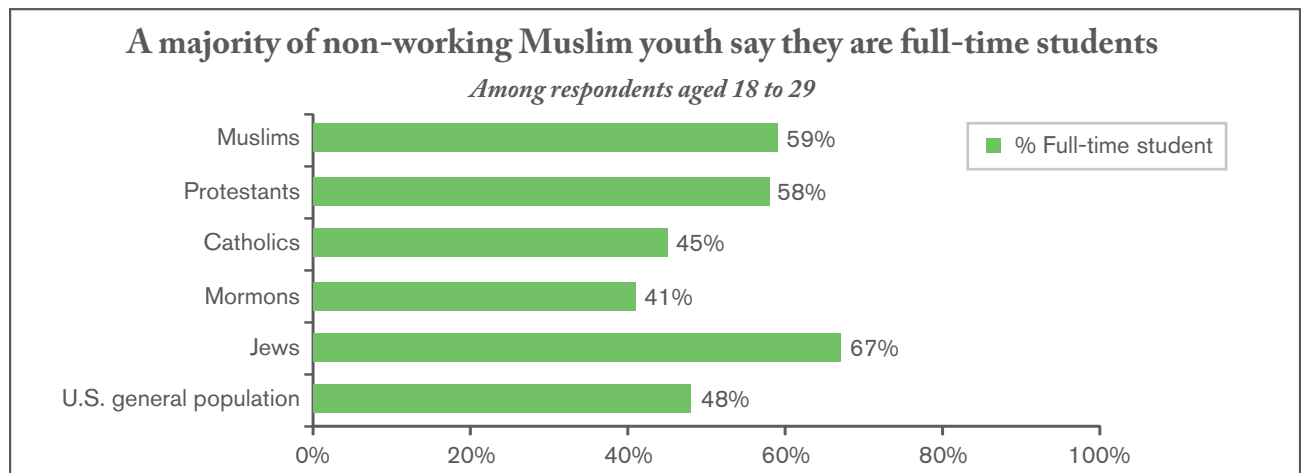
Figure 16



Could you tell me the general category of work you do in your primary job?

About 6 in 10 young Muslims who do not work say they are full-time students, which is similar to the level reported by young Protestants but more than what young Catholics and Mormons report.

Figure 17

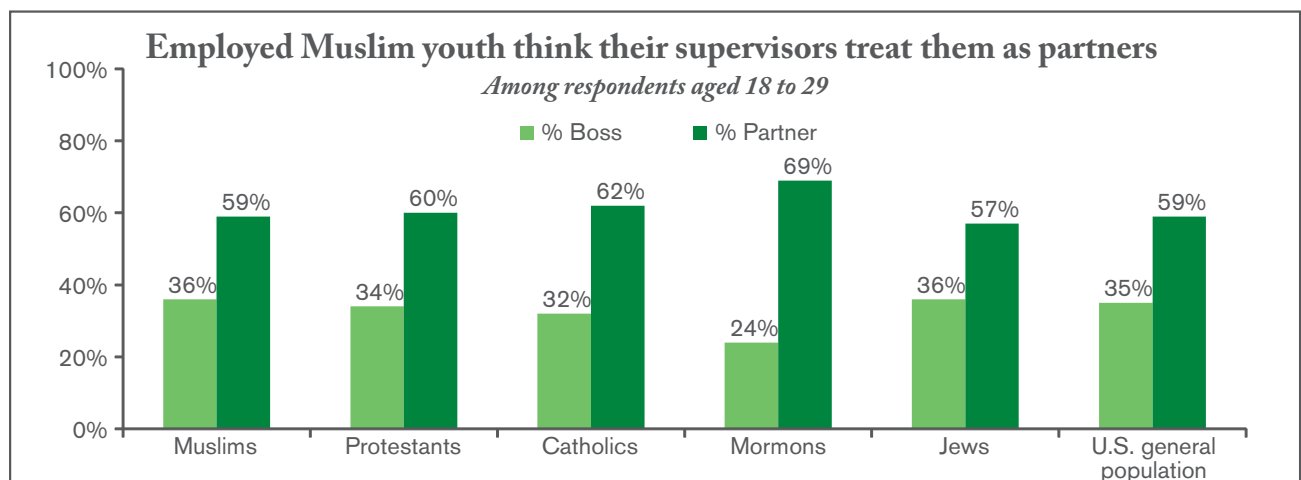


Please tell me whether each of the following applies to you, or not. Are you a full-time student?

Perceptions of using their strengths at work are equally shared by young, working Muslims (76%) and Jews (77%). However, young Muslims are less likely than young Catholics to say they use their strengths at work to do what they do best every day.

Young working Muslims, like working youths in most other religious groups surveyed, hold positive views of their work environment. Perceptions that their supervisor treats them more like a partner are shared equally by young, employed Muslims (59%), Protestants (60%), Catholics (62%), and Jews (57%), although young, employed Mormons (69%) are the most likely to say their supervisor treats them more like a partner. Additionally, young Muslims are as likely as other young respondents to think their supervisors create an open and trusting environment at work.

Figure 18

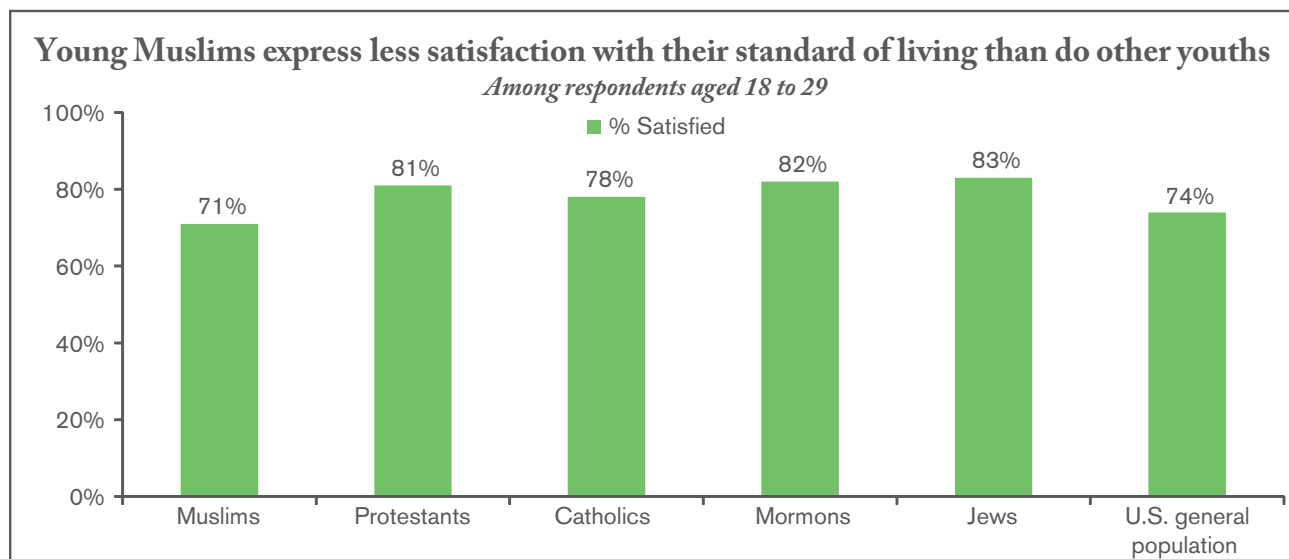


Does your supervisor at work treat you more like he or she is your boss or your partner?

Economic Outlook

Regarding money issues and attitudes about the state of the U.S. economy, the poll findings reveal that young Muslims' perceptions are more negative than those of other religious groups in the same age cohort. While a majority of Muslim youth (71%) say they are satisfied with their standard of living, they are also less likely than other youths to express such satisfaction.

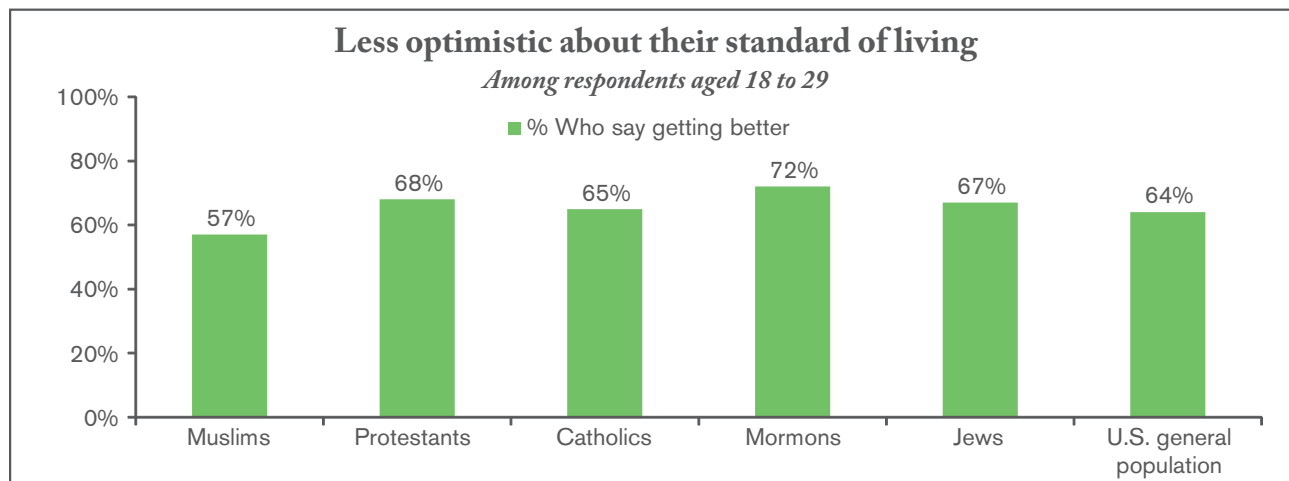
Figure 19



Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your standard of living, all the things you can buy and do?

When asked whether their standard of living is getting better or getting worse, 57% of young Muslims feel it is getting better, compared with 72% of young Mormons and 68% of young Protestants.

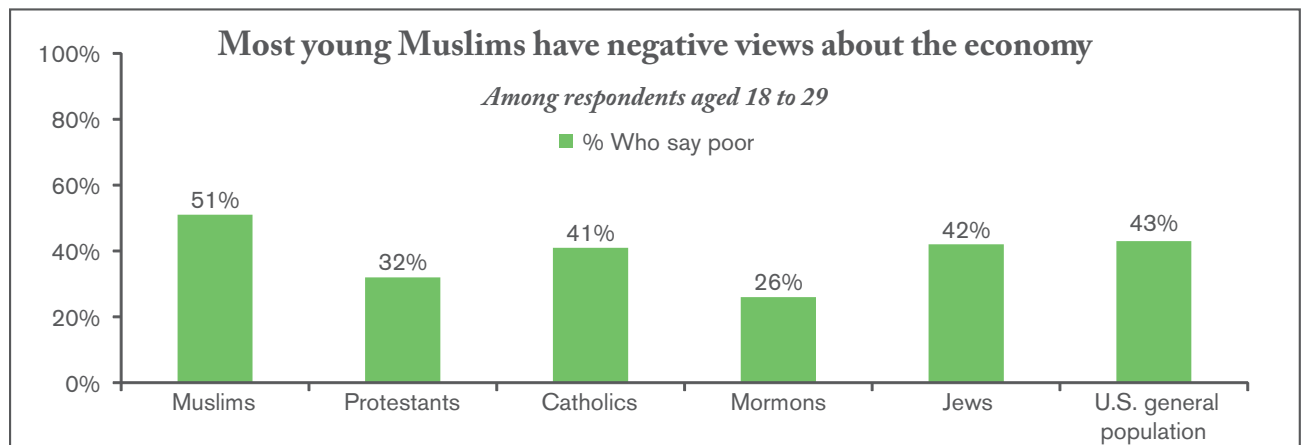
Figure 20



Right now, do you feel your standard of living is getting better or getting worse?

Forty-three percent of young Muslim Americans tell Gallup they worried about money the day before the survey, compared with 39% of young Catholics, 37% each of young Jews and Protestants, and 35% of young Mormons. Young Muslims are also the only group, among those surveyed, in which a majority of respondents rate current economic conditions in the United States as poor.

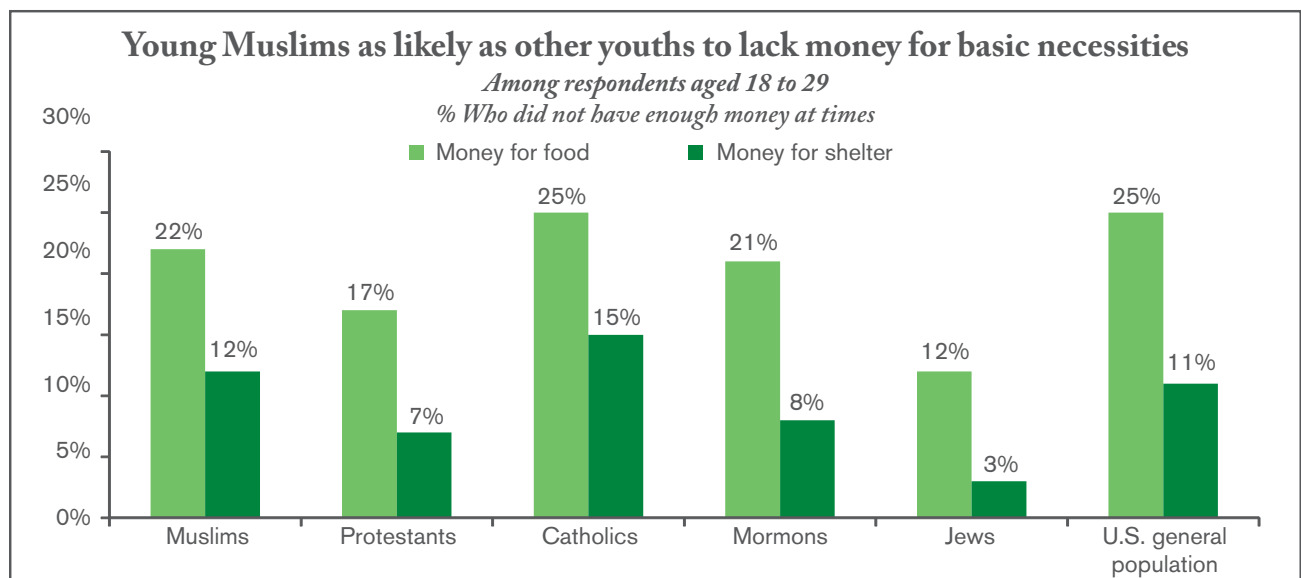
Figure 21



How would you rate economic conditions in this country today -- as excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

Compared with several of the youth groups surveyed, young Muslims are as likely to say there were times in the past year when they lacked enough money to buy food or pay for shelter for themselves or their families.

Figure 22

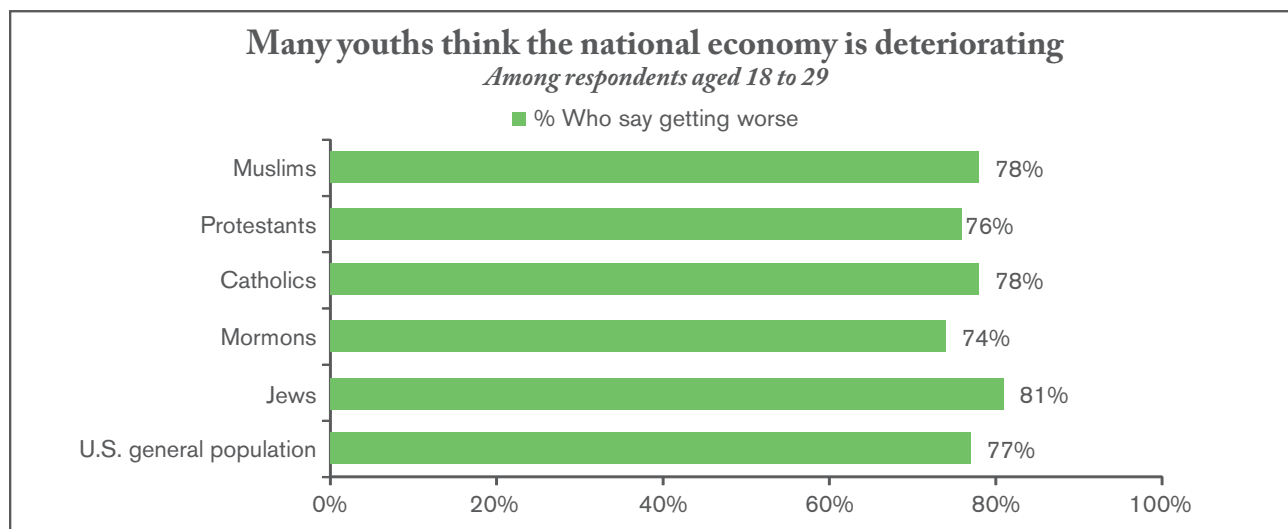


Have there been times in the past 12 months when you did not have enough money: To buy food that you or your family needed?

Have there been times in the past 12 months when you did not have enough money: To provide adequate shelter or housing for you and your family?

Young Muslim Americans are roughly equally likely as youths in other religious groups surveyed to be pessimistic in their assessment of the direction of the national economy.

Figure 23



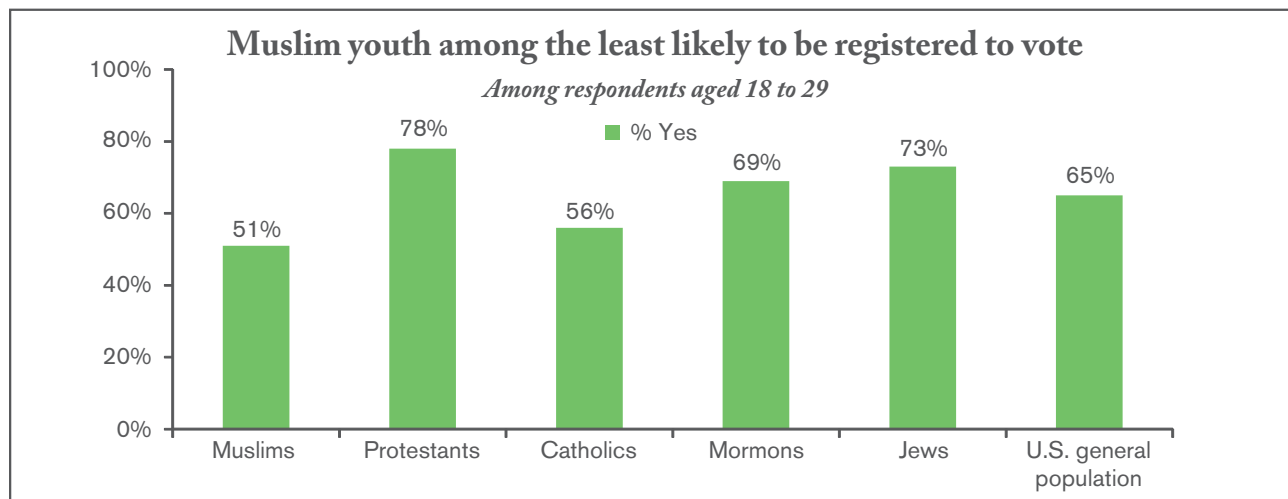
Right now, do you think that economic conditions in the country as a whole are getting better or getting worse?

4f. Political Views

Registration to Vote

A bare majority of young Muslims (51%) say they are registered to vote in their district, which is lower than levels reported by other young respondents. At the other end of the scale, young Protestants (78%) and young Jews (73%) are the two groups who report the highest levels of voter registration.

Figure 24

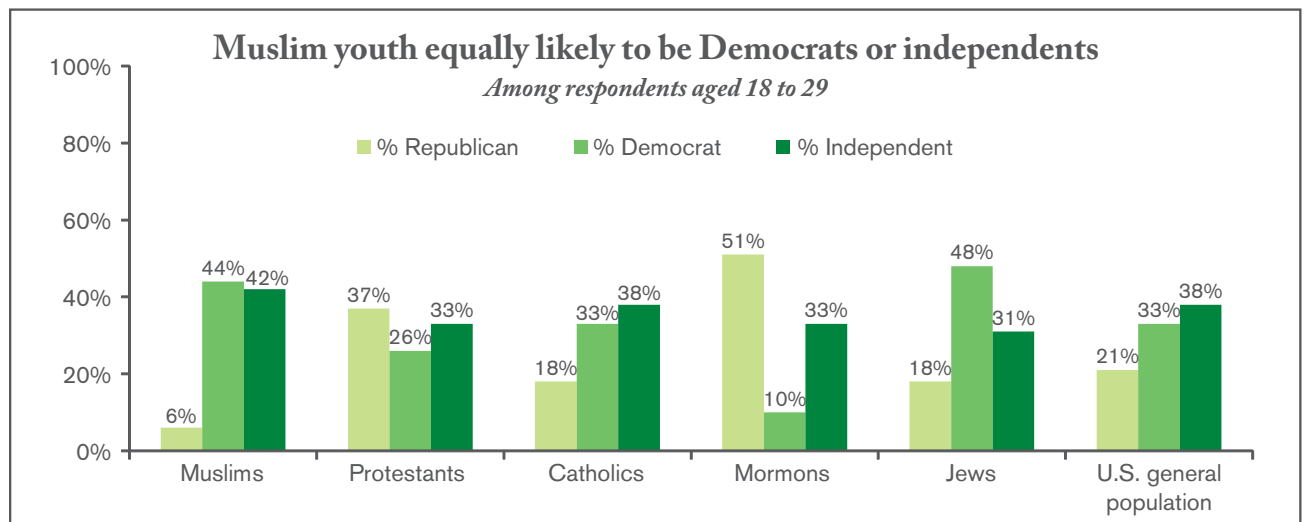


Are you registered to vote in your precinct or election district or not?

Party Affiliation

Unlike any other religious group surveyed, Muslim American youth are most likely to be almost divided between Democrats and independents. They are also the least likely religious group among young respondents to identify as Republicans. On this issue, their attitudes differ most from those of young Mormons who mainly identify as Republicans.

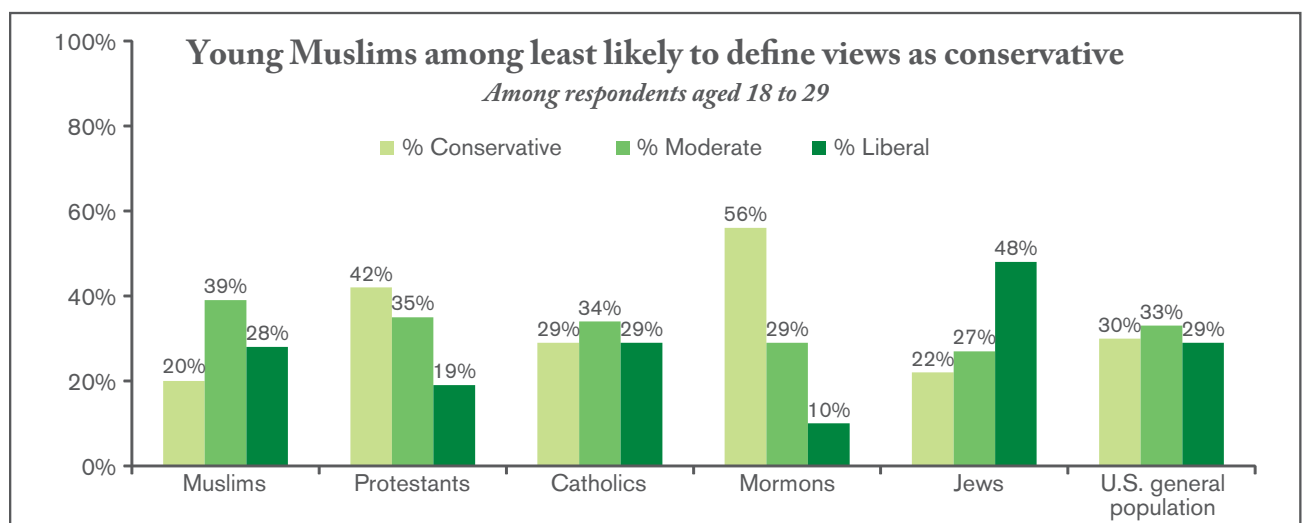
Figure 25



Do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

Along with young Jews, young Muslims are among the least likely religious group to define their political views as either conservative or very conservative. Similar percentages of young Muslims and young Catholics report having either liberal or very liberal political views, 28% and 29%, respectively.

Figure 26

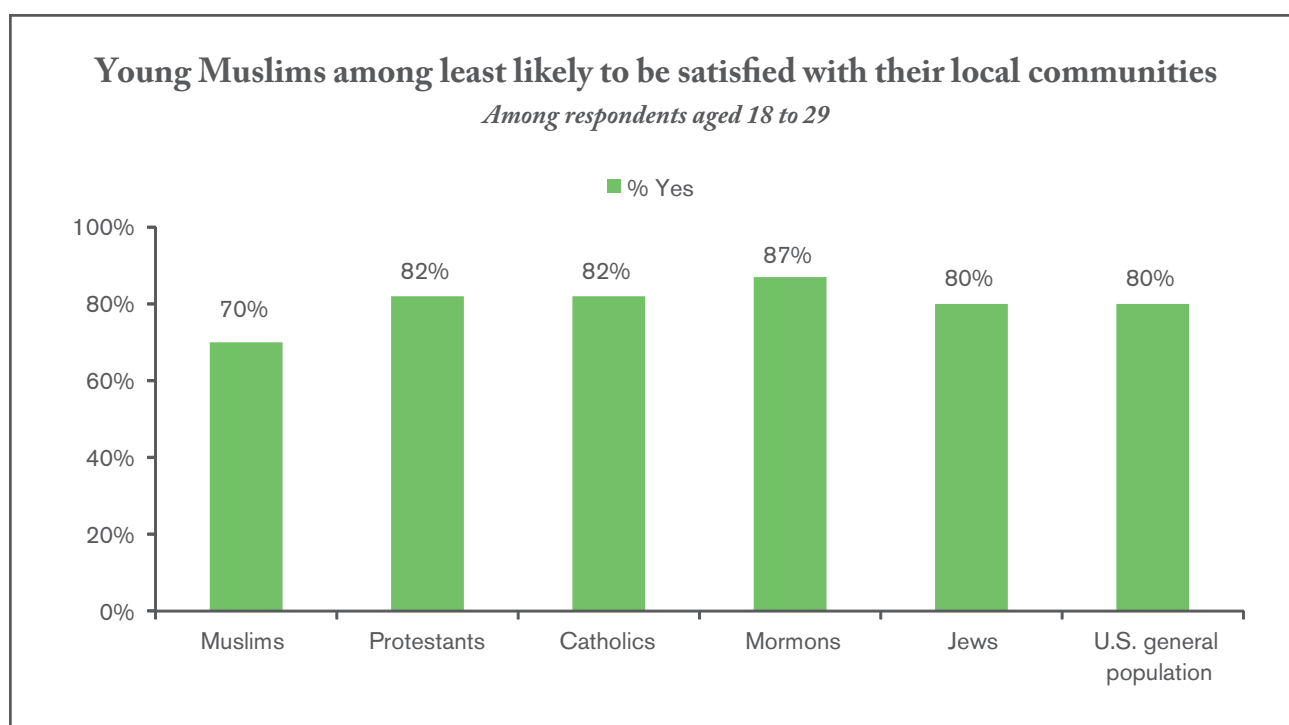


How would you describe your political views?

4g. Community Satisfaction

While young Muslims express, for the most part, satisfaction with their local communities, the ability to compare their views with those of other youths enables us to provide a more nuanced understanding of their satisfaction. Although 70% of young Muslim Americans say they are satisfied with their cities and local areas, they are among the least likely groups of young respondents to express such views. At least 80% of young Jews, Catholics, Protestants, and Mormons say they are satisfied with their local communities.

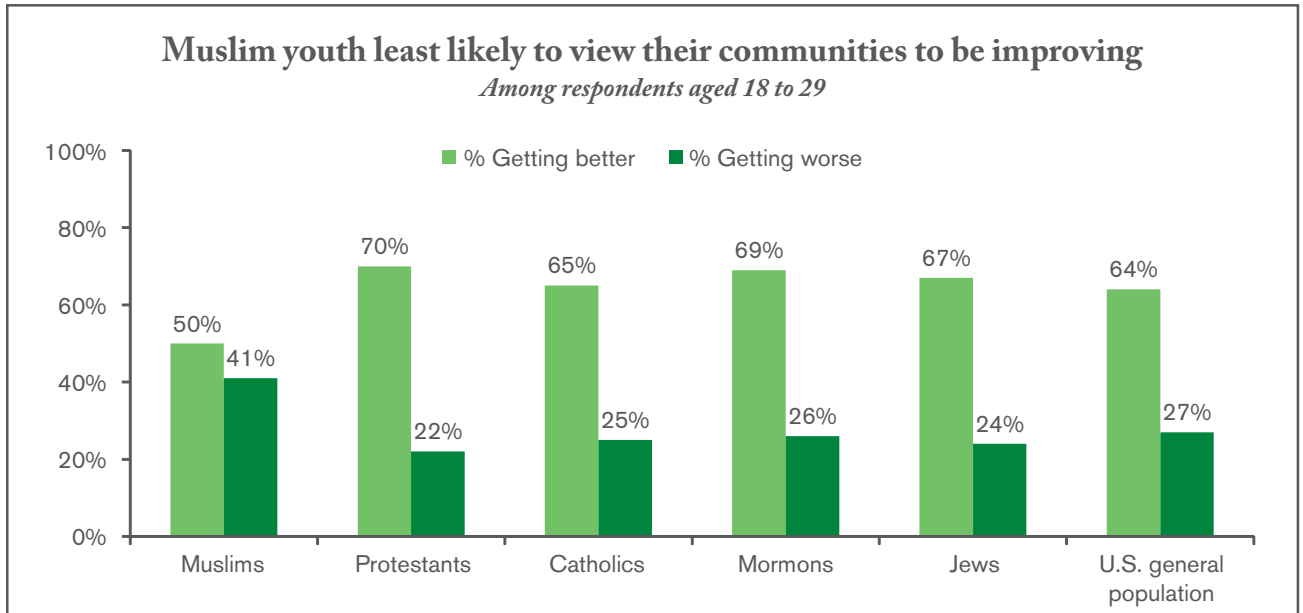
Figure 27



Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the city or area where you live?

Young Muslims are the least likely group surveyed to say their local communities are getting better. Conversely, they are the most likely group to think their cities are getting worse.

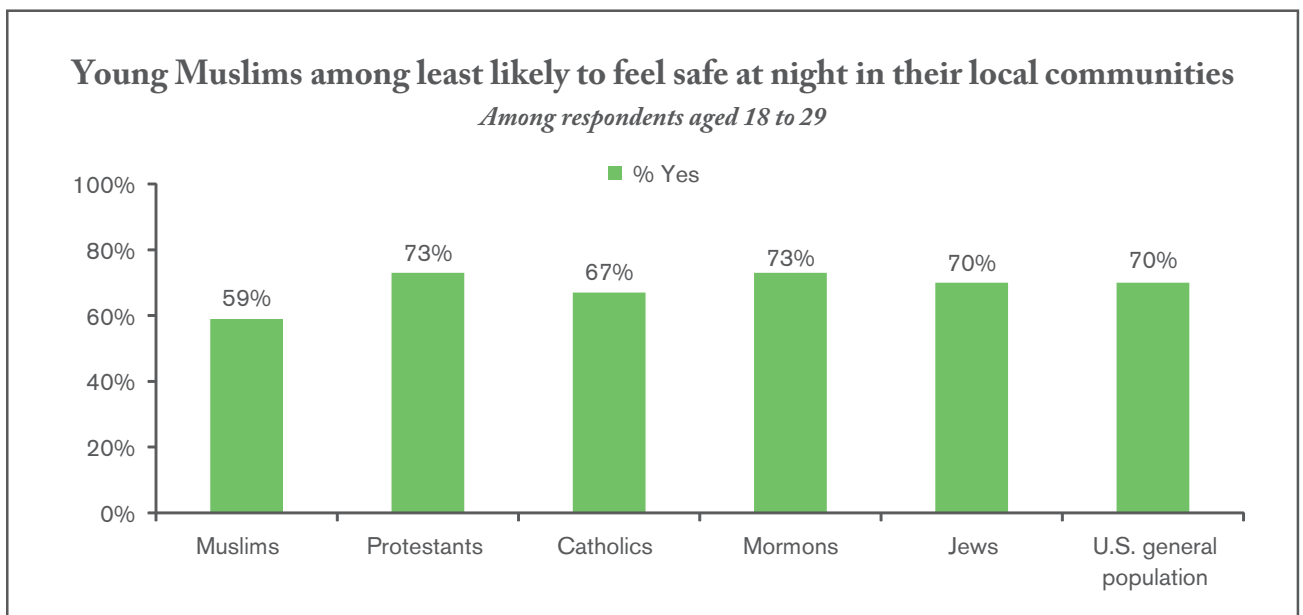
Figure 28



Is the city or area where you live getting better or getting worse as a place to live?

In terms of perceptions of safety, young Muslim Americans are also less likely than respondents in several of the other groups surveyed to report feeling safe in their local communities. Fifty-nine percent of young Muslims say they feel safe walking alone at night, compared with 73% each of young Mormons and Protestants.

Figure 29



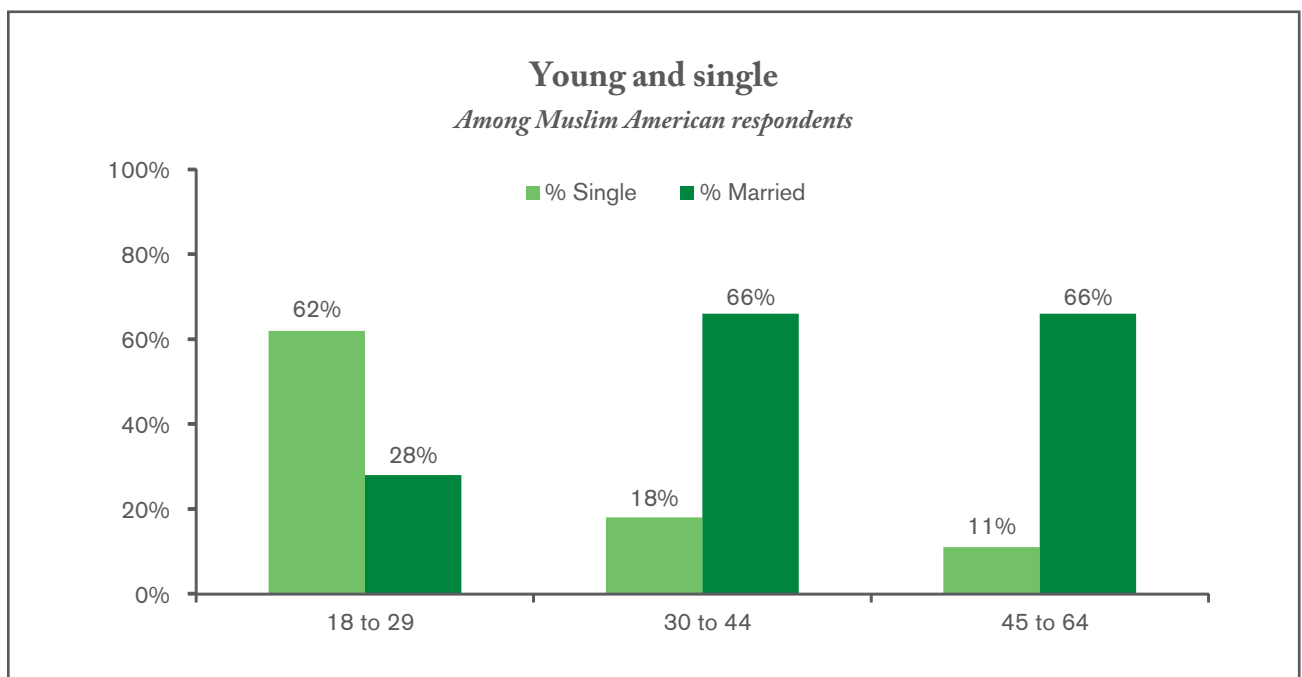
Do you feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where you live?

Shared Views and Differences With Older Muslim Americans

4h. Demographics

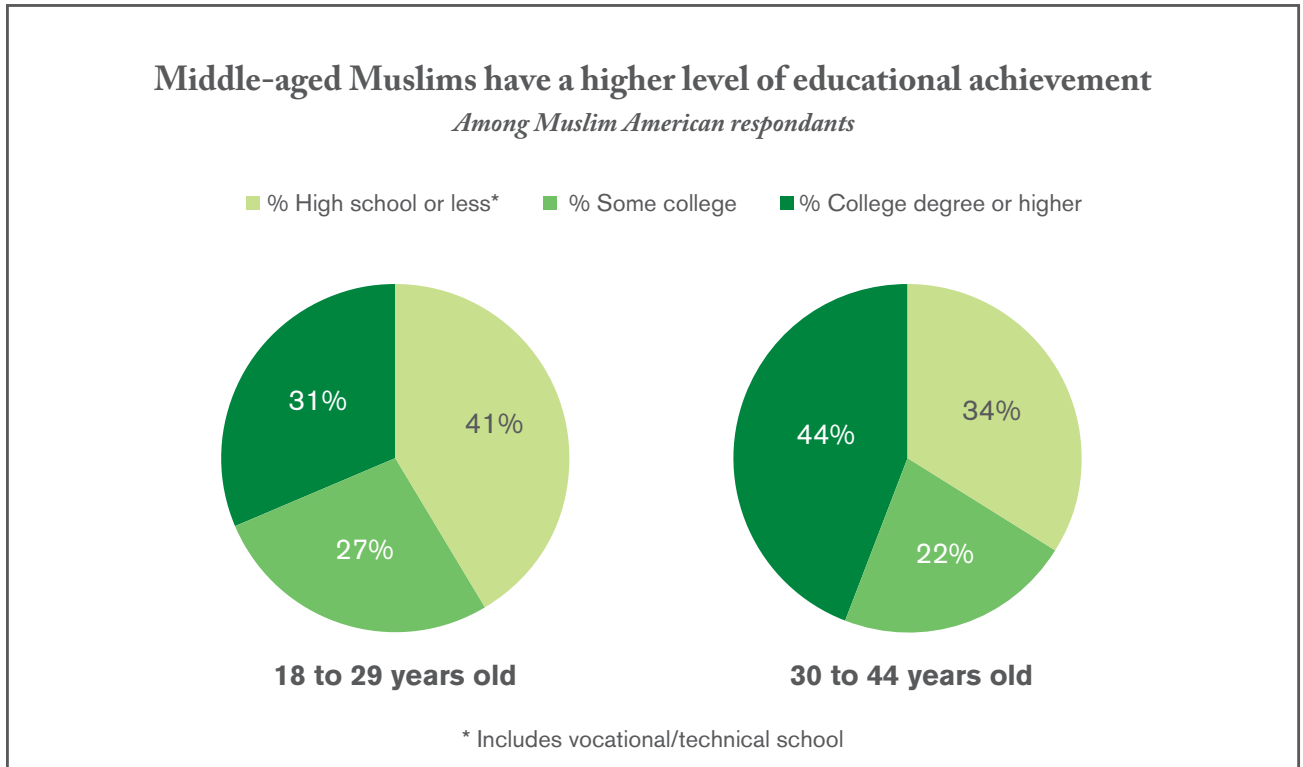
Not surprisingly, young American Muslims are far more likely than older Muslim Americans to be single. Results for those who are at least 65 years old are too small to report. Compared with Muslim Americans between the ages of 30 and 44, young Muslims are also less likely to have a college degree or higher.

Figure 30



What is your current marital status?

Figure 31



What is your highest completed level of education?

What is the most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years?

Today's Muslim American youth are both Muslim and American in cultural synchronization, social engagement, and private lifestyles. In post 9/11 America, Muslim youth have stepped forward in social networks, university groups, and professional associations as leaders firmly stating that Islam is a force for positive action in the United States. Muslim youth desire to represent and act on behalf of their religious communities; however, they are often unable to speak accurately about Islamic perspectives on American public affairs and issues.

Elder Muslim civic and religious leaders are charged with providing adequate training and resources empowering youth to draw upon Islamic ethical principles and morals when confronting America's dilemmas. Likewise, Muslim youth must be grounded in America's traditions of civic engagement and interfaith dialogue. Over the next decade, it is imperative that American Muslim institutions allocate significant human and financial capital toward initiatives channeling Muslim youth into educational and apprenticeship opportunities. Such nurturing will help Muslim youth blossom into transformative artisans and intellectuals within a global context.

American Muslims' sense of self-worth and communal belonging have been under attack. Emboldened by the best traditions of Islamic ethics and American civic participation, Muslim youth will be able to confront the onslaught of lingering Islamophobic elements.

As Muslim American communities invest hope and resources into their youth, they cultivate the next generation of American leadership to expand the traditions of pluralism democracy. America's global standing as the land of opportunity depends, in part, on the successful unfolding of this process. I trust that Americans will accept the principled leadership of Muslims who aspire to establish the Beloved Community. Insha'Allah.

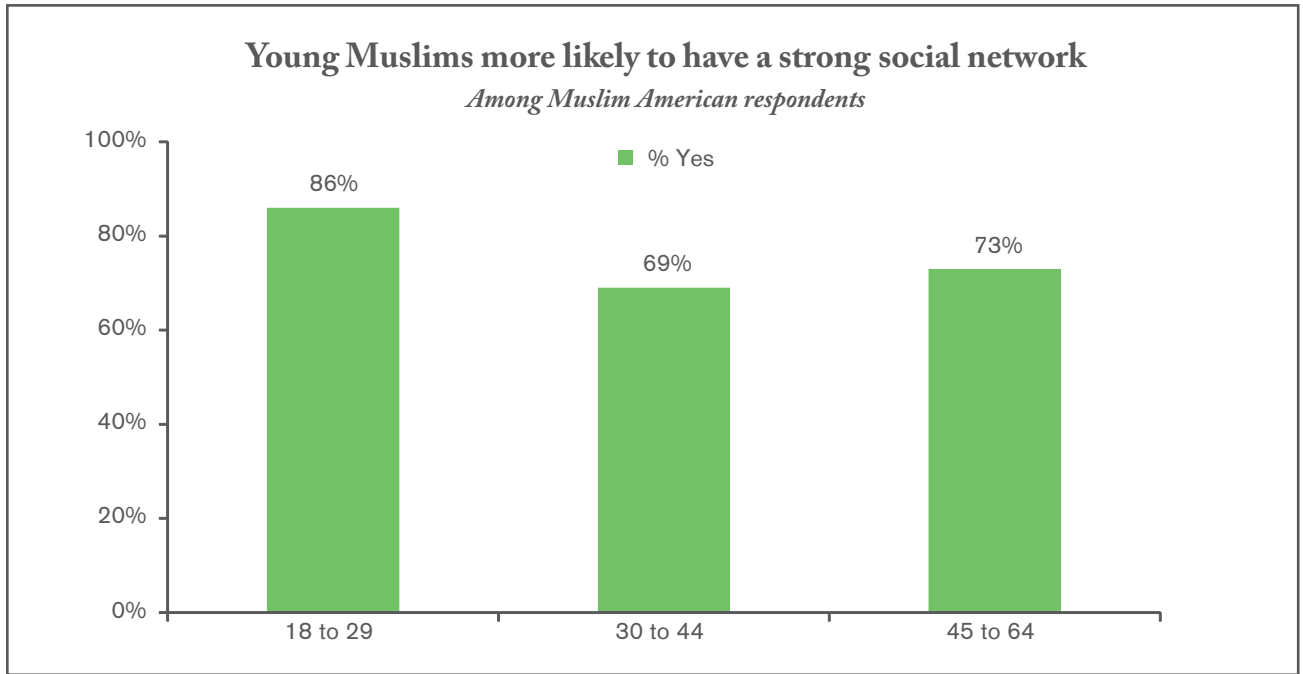
Jihad Saleh Williams

Jihad Saleh Williams is Program and Outreach Coordinator for the Congressional Muslim Staffers Association.

4i. Family

Reported responsibility for caring for an aging or disabled relative or friend is as likely for young and older Muslim Americans. Young Muslims are far more likely than older respondents to report having someone they can count on in case they need help.

Figure 32

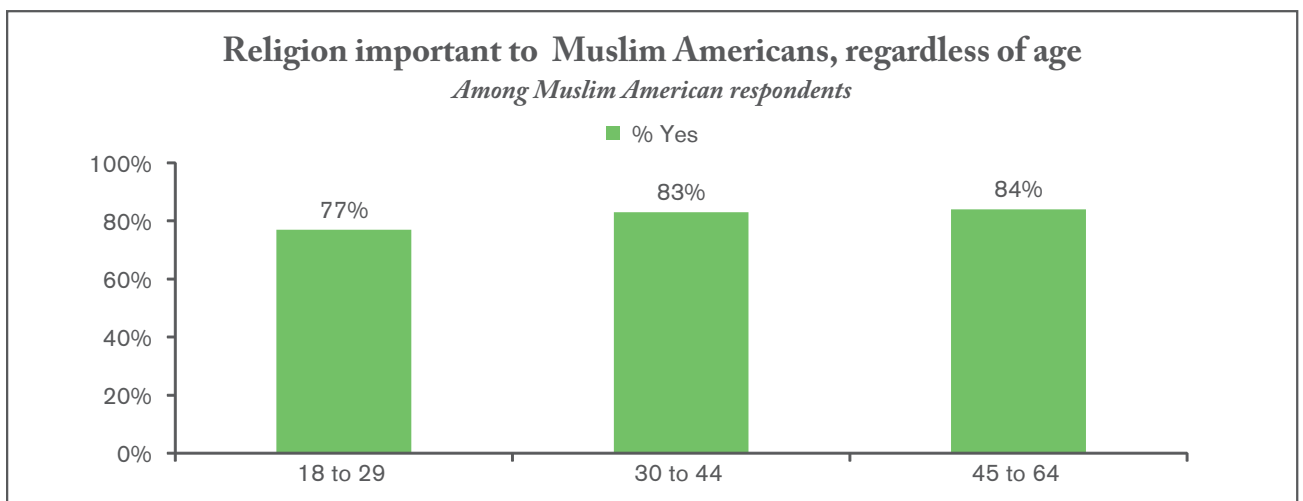


If you were in trouble, do you have relatives or friends you can count on to help you whenever you need them, or not?

4j. Religion

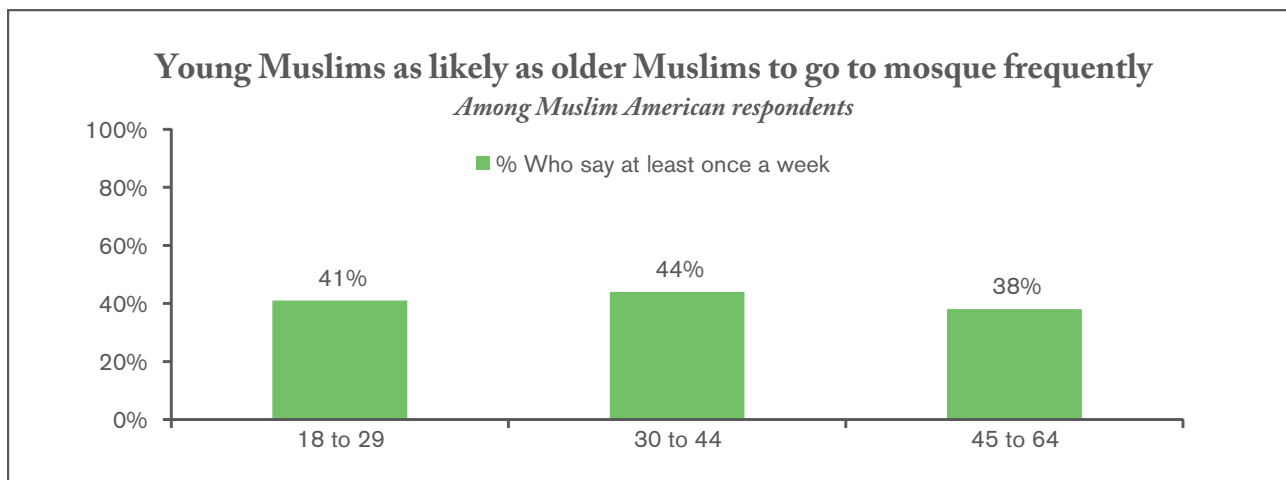
In terms of the role of faith in their daily lives, young Muslims Americans are statistically no less likely than older Muslims to say religion is important for them. Further, Muslim youth in America are as likely as older Muslims to report going to mosque at least once week.

Figure 33



Is religion an important part of your daily life?

Figure 34

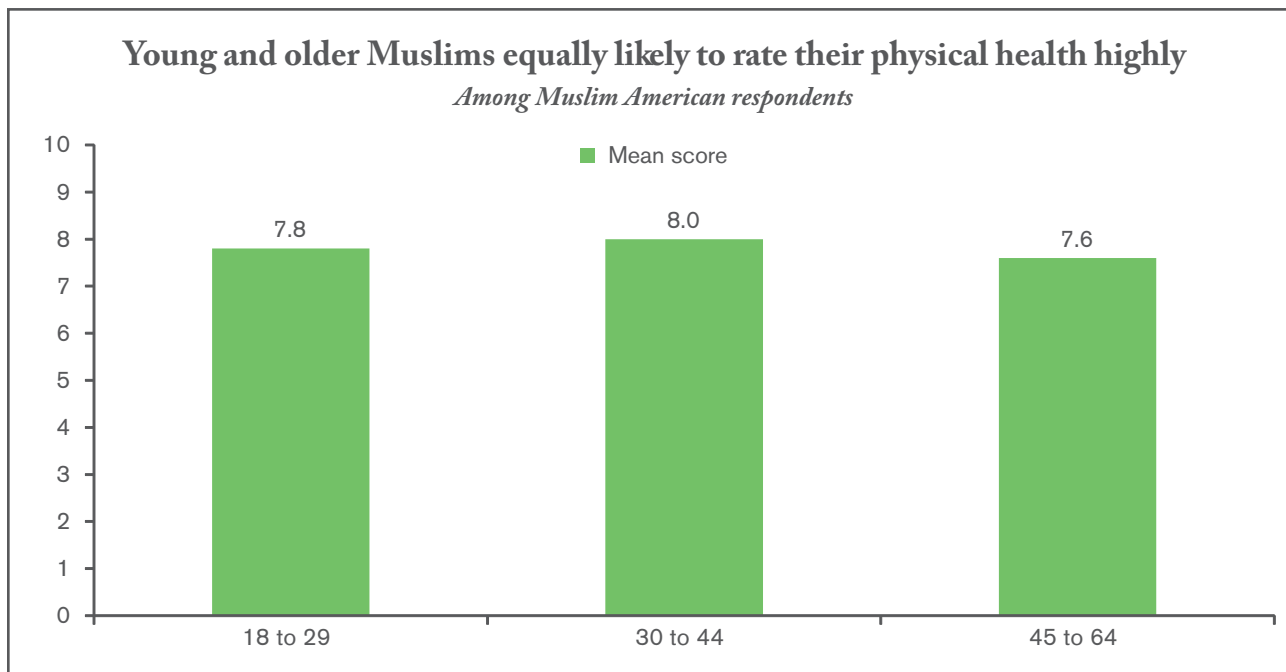


How often do you attend church, synagogue, or mosque -- at least once a week, almost every week, about once a month, seldom, or never?

4k. Health and Well-Being

Regardless of age, Muslims are equally likely to rate their physical health at the top end of the scale.

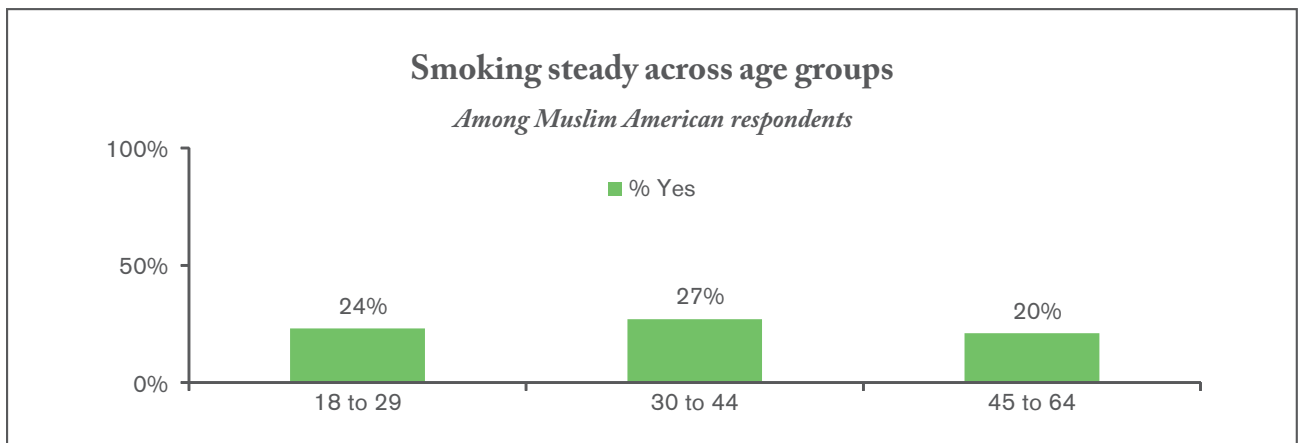
Figure 35



Please rate your physical health today, on a 0-to-10 scale.

Smoking habits are fairly consistent across age groups (differences are not statistically significant) among the Muslim American population.

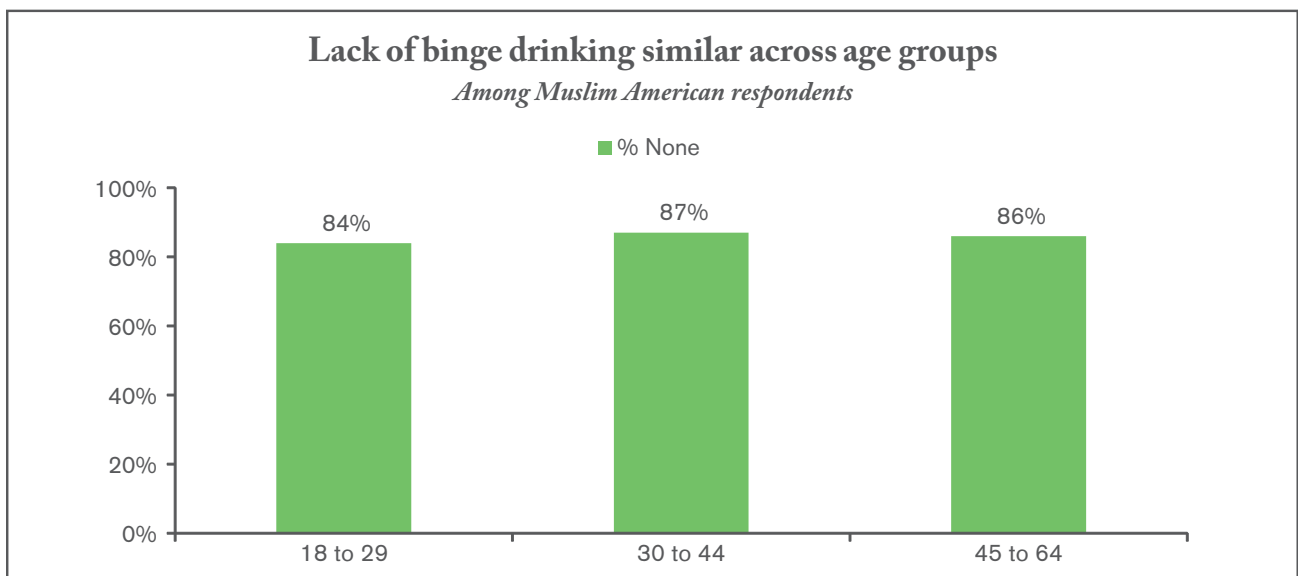
Figure 36



Do you smoke?

Young Muslims are also as likely as older respondents to report that they did not consume four/five alcoholic drinks on any day during the week prior to the survey.

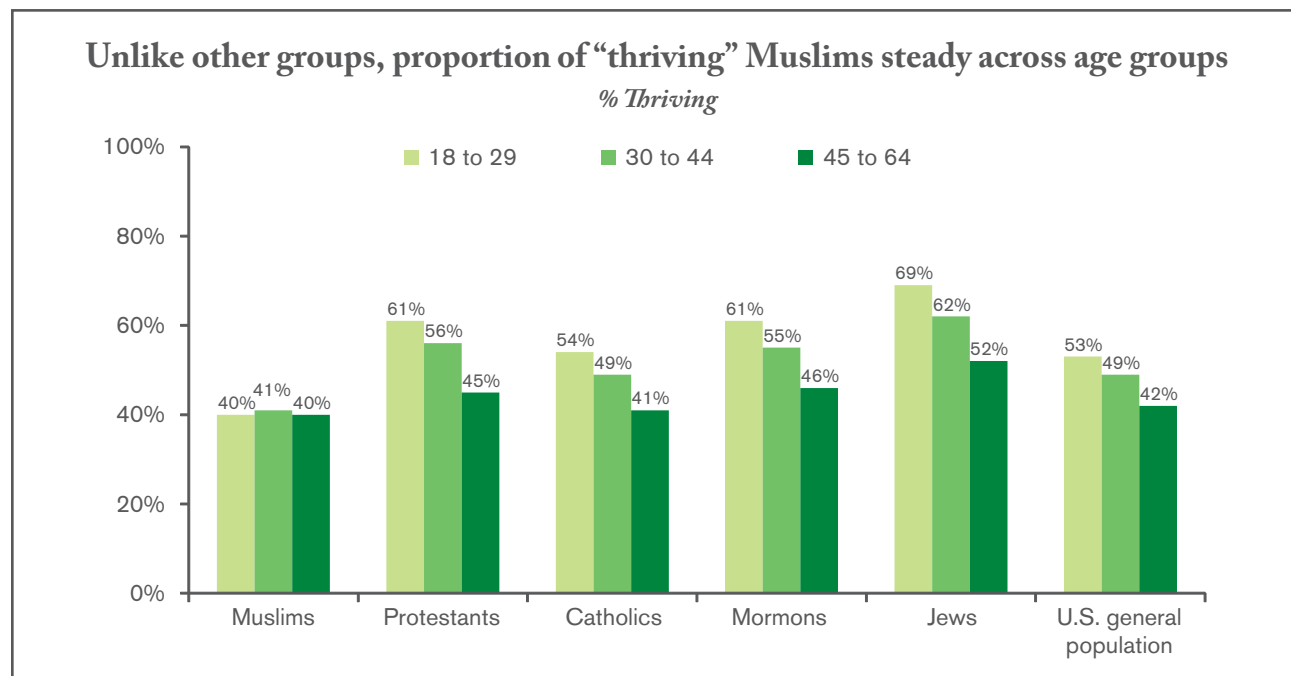
Figure 37



In the last seven days, on how many days did you: Consume at least five/four drinks containing alcohol?

Although life satisfaction decreases with age for most religious groups surveyed, young Muslims are about as likely as older respondents to be considered thriving. Gallup classifies individuals to be “thriving” if they say they currently stand on step 7 or higher of the ladder scale and expect to stand on step 8 or higher in five years.

Figure 38

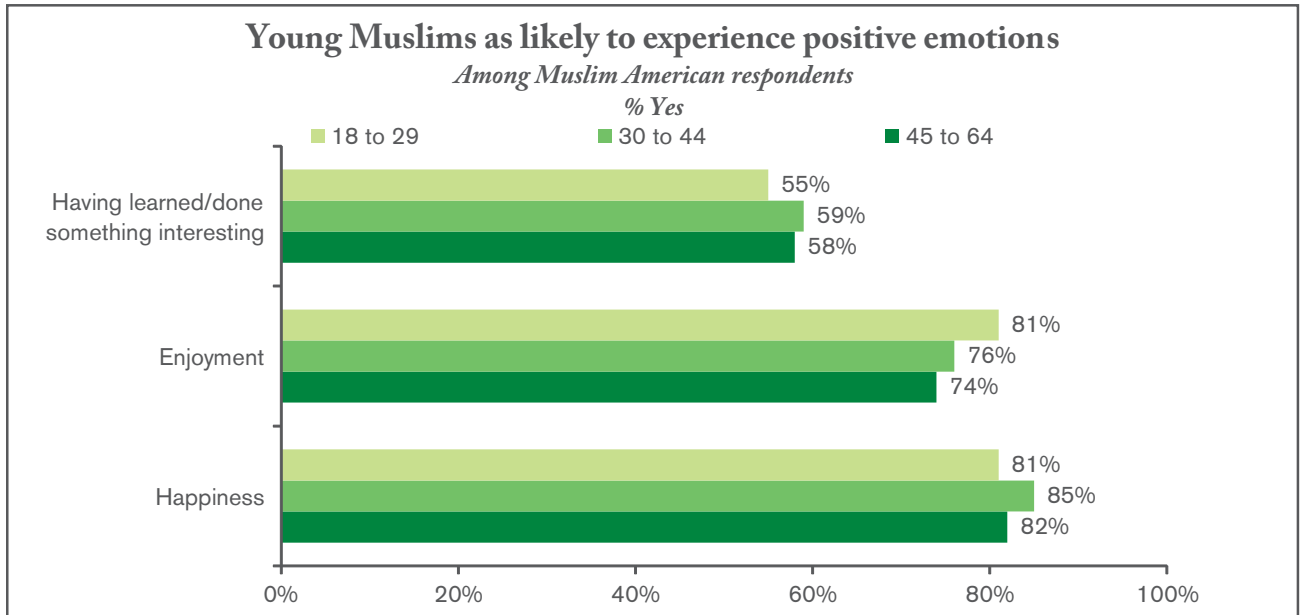


Please imagine a ladder, with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder do you feel you personally stand at the present time?

Please imagine a ladder, with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. Just your best guess, on which step do you think you will stand on in the future, say about five years from now?

Emotions, both positive and negative, of young Muslims are, in many ways, quite similar to those experienced by older respondents. For example, Muslim youth are as likely as older Muslims (those aged 45 to 64) to report experiencing a lot of enjoyment, but they are more likely than older Muslims to report feeling a lot of anger the day before the survey. At the same time, Muslim youth are less likely than these older respondents to report having a lot of physical pain and feeling sad the day before the survey.

Figure 39

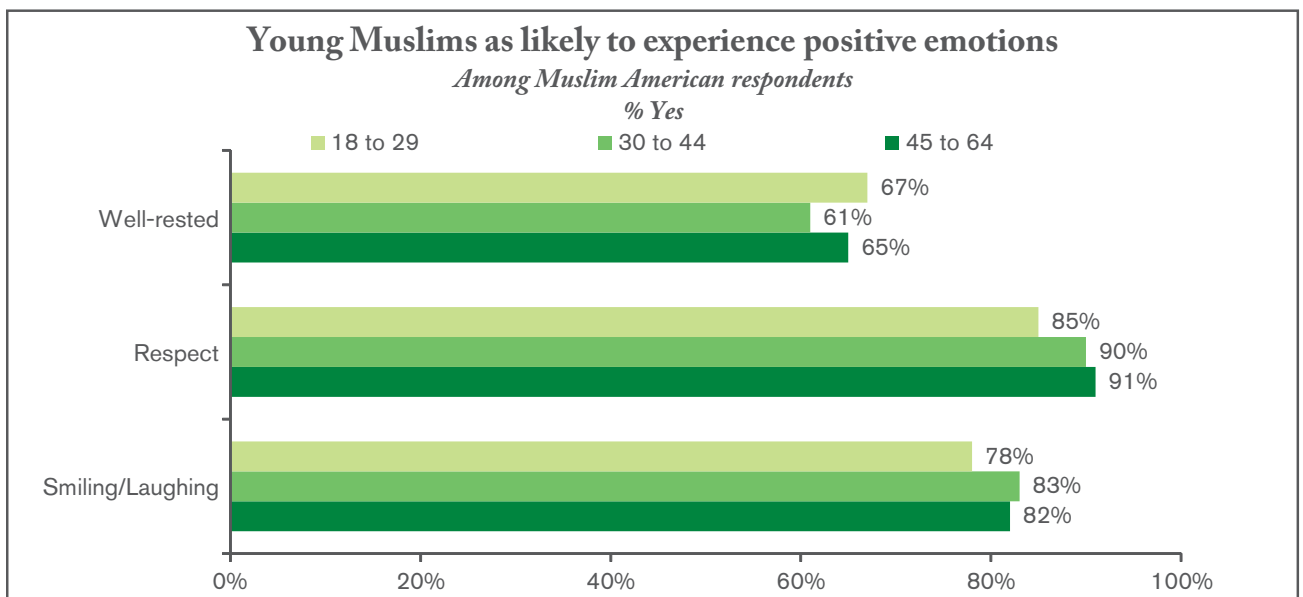


Did you learn or do something interesting yesterday?

Did you experience the following feelings during A LOT OF THE DAY yesterday? How about enjoyment?

Did you experience the following feelings during A LOT OF THE DAY yesterday? How about happiness?

Figure 40

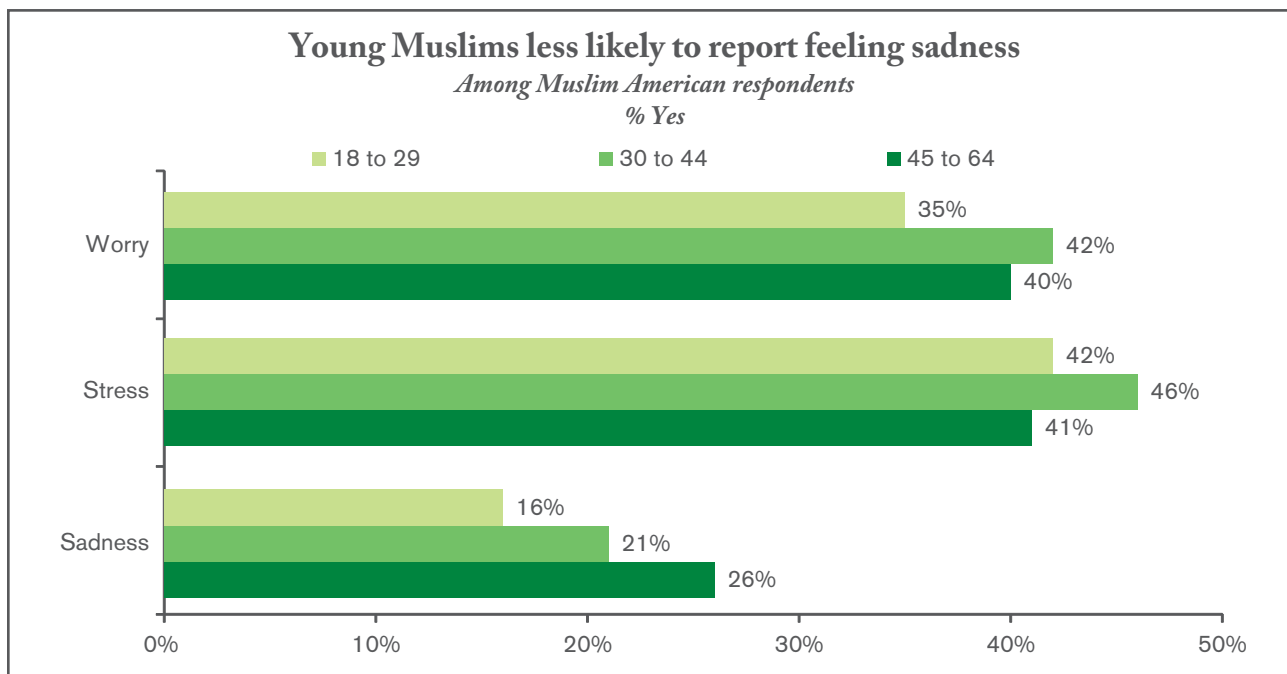


Did you feel well-rested yesterday?

Were you treated with respect all day yesterday?

Did you smile or laugh a lot yesterday?

Figure 41

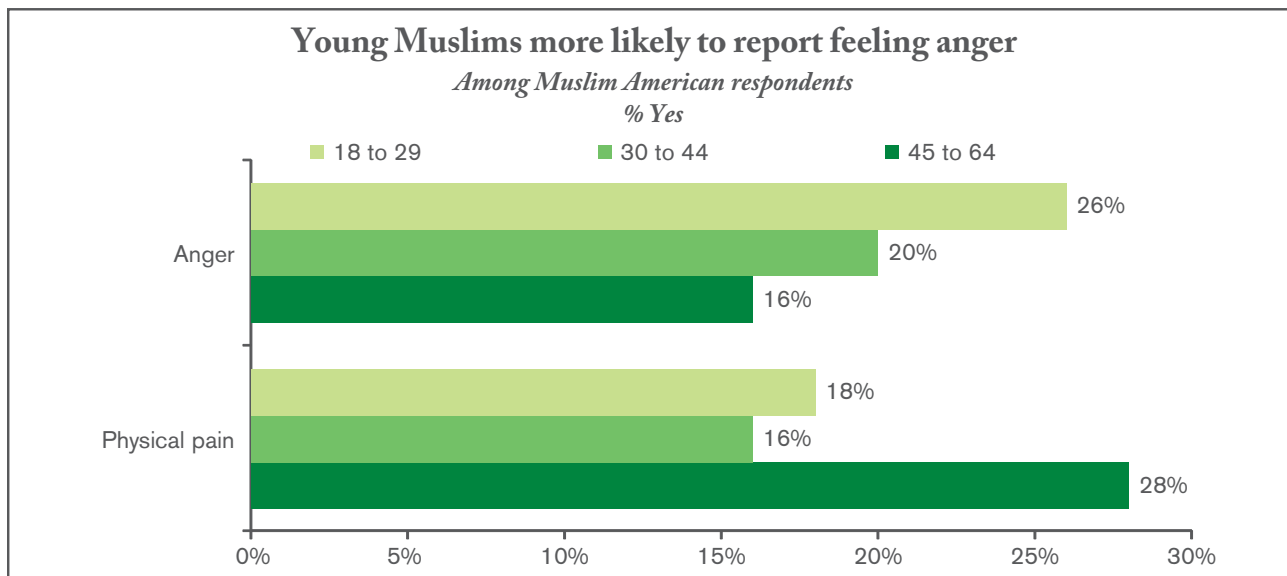


Did you experience the following feelings during ***A LOT OF THE DAY*** yesterday? How about worry?

Did you experience the following feelings during ***A LOT OF THE DAY*** yesterday? How about stress?

Did you experience the following feelings during ***A LOT OF THE DAY*** yesterday? How about sadness?

Figure 42



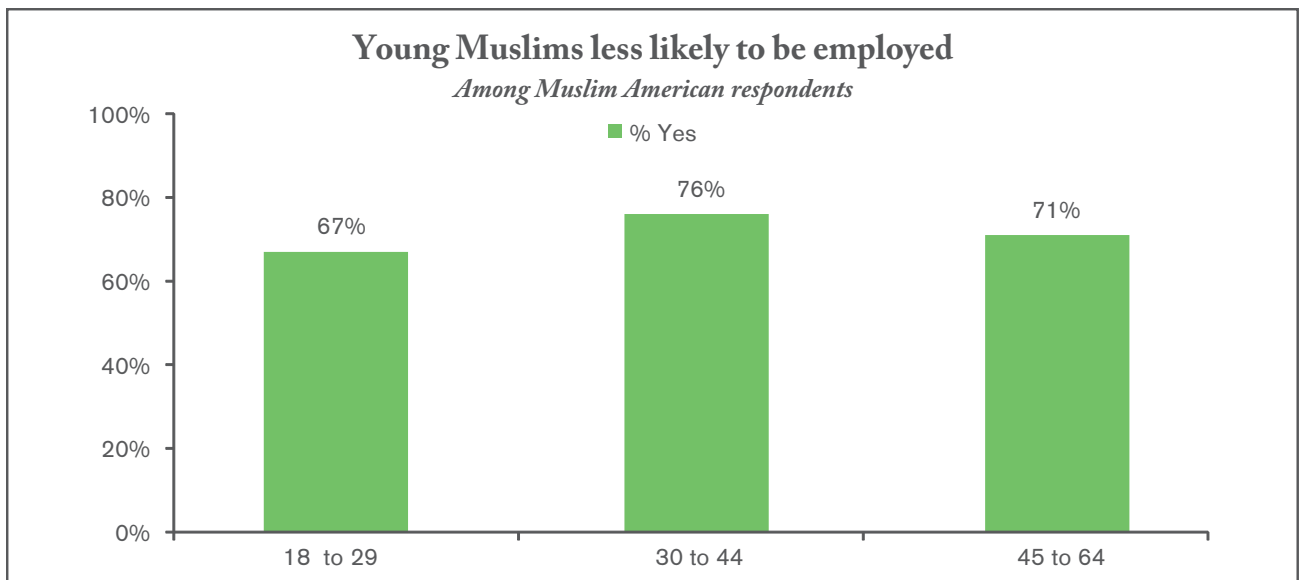
Did you experience the following feelings during ***A LOT OF THE DAY*** yesterday? How about anger?

Did you experience the following feelings during ***A LOT OF THE DAY*** yesterday? How about physical pain?

41. Economic Conditions and Employment

Regardless of age, strong majorities of Muslim Americans are engaged in some form of work. However, younger Muslims are less likely than those between the ages of 30 and 44 to report having a job, either paid or unpaid, 67% and 76%, respectively. As a point of comparison, 71% of Muslim Americans between the ages of 45 and 64 say they have a job.

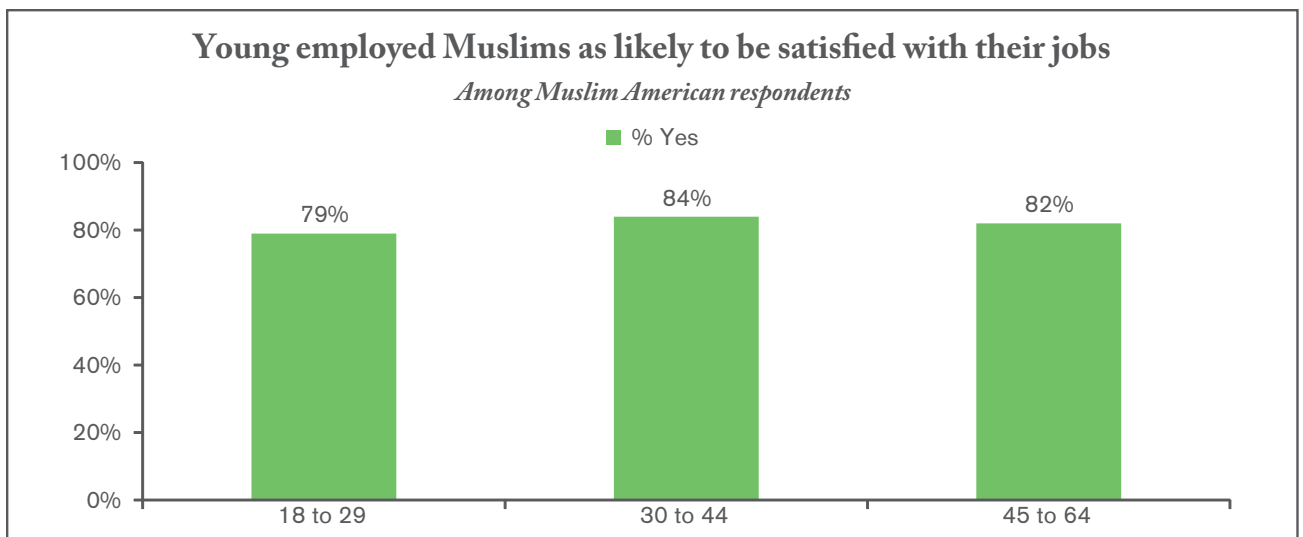
Figure 43



Do you currently have a job or work (either paid or unpaid work)?

Interestingly, job satisfaction among Muslims who say they have a job does not increase statistically across age groups.

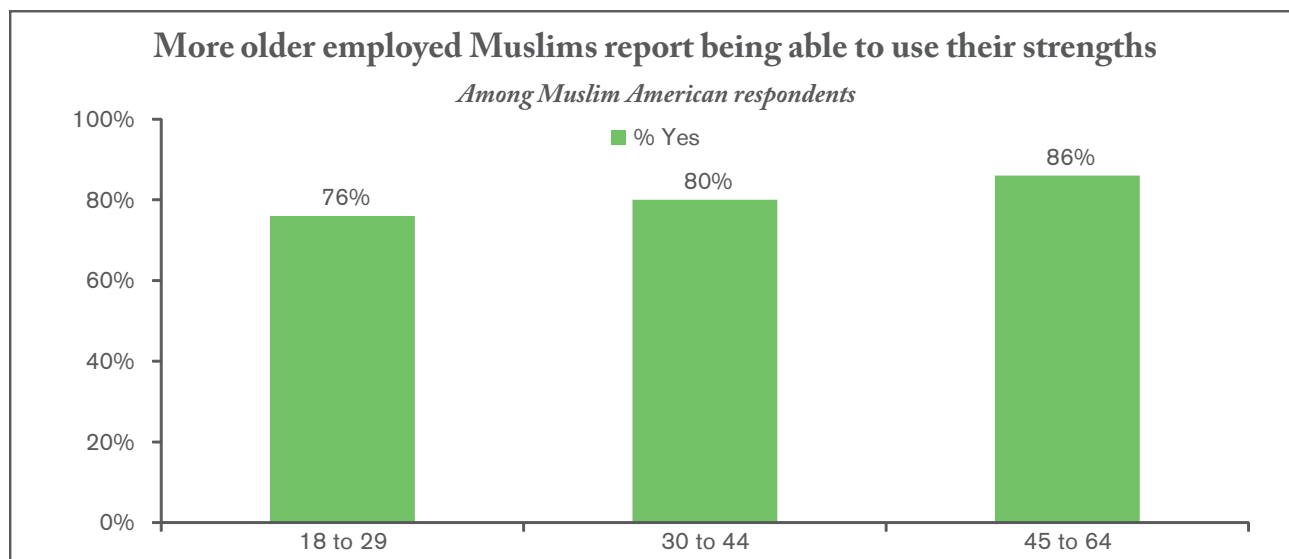
Figure 44



Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your job or the work you do?

But older Muslims (aged 45 to 64) are more likely than younger respondents to say they use their strengths at work to do what they do best every day.

Figure 45

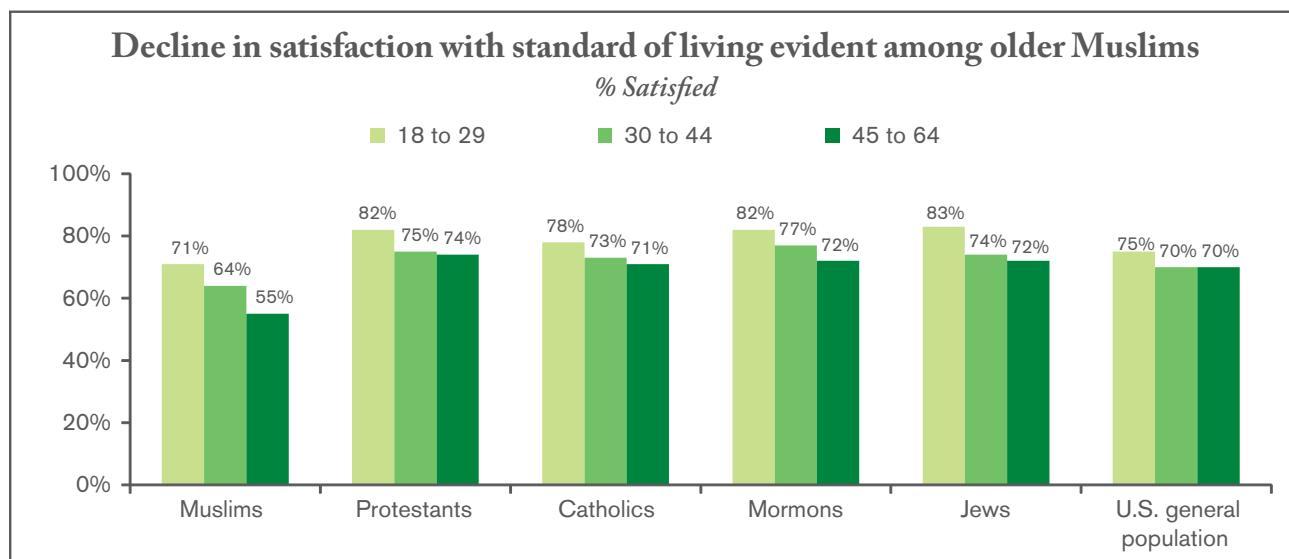


At work, do you get to use your strengths to do what you do best every day, or not?

Economic Outlook

Concerns about their standard of living are more pronounced for older Muslims and a similar directional pattern holds true for older respondents in several other religious groups.

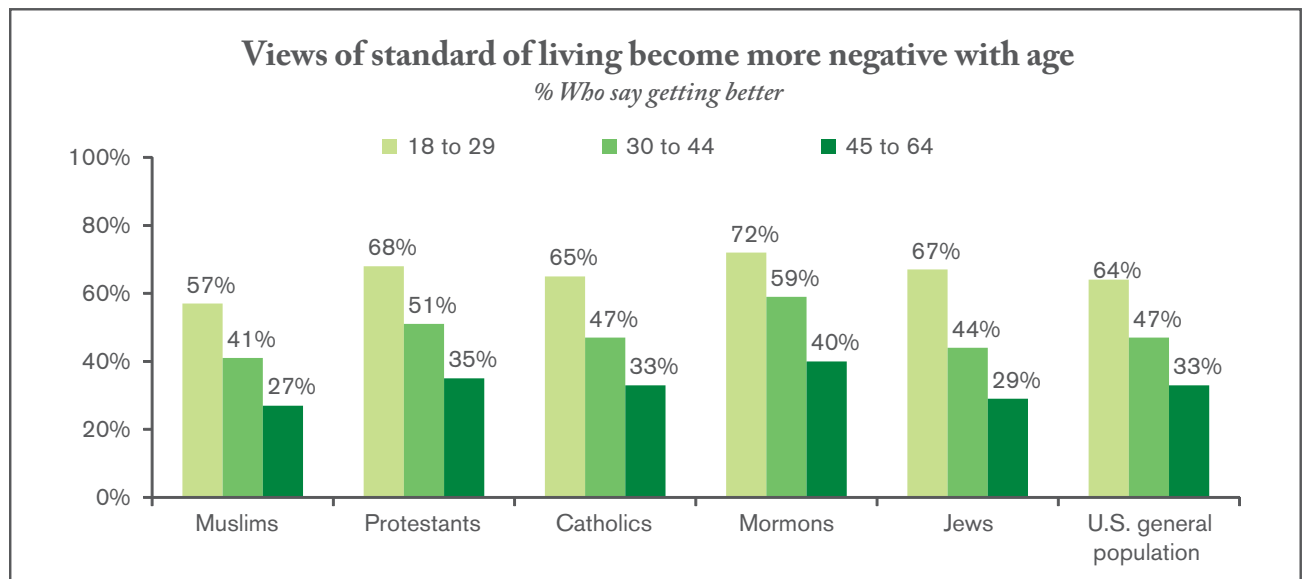
Figure 46



Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your standard of living, all the things you can buy and do?

Perceptions that their standard of living is improving decrease dramatically with age among Muslim Americans. But such views are also shared by older respondents in other religious groups surveyed.

Figure 47



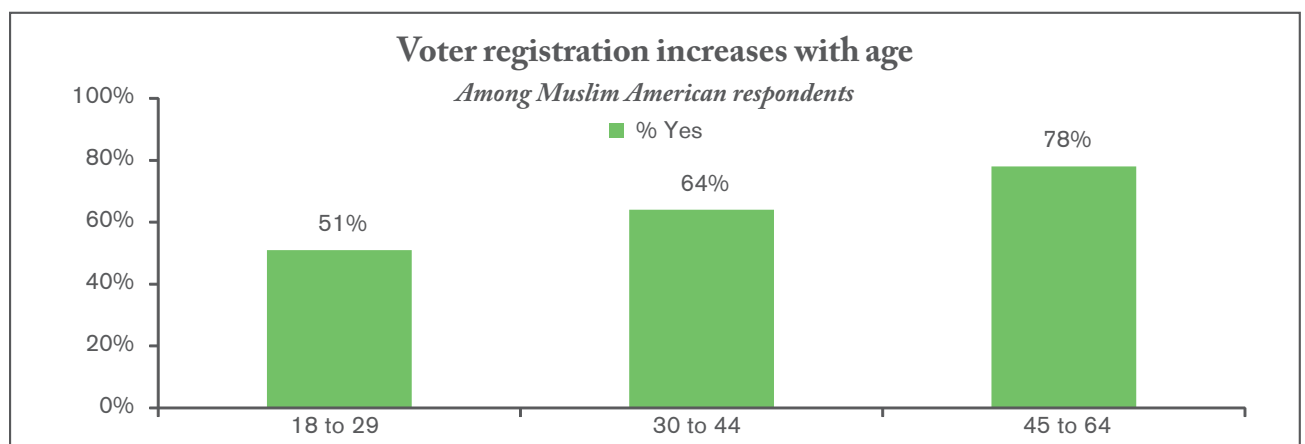
Right now, do you feel your standard of living is getting better or getting worse?

4m. Political Views

Registration to Vote

Although only one-half of young Muslims say they are registered to vote in their precinct, the likelihood of being registered increases with age. More than 6 in 10 Muslims between the ages of 30 and 44 and 78% of those aged 45 to 64 say they are registered to vote.

Figure 48

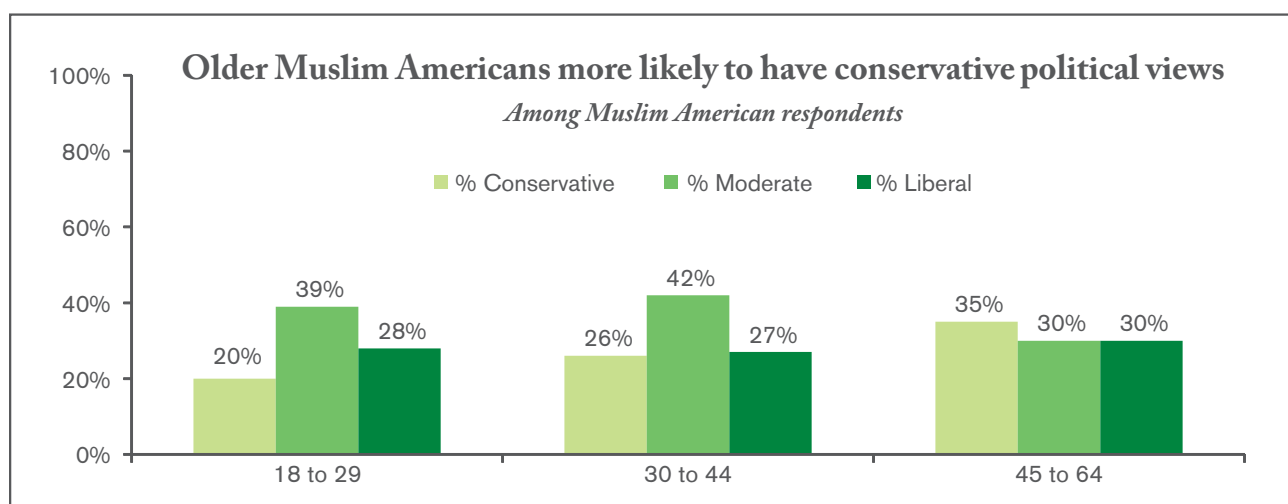


Are you registered to vote in your precinct or election district or not?

Political Affiliation

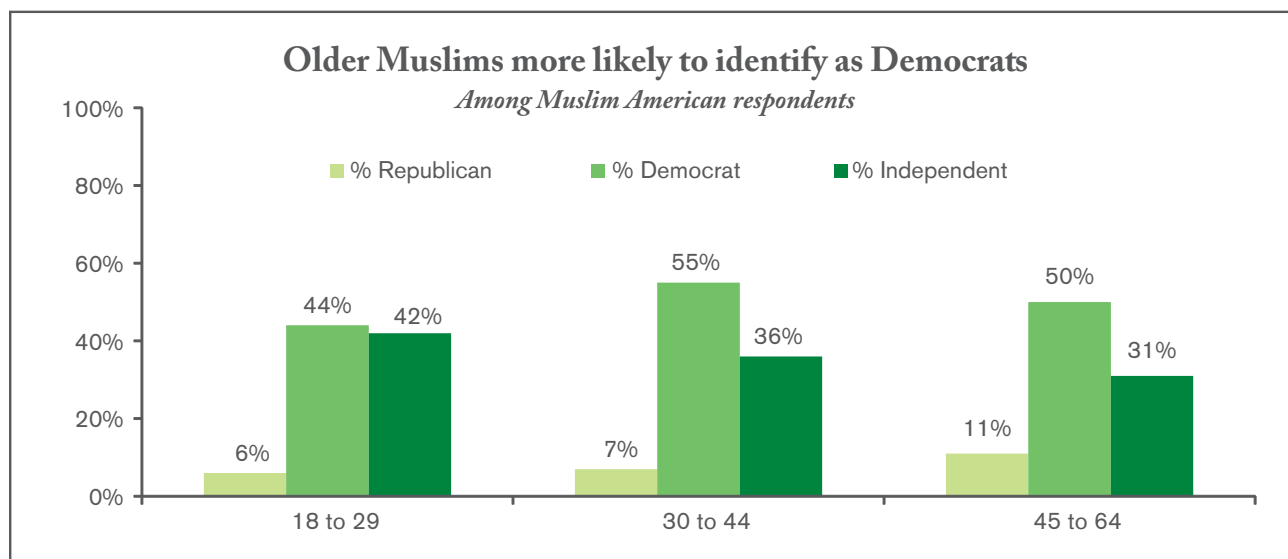
In terms of political views, young Muslims and those between the ages of 30 and 44 share a somewhat similar profile. Both groups mainly define themselves as moderates, 39% and 42%, respectively. Fewer than 3 in 10 in both age groups say their views are either conservative or very conservative and liberal or very liberal. In the 45-to-64 age group, no political views dominate as the cohort is almost equally divided among those who say they hold conservative, moderate, and liberal views. Young Muslims' political identity is split between Democrats and independents, while many older Muslims consider themselves to be Democrats.

Figure 49



How would you describe your political views?

Figure 50



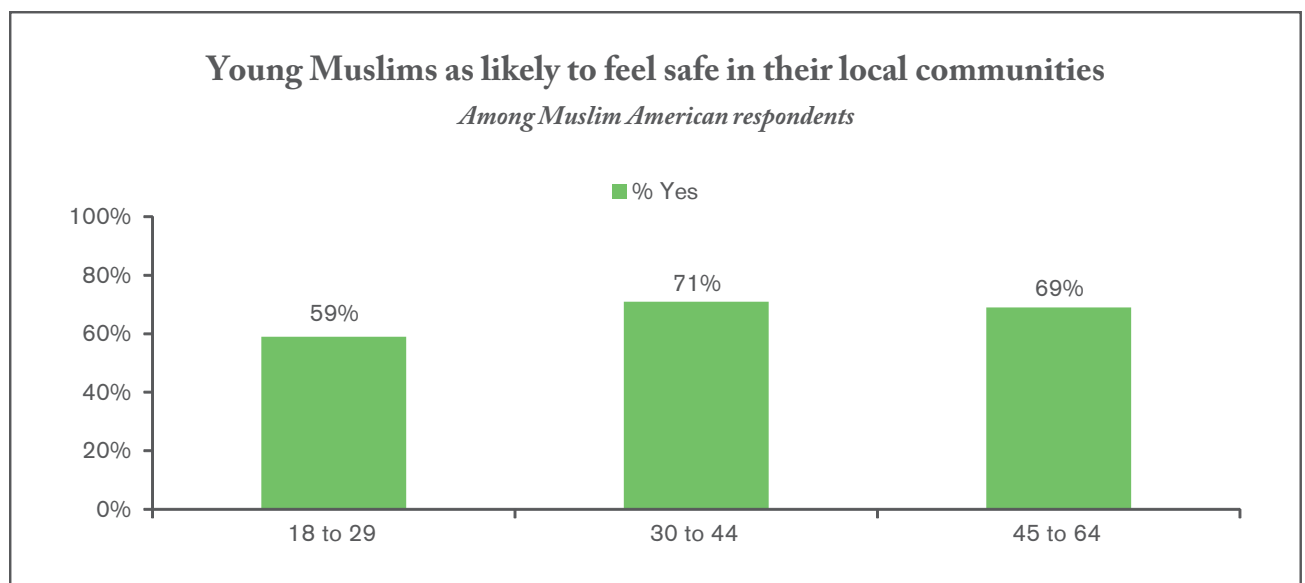
Do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

4n. Community Satisfaction

Muslim Americans' attitudes toward their cities and local areas are similar regardless of age. Seventy percent of young Muslims, 78% of respondents aged 30 to 44, and 76% of those aged 45 to 64 say they are satisfied with their communities (the differences are not statistically significant). Similarly, young Muslims are as likely as older respondents to say their local communities are getting better, 50%, 56%, and 54%, respectively.

Young Muslims are statistically as likely as older Muslims to say they feel safe walking alone at night.

Figure 51



Do you feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where you live?

Topics for Further Research:

- In general, young people are more likely than older respondents to be upbeat about the future. This “youth bonus” is found across all religious groups in the United States, except in the Muslim population. Why are Muslim youth not more likely than older Muslims to feel they are thriving?
- Perceptions of safety are a key aspect of healthy and vibrant communities. However, such perceptions depend on many factors, including one’s own status as a member of a minority group. What factors drive this sense of insecurity among Muslim youth in America?
- Young people often feel alienated from the older generations. Pressures to define themselves as young adults drive many negative feelings. The poll findings show that young Muslim Americans are far more likely than youth in other groups to have a lot of anger. What are the key drivers of such anger among young Muslims in America? How can it be channeled toward positive ends within the Muslim community?

Chapter 5: Muslim Americans: Global Context

Muslim Americans fare well compared with the Muslim populations in other Western societies and populations in a host of predominantly Muslim countries. Among the Muslim populations studied, the largest proportions of thriving individuals are among the Muslim American, German Muslim, and Saudi populations. Muslim Americans are more likely to say they have jobs, but they are less likely than those in many predominantly Muslim countries to say religion is important in their daily lives. When Muslim Americans are compared with Muslims around the world, they are often more similar to the U.S. population.

Key Findings

- In regard to their life satisfaction, more Muslim Americans are classified as thriving than what is observed in most of the Muslim populations studied.
- The percentage of Muslim Americans who are married (51%) is on the lower end of the spectrum.
- Muslim Americans are the most likely to report having a job, either paid or unpaid.
- Although Muslim Americans are more likely than the U.S. general population to say religion is important in their lives, they are less likely to say this than are those in many predominantly Muslim countries.

Using data gathered as part of the Gallup World Poll, which surveys residents in more than 140 countries and areas, we are able to compare Muslim Americans' opinions with those of other Muslims in Western countries such as France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. We are also able to compare their opinions with the opinions of respondents in many predominantly Muslim countries around the world.

5a. Life Satisfaction

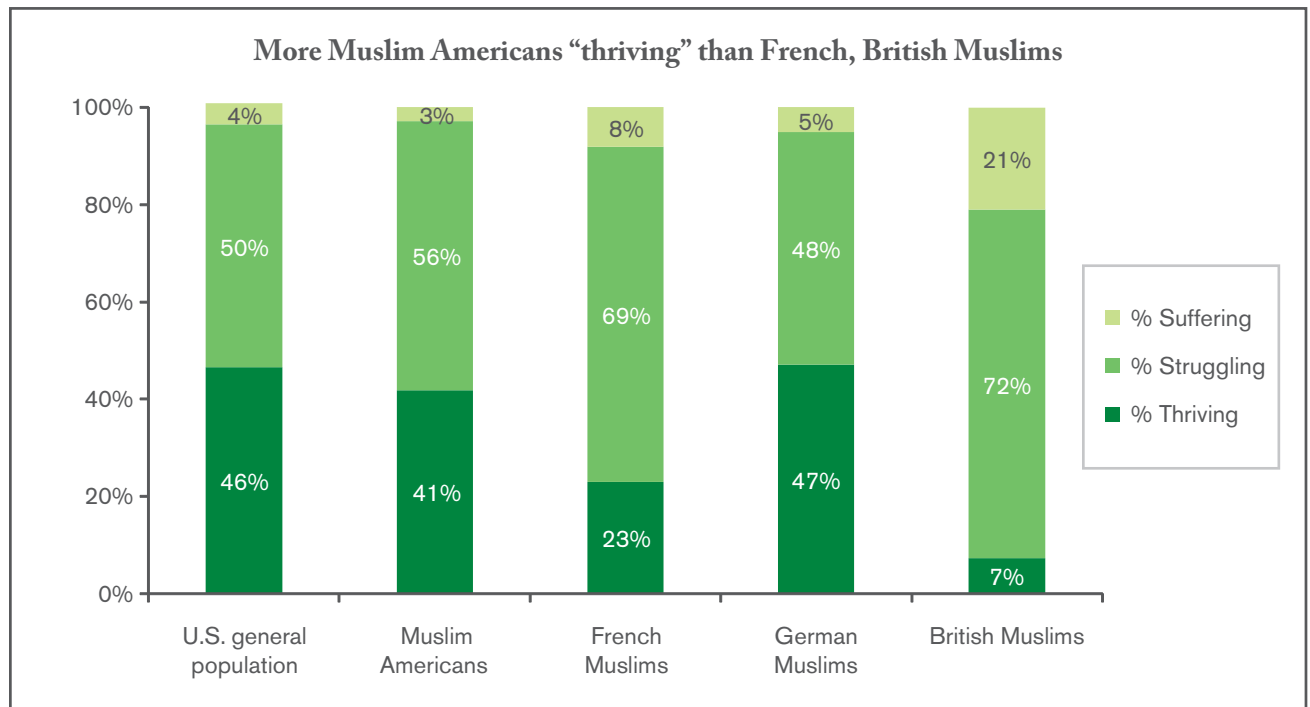
With these data, we can examine the general life satisfaction of Muslims in the United States and elsewhere around the world. Based on respondents' answers to questions that ask them how they see their current lives and how they see their lives in the future, they can be classified as "thriving," "struggling," or "suffering." These data can further be explored through an examination of employment, marital status, and the importance of religion.

Life Satisfaction Among Western Muslims

In terms of life satisfaction, Muslim Americans look similar to Americans overall -- with more than 4 in 10 classified as thriving. Similar percentages of Muslim Americans and Americans among the U.S. general population are classified as

suffering (3% and 4%, respectively). This contrasts sharply with French Muslims and Muslims in the United Kingdom, where the proportions of those thriving are far lower (23% and 7%, respectively). The proportions of those classified as suffering are also more sizable among French and British Muslims (8% and 21%, respectively). However, Muslims in Germany (47%) are roughly as likely as Muslim Americans to be considered thriving.

Figure 1



Please imagine a ladder, with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder do you feel you personally stand at the present time?

Please imagine a ladder, with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. Just your best guess, on which step do you think you will stand on in the future, say about five years from now?

When comparing the percentages of thriving individuals in the United States and Muslim American populations with those in a host of predominantly Muslim countries, only Saudi Arabia's population has a similarly high proportion of thriving individuals (51%) to those in the United States (46%) and to Muslim Americans specifically (41%). Muslim Americans look far more similar to Americans in their life satisfaction than they do to Muslims in the predominantly Muslim countries studied.

What is the most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years?

The future is bright for American Muslims. Today, they prosper socially and economically -- in 10 years' time, how much more so. But to fully realize the opportunities they have, American Muslims will have to heed Imam Ali's advice: "Raise your children for times different from your own."

To do this, American Muslims must take Imam Ali's aphorism literally and figuratively. They need to raise their children in the short term to take advantage of America's opportunities and thus ensure a more prosperous future. Then, American Muslims should empower the young leaders among them to tackle the next generation's challenges with unity and innovative thinking.

At the same time, American Muslims should continue to draw on America's institutions of freedom and democracy for progress -- and on the message of "change" brought to the nation's capital by President Obama.

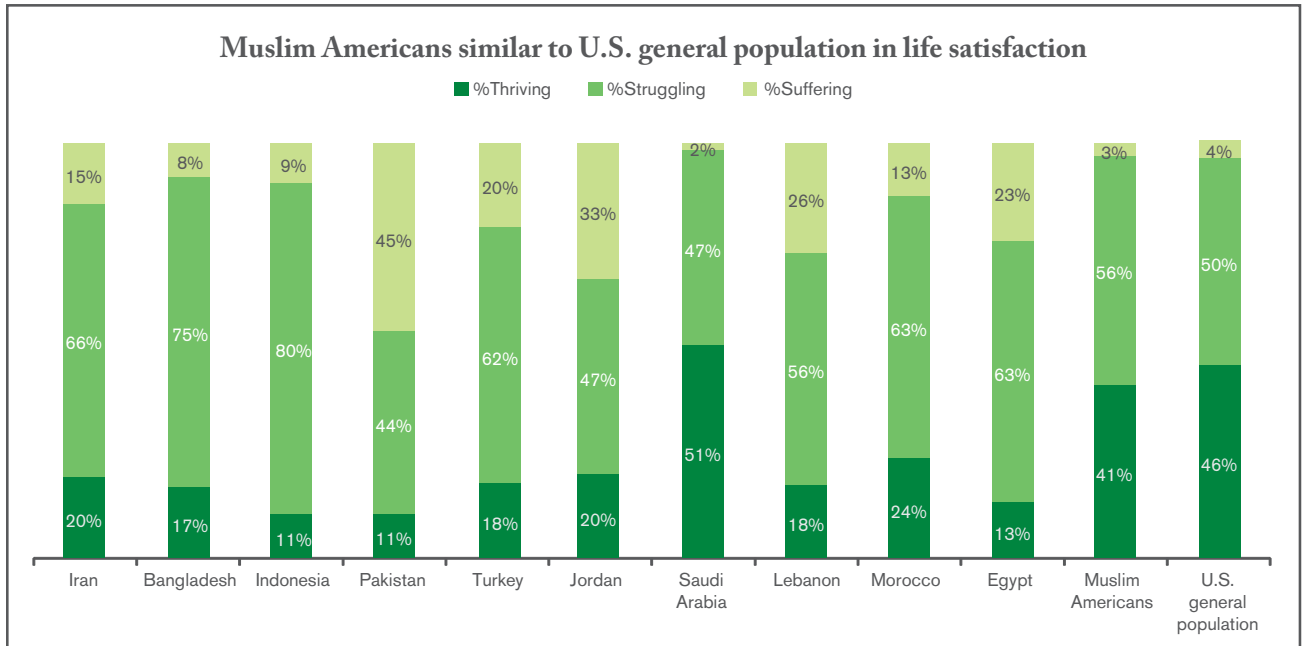
Besides the duty they have to their own advancement, American Muslims must use their unique position to improve relations between the larger Muslim world and the West. By faithfully representing their religion, they can correct errant perceptions in the West; by reaching out as Americans to their brothers and sisters in the Muslim world, they can build lasting bridges between societies.

Imam Ali's wisdom stresses a subsequent challenge, one shared by all religious traditions: the need to identify the fundamental principles of faith and apply them as times, cultures, and individuals change. This is what American Muslims must do in the next 10 years.

Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf

Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf is Chairman of the Cordoba Initiative, an independent, international, interreligious project that works with state and non-state actors to improve Muslim-West relations. Author of What's Right With Islam Is What's Right With America: A New Vision for Muslims and the West, he is also founder and CEO of the American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA) and Imam of Masjid al-Farah.

Figure 2



Please imagine a ladder, with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder do you feel you personally stand at the present time?

Please imagine a ladder, with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. Just your best guess, on which step do you think you will stand on in the future, say about five years from now?

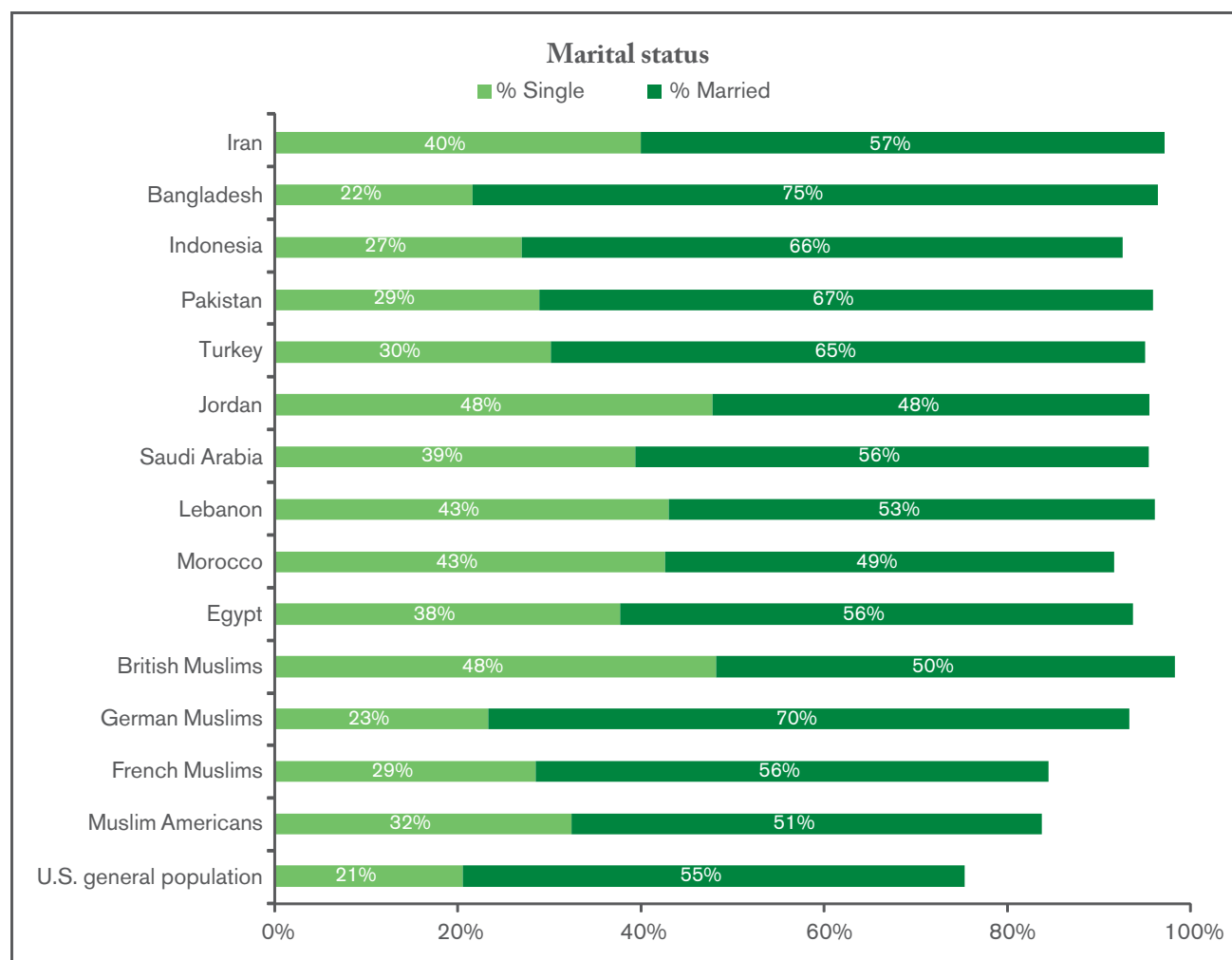
Measures of life satisfaction are highly correlated to household income, education levels, work, and health. In addition to jobs, other factors, such as family and importance of religion, may contribute to individuals' evaluations of their lives. To better understand how Muslims globally compare on these key topics, each is examined and compared with Muslim Americans.

5b. Marital status

Marital status varies widely among Muslims in different parts of the world. Muslim Americans are roughly as likely as Muslims surveyed in France (29%) to report being single, and somewhat more likely than Muslims in Germany (23%). However, nearly half of Muslims surveyed in the United Kingdom (48%) say they are single. Across the predominantly Muslim countries surveyed, the percentage of respondents who are single ranges from a low of 22% in Bangladesh to a high of 48% in Jordan.

Muslim Americans are far less likely than respondents in some predominantly Muslim countries, such as Bangladesh (75%), Pakistan (67%), and Indonesia (66%), to report being married.

Figure 3

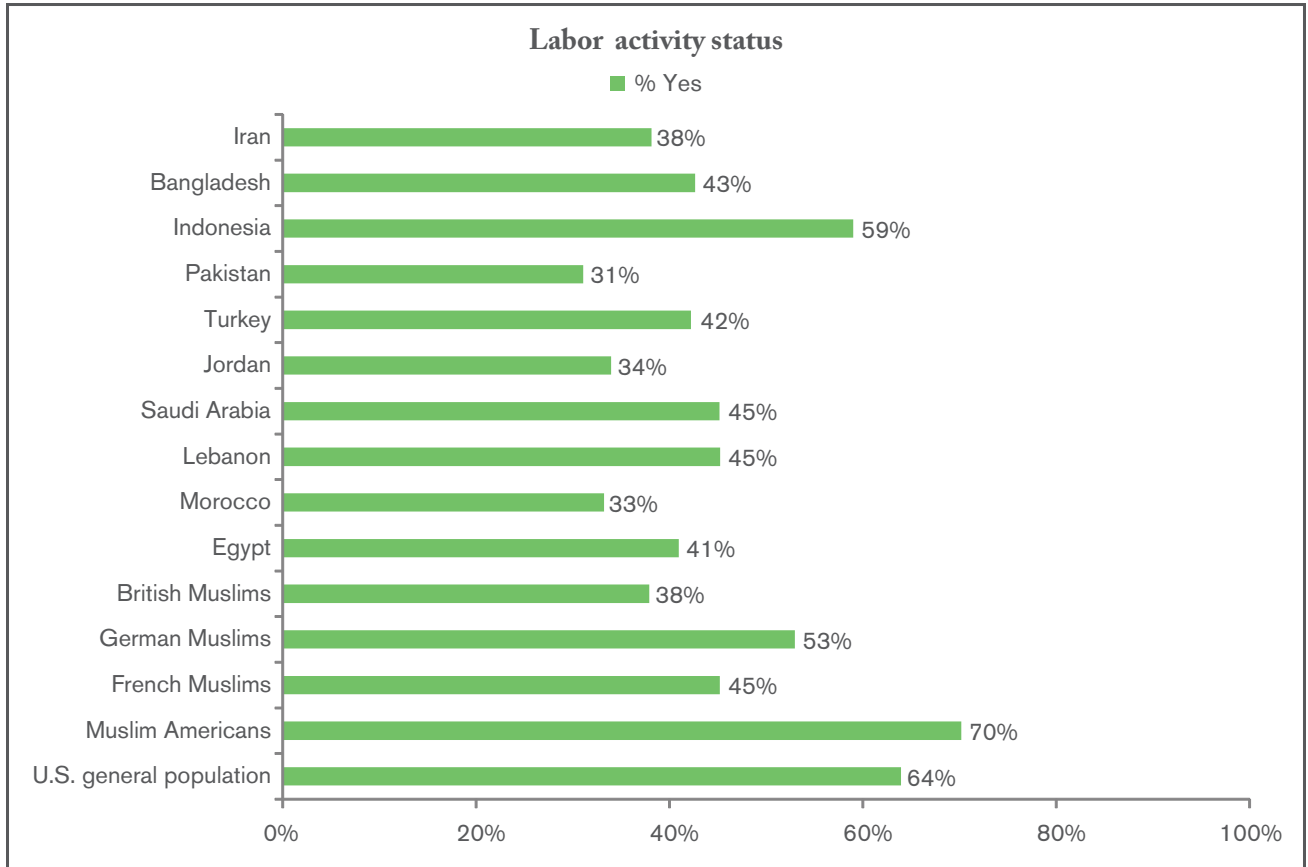


What is your current marital status?

5c. Employment

Being able to work and provide for oneself and one's family contributes a great deal to life satisfaction. People who work, on average, are more likely to give favorable responses to questions gauging well-being than those who do not work.

Figure 4



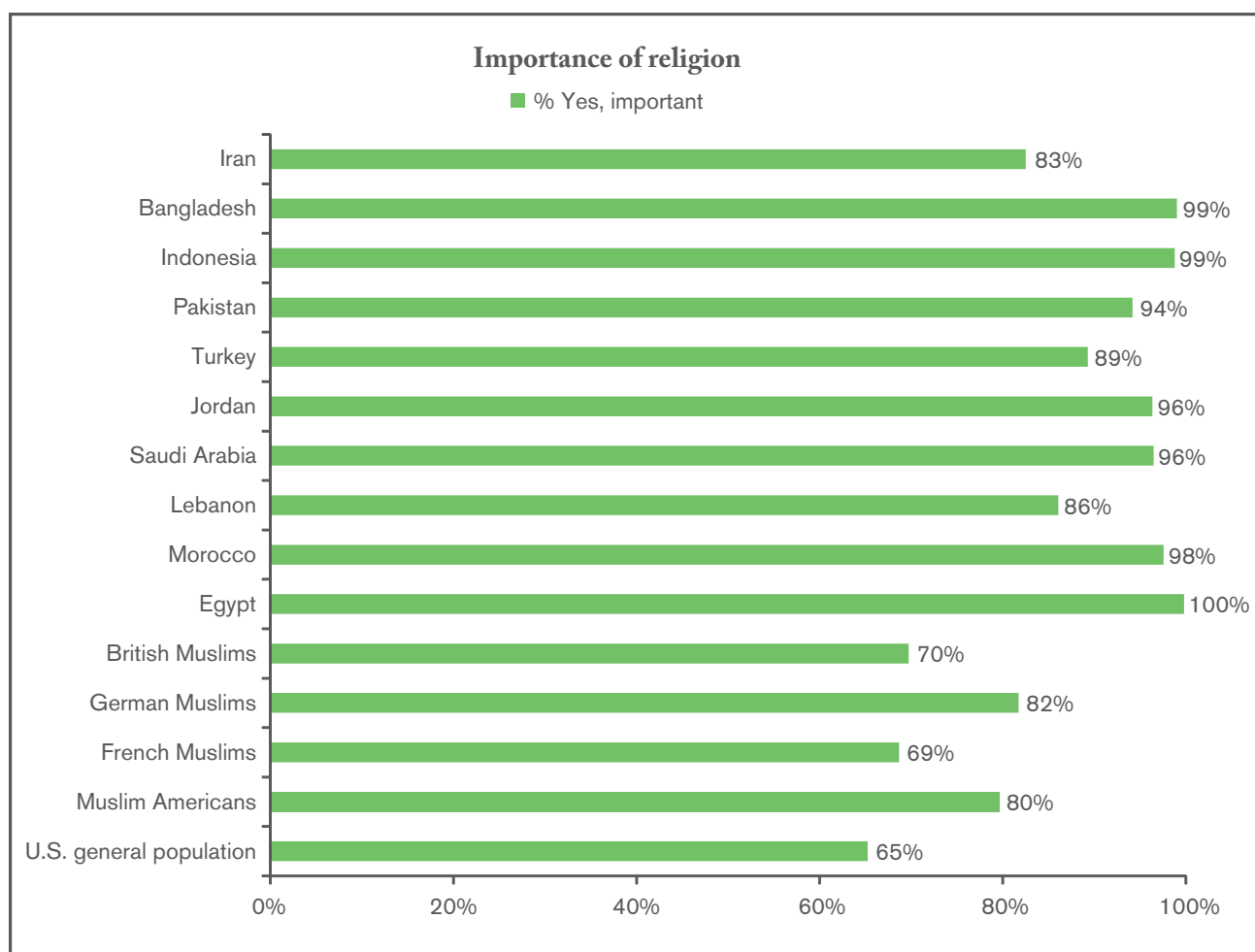
Do you currently have a job or work (either paid or unpaid work)?

Muslim Americans (70%) are more likely than Muslim respondents in some Western and predominantly Muslim countries to say they have a job, either paid or unpaid. Across Muslim populations surveyed, being engaged in some kind of labor activity ranges from a low of 31% in Pakistan to a high of 59% in Indonesia.

5d. Religion

Religion plays an important role in Muslims' lives and Muslim Americans are no exception. Muslim Americans and Muslims surveyed in Germany are far more likely to state that religion is an important part of their daily lives (80% and 82%, respectively) than are Muslims in France and the United Kingdom (69% and 70%, respectively). Although 8 in 10 Muslim Americans claim religion as important, this percentage is lower than percentages in Egypt (100%), Indonesia (99%), Bangladesh (99%), Pakistan (94%), Morocco (98%), Jordan (96%), Saudi Arabia (96%), Lebanon (86%), Turkey (89%), Iran (83%), British Muslims (70%), German Muslims (82%), French Muslims (69%), and the U.S. general population (65%).

Figure 5



Is religion an important part of your daily life?

What is the most important thing Muslim Americans must do in the next 5 to 10 years?

The most important thing American Muslims must do in the next 5 to 10 years is to ensure their message is relevant and reverberates within their Western reality. As a convert to Islam, one of greatest things I lamented, before becoming Muslim, in the church was what I perceived to be the clergy's inability to deliver a relevant message. Now, as a Muslim cleric, I often run into Muslim youth who feel similar to the way I did as a young man. This, to be quite honest, scares me. If we are not relevant within our own communities, we can only imagine the lack of relevancy among our fellow non-Muslim citizens. It is important that we develop a theological message that reverberates among Western people while honoring the sacred nature of our texts.

This message would not only echo among Muslims, but prove beneficial to our non-Muslim brothers and sisters as well. If we continue to stay on the defensive, failing to offer our support for the poor, the weak, the disenfranchised, and the other problems that plague our communities, we will not be able to pass the test of America. America is based on living its legacy and no community made its mark until it was able to contribute, in a positive way, to that legacy. If we are unable to speak the language of America, we cannot fathom that her people will learn to accept us and trust us as neighbors and friends.

Imam Suhaib Webb

Imam Suhaib Webb is an American-born convert to Islam. He has lived in Egypt for the past five years where he studies in al-Azhar University and the Fatwa training program held under the direction of the current Grand Mufti, Dr. Ali Guma. While in the States he resides in the Bay Area where he is employed by the Muslim American Society.

Topics for Further Research:

- What are the specific factors that contribute to the dramatic differences between Muslim Americans and Muslims living in other Western societies?
- How can Muslim Americans maximize the life satisfaction they have as Americans and as Muslims -- without losing the strengths evident in predominantly Muslim societies around the world?
- What can Muslim Americans and Muslim Europeans learn from one another?
- How connected do Muslim Americans feel to Muslims in the rest of the world?

Appendix: World Poll Methodology

Methodology Overview

The Gallup World Poll continually surveys residents in more than 140 countries and areas, representing 95% of the world's adult population, using randomly selected, nationally representative samples. Gallup typically surveys 1,000 individuals in each country, using a standard set of core questions that has been translated into the major languages of the respective country. In some regions, supplemental questions are asked in addition to core questions. Face-to-face interviews are approximately 1 hour long, while telephone interviews last about 30 minutes. In many countries, the survey is conducted once per year, and fieldwork is generally completed in two to four weeks.

Gallup is entirely responsible for the management, design, control, and funding of the Gallup World Poll. For the past 70 years, Gallup has been committed to the principle that accurately collecting and disseminating the opinions and aspirations of people around the globe is vital to understanding our world. Gallup's mission is to provide information in an objective, reliable, and scientifically grounded manner. Gallup is not associated with any political orientation, party, or advocacy group and does not accept partisan entities as clients. Any individual, institution, or governmental agency may access the Gallup World Poll regardless of nationality. The identities of clients and all surveyed respondents will remain confidential.

Preparing for Data Collection

Question Design

Many of the World Poll questions are items that Gallup has used for years. When developing additional questions,

Gallup employed its worldwide network of research and political scientists¹ to better understand key issues with regard to question development and construction and data gathering. Hundreds of items were developed, tested, piloted, and finalized. The best questions were retained for the core questionnaire and organized into indexes. Most items have a simple dichotomous ("yes or no") response set to minimize contamination of data because of cultural differences in response styles and to facilitate cross-cultural comparisons.

The World Poll measures key indicators such as Law and Order, Food and Shelter, Work, Personal Economy, Personal Health, Citizen Engagement, and Well-Being and demonstrates their correlations with world development indicators such as GDP and Brain Gain. These indicators assist leaders in understanding the broad context of national interests and establishing organization-specific correlations between leading indexes and lagging economic outcomes.

Gallup organizes its core group of indicators into the Gallup World Path. The Path is an organizational conceptualization of the seven indexes and is not to be construed as a causal model. The individual indexes have many properties of a strong theoretical framework. In addition to World Path indexes, World Poll questions also measure opinions about national institutions, corruption, youth development, community basics, diversity, optimism, communications, violence, religiosity, and numerous other topics. For many regions of the world, additional questions that are specific to that region or country are included in surveys. Region-specific questions have been developed for Muslim nations, former Soviet Union countries, the Balkans, sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, China and India, South Asia, and Israel and the Palestinian Territories.

1 The Brookings Institution, World Bank, USAID, United Nations, Daniel Kahneman, Ed Diener, Deepak Chopra, Richard Florida, John Hallowell, Jeffrey Sachs, and Arthur Stone were consulted as part of the World Poll project.

Translation

The questionnaire is translated into the major languages of each country. The translation process starts with an English, French, or Spanish version, depending on the region. A translator who is proficient in the original and target languages translates the survey into the target language. A second translator reviews the language version against the original version and recommends refinements.

Training

Gallup selects vendors that have experience in nationwide public opinion studies and conducts in-depth training sessions with experienced, local field staff prior to the start of data collection. A training manual is also provided to assist the fieldwork team with training and to ensure consistency and structure. Topics covered in training include the questionnaire and field procedures.

Sampling and Data Collection Methodology

With few exceptions, all samples are probability based and nationally representative of the resident population aged 15 and older. The coverage area is the entire country including rural areas, and the sampling frame represents the entire country. Exceptions include areas where the safety of interviewing staff is threatened, scarcely populated islands in some countries, and areas that interviewers can reach only by foot, animal, or small boat.

Telephone surveys are used in countries where telephone coverage represents at least 80% of the population or is the customary survey methodology. In Central and Eastern

Europe, as well as in the developing world, including much of Latin America, the former Soviet Union countries, nearly all of Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, an area frame design is used for face-to-face interviewing. The Gallup Panel is used in the United States.

The typical World Poll survey includes at least 1,000 surveys of individuals. In some countries, oversamples are collected in major cities or areas of special interest. Although rare, there are some instances in which the sample size is between 500 and 1,000.

Face-to-Face Survey Design

First Stage

In countries where face-to-face surveys are conducted, census listings of Primary Sampling Units (PSUs), consisting of clusters of households, are the main way of selecting the sample. Typically, the PSUs are stratified this way:

- I. Cities with population = 1,000,000 or more
- II. Cities with population = 500,000 to 999,999
- III. Cities with population = 100,000 to 499,999
- IV. Cities with population = 50,000 to 99,999
- V. Towns with population = 10,000 to 49,999
- VI. Towns/Rural villages with populations under 10,000

In areas where census data are not available, PSUs are stratified by regions. PSUs are proportionally allocated to the population in each stratum, and typically, 125 PSUs are sampled with an average of eight interviews, one interview per sampled

household. If maps of the PSUs are available, then they are used; otherwise, the selected PSUs must be mapped.

Second Stage

Random route procedures are used to select sampled households. Unless an outright refusal occurs, interviewers must make at least three attempts to survey the sampled household. Attempts are made on different days, and if local custom permits, at least one attempt is made on a weekend. After three attempts, if an interview cannot be obtained at the initial sampled household, the household to the immediate right of the initial household is selected. If the first attempt at this household is unsuccessful, then the house immediately to the left of the initial household is selected.

Third Stage

Respondents are randomly selected within the selected households. Interviewers list all eligible household members and their ages or birthdays. The respondent is selected by means of the Kish grid in countries where face-to-face interviewing is used. The person who answers the door is not informed of the selection criteria until after the respondent has been identified.

Telephone Survey Design

In countries where telephone interviewing is employed, Random-Digit-Dial (RDD) or a nationally representative list of phone numbers is used. In select countries where cell phone penetration is high, a dual sampling frame is used. Random respondent selection is achieved by using either the latest birthday or Kish grid method. At least three attempts are made to reach a person in each household, spread over

different days and times of day. Appointments for call-backs that fall within the survey data collection period are made.

Panel Survey Design

The Gallup Panel is a probability based, nationally representative panel, for which all members are recruited via Random-Digit-Dial methodology and is only used in the United States. Participants who elect to join the panel are committing to the completion of two to three surveys per month, with the typical survey lasting 10 to 15 minutes. The World Poll panel survey is conducted over the telephone and takes approximately 30 minutes. No incentives are given to panel participants.

Data Preparation

The data set goes through a rigorous quality assurance process before being publicly released. Gallup's directors of survey research in each region of the world review the data for consistency and stability by interviewer and region. If the regional director suspects a problem, it may be necessary to collect new data. After review by the regional directors, Gallup scientists perform additional validity reviews. The data are centrally aggregated and cleaned, ensuring correct variable codes and labels are applied. The data are then reviewed in detail for logical consistency and trends over time. Once the data are cleaned, weighted, and vetted, the final step is to calculate approximate study design effect and margin of error.

Data Weighting

Data weighting is used to ensure a nationally representative sample for each country and is intended to be used for calculations within a country.

First, base sampling weights are constructed to account for oversamples and household size. If an oversample has been conducted, the data are weighted to correct the disproportionate sample. Weighting by household size (number of residents aged 15 and older) is used to adjust for the probability of selection, as residents in large households will have a disproportionately lower probability of being selected for the sample. (Weighting by household size was introduced for data collected in 2008.)

Second, post-stratification weights are constructed. Population statistics are used to weight the data by gender, age, and, where reliable data are available, education or socioeconomic status.

Finally, approximate study design effect and margin of error are calculated. The design effect calculation reflects the influence of data weighting and does not incorporate the intraclass correlation coefficients.

Margin of Error

The maximum margin of error is calculated around reported proportions for each country-level data set, assuming a 95% confidence level. The margin of error also includes the approximate design effect for the total country sample.

Other errors that can affect survey validity include measurement error associated with the questionnaire, such as translation issues, and coverage error, where a part of the target population has a zero probability of being selected for the survey. Additionally, because of authoritarian governments in select countries, respondents may be less than forthcoming in their assessments, leading to the potential for inflated scores.



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