

‘Score! You are now more Canadian’: A case study approach to understanding
citizenship and national belonging in sport

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF SCIENCE

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN KINESIOLOGY

YORK UNIVERSITY

TORONTO, ONTARIO

MARCH 2022

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the concept of sport as a vehicle of belonging and negotiating identity via case study of the Umoja Games, an annual faith and community-based sport tournament held in the United States and Canada. This study explores the narratives of the players and the co-founder combined with data collected through the Umoja Games social media to understand the ways in which identities, ideas of citizenship and the sense of belonging to the nation are negotiated, constructed, and understood by participants. The Umoja Games becomes a unique setting in which transnational movement, political/social climates, and multiple identities are highlighted and pushed to the foreground allowing for an in-depth analysis of the undergoing negotiation processes of identity building and belonging. This study utilizes the foundational assumptions of post-colonial theory and social constructivism lens to conceptualize, examine, and analyse identity and the notions of belonging.

This study reveals multiple interconnected themes that allow for a better understanding of second-generation bicultural identities and the ways in which the sense of belonging is negotiated given such identities. Utilizing Antonsich's (2010) analytical framework avoids the conflation of belonging to identity and citizenship, revealing the nuances behind the participants feelings of belonging as multi-scalar, interwoven with their own experiences, relational, cultural, economic, and legal factors. Participants' understanding of their own identities proves to be complex, supporting existing research that emphasizes the negotiation process between two identities. However, this negotiation surpasses the binary of finding the balance between two cultures instead participants narratives indicate that identity negotiation exists in the Third Space (Bhabha, 1994). The socio-political, environmental, and cultural conditions that participants describe as Muslim Canadian citizens significantly impacted the ways in which participants experience sport (both mainstream and community) as well as the ways they come to understand their identities and sense of belonging to the nation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to the participants of this study, both the players and the co-founder Mustafa Dinani, who are featured in this thesis. Thank you for your time, support, and the opportunity to present your narratives.

I will forever be grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Yuka Nakamura, for her patience, guidance, and kindness throughout this project and in the writing of this thesis. Thank you for your support throughout this process and your encouragement during these times which have been difficult for so many people.

I would like to thank my second committee member, Dr. Parissa Safai, for her support and patience in my pursuit of this thesis and Dr. Peter Donnelly for being my external examiner. I appreciate your expertise and inspiration.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Figures	vi
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.2 Thesis Overview.....	7
Chapter 2 Literature review	9
2.1 Muslims in Sport	10
2.1.1 Focus on the ethos of physical activity and sport in Islam.....	13
2.1.2 Focus on sport in Muslim societies.....	16
2.1.3 Focus on sport participation and levels of religiosity in diaspora communities.....	22
2.1.4 Focus on sport within community run organizations in diaspora communities.....	25
2.2 Citizenship	32
2.2.1 'Good' citizenship.....	42
2.2.2 Citizenship development and the 'good citizen' in sport.....	47
2.2.3 Sport and Social Inclusion.....	51
2.2.4 The Model Minority.....	54
2.3 Negotiating Multiple Identities	59
Chapter 3 Theory and Methodology	66
3.1 Introduction	66
3.2 Theoretical Framework	66
3.2.1 Identity.....	67
3.2.2 Belonging.....	76
3.3 Methodology	81
3.3.1 Research context.....	85
3.3.2 Ethics.....	87
3.3.3 Recruitment.....	88
3.3.4 Data collection.....	90
3.3.5 Data Collection Procedures.....	92
3.3.6 Data Analysis.....	93
3.3.7 Rigour.....	95
3.3.8 Reflexivity.....	100

Chapter 4: Results and Analysis	109
4.1 Introduction	109
4.2 Performing the Practicing Muslim Identity	114
4.2.1 Prayer	114
4.2.2 Hijab.....	117
4.2.2 (a) Hijab in sport	121
4.2.3(b) Embodiment and Modification of Behaviour	123
4.3 Performing the Model Muslim: The ‘Good’ Other	125
4.3.1 The beginnings of hybridization and Third Space identities.....	129
4.3.2 Performance of the ‘Good’ Other: Behaviour Modification.....	134
4.3.3 Constructing the ‘Good’ Other in sport through ‘modernization’	140
4.3.3(a) Nike Pro Hijab and modernization of Muslim female athletes	142
4.3.3 (b) ‘Regular’ vs. Community sport	148
4.4 Scales of belonging: Local to Transnational	152
4.4.1 Belonging as feeling ‘at home’ (place-belongingness)	152
Autobiographical factors	154
Relational Factors.....	155
Cultural factors.....	157
Economic factors	162
Legal Factors	163
4.4.2 The ‘Politics of Belonging’	167
4.5 Community Belonging: beyond geographical boundaries	170
4.6 Summary	179
Chapter 5 Discussion and Conclusion	181
5.1 Discussion of Key Findings	182
5.2 Strengths and Limitations	197
5.3 Future Directions and Final Words	202
References	206
Appendices	220
Appendix A: Email recruitment template(s)	220
Appendix B: Interview Guide(s)	222
Appendix C: Informed Consent Form(s)	228
Appendix D: Links for Mental Health Resources	232

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Main identities noted by participants.....	111
Figure 2. Multi-scalar level identity schematic	195

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Vignette 1:

The tournament was officially three days away. For the past four months, rain or shine, practice was held at the soccer field behind the local high school every Sunday morning at 10am. It was the perfect time, the grass almost dry from morning dew and the sun not too hot to play comfortably. The team coach, one of the players' dads, had come earlier to set up the pylons for passing and shooting training. As all the players arrived, the captain led the team through the warmup and conditioning began followed by a quick scrimmage game. Since this practice was the last one before the tournament, it was decided that it will be two hours long so that the team can discuss starting line ups and go over some strategies. The team sat on the grass as the coach explained that they were ready, and they were strong enough to easily beat out any other team. Yet the nervousness was tangible, although the team trained with a coach, he was not able to watch them play from the side lines and manage the game. The Umoja Games held women's games separately from male games, so that the women who wore hijab could play without hijab. This meant that men were not allowed to enter the dome. Playing without a coach was a major concern for the team, who was going to manage player switches or give them pointers at half time? It was decided that the team captain would take on the duties of the coach even as she played on the field. In between games, the team would meet with the coach in the parking lot of the venue, a sports-plex on a quiet dead-end street in Pontiac, Michigan, to go over the game highlights and any issues that had occurred. The coach dismissed the group, and chatter broke out between the players discussing travel plans for the 5-hour trip to Michigan. Some wanted to carpool with other players, but most players were travelling a day earlier with their families to get settled in for the three-day

tournament. The Umoja Games is more than just a soccer tournament, it is more of a festival really. For the next three days aside from the soccer games, there would be a fancy gala dinner, various food trucks available, a large scavenger hunt, festival-style games for the kids and a fancy gala dinner.

Vignette 2:

It was 1 am by the time we get to the border. As the car comes to a halt, we sit up straight, and quietly take out our passports. Only one person speaks unless the border police officer asks any questions directly. The officer leans into the drivers' window, counting how many people are in the car. He asks why where we are headed to, how long we would be staying in the US for, if everyone in the car was related and how. I had decided to carpool with one of the other team mates this year, since my dad couldn't take any time off from work. I was legally allowed to cross the border on my own of course, but I always get nervous thinking of all the things the officer can potentially hold against me. He proceeded to walk around the car once, peering into the trunk and side windows. I felt myself holding my breath and tensing my muscles, immediately releasing my shoulders, and flashing the officer a smile. He lightly taps on my window signalling to roll it down. I look at my friends' father and he rolled down my window. The officer looks in the back and randomly asks, "so you all play on the same team?". I quickly nod and smile, knowing that my friend's sister does not play on our team but not wanting to extend the conversation any longer. As he hands back our passports, he wishes us good luck and we drive off to the hotel, exhausted from the trip. As we continue to drive, it becomes obvious we have entered the US. Large bright signs light up the empty plaza parking lots; Target, Dunkin Donuts, Arby's. Pontiac is quiet this time of night, with barely any cars on the street. We pass by the sports plex where we are greeted with a row of American flags, lined up like streetlights. For sure we are in America now. We get our hotel key cards and

head up to the room, dropping our things at the door and immediately going to sleep since our first game was at 10 am the next day.

Vignette 3

The team was performing very well. Out of seven games we had won every single one, placing us in the finals. The eighth game is against the Chicago team, arguably the (second) best team at the tournament. Engulfed by nerves, the team huddled around reassuring everyone that we can – and will – easily beat this team and take the trophy home. The women’s open finals game was the last game of the tournament, scheduled conveniently after lunch and prayer in the main soccer dome. Finals games always attracts crowds, and this game was no exception. Although only women can watch, mothers, grandmothers, children, and players from other teams surrounded the field sitting on any available turf outside the white lines. Some mothers had made signs cheering on their daughters, and most were wearing customized “Striker’s Mom” shirts. One mother had brought a large sign with a Canadian flag painted on one side and our team’s name on the other. Once the game began, the spectators started to chant and wave their signs, cheering us on as we played a difficult game. With only five minutes left and the game tied 0-0, I started getting nervous knowing penalty shoot outs were inevitable. As a goalie, the pressure is all on you to block the shots and win the game. The defenders looked back at me and reassured me that I will be fine. The referee blew the final whistle and gave us five minutes before penalties began. Friends from other Canadian teams ran towards us and wished us luck, telling us that they would much rather see us win than the American team. It was the classic USA vs. CAN rivalry. We had to win now *of course*. The referee came over to me to wish me luck and reminded me of the rules of penalty shots: five shots for each team, whichever team gets the most in is the winner. The referee flipped a coin and I called heads.

“Heads”, she said “so you go first”. I walked to my line and tightened my gloves. Immediately the chanting and cheering quieted down and I focused on the Chicago teams’ striker as she prepared to take her shot. First shot: I lunged to the right; saved. I switched spots with the opposing goalie, and she took her stance against our teams’ striker. She aims for the upper right corner and the ball gracefully curves into the net. A roar of cheering erupts from the side lines. We continue taking turns. By the fourth round it became clearer that our team was taking the trophy home. The referee blew the whistle for the last round of shots. The opposing team player started getting ready to take the shot. I was staring right into her eyes trying to guess which direction she would shoot. All I had to do was save this last shot and it would all be over. She winds up to take the shot and I see the ball fly over my extended arms. I hear the sound of the ball grazing the net behind me, but when I look back the ball had gone over the bar and behind the net. We had officially won! After three seconds of silence everyone realized we had won and began jumping around and cheering, joined by the crowd around us. The mothers were cheering and hugging their daughters, lifting them up and cheering for our victory. Other teams (who were also from Toronto) had come to cheer us on and congratulate us for the win. One of the mothers suggested going out for ice cream to celebrate with all the players and their families who had travelled with them. The team was exhausted, but all those months practicing, even during Ramadhan, had paid off.

The Umoja Games is an annual travelling soccer tournament open for men, women, and children of all skill levels. The Umoja Games was held by the Umoja Outreach Foundation, an organization founded in 2012 in New York, USA that originally aimed to create a space for Khoja (ethnic group originating from India and East Africa) Shia Muslim men to play soccer and enhance their skills. As the years progressed, the organizers realized that there is a real need for a space for

Muslim youth, regardless of their ethnicity, to gather, interact and congregate. They decided to form a formally organized event, called the Umoja Games, where once a year Muslim youth can form teams and play soccer, eat food, and connect with each other. To maximize its impact on connecting people together, they decided the tournament would be held in a new city every year. Soon teams from Orlando, Toronto, Chicago and London, UK began to participate making the Umoja Games the largest Shia Muslim sport tournament in North America. At this point, the Umoja Games has connected over 55 Shia Muslim communities around North America, Europe and Africa, creating a community that spans multiple geographical borders. Since its inception, the Foundation has continued to enhance and better the Umoja Games to now be a three-day long tournament/event, attracting players of all ages and families to participate and connect with Shia Muslim people from around North America.

Since 2015, I have participated in nearly every Umoja Games held in Toronto, Allentown, New York, Chicago, and Detroit. Whilst continuing to participate in mainstream soccer teams at school or through my hometown, I began to truly see the differences (and similarities) in playing in such different environments. I had heard from my brother that sometimes community run sport was not as fun as mainstream sports because it was not as competitive, but I did not share those same feelings. Or maybe it simply did not matter to me as much. I did not experience the same sense of exclusion or discrimination that I had in mainstream sport simply because everyone was the ‘same’; we were all Shia Muslims. The only differences that remained was ethnicity (although most people are Khoja, I am Arab) and nationality especially when the tournament was held in the USA. I no longer was asked “where are you *really* from?” when I said I was Canadian, instead “which city?” was the only follow-up question. My Canadianess was brought to the forefront since technically nationality was the only difference between us all as players. In fact, I had never felt more

recognized as a Canadian while playing sports before this. I felt like, in some ways, we, as a team, represented Canada at the Umoja Games. The team practiced together and trained for months before the tournament, crossing the border with the goal of beating every team and bringing the cup back home. Even, when we walked past an opposing team at the tournament, we introduced ourselves as the “team from Toronto, Canada”. While I had always used participating in sport as a tool to prove to others my belonging to Canada, participating at the Umoja Games was different. I did not have to prove myself to anyone, it was almost de facto. The specific circumstances that had brought me to the USA facilitates a unique intersection of sport and national identity that, despite the niche nature of the tournament, can act as an entry point to examining how identity and belonging is negotiated and understood.

My experiences in sport in the past 10 years has exemplified one overt phenomenon: the ongoing negotiation process of identity and belonging. Sport is just one lens that can be used to investigate the nuances of this negotiation process, and it can serve as a unique entry point to understanding larger social phenomenon like inclusion, exclusion, belonging and identity. My own experiences of course propelled this project and fuelled my interest in better understanding identity and belonging, especially in a population that is considered racialized (second-generation Muslim Canadians; meaning Canadian born to immigrant parents). When discussing and exploring sport experiences of diasporic communities, it is vital to account for social and political contexts and the intersectionality of our identities. Discourses such as the ‘model minority’ and the ‘good immigrant’ shape the lived experiences of racialized Canadians both on and off the field, in that these discourses may be rejected or reinforced (Lakhani, 2008; Lee, 2016). Questioning such discourses means understanding the foundation or the shaping force that leads to these social expectations and criteria for racialized Others. In this sense, to understand what being a Canadian means, what

belonging means and what identity is, we must question the very shaping forces that define national belonging and identity. Thus, while this study utilizes the Umoja Games as the case in study, investigating and questioning larger socio-political discourses and forces become important to contextualizing the participants experiences at the Umoja Games.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the processes of identity and belonging to better understand the nuances of such processes namely through the lens of sport participation.

Specifically, the research questions for this study are:

- 1) Do Muslim people in the Greater Toronto Area negotiate and understand their identities and sense of belonging to Canada through their participation in faith-based community-based sport, if so, how and in what ways?
- 2) How is their sport participation shaped by common Othering narratives of citizenship within the Canadian nation?

1.2 THESIS OVERVIEW

This thesis will offer an analysis of the above research questions by first looking first at the Literature Review in Chapter 2. The first half of the review includes an overview of the existing information on Muslims in sport, detailing four main foci in the research and highlighting areas that require further focus. The second half of the review focuses on sport and citizenship, discussing literature exploring the intersections of sport and citizenship development in various populations, the role of sport in understanding and implementing social inclusion as well as citizenship discourses propagated in sport such as the Model Minority.

Chapter 3 discusses the methodology used, including a detailed explanation of postcolonial theory and social constructionism as the theoretical frameworks utilized in exploring identity and belonging. Further work is done to explain qualitative methods of case study and thematic analysis as the most appropriate methods for the exploration identity and belonging processes in the case of the Umoja Games. Reflexivity as a process of qualitative research is covered to provide the reader with my perspective throughout my analysis, given my connection to the case as a participant turned researcher, and to establish the importance of reflexivity as a process of qualitative research.

Chapter 4 addresses the results and analysis of the data collected from participants and the Umoja Website and Instagram page. This chapter analyses in detail multiple themes and subthemes in understanding the negotiation processes of identity (Muslim identity, Canadian identity, and hybrid identity) and belonging (national and community).

Chapter 5 will conclude the thesis by discussing the implications and important takeaways of this research in relation to the literature and data discussed. The strengths and limitations are then presented followed by considerations for future research in relation to the findings.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

As of 2015, approximately 1.8 billion people globally identified themselves as Muslim (Desilver & Masci, 2017). To identify as Muslim, though, is not a homogeneous experience. Rather, the experiences of Muslim people around the world differ depending on their social context, especially in relation to national identity and belonging (e.g., Kunst, Tajamal, Sam, & Ulleberg, 2012). Identity, and sense of belonging and citizenship are shaped by the social, political, and economic environment in which one lives. Thus, the experiences of Muslims in one region cannot be extrapolated and generalized to all Muslims. Furthermore, with the intensification of globalization and migration, and subsequent formation of diasporic communities and hybridization of culture, the ways in which identity and feelings of belonging and citizenship come to be experienced and understood by individuals are increasingly nuanced and complex. These nuances and complexities can be examined by utilizing sport as a lens to explore notions of identity, belonging and citizenship, a site and practice where these concepts are both (re)produced, defined, and experienced. In doing so, a more fulsome understanding of experiences of Muslims living in Canada can be gained, and how they are shaped and impacted by unique social and political factors.

Previous research exploring the experiences of Muslims in terms of identity in diaspora (e.g., Fleischmann & Phalet, 2015; Kunst, Tajamal, Sam, & Ulleberg, 2012), national identity (e.g., Kunst et al., 2012), belonging (e.g., Patton, 2014), citizenship (e.g., Meer, 2010) and integration (e.g., Wardana, 2013) has heavily focused on Muslims in Europe, Australia and the United States. Thus, comparatively little contextually Canadian research hinders our understanding of sport participation patterns or experiences in Muslim populations in Canada. When discussing Muslims in diasporic communities, we must be nuanced in our understanding and be mindful that their experiences are

specific to their social, geographical, and political contexts. Even between two neighbouring nation-states of Canada and the United States (U.S.), there are political, environmental, and social differences that could potentially result in very different experiences for diaspora communities. Research on Canadian Muslim experiences helps to avoid sweeping generalizations about an already generalized and stereotyped group of people and adds to the breadth of knowledge that exists on the Muslim experience both in and outside of sport.

2.1 MUSLIMS IN SPORT

To begin understanding the sporting experiences of Muslims in Canada, it serves to explore the vast literature on Islam and sport that covers a variety of subtopics in various social contexts around the globe. Using keywords like ‘Islam and sport’ when searching scholarly databases yielded research produced not only from Western countries but also from Pakistan, Iran, and Malaysia. For example, using databases such as *SPORTDiscus* and keywords such as ‘Islam and sport participation,’ identified 14 publications from Europe (UK, Norway, Germany, Belgium and Denmark), six from the Middle East (Iran and Saudi Arabia) and one from Egypt. Using *EBSCOhost* resulted in publications published in languages other than English; however, only English publications were reviewed in this study.

Additional keywords like ‘leisure’ resulted in a much broader range of literature that focused on the aspects of leisure in an Islamic context. Leisure refers to the free time that people spend away from daily responsibilities, like work and school, to relax and enjoy life. It is during this time that people participate in sport, recreation, and physical activities. Thus, utilizing leisure literature, provides a context to experiences (e.g., Kloek, Peters & Sijtsma, 2013), patterns (e.g., Stack & Iwasaki, 2009) and meanings associated with leisure activities, which includes sport. In this way, understanding Muslims in sport falls under the umbrella of understanding leisure patterns of

Muslim people. As Martin and Mason (2004) illustrate in their review of leisure and Islam, analyses of Islamic scriptures, and research on time use and activity patterns in different countries, “the concept of leisure has relevance in an Islamic context, and Islamic teachings support an essentially positive view of leisure and recreation” (p. 1). Understanding leisure from an Islamic perspective allows for a better understanding of the reasons Muslim people choose to participate leisure activities. Incorporating leisure literature into the study of Muslims in sport sets the stage for a broader understanding of how leisure, which includes sport and physical activity, is understood by Muslims via Islamic teachings and scripture in a variety of geographical locations and provides contextual knowledge of how Muslim individuals understand leisure and subsequently sport in their lives.

Certainly, the Islamic perspective alone does not sufficiently address Muslim patterns of sport participation, especially when exploring said patterns in diasporic communities. Social, geographical, and political contexts play a large role in understanding factors that are related to sport participation such as integration, identity, citizenship, and feelings of belonging.

A similar geographical imbalance can be seen in research on Muslims, identity, belonging, citizenship and integration through the lens of sport. Apart from a handful of publications written on Canadian Muslims and sport, the existing literature is uneven, with most studies examining Muslims and sport in European contexts and limited research on other geographical, social, and political environments. Despite this geographical or contextual gap, the existing literature provides a broad understanding of the intersections of Islam and sport in Muslim communities.

Previous research on sport, Islam and Muslim communities can be divided into four main foci, as identified by Walseth (2016):

1. The ethos of physical activity and sport in Islam through the analysis of Islamic texts;

2. Sport in Muslim societies such as sport organizations or “sporting heroines” (Hargreaves, 2001, p. 3) in Muslim countries;
3. Sport participation and levels of religiosity in diaspora communities; and
4. Sport within community run organizations in diaspora communities.

Walseth’s (2016) assessment of the literature was not intended to be a systematic review of existing literature; however, it does provide a helpful overview of the larger trends in this particular area of scholarship, in terms of specific foci, though the third and fourth approaches overlap. This may be because ethnicity and religiosity are knit together closely within the contexts of identity formation and sport participation levels within Muslim populations. As such, a more in-depth, nuanced and detailed elaboration is necessary to understand these two categories of research and to further distinguish the differences between the two approaches. Moreover, while Walseth (2016) observed the large body of research taking the third approach and comparatively little research using the fourth approach, since her publication, even while remaining an under-researched area, more studies have focused on community run sporting initiatives related to Muslim migrants and their integration (e.g., Spaaij & Schail e, 2020). Thus, Walseth’s overview, while helpful, needs additional detail and updating. In what follows, I establish the current state of the existing literature on Muslim sporting experiences by reviewing and building on Walseth’s four categories, and critique and analyse the extant research to identify gaps in our understanding, specifically for Muslims in Canada.

2.1.1 FOCUS ON THE ETHOS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT IN ISLAM

The first category includes research that examines Islamic texts, including the Quran and the *Hadiths*, to see where sport and physical activity fit within Islam and its teachings (Walseth, 2016) and the relationship between Islam and physical activity/sport, including the different interpretations and consequences of involvement. Such research often examines the ways Muslim people interpret sport and physical activity in Islamic scripture and how they subsequently engage in sport and physical activity. However, seeing that sport falls under leisure activities, incorporating leisure research that focuses on the ethos of leisure in Islam can provide a more fulsome understanding of the ethos of sport and physical activity. While some research that focuses on the ethos of sport and physical activity in Islam specifically does reference the broader understanding of leisure activities in Islam as well, I believe explicit incorporation can provide for a stronger conceptual basis.

For example, Martin and Mason (2004) looked at leisure in the Islamic context by reviewing and analysing previous literature as well as Islamic scripture. In their paper, they focus on three aspects of leisure in Islam: (1) what Islam says about leisure time and activities; (2) what is considered Islamic forms of leisure; and (3) activities most associated with leisure in Islamic countries. They conclude that within Islamic teachings, leisure is relevant and generally viewed positively (Martin & Mason, 2004). However, what is considered acceptable or unacceptable modes of leisure is subjective, meaning some may think of some activities as acceptable others may hold a different opinion. Common leisure activities practiced in the West, like drinking alcohol, going to sports bars or gambling, are considered unacceptable (*haram*) for Muslims, while other activities such as sport and activities contributing to healthy bodies and minds are considered acceptable (*halal*). The subjective experience of leisure that is highlighted by Martin and Mason (2004), shows that that leisure itself can be understood and lived in different ways, thus, broadening our understanding of leisure beyond exclusively Western definitions.

Similar to findings in leisure research, differing or opposing opinions, perspectives and experiences with sport and physical activity amongst Muslim populations is a common theme. For example, Walseth and Fasting (2003) investigated the relationship between Islam and physical activity/sport participation among Egyptian women from Norway and found that the women agreed that Islam encouraged participation in sports for women across the different interpretations of Islam. Furthermore, the researchers found that the different interpretations of Islam affected the women's sport participation levels, specifically in terms of barriers to participation (e.g., veil, gender segregation, and the concept of non-sexual movements), and that these barriers were mostly constructed by how Muslim women are viewed. Thus, differing personal opinions and perspectives become common themes across both leisure research and specific sport research. Note this difference in opinion exists in two contexts; first, the understanding of leisure in Islamic scripture as opposed to Western contexts, and second, within the interpretation of Islamic scripture itself.

The observed subjectivity in understanding of leisure activities and sport in Muslim populations leads into the discussion of the role of Western paradigms in this field of research. A significant gap in this category of research is the impact of predominantly Western paradigms in the production of scholarship on Muslims and sport (Abd Rahim, Diah, Jani & Ahmad, 2019). Even Walseth's (2016) review of the literature on Muslims and sport focuses on Western literature, which can lead to Eurocentric/Western narratives to be replicated and disseminated, rather than offering clearer insight into how Muslims understand their experiences in sport. Specifically, sport in Muslim countries and Muslim athletes are viewed through the Western paradigm of sport and there is greater focus on the social reality behind the participation of Muslims in sport, especially Muslim women (Abd Rahim et al., 2019). In other words, instead of focusing on how Muslim women understand their participation in sport, the focus tends to shift to the comparatively oppressive,

restrictive, controlled social situations in particular Muslim countries, correlating their experiences in sport (or lack thereof) to the societal structure in which they live in, which in turn (re)produces common Othering narratives about Muslim women. The usage of Western knowledges and definitions of leisure, sport and activity, hyper focuses on the social construction of Muslim women playing sport, which leads to neglecting the role of Islamic teachings and thoughts that impact the choices Muslims make when participating in sports.

Indeed, the ways that Western scholars view Muslims in sport is different from how Muslim scholars living in Muslim countries study and publish about sport. In terms of the origins of studies in the case of leisure research, evidence indicates that most of the leisure literature is conducted in Western countries within Western universities (Ito, Walker & Liang, 2014). A systematic review of non-Western and cross-cultural/national research found that of 1891 total articles between the years 1990 and 2009, only 4.1% were non-Western and cross-cultural/national in nature (Ito et al., 2014). This indicates that leisure theory is being developed whilst ignoring 95% of the world's population. While this is specific to leisure scholarship, this gap highlights the production of knowledge and its relationship to power and the production of Western power-knowledge. Research practices are interwoven with ideologies and power relations, producing knowledge that maintains and propagates hegemonic narratives (Ryba & Schinke, 2009). The main implication is that, especially when studying marginalised groups in the West that historically are disempowered, there is a lack of representation (as seen in Ito et al., 2014) or worse, misrepresentation in the literature. Studying ethnic and racial minority groups allows for the expansion of leisure theory such that frameworks can be validated, or new relationships can be formed when expanding to a larger population (Ito et al., 2014). Thus, where the literature is being produced and who the research is about are important factors to consider when reviewing all types of literature, but especially in sport and leisure where,

historically, the literature has been predominantly Eurocentric/Western (Singer, 2005; Ryba & Schinke, 2009; Ratna & Samie, 2017, DeKnop, Theeboom, Wittock & Martelaer, 1996; Farooq & Parker, 2009). When studying a population that has been stereotyped, typified, and categorized as a result of events such as 9/11 and 7/7, additional caution and care must be taken into analysing the content of the literature and the origins of the literature.

Overall, scholarship that takes this first approach is beneficial for exhibiting the subjective nature of sport and leisure activity for Muslim people by showing how participation is understood through different understandings of religion. However, a narrow Western focus on what Islam allows or disallows in terms of sport, leads to a shallow understanding of Muslim experiences in sport. A wider net should be cast for a more critical analysis of Islam and Muslims in the sporting context, including research *by* Muslim scholars *in* predominantly Muslim countries, such as Iran and Malaysia.

2.1.2 FOCUS ON SPORT IN MUSLIM SOCIETIES

Compared to the first approach, the other three categories of research outlined by Walseth (2016) take a more critical stance and analysis. The second approach, for instance, provides a more critical view of Muslims in sport, whereby the focus is on sport in Muslim societies, such as sporting heroines in the Muslim world and the organization of sport and sporting events in Muslim countries by examining the social impacts of ethnicity, culture, politics, and policy (Walseth, 2016). Research under this approach can be divided into two subsections. The first subsection includes research examining the narratives of women in sports in Muslim majority countries including sport participation, sport consumption, and attitudes towards sport and leisure. The second subsection includes critical analyses of women in sport in Muslim majority countries in terms of policies and regulations that include or exclude women from participating in sport. This division is imperative to

better organize the existing literature and to recognize the research done by scholars trained and/or living in various social contexts (Western and/or Eastern societies) as to include various perspectives, reflections, narratives and experiences thus providing a more comprehensive understanding of Muslim women sporting narratives.

The first subsection includes the work of Jennifer Hargreaves, specifically *Heroines of Sport: The Politics of Difference* (2001). Hargreaves examines five groups of women who have generally been excluded from the narrative of women in sports and of women as heroines: Black women in South Africa; Muslim women from the Middle East; Aboriginal women from Canada and Australia; and disabled and lesbian women from various countries around the globe. By focusing on these groups of women specifically, the relevance of the categories of difference relating to class, culture, ethnicity, race, religion, and sexual orientation are highlighted as significant categories influencing the participation of women in sport (Hargreaves, 2001). Their struggles as marginalized women participating in sport are examined as both personal and social, linked to contextually specific cultural, political, religious, and economic processes but also to larger more powerful systems of domination such as racism, colonialism, sexism, and ableism. The accounts in Hargreaves' (2001) book examines the ways in which women come to understand themselves and their own agency in participating in sport as well as the ways in which women as seen by the world when participating in sport. Specifically, to the account of Muslim women in the Middle East, Hargreaves (2001) focuses on Nawal El Moutawakel, the Moroccan hurdler who also was the first woman from the African continent to win a gold medal at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. Her win was considered historical and significantly symbolic. Disregarding the heterogenous nature of Muslimness as a category and as a practice/experience, Western media used this win as a triumph over the "restrictive way of life" seen in the Middle East that has held women back from

participating in sport (2001, p. 52). In this way, El Moutawakel's win was a symbolic victory for Muslim women across the world. In Morocco, El Moutawakel was held on a national pedestal as a symbol of Arab pride and as a sign of a forward-looking government that facilitated radical womanhood and allowed for female sport participation at a global scale. Various factors such as the political, cultural, and religious contexts play a role in how women, in this case El Moutawakel, are understood and perceived in sport. Meanings ascribed to Muslim women as restricted and excluded from sport were shattered, signaling a break from traditional practices and movement towards a new freedom (Hargreaves, 2001). Such an analysis allows for a critical view of larger processes in play such as Orientalist views of the East (see Said, 1979) and a nuanced examination of colonialist notions of the Other as traditional, backwards and in need of change especially when it comes to women participating in sport. When read as a whole, the book speaks to human agency and the identity construction processes that marginalized women go through in sport, specifically when held to the elevated status of being sporting 'heroines'. A 'heroine' in this case can be the woman who symbolizes an agenda or a particular thought; the forward-looking, unrestricted Muslim woman. However, a 'heroine' can also be the Muslim woman who chose to overcome the struggles of being a marginalized woman in sport and constructing her own identity.

Another study examined the perspectives of Arab Muslim women (who sojourn in Malaysia) toward involvement in sport and physical activity (Abdul Razak, Fauzee & Abd-Latif, 2010). The researchers found that the young Arab Muslim women saw participating in sport as a challenge to the boundaries of their ethnic identities, a challenge that emphasizes their agency. Specifically, sport participation afforded these women the opportunity to exercise their agency by breaking through constricting aspects of their ethnic or cultural beliefs. Furthermore, the authors found that Arab Muslim women felt that their parents, dress code, and family are main factors behind their lack of

sport participation, all of which were they considered to be reasons related to their ethnicity. This particular study differs from other studies done during the same time period because participants were asked about their ethnic identity separately from their religion or culture. Ethnicity denotes groups that have a common identity-based ancestry, language or culture that is often based on religion, beliefs, and customs as well as memories of migration or colonization (Cornell & Hartmann, 2007). Oftentimes, ethnicity, race and culture are used interchangeably which results in a less detailed and generalized understanding of identity. Abdul Razak et al's (2010) differentiation allows for a more thorough understanding of the Arab Muslim women in the study, since ethnicity, culture and religion are not the same, even if intersecting parts of one's identity.

In general, this group of research highlights the narratives of Muslim women around the globe. While the current study explores the experiences of men *and* women regarding sport participation, this branch of research is still relevant because it provides important contextual insights into the intersection of sport participation, identity, ethnicity, and religion. Research that explores identity formation specifically – whether it be ethnic, religious, or national identity – provides us with a better understanding of how sport participation plays a role in identity formation, especially when including the voices of those who play and participate.

The second subsection of this approach includes a critical analysis of global policies and politics that inform the practices that include/exclude women in sport at both an international level, such as Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and at the national level (i.e., rules and regulations). For example, Jahromi and Koshnam's (2017) study focuses on the global politics of Muslim women in sport, where the authors discuss the steps required to challenge global politicization of Muslim women's attire, or the misinterpretations of Islam at national (in this case Iran) and international levels. Specifically,

they aim to challenge how global policies and politics reflect irrational fear and hostility towards Islam and Muslims. These same illogical anxieties lead to discrimination, marginalization, and exclusion of Muslims from social, political and civic life (Jahromi & Koshnam, 2017).

Similarly, Hamzeh (2017) sheds light on the disqualification of the Iranian Women's team from FIFA in 2012 based on their covering, stating that "two gendering racializing logics emerged that are rooted in a colonialist and Islamist alliance" (p. 11), namely the logics of medicalization and culturalization. Thus, she refers to the ban of the Iranian women's team as "double hijabophobia" (Hamzeh, 2017, p.4). Both FIFA and Muslim-majority nations used medicalized and culturalized notions of the *hijab* to deny Muslim women of their bodily integrity which ultimately led to their exclusion from international soccer. Medicalization and culturalization are the two main gendering racializing logics used by FIFA, International Football Association Board (IFAB) and FIFA representatives from Muslim-majority countries to police the bodies of Muslim women soccer players. Medicalization of *hijab* is evident through the invoking of FIFA's Law 4 which states that a player may not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to themselves or other players. FIFA deployed a process of proving the (lack of) safety of the *hijab* without informing FIFA Muslim-majority countries representatives which robbed them of their agency and, in turn, inadvertently became complicit in the racialization of their own players. It is very important to note that the *hijab* was found by IFAB to pose no threat to the safety of the player or others on the field (Hamzeh, 2017).

The second mode of gendering racializing logic is culturalization. According to the second part of FIFA's Law 4, basic equipment that has any political, religious, or personal slogans will lead to sanctioning by FIFA. In this case, *hijab* was considered to be basic equipment as well as a religious symbol. Given the hyper-Islamophobic context of the past decade (Thobani, 2007), the

hijab often connotes a religious meaning when some Muslim women wear it on the field. In efforts to amend the second part of Law 4, *hijab* was then invoked as a cultural rather than a religious object. While the intentions were to ensure the inclusion of Muslim women in FIFA, it resulted in a reverse culturizing move (Hamzeh, 2017). Ultimately, against the intentions of the Muslim players themselves, FIFA and Muslim majority countries culturalized and racialized Muslim women, in this case, Muslim women soccer players wearing the *hijab*. That is, the inclusion of Muslim women in FIFA is still dependent and conditional on FIFA's racializing practices even if they have 'permitted' the *hijab* on the soccer field (Hoodfar, 2015). The banning and rebranding of *hijab* is an example of what Jahromi and Koshnam (2017) are referring to when addressing the politicization of dress code and *hijab*. Ultimately, outside of the sporting context, the politicization of *hijab* is rooted in the colonial context which transformed the *hijab* from a religious symbol to a political emblem (Hoodfar, 2015) such that it is a lightning rod for global policies and politics that work to simultaneously include and exclude Muslim sporting women.

While the global politicization of Muslim women's attire is outside the scope of this review, we must recognize its contextual significance in understanding Muslim women's lived experience in sport in both Muslim majority countries and non-Muslim countries, especially with regards to *hijab*. The *hijab* is an obligatory part of practicing Islam for some Muslim women; however, it has been misinterpreted as a tool for popularizing Islam or used as a political tool by policy makers and academics to prevent women from competing in higher level international sporting events while wearing *hijab* (Jahromi & Koshnam, 2017). Thus, from this perspective, there are two forces through which women are excluded from sport: first, the global force in the form of transnational policies and second, local government and policies in Muslim-majority countries. Further, as Hamzeh (2017) illustrates, racializing and culturizing logics operate in response to *hijab* wearing

Muslim sporting women. Within a hyper-Islamophobic context (Thobani, 2007), it is crucial to be mindful and critical of how *hijab* and Islam are viewed, understood, and represented, in order to situate how Muslim women athletes, negotiate their own identities both on and off the field.

2.1.3 FOCUS ON SPORT PARTICIPATION AND LEVELS OF RELIGIOSITY IN DIASPORA COMMUNITIES

Walseth's (2016) third and fourth approaches are of particular relevance for the current study. Both approaches focus on Muslims living in diaspora and most of the work published comes from countries in Europe, Australia, and the United States (Burdsey, 2006; Cheng, 2019; Fletcher, 2012; Walseth, 2016). The limited Canadian literature on Muslims and sport also fall into these two categories as well.

Research under the third approach highlight how Muslims are racialized in sport (e.g., Ratna, 2011), the intersections of gender, ethnicity, and 'race' within the sporting context (e.g., Cheng, 2019; Strandbu, 2004), as well as the identity work of Muslims or the processes and forces involved in constructing their collective identities (e.g., Walseth, 2006). In general, research on sporting Muslim women in diaspora has grown considerably in the past two decades (e.g., Dagkas, Benn, & Jawad, 2011; Hamzeh & Oliver, 2012; Maxwell, 2012; Maxwell, Foley, Taylor & Burton, 2013; Maxwell & Taylor, 2010; McCue, 2008; Nakamura, 2002; Palmer, 2008; Taylor & Toohey, 2001; Walseth, 2006, 2015). However, the literature shows divergent findings with regards to religion as a barrier to women's' sport participation. For example, Dagkas et al. (2011) identified what they call "situational barriers" (p. 227) to participation for Muslim women such as dress code, available facilities (meaning gender segregated spaces), religious restrictions and cultural expectations. Among these factors, dress code (meaning modest attire) and co-ed activity were deemed non-negotiable restrictions to Muslim girls, thus leading to their lack of participation. These

findings are supported by a Danish study on physical education classes which found that Muslim girls wearing the *hijab* did not participate in class if the activity involved contact with boys (With-Nielsen & Pfister, 2011). However, Walseth and Stranbu's (2014) study on Muslim women in Norway found that many Muslim women do not find religious restrictions as non-negotiable and do not mind doing sport in gender mixed groups. Lastly, given that the *hijab* may be a significant factor in the sport experiences of Muslim women, the third category of research also pays close attention to the *hijab* and its meanings. The *hijab* can be an important part of all aspects of life including participation in sports and physical activity, in that for some women, *hijab* is a barrier to their participation while others do not share that experience (Ahmad, 2011). For example, Nakamura (2002) found that when modest dress code was not possible in either recreational facilities or school-based physical activity spaces, women would have to compromise their beliefs, stop playing all together, or play within their own community organized space. These contrasting responses make clear that Muslim women are not a homogenous group (Ratna & Samie, 2017) and sport participation among Muslim women varies greatly, such as with ethnicity and socio-economic background, just like any other group of women (Nakamura, 2002).

This third category of research is important for increasing sport participation levels and improving the quality of sporting experiences for Muslims by identifying barriers to participation. Nonetheless, the tendency to focus on 'differences' that cause the barriers can be problematic in that it can reinforce Othering of Muslim women and girls in sport. Furthermore, as Toffoletti and Palmer (2016) point out, the emphasis on barriers assumes that the focus should be on facilitating Muslim women into mainstream sport and implicitly ignores participation outside that context. To avoid this assumption, it is imperative to acknowledge scholarship conducted outside mainstream or Western sport settings and to recognize that Muslim women do play sport and that sport can be imagined in

different (read: alternative or non-Western) ways. This can serve as a warning to researchers for how to conduct their research with Muslim women in ways that avoid Tollofetti and Palmer's (2016) observed pitfall while still representing the voices of research participants.

Additionally, Tjønndal and Hovden's (2020) study on Muslim women's experience in boxing illustrated their commitment to centering the voices of Muslim women by emphasizing how they use their agency to resist imposed oppressive narratives or practices felt from their families, society or sports communities. This feeling of compromising beliefs and negotiating different social expectations is not exclusive to Muslim women. Nakamura's (2017) exploratory study on sport and Muslim men in the Greater Toronto Area highlighted the conflict between Islamic beliefs and Western norms in sport and physical education. These studies followed a similar focus where the conflict between Western and Islamic ideologies are highlighted; however, they avoid Toffoletti and Palmer's (2016) concern of reproducing the cultural conflict model by using the participants' experiences to critique the norms that exist within sport.

It is also noteworthy that the studies discussed above were all conducted by researchers who did not appear to or claim to share the same ethnic, religious, or socio-economic background as the research participants. This has previously been criticized for contributing to the homogenization of minority women and for upholding Western ethnocentric stereotypes of Muslim women (Rana, 2017), although the authors mentioned above (i.e., Nakamura, 2002; Tjønndal & Hovden, 2020), practiced and followed research ethics for conducting research with minorities and marginalized groups in order to avoid this homogenization and Western ethnocentrism in their analyses. Contrary to Rana (2017), this does not mean that an insider will not contribute to the homogenization of minority women. In fact, critical and reflexive approaches should be applied by all researchers, regardless of ethnic or national background. There are, nonetheless, benefits of being an insider

conducting research in that one may be particularly aware of the risk of homogenization, and that building rapport with the participants in study may be facilitated. This is discussed in greater detail in the methodology chapter.

2.1.4 FOCUS ON SPORT WITHIN COMMUNITY RUN ORGANIZATIONS IN DIASPORA COMMUNITIES

The fourth category in Walseth's (2016) classification consists of research that focuses on sport within community run organizations in diaspora communities. Research that takes this approach within Canadian literature is scarce. Existing research explores the relationship between Islamic identities and sporting interests of Muslim participants within their community but also how policy makers come to understand this relationship to cater to the Muslim community (Amara & Henry, 2010). Walseth's (2016) review of literature indicated that there is only one study (before her own) of sports clubs based on Islamic belonging, which was conducted in the UK by Amara and Henry (2010). This study focused on Muslim communities in Birmingham and Leicester and their involvement with sports activities like karate, badminton, swimming, and recreational activities for the elderly. While Amara and Henry (2010) did not focus on the reasons for establishing these sports clubs, they did reveal the theological influence on sporting activities and the organization of such activities. The selection and organization of activities were in accordance with the general principles of *Shari'a* guidelines, such as gender segregation, Islamic rules of *halal* and *haram* (permitted and non-permitted) and a code of conduct (Amara & Henry, 2010).

While there is research on Muslim youth and their participation in mainstream clubs that are not organized along particular ethnic, cultural, or religious lines (e.g., Ahmad, 2011; Pfister, Fasting, Scraton & Vazquez, 2002; Ratna, 2010; Scraton, Caudwell & Holland, 2005; Amara, 2005; 2008), there is comparatively little on Muslim youth and their participation in sport clubs led by

ethnic minorities (Walseth, 2016). More specifically, Walseth (2016) states that it is unknown as to why minority sport clubs are established. However, there are studies conducted in the UK which argue that the reason is due to experiences of racism in mainstream clubs (Bradbury, 2011; Burdsey, 2009; Malcolm, 2002). Furthermore, there is a growing scholarly interest in these separate minority sport clubs in relation to mixed sport clubs (e.g., Joseph, Darnell & Nakamura, 2012; Nakamura, 2019; Thangaraj, 2013, 2015; Nakamura & Donnelly, 2017).

Walseth (2016) proposes that the reasons for establishing exclusive sports clubs may be different for religion-affiliated clubs and ethnic-affiliated clubs, though it should be noted that ethnically based sports clubs could also be religiously homogeneous. Walseth (2016) studied 37 Muslim sport organizations that operated within separate mosque settings. While a religious space, it was not ethnically homogeneous. Not surprisingly then, Walseth (2016) indicated that diversity among mosques in Oslo was mirrored in this study, including Somali, Bosnian, Ahmadiyya, and Arabic-speaking mosques. The organizations she looked at are considered faith-based organizations that also provide faith-related services and activities. Walseth's (2016) study reports on Muslim organizations that offer sports activities to their members and utilizes Putnam's (2000) conceptualization of social capital. The findings illustrated that the Muslim organizations' work facilitates integration, such as supporting the idea of youth becoming 'Norwegian Muslim' by reclaiming the negative aspects of assimilation into a more positive identity of which to be proud. While this work has fostered more bonding than bridging capital, Walseth (2016) argues that it is nonetheless integrative and Muslim organizations that provide sport activities should not be looked at with scepticism by policymakers but instead be valued as a space with integration potential.

One group that is not considered in Walseth's (2016) review and study is Muslim faith-based sport organizations that do *not* offer faith-related activities. These spaces may not have sermons for

youth or offer Qura'an lessons, but they still act as a (predominantly) Muslim space to participate in sport. This subgroup would include a group of individuals who identify as Muslims but do not offer non-sport, religion-based activity, meaning it operates outside of the mosque, such as the Muslim Women's Sports Club (MWSC) in Stuttgart, Germany in Kuppinger's ethnography (2015).

Kuppinger (2015) analysed the club's role and contribution to urban citizenship and found that the club was a vital space for civic participation but is largely overlooked in its role in the urban civic sphere. In this club, Muslim women had participated with others who share similar interests like sports or shared religiosity, with women from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, socio-economic status, or sects of Islam. More crucially, it connects its members to the larger public sphere, acting as a civic association allowing members to debate central ideas and interests (Kuppinger, 2015).

Essentially, such faith-based associations can be spaces where bonding opportunities can emerge and can act as a crucial path to further civic engagement. Nonetheless, in the case of Kippinger's study (2015), the MWSC is in Germany and thus, the findings are specific to the German context.

Steven Fink's *Dribbling for Dawah* (2016), provides further examples of Muslim sport organizations at the local level, namely Muslim basketball leagues, sport programs at mosques and Islamic schools, and sports events hosted by Muslim organizations namely in America. He takes on the ambitious goal of illustrating the central role of sports in shaping American Muslim communities. Fink (2016) draws upon personal interviews, observations, and scholarly literature to demonstrate that participating in sports activities plays an important role in connecting Muslims with other Muslims and non-Muslims i.e., bridging and bonding (Putnam, 2000), as well as strengthening Islamic piety and fellowship. In this way *Dribbling for Dawah* (2016) as a piece of scholarly work falls in between Walseth's (2016) third and fourth literature foci breakdown.

Fink (2016) highlights organizations, clubs and leagues in America that offer recreational, structured, and competitive level sport (mainly basketball) to Muslim youth. These organizations, clubs and leagues fall into three categories: non-mosque affiliated organizations, mosque affiliated, and Islamic school clubs and leagues. Within these three categories some organizations, clubs and leagues are exclusive to Muslim participants while others are open to both Muslims and non-Muslims. For example, New Jersey's Muslim Basketball (MB) league was originally founded in 2005 exclusive from any mosque, as an organized Muslim basketball league with the goal of fostering brotherhood through basketball. Although founded by Muslims, the New Jersey's MB league is not exclusive to any religion or ethnicity, allowing non-Muslims and Muslims to play competitively together. When interviewed by Fink (2016), the founders of New Jersey's MB league emphasized that the rules and regulations enforced in the league reflected Islamic values, such as no fighting, cursing, trash talk, or anything that "instigates negative feelings" (Fink, 2016, p. 163), which strengthens Muslim piety and fellowship but also "demonstrates to non-Muslim players a palpable pouring forth of Muslim love and respect" (Fink, 2016, p.164). Considering the context of 9/11 and the experienced aftermath of discrimination, negative representations, exclusion, and alienation subjected upon Muslim and Muslim-looking bodies, many of these leagues allowed for non-Muslim participation for the sole reason of bridging between non-Muslims and Muslims. Many of the founders of such organizations believed that through this avenue of sport, Muslims can interact, connect, and form relationships with non-Muslims that they may have otherwise not have made (Fink, 2016). By allowing for non-Muslims to play in Muslim leagues that are founded upon Islamic values, piety, and fellowship, they can witness Islam and Muslims outside of the negative generalizations propagated in the news. Generally, these types of leagues, such as New Jersey's MB and South California's Muslim Basketball League, have the same two goals: running a highly

organized league and enabling the building of brotherhood (Fink, 2016). These types of leagues act as spaces where Muslim men specifically can build long lasting relationships within their own community with other Muslim men as well as non-Muslim men in an environment that reflects Islamic values, but do not explicitly use the space to preach or practice Islam (i.e., sermons from mosque leaders etc.).

Mosque affiliated sport programs, clubs, and leagues, however, often explicitly incorporate religious practice alongside sport participation. In the early 1990's across America, mosque leaders began to take notice of the sport's appeal, utilizing sport related activities, like pizza and basketball nights, to attract youth to participate and attend community mosque (Fink, 2016). Such programs promote inter-community bonding but also aim to attract Muslim youth across various communities, connecting Muslim youth across ethnic, cultural, and social communities. The All-Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS) is among America's largest mosque communities, comprising of over 6000 families. At ADAMS, sport is considered a meaningful and impactful vehicle of bridging and bonding (Fink, 2016). ADAMS offers a plethora of youth sports programs including basketball, football, soccer, and cricket leagues complemented by clinics in in these sports. In addition to youth programming, ADAMS also draws many adults to their facilities by offering pick-up basketball games, swimming sessions for women, Sunday football games, and inter-mosque soccer tournaments. By offering higher quality sport programming and facilities, ADAMS leaders believe that more Muslim and non-Muslim youth will be attracted to the mosque, rendering sport as the "connector to the mosque" (Fink, 2016, p. 210). Muslim and non-Muslim youth benefit by forming relationships with other youth and become connected in this way to the mosque as a space. Muslim and non-Muslim youth can then also gain exposure to Islam not only through interactions and by being at the mosque itself, but through the short talks/sermons that

ADAMS leaders give before league games. The Muslim Community of the Western Suburbs (MCWS) is in the same league as ADAMS regarding their goals in providing a large collection of sport activities for their communities. Like ADAMS, MCWS also often pairs religious instruction sessions with basketball, martial arts, table tennis and other sports for their youth. Like the other Muslim leagues, MCWS also enforces the ‘no fighting or swearing rule’ as well as enforcing a dress code for all participants, Muslim or not. The leaders of such spaces have noted the decline of youth attending and participating in mosque activities, firmly believing that sport can be used as a tool to bring youth back to the mosque. Islamic Organization of North America’s (IONA) Youth of the Ummah (YOU) program, offers a wide variety of sport programming for the youth in their communities. However, unlike other programs, YOU have devised an incentive-based system where youth earn points by attending Thursday evening religious lectures, participating in community service projects, and giving religious presentations to youth at mosque (Fink, 2016). Their participation is tracked over the week and those who fall below 60% participation are obligated to sit out of league game for a period of 10 minutes. YOU leaders believe this motivates the participants to be more involved in community activities and religious activities, since they enjoy playing and want to play. YOU connect sport participation to religious practice, which they believe causes a positive correlative relationship between the two.

Overall, such spaces, non-mosque and mosque affiliated, understand the role that sport can play within their communities, whether that means connecting members within the Muslim community or connecting Muslims to non-Muslims. However, the emergence of such spaces in some ways reflects the experiences of diasporic and Othered communities, especially Muslims post-9/11, in the West. Leaders within communities recognize the impacts of negative representation and misinformation propagated in news and media outlets, resulting in feelings of alienation and

discrimination. Sport leagues, clubs and programs become a space where more positive feelings of inclusion and acceptance can be fostered within the members of the community, especially between Muslims and non-Muslims.

In general, Walseth's (2016) breakdown of the literature accurately represents the available literature on Muslims in sport, even five years later. Although Wasleth's (2016) review focuses primarily on work based in Europe, the limited Canadian literature falls in line with the four approaches Walseth (2016) identifies. Walseth's organization of the literature can be used as the frame through which one can understand the existing literature on Muslims in sport and begin to identify the gaps in the literature on Muslims in sport in general. Nevertheless, there is no generalizability of results, especially with qualitative research. One's experience with sport may be similar to or different from another individual, depending on many different factors. When speaking about a population bound together by a religion and one that has been under heightened scrutiny for decades, the common denominator of discrimination and alienation both on and off the field may yield similar lived experiences, as seen in the numerous studies mentioned above. As discussed previously, it can be seen how geographical location alone yields very different responses regarding the reason why Muslim individuals participate in sport. In studies conducted in predominantly Muslim countries, participants understand sport participation as a religious obligation to stay fit and healthy (Alogleh, 1986; Walseth, 2003). Similarly, within studies conducted in Western countries, participants may also mention this sense of obligation; however, the overwhelming reason for sport participation is meeting people who are non-Muslim, making friends, and getting involved; in other words, they are motivated by a desire to gain the necessary social capital that leads to a sense of acceptance within their environment (Walseth, 2015; Burdsey, 2004). The differences in the ways sport participation are understood between Muslims in predominantly Muslim countries versus

those in Western countries, exemplifies the nuances of experiencing sport and how just one compounding factor can yield differing responses which is an observed trend throughout the literature. Thus, by focusing on Muslim experiences in sport with due consideration social and political factors of a given environment or place, a more nuanced understanding of sport participation can be acquired. That being said, studying Muslim experiences of sport participation in Canada reflects the unique and specific social and political aspects of Canadian society, including hegemonic narratives of Canadian identity, citizenship, belonging, and acceptance, and the place of sport within these narratives. The notion of citizenship and how it is understood in the Canadian context is especially important because sport has been used as a tool to foster feelings of citizenship and belonging by religious organizations, governments and even schools (Parker, Morgan, Farooq, Moreland, & Pitchford, 2019).

2.2 CITIZENSHIP

The contentious debate of citizenship is vast and engages many disciplinary perspectives including philosophy, sociology, education, and politics. Thus, this review was conducted using three main academic databases: JSTOR, Taylor & Francis Group and SpringerLink. For each search engine, the keywords used were: “citizenship”, “good citizenship”, “good citizen”, and “citizenship development”. Since this study focuses on the diasporic experience of citizenship in a Western country, the search was restricted to academic articles published in English, published between 1950 and 2020, and geographically researched and authored in Western countries (Canada, United States, Western Europe, and Australia). In fact, more than 50% of the studies were conducted in democratic countries such as the United States, the U.K and Western Europe.

After a thorough examination of the existing scholarly work, citizenship literature can be divided into three approaches: definitions, conceptualizations and iterations of citizenship (see Turner, 2002; Stokke, 2017; Conger & McGraw, 2008; Crick, 2007; Kymlicka & Wayne, 1995; Kymlicka, 1995; Habermas, 1992; Balibar, 1988; Beiner, 1995; Isin & Turner, 2002; Faulks, 2000; Guschwan, 2014); the contextual exploration of citizenship as a lived experience in various historical, political, and social contexts around the globe (see Dekker, 2019; Bolzendahl & Coffé, 2009; Coffé & Van Der Lippe, 2010; Eder, 2017); and citizenship development as a pedagogy in various settings such as education (see Westheimer & Kahne, 2004; Ahrari, Othman, Hassan, Samah & D'Silva, 2013; Avery, 2003; Hammett, 2018; Thompson, 2004; Adler & Kho, 2011).

The first approach covers scholarly literature that discusses the definitions, conceptualizations, and iterations of citizenship. Much of the literature under this approach builds upon T. H. Marshall's (1950) model/conception of citizenship, namely in criticism and debate of his incomplete description of citizenship. In *Citizenship and Social Class* (1950), Marshall took citizenship and class as the fundamental features of modern capitalist societies (primarily the UK), describing the three emergent components of citizenship from the 17th century to the 20th century: legal rights, political rights, and social rights. Marshall wrote that in the 17th and 18th centuries, legal rights (the right to a trial, the right to a fair hearing and access to legal resources) can be perceived as the first form of elementary citizenship which was institutionalized in the jury system (Turner, 2002). In the 18th and 19th century, there was a growth in political rights which was institutionalized in parliamentary institutions (Turner, 2002). Finally in the 19th and 20th century, citizenship is expanded by including social rights which is institutionalized in the welfare state. Marshall argued that citizenship mitigates the inequalities created in the capitalist marketplace. During the 19th century, many European countries went through significant class antagonism and class struggle

(Turner, 2002). Citizenship was able to reduce the class conflict by redistributing some of the resources, which had become more available because of economic growth. Marshall (1950) argued that through social security schemes, family benefits, the welfare state and general education, class conflict could be contained. He further argues, that although inequality remains a fundamental feature of capitalist societies, citizenship mitigates or regulates revolutionary conflict between the classes by creating a form of political solidarity (Turner, 2002). Marshall argued that Britain, as of the 20th century, “had developed a closed, rights-based system of social welfare, which he called ‘social citizenship’” (Revi, 2014, p. 452). It was considered a closed system because social welfare was only provided to British citizens, and it was rights-based in the sense that services were provided to British people as their right of citizenship (Revi, 2014). Holding a British passport and being a British citizen awarded them *social* rights like housing, healthcare, and education. These services are not human rights according to Marshall, since in Britain, only citizens were promised access and full participation in British society.

Over the years, many writers have suggested that Marshall’s (1950) notion of citizenship was incomplete, wrong or misguided, critiquing and amending Marshall’s empirical shortcomings (e.g., King & Waldron, 1988; Roche, 1987; Klausen, 1995; Harris, 1999; Turner, 2002; Lister, 2005). Turner (2002) argues that Marshall’s model was incomplete because of the significant development of cultural rights in the 20th century. In the 19th century, many societies had developed restrictive language policies that made the use of minority languages illegal or stigmatized in public spaces. The turn of the century then brought a greater willingness to tolerate minority languages and even developed to protect minority languages. The main dispute with Marshall’s theory is the regard for societies as homogenous. Marshall (1950) did not consider any other type of difference within a society such as linguistic, religious, ethnic, or cultural differences. His entire theory of

citizenship rested on the assumption that social class was the only division between members of a society, and that the government, through granting legal, political and social rights, overcame class disparity by creating a common basis of citizenship (Turner, 2002). Obviously, societies are much more heterogenous and diverse now, comprising of multiple ethnicities, cultures, religions etc., raising question of how citizenship based in class alone can be the “architect of legitimate social inequality” (Marshall, 1992, p. 39). Furthermore, Marshall had nothing to say about aboriginal communities and their claims to rights to the land prior to invasion, colonization, and settlement (Turner, 2002). Marshall’s theory also does not allow for an understanding of citizenship in a multicultural environment, where members can have more than one identity (Revi, 2014). While there are many issues with Marshall’s theory of citizenship, some scholars such as Lister, argue that Marshall’s work can be expanded upon and “is best used as a study of citizenship, which can be developed and extended as the meaning and application of citizenship rights change over time” (Revi, 2014, p. 458). Klausen (1995) echoes Lister (2005) by claiming that equal citizenship can be used as a tool for achieving support for social welfare. Similarly, studies on identity and citizenship have expanded upon Marshall’s idea that citizenship can diminish social inequality. Fraser and Gordon’s (1992) study of women’s rights, Kymlicka’s (1995) work on group rights and multicultural citizenship and Soysal’s (2011) work on ‘universal personhood’ contribute to the study of identity politics by offering a more complete definition of citizenship as a category of equality (Revi, 2014). A more comprehensive understanding of citizenship cannot be fully achieved realistically, as nations, societies, and communities are constantly evolving and renegotiating the meaning of citizenship as both a lived experience and a social construct. Scholarly work such as Kymlicka’s (1995) work on multicultural citizenship represents the renegotiation and contextual analysis of citizenship in a society that has adopted multiculturalism as policy, law, and culture,

allowing for the debate to continue to illuminate how citizenship evolves and morphs as societies change. This is important to inform our understanding on citizenship as a concept but also as a very real, embodied experience. In this way, research under this approach never truly becomes saturated; as the world continues to evolve and change with globalization, social constructions also change, morphing into new understandings of what it means to be a citizen of a nation and more broadly a global citizen.

The second approach taken in citizenship literature discusses the contextual factors of citizenship as a lived experience in various historical, political, and social contexts around the world. Literature taking this approach represents citizenship as a concept that is in constant evolution, one that is deeply categorized by context. Thus, literature contextualizing citizenship only benefits and enhances our understanding of citizenship. Under this approach, studies explore the contextual (and/or geographical) nature of citizenship norms translated through measurable behaviours like political engagement (e.g., Coffé & Van Der Lippe, 2010), citizenship narratives as a functional element of governing society (e.g., Eder, 2017), and the ways in which politicians and elites describe citizens' civic, social, and political involvement (e.g., Dekker, 2019) to name a few. Such studies seek to demonstrate the ways citizenship comes alive, meaning questioning how citizenship meanings, norms, and characteristics are practiced, embodied and reproduced by members of society. While studies under this approach contextualize citizenship and demonstrate the variance that can be observed in different nations, citizenship is often categorized into two categories: active citizenship and passive citizenship (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Active citizenship highlights democratic engagement (ten Dam, Geijssels, Reumerman, & Ledoux, 2011; Hawthorn, 2019; Peucker & Akbarzadeh, 2014) and proactive participation within the society and communities to which the individual belongs (Scheerens, 2011). Passive citizenship encompasses

the notions of civil obedience (Carr, 1991), individual freedoms, civil rights, participation in political activities (e.g., voting) and ability to access welfare and educational systems (Marshall, 1964; Tonkiss & Bloom, 2015). This categorization of citizenship acts as the foundation across the studies under this approach. Studies then take on two approaches in understanding active and passive citizenship in various contexts: either from the citizens' point of view meaning the ways citizens themselves understand passive and active engagement, or from the institutional point of view, meaning the ways policy or education curriculums represent and give meaning to active and passive citizenship.

It is interesting to note that most of the research under this approach, although quite varied geographically, still mainly focuses on old democratic Western countries such as the United States and Western European countries and the ways in which the public in those countries understand citizenship (e.g., Theiss-Morse & Hibbing, 2005; Dalton, 2008; Conover, Searing & Crewe, 2004). However, the studies that look at new democratic countries (namely Eastern Europe), that were under communist political power for many decades, seem to show variance in citizen understanding of norms related to citizenship engagement and participation in comparison to Western European countries. For example, Howard (2002) showed that Eastern European countries lagged behind Western European countries regarding civic participation. Denters, Gabriel and Torcal (2007) found prevalent differences in citizenship norms between Eastern and Western European countries. Older democratic traditional Western countries regarded critical and deliberative principles of citizenship as more important than law abidingness and solidarity, while Eastern countries ranked law abidingness and solidarity above critical and deliberative principles. Often times, differences in citizenship norms and citizenship participation (both active and passive) are attributed to the communist experience (Howard, 2002; Coffé and Van Der Lippe, 2010)

Studies like Coffé and Van Der Lippe's (2010) research on Eastern Europe citizenship norms, explore the meaning of citizenship through the citizens perspective, seeking to understand the ways citizens' define citizenship, 'good' citizenship, and civic and political engagement across various Eastern European countries (Poland, Slovenia, Czech Republic and Hungary). Their study revealed that Eastern Europe is "not a monolithic and homogenous bloc" (Coffé and Van Der Lippe, 2010, p. 485), highlighting that citizenship norms are highly contextual reflecting the social, political, and cultural specificities of the nation. Other studies, such as Dekker (2019), opt to focus on how politicians and media see citizenship, namely active and passive citizenship, and how it is reflected in public opinion, rather than focusing on how citizens themselves describe their activities and give meaning to citizenship and 'good' citizenship. Dekker's (2019) study aims to understand the "development of dominant views on voluntary civic or social and political involvement in the Netherlands" by specifically focusing on the ways Dutch politicians and elites frame, discuss and advocate for active citizenship.

The third approach taken in citizenship literature discusses citizenship development as a pedagogy in various settings especially education (see Westheimer & Kahne, 2004; Ahrari, Othman, Hassan, Samah & D'Silva, 2013; Avery, 2003; Hammett, 2018). Studies exploring the characterizations of citizenship in education pedagogy as seen through state mandated curriculums and teaching methodology, discuss the ways in which citizenship is taught to school aged children. The colloquial saying 'the children are the future' is validated throughout this literature, emphasizing the importance of educating the next generation to be productive, 'good' citizens. In the past 30 years, there has been an increasing interest in researching democratic education around the world, especially in countries like Australia, England, and the United States (Sears & Hughes, 2006). A large range of scholarship as well as programme development has been produced by

supra-national projects sponsored by organizations such as the Centre for Citizenship Education at the Hong Kong Institute of Education (Lee, Grossman, Kennedy, & Fairbrother, 2004). Much of these studies come because of perceived disaffection, alienation, and the lack of social cohesion in these democratic countries (Sears & Hughes, 2006). Scholars such as Sears and Hughes (1996; 1999; 2005) have been very involved in this research and support the idea that education for democratic citizenship has benefited young people's engagement in civic life, however they believe that what often passes as citizenship education, especially in the Canadian context is "more akin to indoctrination" (Sears & Hughes, 2006). They state that indoctrination means "the closing down of alternatives through the promotion of single, unassailable views and shunning of evidence" (Sears & Hughes, 2006, p.4). In this way then education is the opposite since it is "the opening of possibilities through engagement with evidence" (Sears & Hughes, 2006, p. 4). Such debates surrounding education vs indoctrination regarding citizenship development expand the conversation to include what citizenship means, and what does it mean to different parties i.e., what does citizenship development look like for teachers, for policy makers, and for governing bodies. This then impacts the ways in which citizenship is taught to school aged children and adopted by those children as they grow to become citizens of a society/nation. This approach takes a top-down approach and mostly focuses on the top aspect of citizenship development and less on the experience of the citizen themselves. Research under this approach provides rich contextual information about what citizenship looks like and the meanings that are attached to citizenship and 'good' citizenship.

Keeping the three approaches in mind, this particular case study focuses on the lived experience of citizenship, identity and belonging in Canada, the ways in which participants understand what and who a citizen is/should be in Canada and the ways they understand common

citizenship narratives such as the ‘good’ citizen as understood through participation at the Umoja Games. In some ways, this study falls in between the first two discussed approaches in that it serves to understand how citizenship looks like and how it is conceptualized, defined, and developed specifically in a Western, democratic context. Democratic citizenship shares common features across the world; however, the institutional and social forms of citizenship are located within contexts (Peck, 2009), meaning that citizenship in Canada manifests very differently than citizenship in the United States even though both are Western, democratic societies. Thus, given the contextual nature of citizenship, research exploring citizenship as a concept (philosophically, politically, and socially) specifically in the Canadian context is necessary to understand how citizenship is experienced in Canada. Canada is described as a full democratic country, with a tradition of liberalism and an egalitarian, moderate political ideology. Furthermore, Canada in comparison to almost every other Western democratic country, “has a rather liberal policy for accommodating diversity, and granting migrants’ cultural and religious-based demands, such as public funding for a wide range of community activities and infrastructure” (Moghissi, 2016, p. 92). Canada’s adoption of multiculturalism in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982), acknowledges that practicing one’s own language and religion is crucial for maintaining one’s identity, and confirms that all Canadians have cultural freedom and equal benefit of the law without discrimination based on race, nationality, ethnicity, origin, colour, religion, sex, age and mental or physical disability. In this way, the federal government, by law, is responsible for implementing non-discrimination as a human right to its constituents (Moghissi, 2016).

Thus, the type of citizen that is institutionally developed in Canada (i.e., through education and policy) is based on the contextual meaning of citizenship in this liberal, egalitarian, moderate political climate. Citizenship development aims to create the type of citizen that inhabits a specific

political and social society. In Western democratic societies, citizenship is often used generously to describe a variety of things (Schnaudt, van Deth, Zorell, and Theocharis, 2021). This includes the citizens' perceptions of their rights and duties as citizens as well as their role in politics (e.g., Conover, Crewe, and Searing, 2004; Marshall, 1950). Citizenship is also described as the "specific attitudinal (e.g., trust in democratic institutions, tolerance towards others) and behavioural (political participation) manifestations considered essential for sustaining democracy" (Schnaudt, van Deth, Zorell, and Theocharis, 2021, p. 3). Scholars, such as Westheimer and Kahne (2004), feel that attempts to define citizenship often result in narrowly formulated, ideologically specific, and politically loaded articulations of citizenship since a particular "kind of citizen" (p. 238) is sought to be produced: the neoliberal, democratic citizen. In this sense then, the core definition of citizenship remains democratic in nature and goal even if there may be different ideological iterations of citizenship values reflected in pedagogy. For example, in citizenship education pedagogy, writers on the Left place a greater emphasis on social critique and structural change in addressing issues in a democratic society (which is called justice-oriented citizenship), while Conservatives "emphasize problems caused in society caused by personal deficits" (which is called personal responsibility) (Westheimer and Kahne, 2004, p. 239). Yet, the definition or criteria of citizenship, namely 'good' citizenship, relies on the conception of a 'good society' committed to core democratic values such as freedom of speech and general liberty (Westheimer and Kahne, 2004). In this way then, definitions of citizenship are foundationally planted in creating or shaping 'good', democratic citizens. The concept of 'good' citizenry and the development of 'good' citizens has long been a part of discussions in various academic fields and contexts (Villalobos, Morel & Treviño, 2021).

2.2.1 'GOOD' CITIZENSHIP

The concept of 'good' citizenship is discussed and debated in various academic fields, such as political science, sociology, history among others (Villalobos, Morel, Treviño, 2021). However, across the disciplines, any debate on the notion of 'good' citizenship is composed of the interaction between two definitions: (1) the notion of membership as belonging to a community; and (2) the conceptual position regarding how citizens are expected to act, behave, and believe (Villalobos, Morel, Treviño, 2021). Regarding 'good' citizenship as membership, Stokke (2017) shows that the definition of a citizen itself is subject to debate, since citizenship implies political, social, cultural, and legal elements that cannot be separated from each other. Regarding the types of behaviours that 'good' citizens display, Park and Shin (2006) show that the types of behaviours are highly dynamic, contextually reflective on culture and history. Thus, to understand the meaning of 'good' citizenship as a concept, "it is necessary to first decide who qualifies as a citizen, and how they are expected to behave" (Villalobos, Morel, Treviño, 2021, p. 14).

After an in-depth immersion into the literature, it can be said that majority of the literature discusses 'good citizenship' as participatory citizenry, especially literature that has been conducted and produced in democratic societies and countries. Participatory citizenry is the understanding that citizen participation, meaning participation in democratic politics, is crucial for democratic responsiveness and more importantly is "an intrinsic democratic good" (Bolzendahl and Coffé, 2009, p. 64). Democratic good has been commonly linked to citizenship participation in the literature (eg. Lijphart, 1997; Verba, 1996). However, citizenship participation itself is contested in the literature, as different democratic nations present an array of relevant behaviours and beliefs that constitute 'democratically good' participation (Bolzendahl and Coffé, 2009; Dalton, 2008). Furthermore, citizenship participation, regardless of contextual democratic country, is understood as shaped by citizenship norms, or the norms that citizens hold about 'good citizenship' (Dalton, 2008;

Bolzendahl and Coffé, 2009; Jasso & Opp, 1997; Raney & Berdhal, 2009). Norms, as a cultural phenomenon, are arguably important regulators of social behaviour (Hechter and Opp, 2011). However, since norms are culturally contextual, citizenship norms may vary across nations, and the relationship between other factors of citizenship such as political participation, civic duty, and social responsibility, may vary in strength and form (Bolzendahl & Coffé, 2009). Much of the literature discussing ‘good citizenship’ discusses which factors correlate best to the presentation of ‘good citizenry’ in democratic countries, however the literature heavily focuses only on a few Western European countries and the United States and mainly analyses the *public’s* understanding of ‘good citizenship’ (Conover *et al.*, 2004; Dalton, 2008; Denters *et al.*, 2007; Theiss-Morse & Hibbing, 2005). Furthermore, most of the studies group together norms of citizenship into duty-based norms and engaged norms (Dalton, 2008; Knack, 1995; Raney & Berdahl, 2009). While these studies indicate there is difference and variety in the ways the public understands and presents ‘good citizenship’, there is less literature investigating the link between the various, contextual citizenship norms and the different presentations of political participation and behaviour. This type of investigation enhances the understanding of ‘good citizenship’ as a contextual concept and tests the theory of norm-behaviour linkages between political participation and ‘good citizenship’.

Some studies have sought to further elaborate on these norm-behaviour linkages in relation to ‘good citizenship’ and political participation such as Bolzendahl & Coffé (2009). The authors examined the meanings and practices of citizenship across 25 democratic nations, assessing the possible differences between newer democracies (previously communist countries) and older democracies (like Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Western European countries). They inspect the various meanings and practices of citizenship across these nations where participation and norms of ‘good citizenship’ may present in various relevant behaviours and beliefs, such as voting,

obeying the law, and/or helping other people. While other studies have found that cultural factors (norms) only passively and generically link to attitudes of participation (e.g., Andersen and Hoff, 2001), Bolzendahl and Coffé (2009) seek to investigate “the extent to which citizens may see different types of participation as a more or less normative aspect of citizenship” (p. 65). In this way, the authors test the ever so common linkage that ‘good citizenship’ norms are cultural factors that influence political participation which in turn is crucial for constructing the ‘good’ democratic citizen. Utilizing a multivariate regression analysis of pooled data across 25 nations, the results of their study indicated that ‘good citizenship’ norms did matter for political participation, but the *effect* (strength of the correlation) varied across democratic nations and the type of political participation. They focused on three types of political participation: political activism, party membership and voting, and seven ‘good citizenship’ norms: paying taxes, voting, being active in social and political associations, keeping watch on government actions, being understanding of other people’s opinions, buying or boycotting goods for political or ethical reasons, and helping those in need in your own country and around the world. Previous research had grouped these norms into duty-based norms (like obeying the law, paying taxes) and engaged norms (like voting and political activism), but Bolzendahl and Coffé (2009) state that in doing so, those studies missed important variations in its effect. ‘Good citizen’ norms like paying taxes and obeying the law, for example, were found to be significantly ($p < 0.05$) negatively and strongly related to political activism, indicating that some norms are weakly tied to political participation. Furthermore, Bolzendahl and Coffé’s (2009) study allowed for comparison between different nations to better understand how/if citizenship norms are internalized and translated into behaviors. They found that citizenship norms do vary in impact on different types of political participation, which was not always found in prior research given the grouping of citizenship norms into duty-based and engaged

participatory norms. Certain duties, like paying taxes or obeying the law are widely regarded in the literature as an important and significant norm in citizenship behaviour, however Bolzendahl and Coffé (2009) found that it is negatively related to all types of political participation mirrored in country-specific analyses. Conversely, the duty to vote was found to be positively linked to all forms of political participation. This shows that there is detail and nuance in understanding citizenship norms and the translation into citizenship behaviour. Even voting, which is often correlated to 'good citizenship' was found to be more "valued as an independent democratic good and not as part of a larger framework of citizenship duties" (Bolzendahl and Coffé, 2009, p. 77). This is a significant result that informs the ways in which the literature and scholars understand citizenship not only as a concept but also as norms that may or may not be translated into behaviour, in this case political participation. This distinction allows for a discussion of citizenship beyond political experience (or political participation) and instead as the geographically contextual construction of citizenship, one that must be learned and adopted instead of assumed.

Therefore, citizenship as a concept or category is nuanced and subjective across various contexts. In addition to the various definitions and conceptualizations of citizenship offered in the literature, experiences of native citizens, foreign-born citizens, and non-citizens living in Canada provides for a better understanding of the construction of citizenship narratives, such as the 'good citizen'. For example, the Environics Institute, in partnership with the Institute of Canadian Citizenship (ICC), conducted the first national survey on what it means to be a Canadian citizen. A sample size of 2,376 Canadian residents living in the 10 provinces were asked questions about feelings of citizenship, obstacles to feeling like a good citizen, and who makes a good citizen. The results yielded three categories of public opinion: what it means to be a good citizen, the state of citizenship in Canada today, and native-versus foreign-born perspectives on expectations of

citizenship (The Environics Institute, 2012). The report focused on national findings surrounding these three categories and how they differ within key segments of the population (e.g., region, demographic characteristics, country of birth and citizenship status) (The Environics Institute, 2012). The results showed that being a good citizen is perceived as more than having a Canadian passport and obeying the law. Rather, it entails being an active member of the community and being accepting of those who are different from you. Survey respondents indicated that they feel like good citizens when they give back to their communities by volunteering or being kind and generous to others. They believe that a good citizen does not need to be born in Canada, and that newcomers can adapt and become good citizens too. Finally, Canadian-born and foreign-born individuals share similar insights on how to be a good citizen in Canada. Ideas around active commitments to the community to feel like a good citizen are shared between the two groups.

However, throughout the above study, there is no mention of feelings of exclusion, alienation, or the personal struggles of acclimating to the good citizen narrative for those who are foreign-born. However, many groups -- Black, women, Indigenous peoples, ethnic and religious minorities -- express feelings of exclusion from the 'common culture' even if they possess legal citizenship because of their differences (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994). This is evident in research on diasporic communities where the struggle to negotiate multiple identities leaves individuals feeling excluded from both the limits of their original home nation, as well as new lived nations (Dwyer, 2000; Portes, 1997; Vertovec, 2001). Indeed, the status of being a citizen does not guarantee feelings of belonging and acceptability. Many citizens may be outside the imaginary limits of the nation because being a legal citizen does not guarantee acceptance. This inside-outside status may be experienced most often by those who are also categorized as the Other, and individuals must engage in additional work to acclimate, assimilate, and adjust to fit into the nation's ideals of

citizenship (Abdel-Shehid, 2005). This inside-outside status falls in line with the inherent conceptualization of citizenship as an exclusionary practice, including some citizens within the boundaries of the nation while excluding other citizens on grounds beyond legal status. Those citizens who experience exclusion on such grounds often find themselves negotiating their citizenship(s), identities, and basic belonging to understand where they fit within the nation where their citizenship should have guaranteed social benefits such as inclusion, belonging and acceptance. Here, sport becomes an illuminating lens to explore and understand feelings of inclusion, belonging and acceptance, since sport notoriously claims to be a powerful tool in joining the masses, regardless of differences and fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion that cannot be compared to anything else.

2.2.2 CITIZENSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND THE ‘GOOD CITIZEN’ IN SPORT

Regarding sport, the definition of citizenship has also been contested and varies within this context (see Tonkiss & Bloom, 2015; Turner, 2016; Tyler, 2010; Grant, 2011; Ong, Dominguez, Friedman, Schiller, Stolcke, Wu & Ying, 1996). However, there is general agreement that citizenship within sport can be conceptualized in two broad pathways: *passive* forms of citizenship and *active* forms of citizenship, which aligns with Westheimer and Kahne’s (2004) conceptualization of citizenship. Passive citizenship (or civil) encompasses the notions of civil obedience (Carr, 1991), individual freedoms, civil rights, participation in political activities (e.g., voting) and ability to access welfare and educational systems (Marshall, 1964; Tonkiss & Bloom, 2015). Active citizenship (or civic) highlights democratic engagement (ten Dam, Geijsel, Reumerman, & Ledoux, 2011) and proactive participation within the society and communities to which the individual belongs (Scheerens, 2011).

Interest in using sport as a vehicle for citizen development has been consistently expanding, following the rise and growth of the Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) sector (Giulianotti, 2011). SDP involves the use of sport to address various social problems that exist within a population like health promotion, education (Rosso & McGrath, 2017), youth crime, and social development. Numerous successful initiatives exist that utilize sport for mobilizing some form of social development, whether it be ‘good citizenry’ (Parker, Morgan, Farooq, Moreland, & Pitchford, 2019), social inclusion and acceptance (Morgan & Parker, 2017), reducing vulnerability in vulnerable youth (Haudenhuyse, Theeboom & Coalter, 2012) or positive youth development (Fraser-Thomas, Côté & Deakin, 2005). Developing citizenship qualities through sport can be observed and understood in various social settings, including educational settings like in physical education classes at school, community-based sport, and international sporting events such as the Olympics. Each setting provides important context to how sport is used to develop desired citizenship qualities in the participants.

The use of sport in educational settings to enhance citizenship qualities is well documented in the literature (e.g., Eley & Kirk, 2002; Garratt, 2010; Taylor, Piper & Garratt, 2014; Lawson, 1999) and in sport policy discourse (e.g., Kay & Bradbury, 2008). For example, organizations such as the YMCA, YWCA, the Boys and Girls Club, and Millennium Volunteers (MV) in England (Eley & Kirk, 2002), all use recreational programs to promote citizenship virtues and responsibility. Government programs like MV encourage development of moral virtues and values of citizenship within young citizens via volunteering at sporting events (Eley & Kirk, 2002). This example illustrates how the ‘citizen’ goes beyond legal status and definitions of citizenship but is also linked to morals and values that serve to define the ‘good citizen’ who can be developed through citizen participation in sport and sport-related initiatives. Often these studies approach sport as a remedy or

the solution to social issues i.e., sport-based interventions, such as community level sport interventions that target marginalised or at-risk youth to develop qualities associated with ‘good citizenship’ (Parker et al., 2019). However, rationales of social change through sport are conceived as *individual* attainment of skills, powers and attributes that are presumably transferable to other social spheres (Ekholm, 2016). In terms of sport-based intervention, problems are presented as risks that can be avoided by the individuals themselves, ultimately positioning subjects as being responsible for their own wellbeing and inclusion as opposed to the state. Critical scholars have argued that such interventions tend to focus on developing personal responsibility, a quality indicative of passive citizenship (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004), as opposed to active citizenship (Parker et al., 2019).

A study conducted by Parker et al. (2019) aimed to explore citizenship development in marginalised and at-risk youth who participated in a local/community-based soccer initiative that acted as an intervention on youth crime and anti-social behaviour for youth living in across three major UK cities. Here ‘marginalized’ is used to denote vulnerable, at-risk individuals who are excluded from mainstream society. The study found that the program enhanced the participants’ feelings of personal responsibility by “enhancing social competencies such as widening their friendship networks, enhancing their communication skills, and increasing their levels of confidence” (Parker et al., 2019, p. 304). The participants in Parker et al’s (2019) study experienced personal growth that was applicable outside of sport. Likewise, other similar studies like Bowtell’s (2006) and McCormack’s (2010) work highlight the effectiveness of initiatives such as Street-Games, a sports charity that delivers sport to young people in disadvantaged communities across the UK. The studies recognize community sports coaches as effective change-agents who could deter

youth from crime by preventing young people from falling into criminal activity via secondary and tertiary interventions akin to sport participation (Bowtell, 2006; McCormack, 2010).

While the aforementioned studies show support for sport-based initiatives fostering citizenship skills, research in the area of sport and citizenship development may not always critique notions like citizenship and its relationship to sport. For example, although Parker et al (2019) discussed the application of sport as a social control tool and development of both passive and active citizenship, the critique of constructing the ‘good citizen’ was more implied than explicitly expressed. Furthermore, utilizing sport-based interventions perpetuate the ‘sport is good for you’ or ‘sport for all’ rhetoric (Rosso & McGrath, 2017). The risk of this rhetoric is succumbing to a simplistic understanding of social and cultural issues, and the view that sport alone can be a solution for said challenges (Spaaij, 2013). Thus, it is necessary to keep in mind that sport does not always bear positive results or connotations for all communities (Spaaij, 2013; Spaaij, Magee, & Jeanes, 2014). While sport can be a vehicle of social change and personal/community development (Coalter, 2013; Jarvie, 2011), sport can also facilitate racism (Jarvie, 2011), social exclusion (Spaaij, Magee, & Jeanes, 2014) and negative effects on social capital (Tonts, 2005; Rosso, 2015) in marginalized populations.

Additionally, the connotations of citizenship are complex, inherently both inclusionary *and* exclusionary. However, when studies focus on the inclusionary power of sport, and by extension citizenship, it downplays the inherently exclusionary definition and practice of citizenship. The inclusionary aspect of citizenship represents a social understanding that a citizen is guaranteed the social benefits of citizenship, such as social inclusion, belonging, and acceptance into the nation. Whereas most of the literature pertaining to citizenship focuses on these inclusionary values of

citizenship, more critical discussions of citizenship tend to portray citizenship as more of an exclusionary category (Lister, 2003; Dominelli, 2010; Lewis, 2004; Williams, 1989).

In the same vein of understanding the role of sport in reifying the ‘good citizen’ narrative, one can further explore the ways in which sport shapes common citizenship narratives such as the Model Minority. Such narratives revolve around ideas of citizenship, namely ‘good’ citizenship and are tethered to notions of inclusion and belonging. In this way, discussion of sport in this manner allows for an avenue to understand social inclusion, exclusion and negotiations of citizenship.

2.2.3 SPORT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

As a result of migration and globalization, sport participation and its relation to feelings of social inclusion has become a point of interest among researchers, especially in the Global North, with a particular focus on immigrant populations and inclusion within the host nation or community (e.g., Spaaij, 2015; Mauro, 2016; Zwahlen, Nagel & Schlesinger, 2018). Social inclusion refers to the “proactive, human development approach to social well-being that calls for more than the removal of barriers or risks” (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002, p. 2). It is both a process and a goal of making sure that all individuals are able to participate as valuable, respected, contributing members of society. Social inclusion also ensures “validation and recognition of diversity as well as a recognition of the commonality of lived experiences and the shared aspirations among people” (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002, p. 3). Feelings of social inclusion and belonging are central to citizenship development, both active and passive, for if people do not feel that they are a part of the community or nation, they are less inclined to participate or be engaged with community or national affairs. At the same time, the literature above shows that when individuals do participate and are engaged within their own communities (volunteering, taking on leadership roles etc.), they feel

included within the nation and are more likely to feel like they are members of the nation i.e., a citizen.

The question then becomes if sport participation can facilitate social inclusion and belonging in relation to citizenship development. There seems to be two opposing positions in answering this question. On one hand, as discussed above in relation to citizenship development, some research shows that sport participation and sport-based interventions are effective within certain populations to combat particular aspects of social exclusion (Bowtell, 2006; McCormack, 2010; Parker et al., 2019). On the other hand, other research states that while sport can impact social inclusion on some level, sporting activities are not a homogenous, standardised product or experience; different people will experience sport differently, and a variety of factors such as gender, class and ethnicity will impact the nature and extent of any effects that are evident (Bailey, 2008). Donnelly and Coakley (2002) conclude that while there is evidence that sport programs have the potential to combat social exclusion, “far too often inclusion is assumed as a consequence of participation” (p. 14) with little to no evidence. To simply conclude that sport programs have the capacity to facilitate social inclusion is far too generalized and in need of further research. Sport programs can potentially facilitate social inclusion; however, specific criteria must be addressed and met such as defining and measuring social inclusion, ensuring that programs are led by appropriate and well-trained leaders, as well as addressing infra-structural, super-structural, and procedural barriers to involvement in physical activity and sport (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002).

This relationship between sport, citizenship and inclusion in a Canadian context is explored in a 2014 study conducted by the ICC entitled, *Playing Together -- New Citizens, Sport and Belonging*. The report examines how new Canadian citizens participate in sports in Canada and the role that sport plays in their integration and belonging in Canada. The study found that barriers --

largely structural -- prevent new citizens from participating in sport. The researchers discussed these barriers with various sport organizations and found that although aware of these barriers, there was no systematic, successful, and sustainable plan of action in place.

One of the stated barriers to sport is integration of new citizens into mainstream sport clubs, as many newcomers tend to play sport with others from their country of origin. This implies that playing mainstream sports is considered the epitome of inclusion in Canadian society, particularly hockey. During the focus groups, for example, participants listed hockey as the sport that represents Canada and is synonymous with Canadian sporting culture (ICC, 2014). One participant said that hockey is in the citizenship booklet and on Canadian money, indicating to him that to not play hockey, means to not be Canadian (ICC, 2014). Other participants shared that having hockey knowledge made them feel more connected to their peers at work and made them feel that they belong. These results are indicative of two ideas: a) sport, in this case hockey, can act as a unifying force that allows new Canadian citizens to feel a part of the community (and nation); and b) sport, specifically hockey, can act as an exclusionary force, defining who is and who is not considered Canadian vis-a-vis participation or lack thereof. This example illustrates how sport can act as a vehicle for perpetuating the same inclusionary/exclusionary practice that is seen in the conceptualization of citizenship itself.

Discussion of these parallels between sport and citizenship is absent from the ICC report, as the focus was more on the inclusionary force of sport participation and understanding the barriers to sport participation. However, understanding the lived experiences of sport and its relation to citizenship for Canadian citizens uncovers the process of identity negotiation that many Canadians experience when it comes to sport participation. Work by Szto (2020) further explores the relationship between hockey as the flagbearer of Canadian-ness and the lived experiences of

minority Canadians participating in hockey, specifically South Asian Canadians. Hockey in Canada exposes the deeply rooted racism that Canadian minorities experience on a daily basis despite the narratives of multiculturalism and inclusion in Canada. There is a small pool of literature that critically examines hockey (Szto, 2020), largely because the myth of Canada as a multicultural nation does not leave space for discussing issues of race and questioning the tensions between hockey and Canada as a multicultural nation. Furthermore, studies by Szto (2020) and Thangaraj (2012; 2015; 2016) highlight the connections between citizenship, identity, and sport by exploring how sport is a site for negotiating identity and processes of citizenship building within the nation. One narrative that shapes this process of negotiation, particularly for immigrants in Canada is that of the ‘model minority.’

2.2.4 THE MODEL MINORITY

The model minority, as defined by Rita Dhamoon, is one who is “non-practicing, educated, English-speaking (with a particular accent), wealthy,” non-white citizen who can “replicate the ideal white male worker” (2009, p. 136). This ideal immigrant serves as the baseline of comparison to other immigrants, thus creating the ‘good immigrant’ and the ‘bad immigrant’ categories and narratives. The ‘good immigrant’ actively contributes to the economy and replicates existing norms, while the ‘bad immigrant’ is selfish, backwards, and a financial drain that represents the opposite of a good citizen (Dhamoon, 2009). Thus, the model minority must be understood in relation to these binaries and in terms of how it functions to reinforce particular racial hierarchies not just between the ‘good’ and ‘bad’ immigrant but also among Indigenous and racialized Others.

The designation of model minority was first used to refer to the successful integration of Asian immigrants into the US, a label that continues still. Palumbo-Liu (1994) explains that the term originated in a *New York Times Magazine* article in 1966 on the integration of Asian American

immigrants, where their success was juxtaposed with the ‘failure’ of Blacks in the US. Scholars have expanded the term model minority to include and describe other immigrant minorities. The minority is then categorized into two types: the one who can be assimilated and those who cannot (Ahmed, 2000). Model minorities have superficial differences, some of which, like food and clothing, can be coded as multicultural and celebrated at festivals. However, the trade-off to this acceptance is that the immigrant accepts the hegemonic structural conditions of the nation (i.e., whiteness, patriarchy, heteronormativity, and capitalism), in order to gain access to the nation. Thus, the label of model minority is not a compliment; rather, it is a racialized and exclusionary tool used to enforce hegemonic national ideals as well as police Others into categories of ‘good immigrant’ and ‘bad immigrant’. Further, the status of the model minority is still not static. As seen by the example of Ben Johnson, Abdel-Shehid (2005) warns that the model minority will always live with the threat of losing this privilege, shifting from the ‘good immigrant’ to the ‘bad immigrant’ and subsequently be expelled out of the nation’s limits. This threat is made tangible by feelings of anonymity and exclusion. For Ben Johnson that came in the form of the media gradually removing Johnson from the nation, ultimately typifying him as Jamaican and not Canadian at all.

Despite the origins of the term being over 50 years ago, only recently did the literature start to reflect the experiences of Asian-Americans and -Canadians in sport (Nakamura, 2004; Nakamura, 2009; Thangaraj, 2012; Thangaraj, 2015; Thangaraj et al., 2016; Szto, 2020; Mayeda, 1999; Kalman-Lamb, 2013). Asians in the Americas have been constructed as model minorities who are intelligent, hardworking, and wealthy while also remaining docile, obedient and self-reliant. While this stereotype applies to both men and women, men specifically are stereotyped as non-masculine and effeminate because of their intelligence (Lee, 2016). Their intelligence is negatively associated with the stereotype of ‘geeky’ and ‘nerdy.’ This stereotype has implications

for Asian American and Canadian men's experiences in sport where racism and bias in sport strips them of their masculinity and leaves Asian American and Canadian men being constructed as having feminine characteristics in contrast to rough masculine characteristics (Lee, 2016). Thus, when Asian American men participate in sports that highlight dominant notions of masculinity, they are faced with conflicting identities (Lee, 2016). Additionally, according to the narratives of the participants, sport provided these Asian American men the ability to 'de-Asianize' themselves (Lee, 2016). One participant stated that being a soccer player allowed him to separate his image from the other Asians at school. Additionally, "de-Asianizing" allowed them to claim the idealized, dominant White masculinity that associated with the 'ideal citizen'. Not only is sport viewed as a masculinizing tool, but also a 'de-racing' tool, illustrating how sport reproduces the hegemonic ideals of masculinity and race that undergird the ways in which who belongs – i.e., the citizen – are defined.

The concept of the 'model minority' and the 'good immigrant' exist within the same hemisphere of racialization processes, making them closely related when examining the lived experiences of racialized subjects. Post 9/11, the widespread acceptance of the 'Muslim terrorist' stereotype has altered the understanding of Islam in the West. The trope of the 'Muslim terrorist' has in effect displaced Islam as faith and racialized Islam and Muslims, both immigrants and their children born in the West (Gotanda, 2011). Gotanda (2011) argues that the racialization of Islam and Muslims should be seen within the established tradition of the racialization of Asian Americans. Gotanda (2011) describes the racialization of Islam through the racialization of Muslims by utilizing three dimensions of racialization: the raced body, racial category and ascribed subordination. First, the Muslim body becomes a raced body, a descriptive term of a racial body type like Black, White and Yellow. Second, the term 'Muslim' no longer speaks to just one's faith, but instead acts as a

racial category which is a socially recognized ‘race’ or grouping treated as a race (Gotanda, 2011). In America, a similar process transformed the national categories of Japanese, Korean and Indian into racial categories of ancestry and later included the category of Asian American to include multiple national origins and ethnicities (Espiritu, 1992). The Muslim racial category is also ancestry-linked but not through national homeland, instead it is linked through the *religion* of the ancestral homeland. This means that the Muslim racial category includes those who have immigrant roots to predominantly Islamic countries which includes a large geographical area comprising of the Middle East, Central, Southeast, and South Asia, and North Africa. Third, for Muslims, the active process of hierarchy and subordination or ascribed subordination occurs via the stereotype of the ‘Muslim terrorist’ because regardless of their subjective wishes, the ‘Muslim terrorist’ is imposed upon the group. A similar process occurs in Asian American racialization which includes imposed subordination in the form of two tropes: permanent foreignness and the model minority (Wu, 2002).

Sport, its aforementioned connection to citizenship-building and its role as a site for citizenship skill learning, then serves as a mediator between immigrants and their ‘goodness’ as citizens. For example, the ‘good immigrant’ complex is seen in Lakhani’s (2008) exploration of the way in which Asmahan Mansour, a young, female Muslim Canadian athlete, was transformed into the Canadian symbol of the ‘good immigrant.’ Through analysis of Canadian press, Lakhani (2008) argues that the press constructed Mansour into a ‘good immigrant’ by shaping the case into a nationalist narrative that highlights Canada’s undying efforts to maintain ‘multiculturalism’ and ‘tolerance.’ The key to Lakhani’s (2008) analysis was how English-language newspapers represented Mansour in a manner that credited her agency. This is significant because one of the disadvantages of the model minority status is the loss of agency, whereby the individual is expected to fall in line with the status quo. Specifically, it renders individuals as politically docile in order to

maintain their status as the model minority (Shams, 2020). In the case of Mansour, the press framed her as a vibrant, young athlete who is not oppressed by Islam but is instead a young woman who has chosen to wear *hijab* and play sport. Importantly, although Mansour was racialized for her *hijab*, her middle-class family was very outspoken about their allegiance and pride as Canadians. They never critiqued the racialized system that constructs them in narrow ways, offering them only the option of taking up the mantle of model minority to claim belonging in the nation. In this way, Mansour maintains her status as the model minority and the ‘good immigrant’. Her *hijab* becomes a celebrated superficial difference that plays into the multiculturalism and diversity story that Canada writes.

Scholars have explored the representation of the ‘good immigrant’ and ‘model minority’ in Canadian media, from cases of high performing athletes like Ben Johnson (Abdel-Shehid, 2005) to athletes like Asmahan Mansour (Lakhani, 2008). However, a deeper understanding of how athletes *themselves* negotiate their feelings of citizenship and status as a model minority through sport is missing. This is important to further contextualize how sport and citizenship are inherently intertwined, continuously (re)defining who the good citizen is and how racialized individuals are included within and excluded from the nation. While Lee (2016) argues that participants in her study used sport as a mechanism to stand out from other Asians or to reclaim hegemonic masculinity that is lost via the model minority stereotype, some questions remain unanswered. For example, in the same the vein of reclaiming masculinity, what role does sport play in exercising one’s agency in relation to the model minority narrative? Within the Canadian context, playing certain sports such as hockey is seen as the epitome of being ‘Canadian.’ Thus, if sport participation is seen as a part of the status quo, how do racialized Others negotiate pressures to be ‘Canadian’ and/or the ‘good immigrant,’ and what is the role of sport in these processes? More specifically,

what are the lived experiences of racialized Muslims - who are regularly expelled both discursively and literally from the nation - in sport and how do they construct their identities in the Canadian context, in relation to ideas of citizenship?

This study intends to further inform the literature on sport participation and the role of citizenship identity development in minority Canadian citizens. The research in this area is oftentimes focused on American, European and Australian participants, thus negating the unique Canadian experience of sport shaped by the overarching myth of multiculturalism that result in a constant identity negotiation within minority populations. The literature on Muslims in sport is extensive in scope as exemplified above and by scholars like Walseth (2016). Larger tropes of citizenship, nationhood and identity can be studied through the lens of sport to better understand the experiences of racialized Canadians. To address the gap in our understanding of sporting experiences in community-based sport, this study undertakes a deeper analysis of these larger tropes, specifically within the context of faith-based community sport organizations.

2.3 NEGOTIATING MULTIPLE IDENTITIES

Closely related to the model minority is the discussion of identity and identity formation in individuals living in diaspora. Given that this study specifically recruited participants born in Canada who identify as Muslim and as a Canadian, the process of negotiation and construction of self-narrative is one of the main topics of concern. As stated in the sections above, contextual factors are important when discussing experiences and narratives of Muslim people, since Muslimness is a heterogenous category that cannot be assumed. In the wake of Islamophobia in the West, many Muslims living in the West find that their multiple cultures and identities are in conflict, struggling to find the balance point between their identities (Sirin & Fine, 2007). Many of

the previous studies exploring identity in Muslims living in the West, discuss the construction of a coherent self-narrative as a 'bicultural experience' (West, Zhang, Yampolsky, & Sasaki, 2017). Especially with the rise of globalization, people who are a part of two cultures, or bicultural people, have steadily increased in population in Western countries. Bicultural people can be immigrants, citizens living in multicultural societies, or the children of people from different cultural backgrounds (mixed-race or mixed-cultured) but the defining feature is the personally significant and lengthy exposure to two cultures (West et al., 2017; Yampolsky, Amiot, & de la Sablonnière, 2013). As such, previous studies have sought out to better understand the nuances in the identification process by employing derivatives of identity and acculturation theories to the identity narratives of bicultural individuals, namely Muslim Westerners (e.g., Younis & Hassan, 2018; Ozyurt, 2013; Sirin & Fine, 2007; Zaal, Salah & Fine, 2007).

Some past research conducted exploring identity in bicultural people in the West employ models of biculturalism in hopes of better understanding the unique experiences of negotiating two cultures and the impact that has on ones thinking and behaviour. For example, Heine, Lehman, Markus, and Kitayama (1999) examined the universality and cross-cultural generalizability of self-regard, or the need and motivation to possess, enhance and maintain positive self-views, by comparing self-regard in Japanese culture versus in North American culture. They concluded that self-regard as a social construction varied dramatically between the two cultures, since the construction of the *self* and *regard* themselves differs across cultures, thus the need for self-regard cannot be universal and instead is highly contextual. By this logic, the authors find that bicultural individuals, in this case Japanese Canadians', approach to self-regard is constructed additively, depending on their averaged amount of exposure and investment to either culture (Heine et al., 1999). Japanese monocultural people reported lower self-regard levels in comparison to Euro

Canadian monocultural people who reported high self-regard levels. Bicultural Japanese Canadians reported self-regard levels moderately in between Japanese monocultural people and Euro Canadian monocultural people. In this way, the authors argue that bicultural people are influenced by both cultures resulting in a moderate self-regard (Heine et al., 1999). While bicultural experience can be understood based on the exposure to both cultures, this theory often falls short in understanding the complexities and nuances of managing cultures. More recent hypothesis suggests the ways in which bicultural individuals negotiate their cultures goes beyond the additive explanation that bicultural theory offers; the bicultural experience is not “simply the sum of their cultures influences” (West et al., 2017, p. 963). More recent studies conducted on Muslim youth in the West, such as Younis and Hassan (2018) share similar thoughts on bicultural theory and its ability to fully conceptualize the bicultural experience stating that “in light of the complex nature of social identity, group membership and political categorization” discussing the identities of Muslims in Western context goes beyond the simplicity of additive theory in biculturalism.

As such, biculturalism research has begun filling the gaps in our understanding of bicultural identity left by bicultural models by expanding upon previous frameworks to capture the bicultural experience of adapting to situationally salient cultural contexts (West et al., 2017). The expanded point of view, or the “transformative theory of biculturalism” (West et al., 2017, p. 967), posits that bicultural peoples’ characteristics and experiences result from the direct exposure and influence of two cultures but also from the *processes* that are used to negotiate the two cultures. This is the key difference between the initial additive conclusion of bicultural models; having two cultures in one person is not enough to be bicultural, it is the process of negotiating between the two cultures that epitomizes the bicultural experience. This becomes more evident in Yampolsky et al (2013) study where twenty-two multicultural Canadians of second and higher generation descendants of

immigrants were recruited and interviewed to better understand the identity configurations and the life experiences of multicultural individuals. Note the researchers specifically use the term ‘multicultural’ as opposed to ‘bicultural’ given that some participants identified as Canadian plus two to three other identities. However, the overall result of the study speaks to the insufficiency of previous bicultural models, indicating the degree of complexities uncovered through participants narratives indicating various processes involved in identity configuration for individuals who possess multiple cultures (Yampolsky et al., 2013). Participants spoke about their own identity experience as multicultural individuals which then was categorized into three configurations as postulated by Amiot, de la Sablonnière, Terry, and Smith (2007): categorization, compartmentalization and integration. Participants who referred to their experience as excluding one identity and favouring the other were characterized as categorizing. For example, one participant, a Chinese Canadian, described themselves as predominantly Canadian since they did not like their Asian culture. Another participant, half Italian and half Chinese-Guyanese Canadian felt that they were more Canadian as opposed to Chinese, Italian or Guyanese because those cultures and ethnicities belonged to their parents and not them. Participants who referred to their identities as equally part of their self-concept but separate from each other were characterized as compartmentalizing. For example, one participant, half Italian and half Irish-British Canadian, described her experience as being able to “bounce between two cultures, three cultures” and feeling like they were “always one or the other ... never both at the same time” (Yampolsky et al., 2013, p. 8). Finally, participants who described their experience as seeing similarities between their identities were characterized as integrating their identities. For example, one participant, who was half Lebanese and half French born in America but moved to Montreal at a very young age, described his experience like a “swiss army knife” (Yampolsky et al., 2013, p. 8) speaking to his ability to

have adapted to his cultural contexts while simultaneously retaining interconnected and present identities. The participant continues to describe his experience as having “multiple tools” (Yampolsky et al., 2013, p. 8) that can be utilized when speaking with Lebanese people or French people. In this way this participants’ multiple identities as seen as useful and beneficial when making conversation with others. These narratives seen in this study exemplifies the nuance that was previously disregarded utilizing previous bicultural models that focused on the additive conclusion rather than on the processes of identity negotiation.

As such, research exploring the processes of identity negotiation in Muslim youth (second-generation and higher) in the West employ expanded models of bicultural theories and frameworks to obtain a richer understanding of cultural influences on the bicultural experience. Younis and Hassan (2018) explored the identity narratives of second-generation Muslim youth to consider the relevance of bicultural theories and frameworks to this group. The study recruited twenty Muslim youth of diverse ethnicities and backgrounds from Montreal, Berlin and Copenhagen to participate in semi-structured interviews pertaining how they negotiated their identities in light of their personal life trajectories. The study focused on two major themes unique to second-generation social identity development: the importance of personal experiences in the development of identities; and the process of enmeshment of multiple social identities (Younis & Hassan, 2018). The study revealed a complex nature of developing social identity, which refers to group membership and the characteristics that we share with others that fosters a sense of commonality and shared identity, such as language, religion, citizenship, and ethnicity (Younis & Hassan, 2018; Jenkins, 2004). The results revealed the significance of personal experiences to the development of social identity especially regarding the development of their identities in specific socio-political environments. For example, one participant who is half Iraqi and half Indian, born and raised in

Denmark, described his identity development (as a Muslim) as predominantly confusing since they were surrounded by various iterations of Muslim identity given he lived in a largely immigrant neighbourhood and came from a bicultural family. He also ascribed his confusion to the way Danes treated him as a Muslim and used the example of the 2005 Danish cartoon crisis in which the Prophet Mohammed was caricatured in the newspaper, to describe his social identity development. His personal account significantly impacted the way he viewed himself as a Muslim and the way he came to understand Islam. Thus, personal experience becomes a key factor in understanding bicultural (or multicultural) identity development. A second theme that emerged from this study is the development of enmeshed identities. Many participants described their social identities as mutually constituted to one another (Younis & Hassan, 2018). Such a depiction questions the boundaries of social identities and challenges the additive conclusions made by bicultural theories and models. Indeed, participants often describes their identities as interdependent on one another, raising inherent contradictions when attempting to describe their identities separate of each other. This shows that social identities are not and cannot be developed exclusive from each other and are influenced by factors stemming from personal experience.

Other research conducted on the same population, second-generation Muslims in the West, report similar findings. Ozyurt (2013) focused on the ways in which Muslim women who are embedded in both Islamic and Western cultures and lifestyles negotiated their modern and traditional identities to construct a coherent self-narrative that exemplified their bicultural experience as “Western-Muslim” (p. 239). This study interviewed Muslim women in America and in the Netherlands to evaluate the ways they constructed their self-narrative in different cultural and political spaces. Ozyurt (2013) concludes that Muslim women in America and the Netherlands “have distinct perceptions of what it means to be Muslim in a non-Muslim society” (p. 260).

Muslim women in America perceived the cultural and political conditions in America as allowing for the development of a hybrid identity, meaning an identity that has successfully synthesized their religious and civic allegiances to construct a unique Muslim-American self (Ozyurt, 2013). This perception was due to the positive attitude Muslim women in America held towards the compatibility of American civic culture and the religious and cultural prescriptions of Islam and supports Yampolsky's (2013) results of integrating identity. The Muslim American participants did not foresee any conflict thus were able to construct a hybrid identity. However, Muslim women in the Netherlands perceived themselves as "cultural mediators and move between two cultures, two identities, and two world views" to grasp a better understanding and commitment to both (Ozyurt, 2013, p. 261). These results support the understanding that bicultural models are insufficient for understanding the nuances of bicultural (and multicultural) experiences, that the process of negotiation is imperative to uncovering the meanings constructed about the self and about the world.

This study aims to explore identity development and construction in second-generation Muslims born and raised in Canada as well as the ways in which they begin to understand themselves as belonging to the nation as citizens. Previous research sets the standard for how certain populations' narratives should be examined, by suggesting expanded theories, methods, and frameworks to uncover rich depictions of their experiences. Following in the footsteps of the research conducted in this field, the following section discusses the theory and methodology that informed this study.

CHAPTER 3 THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the theoretical framework and theories that inform this study. By utilizing both postcolonial and social constructionist lenses, the conceptualization of identity and the notions of belonging are examined and analysed. The second half of this chapter discusses the methodology used in this study, how it is informed by theory, and its relevance to this study. Additionally, the data collection and analysis process as well as the considerations for rigour and ethics are discussed in this chapter.

3.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Postcolonialism is understood as the effects of colonization on cultures and societies after the Second World War (Gandhi, 2019). The ‘post-colonial state’ denotes the chronological beginning of the post-independence period. Since then, scholars have been advancing postcolonial theory through understanding the impacts of imperialism and the aftermath of decolonization via literary and theoretical investigations. Postcolonial theory and studies focus on the perspectives and encounters of individuals living under the shadow of empire, specifically in nations that were subjected to the social orders of colonial power. In such a context, the question of identity and recognition as members of particular group(s) becomes a primary dilemma for the members of the nation (Dizayi, 2019), as post-colonial members continue to experience the repercussions of imperialism and colonialism in terms of how they shape relationships with the nation, its people and one another. The most significant and contentious issue of postcolonial theory and studies, therefore, is that of identity (Dizayi, 2019), as individuals negotiate their identities in the face of colonial histories. In exploring the process of identity formation because of colonialism and

imperialism, the sense of belonging to a place as ‘home’ becomes a closely related contextual question. In understanding the formation and construction of identity and belonging, adopting a social constructionist approach aids in the understanding of how identities and a sense of belonging to a place is constructed and performed by groups and individuals.

Social constructionism refers to the sociological theory of knowledge that examines the development of jointly constructed meanings that form the basis for shared assumptions about reality (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2009). Characteristics and categories that are thought to be immutable such as race, gender, class and sexuality are instead understood as social perceptions and assumed meanings that are changed, attached and reproduced through historical processes within institutions and culture. The origins of social constructionism in Western philosophy and sociology can be traced back to Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman and their book, *The Social Construction of Reality*, which was published in 1966. Berger and Luckman propose that meanings are co-constructed by individuals within the specific sociocultural contexts that surround them. Utilizing the foundational assumptions of post-colonial theory and social constructivism in tandem with the conceptual frameworks of identity and belonging, the ways in which participants understand their identity and sense of belonging to the nation through their experiences in sport can be better understood and contextualized.

3.2.1 IDENTITY

Despite its definition and usage in social science, political science and psychology, identity as a concept remains an enigma. The present idea of ‘identity’ is still a recent, complicated social construct. Identity as we know it derives mainly from the work of Erik Erikson in the 1950s’, where it is referred to in one of two ways, “(a) a social category defined by membership rules and (alleged) characteristic attributes or expected behaviours, or (b) socially distinguishing features that a person

takes a special pride in or views as unchangeable but socially consequential (or (a) and (b) at once)” (Fearon, 1999, p 1). In essence, the notion of identity involves two criteria of comparison between things or persons: similarity and difference (Jenkins, 2004). This comparison is used to: a) classify things or persons; and b) to associate or attach oneself to something or someone else, like a friend, a sports team or an ideology (Jenkins, 2008). Identity denotes the ways in which individuals and collectives distinguish themselves from other individuals and collectives. Jenkins (2004) argues that all identities are social identities whereby identifying ourselves or others is a matter of negotiation through interaction to establish meaning, and meaning always involves interaction like agreement and disagreement, negotiation and communication, and convention and innovation. Humans establish meanings associated with their identity through interactions of similarity and difference, establishing a hierarchy of signification between individuals, between collective entities, and between individuals and collective entities. In other words, identity is not something that one possesses or *has*; on the contrary, identity is something that one actively *does* (Jenkins, 2008). Thus, identity must be understood as a process of ‘being’ and ‘becoming’. One’s identity is never final; rather, it is an ongoing process and is both singular and plural, meaning that identity is a network of multiple *identities*, constantly intersecting and overlapping, that shape how we understand ourselves and how others view us. Approaching identity in this manner shifts our attention to the process of how identity ‘works,’ to the process of ongoing reflexivity to understand ourselves and others, and to the institutional and interactional social construction of identity (Jenkins, 2004).

Returning to the notion of identity, similarity and difference are the dynamic principles of identification (Jenkins, 2008). Of course, this notion is not new and has been mentioned by several scholars. For example, in 1844 in a letter to Feuerbach, Marx (as cited by Wheen, 1999) wrote that the concept of unity in a society is “based on real differences between men” (Wheen, 1999, p. 55).

Years later, Simmel (1950) argued that significant meaning is established between individuals through the negotiation of similarities and differences between them. In fact, he argues that the cultural history of mankind can be deduced to the struggles and conciliatory attempts between the two (Simmel, 1950). However, in theorizing identity, the discourse of difference dominates the understanding of how identity and identification ‘works.’ The discourse of difference or the “difference paradigm” (Jenkins, 2008, p. 19) refers to the emphasis of difference in the identification process. Some notable theorists of difference include Seyla Benhabib (1996), Judith Butler (1990), Paul Gilroy (2005), Stuart Hall (2011), Luce Irigaray (1993), Steven Seidman (1997) and Charles Taylor (1994). The core proposition shared by theorists of the difference paradigm is that the matter of knowing ‘who is who’ is primarily a matter of establishing and marking differences between people (Jenkins, 2008). Stuart Hall (2011) summarizes this emphasis on difference clearly:

[identities] are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion, than they are the sign of an identical, naturally constituted unity . . . Above all, and directly contrary to the form in which they are constantly invoked, identities are constructed through, not outside, difference . . . identities can function as points of identification and attachment only because of their capacity to exclude. (p. 4-5)

Therefore, the definition of ‘us’ is ultimately hinged on the fact of not being ‘them’. Benhabib (1996) reiterates this by stating that every search for identity results in the differentiation of oneself from what one is not. Thus, it is mainly through difference that identity is constructed. Utilizing this foundational understanding of the construction of identity, we can understand how individuals come to acquire their strong sense of national and cultural identity. It is through

contrasting themselves with other cultures that they come to know who they are. Moreover, they are simultaneously constructing who and what they believe to be the Other: someone who is different and opposite from what they are. This foundational understanding is further contextualized by postcolonial theory, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the construction of the Other throughout history.

Postcolonial theory has emerged as an important mode of critical inquiry into the cultural, political, economic, and literary impact of European imperial expansion and European Enlightenment (Carey & Festa, 2009). Enlightenment, as seen by postcolonial critics, is both an 18th century phenomenon and a concept that shaped modern political formations (Carey & Festa, 2009). Postcolonial thought links Enlightenment to the modern construction of social concepts such as citizenship, the state, human rights, the individual, the idea of the subject, and democracy (to name a few), as bearing the burden of European thought and history (Chakrabarty, 2009). Dipesh Chakrabarty's influential book, *Provincializing Europe* (2009), exemplifies the Postcolonial attribution of European thought, by arguing that historicism as a mode of thinking represents modernity, capitalism, and civilization through a 'first in Europe and then elsewhere' temporal frame. In this way, European thought and history, i.e., Enlightenment, set the standards by which non-European nations, peoples, cultures and histories were defined. As a result of Enlightenment, standards or criteria of modernity were set, one that reflected 'civilization' and in, categorized and classified other societies as 'civilized,' 'semi-civilized,' or 'barbarian' (Mondal, 2014). Through this evaluation, a particular knowledge is produced, for example 'West' = 'urban' = 'developed' = 'good' = 'desirable,' thereby rendering 'non-West' = 'rural' = 'underdeveloped' = 'bad' = 'undesirable.' The definition of 'non-West' hinges on the fact that it is everything that the West is not. With European colonial expansion and nation building, Europe comes to be represented as the

West through the emphasis of difference from the Other. As Europeans encountered other societies and cultures, they evaluated themselves in comparison to Others in relation to the fixed standard derived from Enlightenment that served as criteria to measure the West's achievement.

Within the context of these relationships with difference, the idea of 'the West' took on shape and meaning (Hall & Gieben, 1992, p. 278). European colonial enterprises, whether English, Dutch, French or Spanish, generated similar stereotypes of outsiders, as lazy, aggressive, violent, greedy, irrational people. Whether they were Turks, Africans, Native Americans, Indians, or Irish, European colonizers categorized these people as the Other (Loomba, 1998). As such, knowledge produced by the West about the Other was riddled with colonial stereotyping effectively erasing the agency, diversity, resistance, and voices of those who were colonized. Post-colonial literature aims to critically scrutinize the colonial relationship to resist the colonial perspective by undercutting the discourses that supported colonization and give expression to the colonized experience of division and exclusion under empire (Mondal, 2014). Fanon, Said and Bhabha are important figures in post-colonial literature, critically examining the operations of colonial discourses and the construction of identity under colonial empire.

Fanon's take on identity is based on the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. Fanon (1963) illustrates how the impact of imperialism on identity production remains long after liberation and that liberation alone is not enough to free the colonized from the legacy of colonization, and to recapture their sense of identity. In Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1963), the experience of immigration is metaphorized as 'white masks' that are donned to cope with(in) the West, to appear to the colonizer in a way that is dissociated from the 'primitive' attributes imposed upon and associated with colonized peoples. Fanon as a Black man born in the French Antilles and educated in France and Martinique, writes of his experience of racism and the consequences for the

colonized subject who has internalized the self as the 'Other.' He describes his feelings of being subjected to the White gaze as a peculiar object of derision and of aberration. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon describes feeling "dislocated" and objectified when white strangers would point out his blackness in derogatory ways (Fanon, 1963, p.112-13). The power of colonizer's objectification, which Fanon experiences, was an act of violence that forced the colonized subject to internalize this categorization as not a human subject with wants and needs, but as an Othered object with a pre-determined identity, definition, and representation.

One way to respond to the trauma of this internalized identity is to strive to escape it by taking up the dominant identity, the 'civilized' ideals of, in the case of Fanon, the French 'motherland.' Fanon refers to this as the crisis of identity and argues that "a black man thinks himself to become whiter by utilizing the dialect of the white man, by taking upon himself the world of the other" (Fanon, 1963, p. 115). This practice of imitation is the aftereffect of the colonial impact on identity and awareness, whereby the colonizer leaves the colonized exposed to the process of value assessment applied onto the colonized: if one does not impersonate the colonizer, they are deemed valueless. This is central to Fanon's discussion: the colonizers, or the white man, devalue the colonized, or the black man, by enforcing their discourse of the Other during colonization with one end goal in mind – to show how they are unequal to the colonizers (Dizayi, 2019). It is only through the maintenance of difference that colonial efforts are justified. Thus, the colonized identity is left in peril, culturally, financially, and psychologically manipulated to view themselves as valueless and below the white man.

Fanon depicts the power of description and language as a tool through which colonizers control and manipulate the binary of the colonizer versus colonized, resulting in a deep, fragmented sense of identity within the colonized. Said builds off this in *Orientalism* (1978) where he develops

his critique of how the world has been organized into two binaries: the Orient and the Occident, East and West. While Fanon takes a more psychoanalytic approach, Said is interested in political discourse. Said's point of view on identity develops from the binary of the East and West. Through Foucauldian thought on power and knowledge, Said clarifies his theory of Western colonialism and its rationale of power (Diyazi, 2019). By connecting it to the works of Western writers about the Orient, Said uncovers that the way people are talked about reflects a particular 'truth,' thereby representation itself becomes a mode of power. Said's thought on identity is developed through the binary relation of the West and East, that the truth is characterized by those who control the power (i.e., the colonizer) which he calls 'Eurocentric' truth. Since they have power, they authorize themselves to categorize knowledge. Along the lines of this 'truth,' the conceptualization of identity, meaning the identity of those subjected to this mode of power, is also controlled by the West and deemed unrivaled (Said, 1978). The fundamental point in Said's work is that colonized individuals are bound to the rationale of the colonizer, such that identity is envisioned and understood within the boundaries and constraints of Occidental (Western) knowledge (Diyazi, 2019). This leaves colonized individuals unable to recognize and understand themselves outside this binary Orientalist view, further supporting Fanon's depiction of imposed pre-defined identity of colonized subjects founded in colonized, or Western, knowledge.

Thus, both Fanon and Said perceive identity to be shaped by colonial influence. Post-colonial identity presented by Fanon is depicted through the understanding that colonizers subjugated and embedded inferiority within colonial subjects, leaving the colonized mimicking the colonizer to frame their identity and feel equivalent as a way to escape the trauma of enforced identity. Said understood this, as he builds on Fanon's work on the impact of colonial powers on shaping the identity of the colonized and divides the world into two binaries: West and East.

However, for Said, this imposed identity is neither genuine nor set; rather, true identity is ideally shaped by resistance to the colonial framework, the dismissal of the forced narrative, and the work to return to the roots of Eastern character (Dizayi, 2019). Here, Said moves away from the binary existence between colonizer and colonized, and instead discusses the in-between space or the interstitial space which “locates his understanding of cultural diversity that empowers the marginalised and exiled to compromise a position between past and present and ironically accepts and denies the other” (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 1999, p. 6). Identity is neither fixed nor flexible, rather, it lies somewhere in between (Said, 1978). It is within this interstitial space where Said imagines the real nature of colonial identity as a resistance to the imposed identity of the colonizer and return to Eastern character. Ultimately, both Fanon and Said perceive identity as impacted by colonial powers and an identity crisis occurs as a result of such Western powers implanting inferiority within their awareness.

Embedded within Fanon and Said’s conceptualization of identity is the constructivist assumption that identity is shaped and moulded via interactions, communication, and reflections with the societal context. Fanon and Said speak to the construction of the ‘truth,’ the image of the Other and construction of human value that becomes internalized as personal identity, explicitly focusing on the role of power in the construction of identity and the ‘truth’. The social constructionist perspective conceives that “personal identity is established within the perception of self as derived from thoughtful reflection on communicative interactions between oneself and others from the societal environment” (Jackson & Hogg, 2010, p. 140). Personal identity is uniquely socialized through the evolving process of ongoing, dynamic social interaction via experiencing the attitudes, values, and beliefs of the social context (known as the generalized other), communication with others, and the negotiation between the *I* and *me* (Jackson & Hogg, 2010). When interacting

within a societal context, one encounters the norms of the generalized other, which allows one to reflect on those norms and decide whether to align themselves with said norms or not. This process is repeated with every interaction in different social contexts, taking on elements as a part of their personal identity from a multiplicity of perspectives. With every encounter, individuals reflect upon themselves as a person and how others in the social community view them (Jackson & Hogg, 2010).

Social construction does not mean that an individual does not have choice or autonomy in the process of their developing identity; a choice is to be made whether to accept or reject changes to one's identity (Jackson & Hogg, 2010). Personal identity then consists of both a *me* and *I*. The *me* is the part of an individual that accepts the ideas of the generalized other and chooses to conform to the norms and patterns of the social context. The *I* is the person's individuality and distinctiveness with their own reflection and creativity that does not accept the generalized other but instead reflects upon what makes them unique compared to others. Together, the *me* and *I* play off each other to form a unique personal identity (Jackson & Hogg, 2010). Over time, through the process of interacting and communicating with others from various contexts, individuals make reflective assessments of their own identity. All their experiences, beliefs, and values that have accumulated are challenged as they interact and communicate with others, triggering the reflection of one's accumulated personal identity with these novel interactions where then a choice is made to accept or reject changes. This is how personal identity evolves through interaction and communication (Jackson & Hogg, 2010).

The crisis of identity, as described by Fanon, directly reflects this process of personal identity formation. Individuals terrorized by colonial and imperial power, reflect on their own identity through the generalized Other, becoming aware that by taking on the norms, beliefs, values and patterns of the dominant culture one becomes valuable. The very categories of difference that

maintain Othered identity, such as the ‘West’ and the ‘East’, are socially constructed via power dynamics upheld by the dominant groups in a societal context as described by Said. Thus, the discussion of identity through the postcolonial lens aligns with the assumptions of social constructionism.

Furthermore, Fanon’s psychological dimension of identity and Said’s discussion of identity as resistance, both frame identity as an emotion, a feeling of association and belonging. In fact, it is generally agreed that feelings of belonging to a place and processes of self-identification are mutually implicated (Antonsich, 2009). Questions of ‘Who am I?’ and ‘Where do I belong?’ cannot be isolated from each other; they are overlapping and intersecting, working in tandem to shape the ways in which individuals uniquely understand and experience their belongingness. Similar to identity formation processes, a social constructionist approach acts as the foundation to better understand the sense of belonging developed specifically by Muslim, Canadian-born participants in this study.

3.2.2 BELONGING

Belonging as a concept has rarely been given distinction on its own and is usually taken for granted as self-explanatory. It is often equated with the notion of identity, specifically, national, or ethnic identity, citizenship or both, especially across social science disciplines (Antonsich, 2010). When not used as a synonym of identity, it is used as synonymous with the notion of citizenship, without any attempt to define the ways in which sense of belonging could be different from citizenship or identity, and without discussing the theoretical or analytical specifics (Antonsich, 2010). Instead, belonging is a multidimensional term (Marshall & Foster, 2002; Croucher, 2004; Yuval-Davis, Anthias & Kofman, 2005) that “encompasses citizenship, nationhood, gender, ethnicity and emotional dimensions of status or attachment” (Antonsich, 2010, p. 645).

Yuval-Davis's (2006) conceptualization and analytical framework illustrates the multiple dimensions of belonging at three analytical levels: (1) social locations, (2) identifications and emotional attachments to groups and collectives, and (3) ethical and political values that impact the ways in which one evaluates one's own belonging and the belonging of others. Belonging is often naturalized and is only politicized and articulated when it is threatened in some way. The politics of belonging refers to the specific political projects that aim to construct belonging in a particular way to certain collectivises, while simultaneously themselves being constructed by these projects. This conceptualization of belonging is an analytical differentiation between belonging and the politics of belonging, which is necessary for any critical discussion of political discourse on nationalism, racism, or other contemporary politics of belonging (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Belonging then has multiple conceptualizations and dimensions. Reducing belonging to a fixed dimension falls into the common assumption that many political projects of belonging make, reifying fixed belonging. Rather, the dimensions discussed above are interrelated, highlighting the multidimensional, fluid nature of belonging (Yuval-Davis, 2006).

Yuval-Davis's framework distinguishes between social locations and political systems (2006). Social locations refer to the history and power a group may hold and the social capital it awards the individuals who identify with this group. Yuval-Davis elaborates that when individuals identify and claim belonging to a group, which is often layered with gender, race, socioeconomic status, and so on, they are either disempowered or advantaged based on the group's positionality along an axis of power (2006). This is the crux of the framework which illustrates the connections between individuals, groups, capital, and politics and highlights the multi-dimensional feature of belonging as both a position of privilege and disempowerment. Discussing belonging in this way correlates with theories surrounding intersectionality, power and privilege. In fact, intersectionality

is embedded within the political dimension of belonging, as structural power is linked with both domestic and international politics (Baines & Sharma, 2002; Brah & Phoenix, 2004). Political and economic ideologies work in conjunction with each other to uphold structures that empower some groups at the cost of the disenfranchisement and disempowerment of others (Baines & Sharma, 2002; Roberts & Mahtani, 2010). In Canada, neoliberal policies and the idea of meritocracy -- as an economic ideology-- favours individual agency and ignores structural barriers that often dismisses the racism and anti-racism discourse (Mozaffarian, 2019). This conjunction of political and economic ideologies in disempowering some and empowering others in Canada exemplifies the relationship between ‘social location’ and politics, thus rendering them as separate and, as Yuval-Davis does, useless. Antonsich (2010) builds off Yuval-Davis’ framework to conceptualize belonging in a way that recognizes the interdependent relationship between social locations and politics.

Antonsich follows Yuval-Davis’ (2006) analytical framework to offer a discussion of the term belonging that avoids the conflation of identity and citizenship. Antonsich presents this via two major analytical dimensions: “1) belonging as a personal, intimate, feeling of being ‘at home’ in a place (place-belongingness); and 2) belonging as a discursive resource which constructs, claims, justifies, or resists forms of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion (politics of belonging)” (Antonsich, 2010, p. 645). Yuval-Davis’ framework does analyze belonging as emotional attachment of and feeling at home; however, Antonsich determines that the framework is insufficient in this aspect and “overlooks the notion of place, as if feelings, discourses, and practices of belonging exist in a geographical vacuum” (Antonsich, 2010, p.7). This is because Yuval Davis’ framework distinguishes between social locations and politics and “clearly leans towards the politics of belonging [...]” (Antonsich, 2010, p.7). Instead, Antonsich identifies how both socio-cultural norms

and political rhetoric are embedded within the power structures that grant or deny belonging, meaning that belonging is shaped by both structure and agency. This highlights the interdependence of social locations and politics. Antonsich also focuses on a key characteristic of belonging: the notion that belonging is an emotional feeling of being at home and feeling safe in a place.

Antonsich's (2010) framework recognizes that feelings of belonging to a place and processes of self-formation are mutually implicated. The sense of self is closely linked and associated with feelings of place-belongingness which can be generated along five factors: autobiographical, relational, cultural, economic and legal. A sixth factor, length of stay, is also relevant for generating a sense of place-belongingness among 'incomers' (Antonsich, 2010). First, autobiographical factors relate to an individual's past history like personal experiences, relationships and memories that attach the individual to a particular place. The place where a person is born and grows up remains a central place in an individual's life, which contributes to the feelings of place-belongingness. Second, relational factors refer to the personal and social relations that individuals experience that enriches their lives. Although not all relations are significant in impacting one's feelings of place-belonging (see Baumeister & Leary's (1995) belonging hypothesis), significant, long-lasting, positive, stable and physical interactions create a sense of connectedness to others on which belonging relies. Third, among cultural factors, language is deemed the most important when discussing belonging. On one hand, language can be activated in the politics of belonging, defining and categorizing 'we' from 'them.' On the other hand, language can evoke a sense of community, the sensation to be among people who not only understand what you say but also what you mean (Ignatieff, 1994). In this sense, language can be felt as an element of intimacy that resonates with autobiographical factors which then contributes to the sense of feeling 'at home' (hooks, 2009). Other cultural factors like cultural expressions, traditions, habits and practices can also generate

similar feelings. Fourth, economic factors contribute to the feelings of safety, stability and a possible future in a particular place. Although having a job is not sufficient to generate place-belongingness, being fully integrated into a given economy is an important factor to feeling that one belongs (Antonsich, 2010). Fifth, legal factors, like citizenship and residency permits, are an essential component of place-belongingness. Being a citizen awards individuals with rights to work, live, obtain social benefits, and actively participate to shape one's environment. The ability for one to be active and have a say in shaping the environment around them is deemed important in generating feelings of belonging (Mee and Wright, 2009). Together, these factors might lead an individual to lead a life worth living, which according to bell hooks (2009) is what belonging is all about.

The above factors do contribute to the sense of place-belongingness; however, being able to feel at home is not simply a personal, intimate matter. Social discourses and practices of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion (politics of belonging) also contribute to the sense of belonging. The essence of the politics of belonging is the boundary discourse and practices that separate 'us' from 'them' such that belonging to a place becomes synonymous with belonging to a group of people (Antonsich, 2010). Scholars have theorized that feelings of belonging are inherently spatial, where meanings of inclusion/exclusion are reproduced through the maintenance of a certain order of things and the idea of cultural unity. The intimate personal feelings of being 'at home' becomes the comforting realization of exclusivity, that 'we' belong and 'they' do not (Antonsich, 2010). The politics of belonging consists of two sides: the side that claims belonging and the side that grants belonging. Those who claim belonging also claim the right to stay, work and live in a place which explains why citizenship is often treated as a synonym of political belonging (Antonsich, 2010). However, even when political belonging is granted, it may still not be enough to generate a sense of

place-belonging. Studies on multiculturalism confirm that in order to feel belonging, individuals must be able to express their own identities (Sporton & Valentine, 2007) and feel valued and listened to as meaningful members of their community (Ameli, Elahi & Merali, 2004; Mulgan, 2009). The exclusionary nature of political belonging pushed scholars to resist this form of belonging as a “hegemonic construction” (Yuval-Davis et al., 2005, p.528) by instead calling for more inclusive forms of belonging.

Antonsich (2010) therefore argues that belonging remains first and foremost place-belonging: the personal, intimate feeling of being ‘at home’ in a place. But at the same time, it is unavoidably shaped by the politics of belonging, which is why he argues that when studying belonging it is necessary to consider both dimensions as an intersecting dynamic. Furthermore, Antonsich notes that the interrelation of the ‘here’ and ‘there’ of belonging has been largely studied, but there lacks a focus on investigating the ‘here’ of belonging as a nuanced, multidimensional dynamic of its own. Utilizing Antonsich’s (2010) framework for this study allows for conceptualizing belonging as a personal, intimate, and flexible experience shaped by multiple personal and social factors. The ways in which identity and belonging are conceptualized by post-colonial theorists complement Antonsich’s conceptualization of belonging by recognizing the workings of power relations and rejection of essentialist forms of belonging and by extension, identity. Study participants had a platform to exercise their agency in defining belonging according to their own experiences as Canadian-born Muslims, potentially resulting in a more nuanced understanding of how sport participation in faith-based community sport may influence their feelings of belonging.

3.3 METHODOLOGY

The objectives of the study are twofold: to understand the ways in which Canadian Muslims negotiate their identities through sport participation in faith-based community sport, and to examine the ways in which sport participation may impact their ideas of citizenship, belonging and identity. Specifically, I explore the ways in which identities are constructed, reproduced, and negotiated through sport participation in a specific context and investigate the ways in which individuals may be affected by narratives such as the ‘model minority’ and ‘good citizen.’ I achieve these objectives via a case study approach.

According to Yin (2003), a case study approach should be used when: (a) the focus of the study is to answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions; (b) you cannot manipulate the behaviour of the participants; (c) you want to account for contextual conditions because you believe they are relevant to the phenomenon under study; or (d) the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context. The advantage of this approach is that research participants are able to tell their stories and describe their views of reality, which then allows the researcher to better understand the actions of the participants.

This methodology is appropriate for this study because it meets all four criteria. First, the focus of this study is to investigate how faith-based sport organizations act as the lens through which to observe various narratives around citizenship, belonging and identity in Canada. Second, the nature of the study does not manipulate any behaviours of those related to these narratives or three phenomena of interest; rather, participants are invited to reflect and share their experiences in their own words via semi-structured interviews. Third, the specific contextual conditions of sport participation in the Umoja Games is believed to be unique and relevant to the phenomena under study. Umoja is a faith-based sport organization operating outside of the mosque environment and includes Shia Muslims from around the world, as teams travel to the event from Canada, England,

Africa and the US, providing contextual conditions relevant to the phenomenon under study. Finally, case study research is concerned with the specific context in which a phenomenon occurs, however the boundaries of the case are not clearly defined since the context of the tournament informs the phenomenon under study in numerous ways.

A common pitfall associated with case study research is the tendency to overshoot the objectives for the study; thus, delineating clear boundaries of the case is important. Binding a case study by time and place (Creswell, 1998); time and activity (Stake, 1995); and by definition and context (Miles & Huberman, 1994) allows for a more focused project. The topics that this study examines are broad, large concepts (i.e., citizenship, belonging, identity), especially when recognizing that identities are multiple, dynamic, and shifting. Therefore, this study is bound by definition and context (i.e., the participants recruited for the study are players in the Umoja Games.) Participation is defined as physically being at the Umoja Games soccer tournament and playing on a team, and does not include volunteering, observing or organizing the tournament.

Social constructivism is built upon the premise of the social construction of reality, meaning that truth is relative and dependent on one's own perspective (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Social constructivism acknowledges that knowledge and meanings are historically and culturally constructed through social processes (Schwandt, 2003). It focuses on individuals' learning that takes place because of their interaction with others. Via this focus, social constructivists believe that representations of biological and physical realities, like race and gender, are socially constructed, such that the ways in which we come to understand these concepts are shaped by historical and cultural knowledge and meanings ascribed to them by social processes. Even the concept of self and self-identification is a collection of socially constructed beliefs about oneself. For example, the phrase 'looking-glass self' was coined by sociologist Charles Cooley in 1902, to describe the

process of developing one's sense of identity. Social interactions act as a mirror or a 'looking-glass' through which individuals begin to perceive themselves. The development of self is then a reaction to what the individual imagines are judgements and perceptions of others. In this way, identities, or the self, is the result of learning how to perceive ourselves through the perceptions of those around us; in other words, it is constructed through social interactions (Yeung & Martin, 2003).

When discussing concepts like identity, the process through which individuals come to understand their own identities, and of those around them, is not innately nor permanently decided. Rather, identity is continuously being produced or constructed by various experiences and interactions within different contexts. Furthermore, the concepts discussed in this study (i.e., citizenship, belonging, identity) are also socially constructed in that these concepts are shaped by historical and cultural contexts and social processes that influence what it means to be a citizen of a nation, to be accepted, and to belong. Sense of belonging is especially nebulous for it encompasses many interconnecting social, historical, and geographical factors (Miller, 2003). Subsequently, belonging is conceptualized and experienced by individuals through forming connections with and through these layers, connections that ultimately establish what belonging feels and looks like. In other words, belonging is constructed through historically and culturally situated definitions, meanings, and interactions. From a social constructivist perspective, just as people have multiple identities, they also perceive multiple realities and have multiple understandings of those realities (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). These multiple realities are shaped by one's sense of identity, and related discourses, such as citizenship, belonging, nationality and race within the Canadian context (i.e., they are socially constructed.)

Therefore, to study and understand identity and belonging requires a multidimensional and multi-contextual perspective, for these concepts are not static and not necessarily singular;

individuals may have multiple identities that are contextually and socially constructed, and they may define belonging in various ways. Utilizing the social constructivist paradigm in this study allows for a deeper and more complex understanding of identities and the meanings around belonging and sport participation, and how they are constructed via historically and culturally situated social processes. This study also examines the multiple identities, realities and understandings that individuals hold through the lens of sport and sport participation. Two experts in case study methodology, both Stake (1995) and Yin (2003), base their respective approaches for a case study on a constructivist paradigm thus utilizing a case study approach is appropriate for the scope and intention of this study (Baxter and Jack, 2008).

3.3.1 RESEARCH CONTEXT

This case study is focused on participants of a travelling soccer tournament, the Umoja Games (UGames), that is held annually in a different city every year, with the exception of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, commencing once again this year 2021. This tournament is organized by the Umoja Outreach Foundation, an independent organization founded by Shia Muslims from New York and Toronto. This foundation started with a soccer tournament organized by men for men in New York City. Upon seeing the need and demand for such an event, the founders decided to expand to other cities. Later on, the founders noted a demand for including women and launched the first women only tournament in 2015. The foundation's original intention was to use soccer as the common language that brings together Muslim communities across the world. This intention has resulted in the vast growth of the foundation, predominantly focusing on the US and Canada. This shift to narrow the target population resulted from the recognition that Shia Muslims needed a space where members of their community could interact and bond with each other, thereby creating a social network with other Shia Muslims. The founders also realized that

various needs of the community were not being met, like mentorship, career guidance and community service for youth. Thus, the Umoja foundation has since grown to include several other branches: UBrains (an upcoming program that enables students to receive academic assistance by participating in a variety of different events and competitions), UAcademy (a multi-city soccer academy that develops soccer skills for children of various ages), UCare (a portal that connects volunteers to organizations to promote community service), and UMentor (connecting new professionals and students to established professionals to promote intercommunity professional networking) (Umoja Outreach, 2020). What began as a soccer tournament has thus expanded into a larger project of connecting communities of Shia Muslims across Canada and the US, and across generations, from children to grandparents. While UAcademy and UBrains target children and youth, the other branches focus on involving every member of the family and community to create “intergenerational bonds” (Umoja Outreach, 2020).

The foundation operates separately from mosques or Muslim community centres. Instead, the foundation is financially supported by over 40 sponsors, including community businesses and larger Muslim organizations such as NASIMCO (North American Shia Ithna-Asheri Muslim Communities Organization). A mosque is where the religion is practiced, taught and celebrated. It also acts as a community centre or hub for members to interact and associate with each other. In a mosque environment, there is a general understanding of expected behaviour and conduct that must be held to remain respectful to the place of worship. When asked why Umoja is not affiliated with a mosque, the Founder referenced this commonly held assumption by hinting at the rigidity that comes with being explicitly affiliated with a mosque. Working independently from mosques, therefore, allows for flexibility in terms of fixed geographical location, receiving funding, and religious adherence. While faith is central to Umoja Outreach Foundation in that it is a faith-based

organization in that the members and participants must be Shia Ithna-Asheri Muslims; it does not act as a place to practice or teach religion. This separation is important to note because it provides context to the intention of the organization and any subsequent decisions made to further expand its mission. Whilst utilizing the context of the Foundation as a whole, this study focuses on the UGames branch specifically, with a further focus on Canadian participants within the Umoja Games.

3.3.2 ETHICS

Ethics approval was granted by the York University Research Ethics Board before any recruitment was initiated. This study was therefore conducted with full compliance with required ethics, confidentiality, and informed consent procedures and policies set out under the York University Graduate Student Human Participants Research Protocol. Confidentiality is a top priority in this study; thus, all information collected in the research process is used in confidence. Research participants were given the choice to choose their own pseudonyms to protect their anonymity. Specific references which may identify participants, and/or specific situations and locations were altered. After interviews, participants were invited to review the transcripts. One participant reviewed their transcripts, but no changes were made. Informed consent documents, transcripts and recording of the interviews, and my researcher notes were stored in a zipped, password protected file on a personal iPad, which was securely stored and accessible only by the primary researcher.

Participants were informed of all confidentiality provisions and the nature of the research to the fullest extent possible, only insofar as it does not jeopardize the confidentiality extended to any other research participant. Participants were informed of the confidentiality protocol prior to the onset of the interview process. Participants were required to sign an Informed Consent Waiver (Appendix C) that outlined that their participation is voluntary and confidential, and that they may

refuse to participate in the research or withdraw from the project at any point during the research without penalty. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, all informed consent forms were emailed to participants, signed electronically by downloading the consent form as a Word document, typing their names in the indicated spaces, and emailing me the document. I kept a copy of the consent form in a password protected file and USB drive, and participants were reminded to keep a copy for their records. Additionally, since the research questions may have contained sensitive and triggering material for the participants, all participants were given a link to a list of community mental health resources (found in Appendix D), in case they needed counselling. Since all participants who participated in this study reside in the same geographical region, to further ensure confidentiality, any team names, number of years participating at Umoja, or any other identifying information were excluded or changed in the final document and presentation materials.

Furthermore, data were collected from the Umoja Outreach Foundation website as well as from the Umoja Outreach Foundation Instagram account (@/umojaoutreach). These sites are all publicly accessible. Information collected did not include any sensitive information that could be traced back to particular participants nor does it include data that require consent. Instagram analytics data were collected provided by the social media manager of the account and permission was obtained from one of the Founder.

3.3.3 RECRUITMENT

For this study, a combination of purposeful sampling, personal connections, and the snowball method was employed. In total, nine participants were recruited. Two participants were recruited through the recommendation of other participants (i.e., snowball method) while the other seven were recruited through purposeful sampling. Of the seven participants, four were recruited via

personal connections. Purposeful sampling involves identifying and selecting participants who meet particular criteria. The criteria for participants (players) included:

- a) Identify as Shia Muslim
- b) Canadian-born and Canadian citizen
- c) Between the ages of 18 and 25 years
- d) Living in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)
- e) Played in the Umoja Games.

This recruitment strategy was used because each case in this study was determined by definition and context, specifically participants who have lived experience of being Muslims in Canada, and participating in (as players) and main organizers of this event (i.e., founders not volunteers). This study focuses on youth and their experiences in sport thus the condition of 18-25 years of age. The participants, both the players and the founders, hold specific information pertinent to this study, from experiences of participating and key logistical information to the organization of the foundation and the Games. As such, purposeful sampling, with the goal to recruit “information-rich” key informants related to the phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2002, p. 65), was used to achieve thematic saturation.

Participants for this study were also recruited via personal connections, as well as snowball sampling. Given my own participation in this organization for over six years, I have relationships with players, coaches, and organizers. Utilizing these connections, a message was sent via personal message (text and direct message on Instagram) to potential participants to inform them of the purpose of the study and inviting them to participate in the study (found in Appendix A). The Founders were also contacted (via email and text message) to inform them of the study and request their participation (found in Appendix A). Once responses were received, participants were sent a

SurveyMonkey link to schedule an interview (Appendix A). The survey results can only be viewed by the host/researcher, and thus, anonymity was maintained. Afterwards, the informed consent form was sent to each participant individually via email.

Ultimately, nine participants agreed to participate, including one co-founder. The participants recruited played on several teams, all names of which have been changed to preserve the anonymity of the participants. All teams are located within the Greater Toronto Area in Ontario, Canada. All three co-founders were invited to participate; however, only one semi-structured interview was conducted for the sake of this study. This was decided upon completion of the first interview with the co-founder since the questions about the foundation and the organization of the Umoja Games were sufficiently answered by the co-founder. Any further information required was accessed through the Umoja Outreach website and through the participants.

3.3.4 DATA COLLECTION

This case study revolves around participants' personal experiences and thus relies on narratives that can be best accessed through interviewing participants and founders (i.e., the key informants in this study). Thus, for this study, data were collected via in-depth semi-structured interviews with players who participated in the Umoja Games soccer tournament, as well as with a co-founder of the Umoja Foundation. Given the purpose of this study, semi-structured interviews are an appropriate method of data collection since identity and experience are not generalizable to all Muslim Canadians participating in sport. The purpose the interviews with the players was to collect rich data about their experiences as a player in the Umoja Games, as well as their thoughts, beliefs, experiences, and opinions on being a Muslim Canadian citizen.

In a semi-structured interview, "... questions are typically asked of each interviewee in a systematic and consistent order, but interviewers are allowed the freedom to digress; that is the interviewers are permitted (in fact, expected) to probe beyond the answers to their prepared standardized questions" (Berg, 2004, p. 81). Thus, I led an open discussion to allow research participants to respond in ways that they found most meaningful. Since the discussion centered around belonging, citizenship and identity, I hoped for responses that explore the deeper meanings the participants have constructed or as Hermanowicz described, responses that "show the flesh ... behind all of the garments they wear in everyday social life" (2002, p. 480). The interview guide is provided in Appendix B.

Two interviews were conducted to allow for a more in-depth line of questioning and room for follow up questions. Within the case study approach, the researcher seeks to account for contextual conditions because they believe they are relevant to the phenomenon under study (Yin, 2003). The first interview was solely focused on their experiences as players of the Umoja Games, including practices, travelling to the Games and playing in the Games. Having one interview that solely revolves around the context of the Games and the experience associated with it, ensures the emphasis of content informing the phenomenon, that being the construction of identity and belonging to Canada. The second interview focused on the intersection of multiple identities, such as religious, national and athletic identities.

The original plan was to conduct the semi-structured interviews in-person and one-on-one. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, some adjustments were made to ensure the safety of all those involved. All interviews were conducted via Zoom to comply with lockdown and social distancing regulations where the participants and I resided. Zoom Video Communications Inc. is a cloud-based, collaborative video conferencing service similar to Skype or Facetime. As of October 2020,

Zoom had updated their security measures to ensure end-to-end encryption, chat encryption, and application security (Zoom Video Communications Inc., 2016). End-to-end encryption means that all messages or video shared between parties are exclusive to the parties involved and unavailable to third parties.

Along with the interview data, data were also collected through the Umoja Outreach Foundation website as well as the Umoja Outreach Instagram account (@/umojaoutreach). Both the website and the Instagram account are publicly shared and contain information about the event itself providing contextual and background information such as the mission statement, goals, and future plans for the event and the Foundation. Given that this is a case study, other sources of data further contextualize and support the process of investigation. Social media is a powerful tool that can connect members of a community beyond physical personal interactions. With the current pandemic, many people have turned to social media to stay connected with their friends and family and has proven to be a useful tool in that manner. Thus, the Umoja Outreach Foundation's Instagram account was used to further understand belong, identity and sense of community promoted by the organization/event since it was not possible to physically attend the event in 2020 due to the pandemic.

3.3.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The day before the interview, participants were sent a reminder email with meeting time, Zoom link and meeting password. Consent was obtained by all participants before interviews through the consent form as well as verbal consent before recording began. The meeting link was securely provided to each participant and the meeting room was locked so no other person could join. Every call was recorded using the built-in recording feature on Zoom and stored securely on the dedicated device (iPad). All data collected from participants, including consent forms and

recordings, were stored in zipped files in a locked iPad only accessible by myself. In all instances, full consent was obtained and ethical privacy considerations were implemented.

Each Umoja Games participant was interviewed twice. The first interview averaged 35 minutes to 40 minutes, while the second interview averaged 60 to 75 minutes. The founder was only interviewed once for 55 minutes. Furthermore, data were collected from the website and the Instagram account to be integrated within the study to add contextual depth to the topics discussed by the participants. Although no data were collected from the Umoja App, the app was downloaded to better understand its function and the role it may play in community building. Information collected from the website pertains to the organization of the Foundation itself, meaning what types of services are provided, when events are scheduled, where are events being held, who is involved in such events etc. The Instagram data were specifically collected after the interviews were completed, once community membership arose as a prominent theme. It was noted by the Founder during the interview that social media was important and integral in their efforts to create a community that can always be in contact with each other. As a result, content engagement data that did not contain any sensitive information pertaining to the users was requested, as this is not public information and is only accessible by the account owner. This information was integrated with the interview data to contextualize the tournament, and to recognize how social media is a means to dissipate information to participants that has a potential impact on participants' sense of community beyond the tournament itself.

3.3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Interviews were transcribed verbatim using Otter.ai, a paid transcription service; however, all transcripts were edited manually once digital transcription was complete. All transcripts were never shared nor printed and remained accessible by only the researcher.

Thematic analysis (TA) (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used to analyse the interview data. Thematic analysis is a “method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 1). TA reports experiences, meanings, and realities of participants without being tied to a framework allowing for flexibility in terms of the “research question, sample size and constitution, data collection method, and approaches to meaning generation” (p. 297). Thematic analysis does not require the detailed knowledge of other qualitative approaches, making it an accessible form of analysis especially for researchers early in their careers (Braun & Clarke, 2006). After data collection, this study followed the procedures of coding and theme identification as indicated by Braun and Clarke’s (2006) adaptation of thematic analysis. This method of analysis is appropriate for this particular case study not only for its flexible nature but also because it gives the researcher organized and richly described information (King, 2004). TA forces the researcher to take a well-structured approach to handling data, which helps produce an organized and clear report (King, 2004), especially useful for a novice researcher like myself.

There are six steps to Thematic Analysis: 1) become familiar with the data; 2) generate initial codes; 3) search for themes; 4) review themes; 5) define themes; and 6) write-up. Although transcription was completed utilizing a transcription software, the transcripts were read many times in order to familiarize myself with the data. Any notes taken during the interview were referenced to inform statements where an initial thought was triggered. Also, since the interviews were done on Zoom with visuals, notes on body language and gestures (for example, air quotations around certain words) were noted. Once this process was done several times, initial codes were generated. These codes were grouped to ultimately be refined into themes. Once the themes were finalized, several relevant sub-themes were generated that spoke to the data collected from the interviews as well as the Umoja website and their Instagram page.

Information collected from the website and the Umoja Outreach Instagram page was not formally analysed but instead was used to supplement the investigation of this particular case. For example, information about the Umoja Outreach Foundation, their mission, their goals, the various services they provide as well as information of the Founders was all accessed through the website.

3.3.7 RIGOUR

Rigour can be achieved by indicating the decisions made throughout the research process. This provides a rationale for the methodological and interpretative judgements of the researcher in the project (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013). Numerous frameworks have developed to evaluate the rigour of qualitative studies (e.g. Guba & Lincoln, 1989). For case study research, researchers are advised to follow general guidelines and strategies for qualitative studies in addition to designing a detailed case study that integrates five key elements (Russell, Gregory, Ploeg, DiCenso, & Guyatt, 2005). These five elements are:

- 1) a clear, substantiated, written research question;
- 2) establishing that case study design is an appropriate for the research question;
- 3) applying purposeful sampling strategies appropriate for case study;
- 4) data are collected and managed systematically;
- 5) data are analysed correctly.

These are several key basic elements to designing a case study project that enhance the overall study quality and trustworthiness. Furthermore, in establishing trustworthiness and rigour, Guba and Lincoln (1989) created a criterion in qualitative research known as the Four Dimension Criteria (FDC): credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Forero, Nahidi, de Costa, Mohsin, Fitzgerald, Gibson, McCarthy & Aboagye-Sarfo, 2018). To ensure the credibility,

dependability, and confirmability of a case study, certain strategies were implemented. Credibility in qualitative research means the confidence of the data or “truth value” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 556). Dependability refers to the consistency and reliability in the data, from the collection methods to the documented research findings (Moon, Brewer, Januchowski-Hartley, Adams and Blackman, 2016). The researcher should document research design and implementation like the details of data collection (such as field notes and researcher reflexivity journal) and methodology (Shenton, 2004). In doing so, bias is reduced, and dependability is increased by allowing for transparency of the research process (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). To achieve confirmability, the researcher must demonstrate that the results are clearly linked to the conclusions; that “the philosophical and epistemological position of the research ... is determined by both the problem and the predisposition of the researcher, in terms of their way of categorizing ‘truth’” (Moon et al., 2016, p. 3). For example, reflexivity can help to ensure credibility, dependability and confirmability (Houghton et al., 2013). Reflexivity can be expressed by maintaining a reflective diary (Rodgers & Cowles, 1993; Koch, 1994; Koch & Harrington, 1998; Johnson, 1999; Jootun, McGhee & Marland, 2009). A reflective journal is a written or verbal journal kept by researchers during the research process, detailing what they did and why. Guba and Lincoln (1989) defined it as “analogous to the anthropologists field journals and is the major means for an inquirer to perform a running check on the biases, which he (sic) carried with him into the context” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 7). Reflexive journals are considered part of the auditing process for research projects, with the specific function of increasing reliability and removing bias (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Qualitative research projects can often be complex to design, manage and analyze, and can yield hours of recorded data to be transcribed and coded. A personal record detailing the process, decisions and feelings allows the

researcher to learn from the research process and remember how conclusions came to be (Thorpe, 2010). Lincoln and Guba (1989) list four major things to record in a diary:

- 1) A log of evolving perceptions throughout the research process
- 2) A log of day-to-day procedures regarding the research
- 3) A log of any methodological decisions made throughout the process
- 4) A log of day-to-day personal introspections about the research

Thus, I kept a reflexive journal throughout the process of this study following Guba and Lincoln's (1989) guidelines. I also recorded my own observations about the participants while doing interviews and used these notes to enrich and contextualize the collected data. Additionally, since I have participated at the Umoja Games for several years and I identify as a Muslim Canadian, it was important for me to recognize my own positionality before imploring on other's experiences. I utilized this journal to account for my own biases which may influence the findings, essentially increasing credibility. To do so, I answered the interview questions myself prior to interviewing the participants to make clear to myself how I personally understood my own experience at the Umoja Games, how I viewed myself as a Muslim woman born and raised in Canada, and how my own sport participation was shaped by my previous experiences of Othering narratives. I believe this allowed me to separate my own experiences from those of my participants, so that participants' narratives can be understood as accurately reflecting their interpretations of their experiences. When analysing the interview data, I made note of experiences and opinions the participants made that I agreed with or felt resonated with my own experience but also those that did not. In doing so, I was able to visibly see various experiences and opinions, and refrain from subconsciously affirming only that which resonates with my own experience.

Furthermore, I also utilized Baxter and Jack (2008) five key elements as well as Guba and Lincoln's (1989) guidelines and strategies in tandem to design a case study that reflected trustworthiness, credibility and rigour. Both guidelines have overlapping elements such as building rapport. Baxter and Jack (2008) establish that novice researchers have the responsibility of ensuring these five elements to enhance overall study quality or trustworthiness:

- (a) the case study research question is clearly written, propositions (if appropriate to the case study type) are provided, and the question is substantiated;
- (b) case study design is appropriate for the research question;
- (c) purposeful sampling strategies appropriate for case study have been applied;
- (d) data are collected and managed systematically; and
- (e) the data are analyzed correctly (Russell, Gregory, Ploeg, DiCenso, & Guyatt, 2005)." (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 556).

These five elements were met in this case study in the following ways. First, the research questions were carefully developed and clearly written in relation to the case study in question. The specificity of the research question reflects the specificity of the event in question; the Umoja Games itself is targeted to a particular subset of the Muslim population. The study further narrows the subset down to Canadian Shia Muslims living in the Greater Toronto Area, as reflected in the research questions. Furthermore, since the concepts being explored (i.e., sense of belonging, identity, citizenship etc.) are large and complex, specificity and clarity are necessary in order to maintain a well bounded case study. This study recruited participants via purposeful sampling and snowball sampling. This is a key element in case study design research as the participants must be individuals who possess the knowledge and experiences being observed. While both Guba and Lincoln (1989) and Baxter and Jack (2008) emphasize rapport with participants to establish

trustworthiness and credibility, Baxter and Jack (2008) recommend that novice researchers should plan for prolonged exposure with the phenomenon under study within its context to further ensure that rapport be established with participants, that multiple perspectives can be collected and understood and to reduce potential for social desirability responses in interviews. Through my own participation in the Umoja Games for over five years, not only was I very familiar with the event itself and the context in which it takes place, I also was familiar with many of the participants. This proved beneficial when recruiting participants and building rapport with them. Furthermore, prolonged engagement with the participants was achieved via two separate interviews, as Guba and Lincoln state to “assess possible sources of distortion and especially to identify saliences in the situation” (1989, p.18). Originally, I had planned to collect data while at the 2020 tournament. However; due to COVID-19 and subsequent travel restrictions and lockdowns, I was unable to attend and therefore could not incorporate additional engagement with the participants.

In regards to data collection and analysis, additional strategies commonly integrated into qualitative studies include the use of reflection or keeping field notes and peer examination of the data. Both Guba and Lincoln (1989) and Baxter and Jack (2008) mention member checks for confirmability as well as accuracy of data. While all participants were offered an opportunity to view and review their transcripts, only four of the nine participants requested to do so. No major changes were made to the transcript other than some clarification for questions post-interview because of audio issues during the recording where some statements were incomprehensible and clarification was required from the participants. The process of double coding (Baxter & Jack, 2008) was also used, where the researcher initially codes the set of data once and after a period of time returns to recode the data and compares it to the initial set. I initially coded the data two weeks after all interviews were completed. I then worked on other parts of the project for a couple of

weeks then returned to the data and coded once more. The second round of coding resulted in more codes generated and ultimately additional subthemes. It was at this point that the Instagram data was requested to better formulate particular themes and subthemes generated from the interview data so as to not i generate a conclusion that is not sufficiently supported by data.

3.3.8 REFLEXIVITY

In qualitative research, reflexivity is an important step in ensuring quality research.

Reflexivity is the conscious examination of the role of existing beliefs and values a researcher holds in the production of knowledge (Finlay, 2002). It is a valuable way for researchers to use their own experiences as a form of insight, as their experiences are the primary source of evidence (Finlay, 2002). Reflexivity is especially vital for this case study, given how close I am to the topic both in terms of my participation at the Umoja Games as well as my identity as a Muslim Canadian.

My experiences in sport as a Muslim woman born and raised in Toronto has greatly shaped how I interpret the narratives surrounding sport. Specifically, because of how I dress and what I believe, I would inevitably experience feelings of difference or discomfort in mainstream sport, a belief that my parents also held. Thus, seeking sport opportunities in a league outside of my religious community seemed absurd. Nonetheless, I did pursue sport within mainstream leagues. I recognized that playing in ‘white’ leagues was different from playing within my Muslim community, and that for me, playing in the ‘white’ league was a form of rebellion. I wanted to prove that I could do it, not just to my parents, but to myself. Thus, in high school, I played soccer for three years, and rugby for one year. By the time I was in my last year of undergraduate studies, I was playing in four different soccer leagues, only one of them being a Muslim community-based league.

For me, it is natural to want a sense of belonging. Feeling that you belong to something, or someplace brings a sense of security and peace that acts as the foundation for how we experience the world around us. From senior kindergarten to Grade 8, I attended an all Shia Muslim school which in retrospect, heavily shielded me from feeling like an outsider or feeling different. Not only was I surrounded by Muslims, I was immersed in the Shia Muslim sect, which is a small sect of Islam (approximately 10% of Muslims are Shia). In elementary school, I was involved in every sport offered. Our school often played in soccer and basketball tournaments against other Muslim schools, all Sunni Muslim schools, since at that time my school was the only Shia Muslim school in the GTA. At one of these tournaments, during prayer time, one of the girls said we (the Shia's) had to pray at the back of the group because we were ruining the continuity of the prayer chain. In reality, this was not true, whether one is Shia or Sunni, congregational prayer is meant to unite all Muslims under God no matter one's sect, ethnicity or race. However, at the age of 12 this was one of the first times I realized difference and exclusion within Islam and felt as though we did not belong in that space. It was also the first time I met Muslims who were also Black.

There is much to say about the racial and sect related issues that plague the Muslim Ummah, and how deep these issues run both historically and politically; thus, it was not surprising that these issues came up in the interviews. I say this here as it is integral to the context of this case study. The historical and political landscape, both Muslim vs. Muslim and Muslim vs. The West, shapes the need or desire to have spaces that are exclusively for Shia Muslims. I say this as a Shia Muslim myself who has been immersed in the Shia school of thought since the age of 4. The push to have exclusive spaces is juxtaposed with the cross-sectional unity (ie., ethnic, cultural, sect, racial, generational) essence of Islam. While community and family are essential to such events like the Umoja Games, the exclusivity somehow acted against that message of unity. I came into this project

with an understanding of such issues and ideas, for I had been experiencing them and questioning them since I was 12 years old.

However, it was only in Grade 9, when I attended public high school, did I experience difference outside the Muslim community. This added another layer to how I understood belonging and identity, specifically national identity. Of course, growing up we celebrated Canada Day, did the Terry Fox Run and watched Canada play at the Olympics, so my sense of what being Canadian meant was strongly connected with such presentations of Canadianess. But it was not until high school did I realize that there is more to being Canadian than just celebrating and buying the Hudson's Bay Canada collection mittens. Compared to the people around me, I didn't *look* 'Canadian,' I didn't *do* 'Canadian things' like camping, go to the cottage every summer, or play hockey or skate all winter long. I wondered if I should be doing those things to prove my Canadian-ness, not only to other people, but even to myself. Other times I felt that even if I don't do those things, I was still pretty Canadian for the most part; I only have one passport, I was born in Canada and I have lived here my whole life. But being Muslim alongside being Canadian left me questioning the 'purity' of my Canadianess, as if being anything else reduced the concentration of 'Canadianess' and made me less than. I remember my father adamantly stating that I will forever be Canadian first then Muslim, that this is my country and no one should be able to convince me otherwise. I once told him about a boy in my business class who would consistently make rude comments about my appearance every class. I remember him telling me that if I went about life choosing to focus on why people said mean things to me that I would never be successful in life. If I continued to view myself as a victim of difference and oppression, I would be giving them the power to dictate my life, to make me feel uncomfortable and unwelcome in my own country. Fast-forward 10 years, my father still stands by his point and while I know there is some truth in what he

said, at the same time, I cannot ignore the clear racism and discrimination that I experienced and that other Muslims experience in the West.

I started high school in 2010, just three years after FIFA first banned the hijab in soccer matches, though I was completely oblivious to this at the time. In fact, I was so well sheltered up to age 14, that 9/11 was just the 11th day of September. Of course, 9/11 intensified the ongoing ideological war against Muslims in the West and whether I was aware of it at the time or not, it shaped the ways in which others perceived me and my subsequent experiences in school and sport. Nonetheless, sport seemed like a space where differences dissipated and only the sport mattered. Despite my experience in middle school, I was convinced that if I played on a team at school I would fit in more because ‘when in Rome do what the Romans do’; I was surrounded by white people who supposedly exemplified Canadian-ness so if I do what they do then, I too will exemplify Canadian-ness. People who played sports were well-liked, celebrated and popular so if I played I too would be all those things. Throughout several seasons of different sports, I realized this was not always the case. I experienced my fair share of implicit and explicit discrimination directly related to being a Muslim while playing sports, from coaches to opponents to referees. But at the same time, I was more liked, I was celebrated and in a sense, I gained popularity from playing soccer, rugby and running track. I realized the social value attached to being an athlete, but also aware that the exclusion that existed outside the field did not disappear.

While I was aware of the image of Islam in the media and the perception of Muslims in the West and I was beginning to connect the dots more broadly and with sport as a structure or institution, I only began to critically examine these ideas once I was in university after being introduced to social issues in sport. I began to connect my experience with the experiences of other minorities in sport, to the world around me, and to theories of race, gender and sport. Thus, the 2018

Umoja Games in Detroit, Michigan was an eye opener for me because I was equipped with the knowledge and understanding of belonging and identity negotiation for minorities through sport participation.

Certain things stood out to me; I was always hypervigilant. In some ways, I did the exact opposite of what my father told me to do: I overlooked nothing and questioned everything. I attribute this to having the educational background to interpret the never-ending flow of news around me but also stubbornness and refusal to allow others to tell me how to feel about what I experienced and saw. As a Canadian, I watched the news in shock and awe as the American political climate crumbled with President Trump in office. In light of then President Trump's Muslim Ban and other politicized, racially driven events such as the Black Lives Matter movement, my position as a Canadian Muslim has stood out to me more than it had before. Now with the French government banning Hijab for girls under 16 and banning halal meat stores unless they sell alcohol and pork, how could one overlook and ignore discrimination? In comparison, I feel lucky and blessed to have been born in Canada, especially when I see how Muslims in other Western countries experience blatant structural oppression. However, as Patricia Hill Collins emphasizes, quantifying and ranking oppressions is a premise of additive analysis which is a discourse one must shift away from (Collins, 1993). It may lead to the feelings that since Canada is not as bad as the US, there is no need to focus on such oppressions. Personally, this type of thinking sensitized me to the differences between the treatment of Muslims in Canada compared to the United States. Under the veil of multiculturalism and the guise of diversity, I find myself often brushing off encounters of racism just because the events of Chapel Hill (where three Muslims were killed in their home) or Christchurch in New Zealand are etched in my mind. They leave little space to even entertain, lest I feel guilty, the thought that Canada is as bad as the US.

When I was younger, I knew that we were in America when there seemed to be more flags than people; on every possible surface or item the Star Spangled Banner was sure to be found. The people were different too. It wasn't that they looked different per se but they acted differently. They weren't as nice or smiley like people are in Canada. At 21 years old, I noticed other things as well. The ways in which my American Muslim friends experienced their Muslimness was different than mine. Guns are a real threat in America. I had never had to worry that someone might pull out a gun and *shoot me* at school or in a parking lot. But my friends did have to worry about that. They had a President who blatantly and explicitly insulted Muslim people on live television. Of course, events like the Quebec City mosque shooting quickly bring me back to the reality that Canada is not immune to Islamophobia or racism towards Muslims, but there are differences. While this project is not focusing on the differences between American Muslims and Canadian Muslims, the location of the Umoja Games allows for the feelings around being Canadian to emerge through interaction with others, for it is predominantly through interaction that we identify similarities and differences to understand who 'we' are compared to 'them'.

Contextualizing the climate for Muslims in Canada is an important factor to this case study, for the concepts in study, identity and belonging, are in part shaped by the history, politics and social knowledge(s) in society. However, while these factors do greatly impact the ways we come to understand ourselves and the world around us, centring the identity and belonging discussion around these factors continues to frame identity and belonging as a process that is done 'to' individuals instead as a process done 'by' individuals. Especially in a population that struggles with the constraints of socially constructed narratives, focusing on personal experiences to understand identity and belonging not only reclaims agency over one's lived experience but also provides for a different and unique perspective to identity and belonging discussions. Focusing on sport

participation, specifically the Umoja Games, provides for a unique case where identity, belonging and citizenship can be explored in a group that has a unique experience shaped by these broader historical, political, and social forces.

I recognize that my position as a player and a member of the community means that I have my own understanding of both the Games and of these phenomena under study. After all, my curiosity about this subject stemmed from my own experiences and negotiation specifically within sport, and ultimately motivated me to ask these research questions. As an individual who identifies as a Shia Muslim Canadian woman, my multiple identities collide and intertwine in ways that shape my overall view on society and the world around me. While each individual experiences the world in a different way, commonalities across those living in diaspora are inevitable because people who look like me experience the world and are scrutinized and constructed in uniform ways, such as through the lens of Orientalism. Nevertheless, while my experiences and feelings may align with those of the participants and have shaped the critical questioning upon which this study is based, I engage in reflexivity so that my experiences do not dictate the data. Specifically, I asked myself the following questions and answered them before and after interviewing:

1. How have my experiences shaped the way I view the world around me in relation to Muslims in the West?
2. How has participating in different spaces of sport (Muslim only vs. mainstream) differed for me? In which ways were they the same?
3. Describe the following terms in as much detail as possible: Canadian, immigrant, second generation Canadian, athlete, community, Canadian pride.

4. Why do I keep going back to play at Umoja specifically? Why do I continue playing sports in any context? What do I get out of playing at Umoja that I don't get out of playing in 'mainstream' leagues or vice versa?

The intention was to understand what I know and how I feel about my own experiences so that when asking these questions to the participants and interpreting the data, I refrain from imposing my own understanding on their personal experience. I too am coming to understand my own identity and sense of belonging to Canada, which is one of the main reasons for this project to begin with, but I recognize that as the researcher I must do my diligence to centre the participants' narratives in all their complexities with as much nuance as possible.

I also listened to and watched the interview right after completion and looked for any words or facial reactions I had to what the participants were saying. After relistening to the 1st interview I noticed that I was saying things like "I completely understand" or "relatable," which may have enticed the participant to not elaborate since they thought I understood because I had the same experience or found it relatable. Out of habit, I tend to say "perfect" a lot which in some cases can also entice the participant to feel like they may not need to elaborate any further even if they may have had something else to add. "Perfect" could also indicate to the participant that they had said what I was "looking for" or expecting, rather than just sharing what they experienced. I took note of this after the first interview and reminded myself to not say things like that just in case they were to impact how the participants responded.

When analysing the data, it was also important to distance myself from the responses as a researcher, by reminding myself that each experience is uniquely shaped by the life journey of the participant. While we may have shared experiences, to maintain the sanctity of each narrative, I must treat their experience as a unique entity and do justice to their experience. After all, the point

of narrative based research like this study is to give voice to those who have historically been marginalized and generalized. By asking questions like “can you elaborate more on what you mean by X,” it provides more context and depth to a participant’s answer such that it becomes less likely to assume what the participant meant, thus reducing the chance of my own assumptions dictating the analysis. Once I realized my tendency to use terms like “perfect” and the connotations that it may assume, I was able to separate myself from the participants' narrative and act as a researcher solely interested in their own unique perspective and experience. Of course, I can never know if they catered their responses to what they may have thought will resonate with me, but as a researcher I believe I created the environment where participants felt safe and comfortable to share their experiences without judgement or enticement.

In many ways, this study revealed themes I did not anticipate. Going into this project, I knew I did not want to replicate the previous studies on Muslims in sport. Specifically, I did not want to focus on the barriers of participation, or how being a Muslim is difficult in Canada because of all the ‘glaring differences’. Such research, while illuminating, nonetheless reifies differences, specifically for Muslim people, as incompatible with Western ideas of citizenship. I am tired of reading about how Muslim women struggle playing sports, how they are unaccepted, exiled and incompatible with Western culture. I am tired of reading the words “Muslim women” automatically followed by “cannot” or “do not”. I am tired of other people writing and talking about us in journals, in books, on TV shows and on the internet in ways that strengthen the divide between “us” and “them,” between the Occident and the Orient. Yet, I *still* caught myself stuck in the same colonial binary I aimed to reject, stuck in interpreting my participants’ narratives as an expression of that binary. I had to break free from understanding my own identity and belonging as either-or, and instead think of them as a fluid, flexible, critical process, continuously evolving as we experience

life. I had to free myself from the burdens of being ‘Canadian enough’, or Muslim enough or the ‘perfect’ combination of both. I had to be open to understanding identity and belonging beyond the perfectly worded definitions in textbooks, and instead as highly textured, nuanced, critical processes that are tangled with personal and contextual experiences, interactions, and details.

The following chapters present the results, analysis, and discussion of this study, where the various themes and subthemes compiled offers more holistic, encompassing, and postcolonial understanding of identity and belonging to Canada.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aimed to explore the ways in which Muslim people living in Canada begin to understand their identities and sense of belonging to the nation, specifically through their participation in faith-based community sport. Focusing on the participants of the Umoja Games, two questions are posed: first, do second-generation Muslim people in the Greater Toronto Area negotiate and understand their identities and sense of belonging to Canada through their participation in faith-based community sport, and if so, in what ways?; and second, how is their sport participation in faith based community sport shaped by common othering narratives? While this study takes a case study approach by focusing on the experiences of Umoja Games participants, the data discussed in this chapter make it clear that the broader context of identifying as Canadian and as a Muslim in Canada is deeply enmeshed with the specific experiences at the Umoja Games and vice versa. The lived experiences of being Muslim and Canadian offer insight not just into the external context of this study, but also the foundation of participants’ perceptions and understanding of their involvement with the Umoja Games. The ways in which participants understand their

identities and experiences as Muslims, as Canadians and as athletes in their everyday lives cannot be discussed separately from their experiences as participants at the Umoja Games. Rather than viewing participants' experiences as Canadians, Muslims and athletes as unilaterally informing their experiences at the Umoja Games and serving only as an external contextual role, they are understood as having a fluid reciprocal relationship where experiences and narratives inform each other. This dynamic, interdependent connection between the broader context and the specific case of the Umoja Games, and its importance in understanding the study participants' lived experiences are reflected in the organization of this chapter.

Through analysing the data collected from two extensive discussions with each of the participants, the interview with the co-founder of the Umoja Outreach Foundation and social media (Instagram) data, it became clear that identity and belonging are both extremely contextual and nuanced experiences. Thus, it was difficult to objectively conclude whether participants identified as Muslim, Canadian, Muslims in Canada or Canadian Muslim. However, as the results below demonstrate, I argue that there is evidence of participants constructing an identity beyond the constraints of fixed categories of 'Canadian' or 'Muslim.' Instead, a new hybrid identity can be detected in some contexts, where participants understand themselves as more than the sum-of-their-parts but instead a separate category of 'Canadian Muslim.' 'Canadian' preceding 'Muslim' does not mean that participants see themselves as more Canadian than Muslim; there is no quantity or percentage attached to 'Canadian' or 'Muslim' separately because 'Canadian Muslim' (although two words) should be read as one. While participants refer to different aspects of their identities in particular contexts (i.e., being a Muslim or being a Canadian), the ways in which they come to understand each 'part' of their identity is interdependent on each other. Additionally, some participants thought of themselves as Canadians at the start of the interview and then came to the

conclusion that in fact they do not feel that they fully identify as Canadian in all contexts. What this shows is the fluidity of identity and the ways in which the negotiation process is never complete, and that identity and culture are never fixed and always evolving as we continue interacting and learning about the world around us. Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the main identities participants mentioned throughout the interviews. Note that the overlapping sections in this figure indicate the interdependence of these identities, that in fact although discussed separately at times, these identities encompass a unique personal identity, one that is shaped by the various internal and external factors that participants have experienced in their lives. This unique identity is shaped and formed via the participants' lived experiences as Muslims and as Canadian citizens born and raised in a society with adopted social understandings, norms, and values from both cultures.

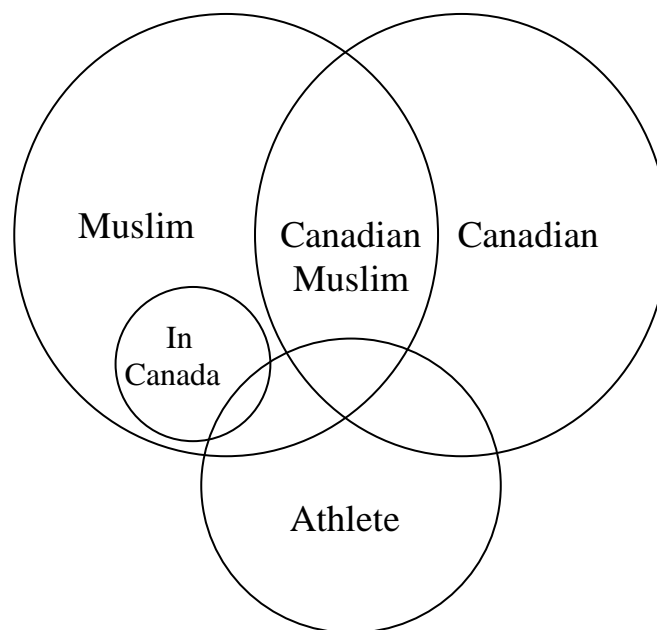


Figure 1: Main identities noted by participants

In what follows, the first section discusses Muslim identity specifically, and the ways in which participants understood 'being' and 'becoming' Muslim through practices, beliefs, and behaviours. However, 'being' or 'becoming' Muslim in this case cannot be discussed separately

from the contexts in which participants identify as Muslim, meaning that for the participants, living in Canada and/or identifying as a Canadian is inherently related to the social context in which participants practice Islam. As Canadian-born individuals, the ways in which Muslimness is negotiated is deeply tied to the Western context of practicing Islam.

Through analysing the data collected from two extensive discussions with each of the participants and the interview with the co-founder of the Umoja Outreach Foundation as well as the data collected from the Umoja Games website and Instagram page, it became evident that there are two interconnected components to understanding the ‘being’ or identity performance of participants, namely, the Practicing Muslim and the Model Muslim. Although discussed separately for ease of understanding, these two components are performed and negotiated in tandem in various social contexts. This means whether participants find themselves in a non-Muslim space (i.e., work, school, sport, etc.) or a Muslim space (i.e., mosque, exclusive Muslim sporting environment, etc.), both the ‘Practicing Muslim’ and the ‘Model Muslim’ are presented at some level. The ways in which participants come to understand these presentations can be analysed through the negotiation of similarity and difference; othered vs non-othered, Muslim vs non-Muslim, hijab wearing vs non-hijab wearing, and Canadian vs non-Canadian to name a few. This negotiation led to attaching meanings to particular representations of similarity and difference. The ways in which participants in this study understood Muslimness and Canadianess was through representations and meanings attached to Muslimness and Canadianess. Performing these representations allowed participants to identify themselves visibly or physically to others as Muslims and/or Canadians. Regarding Muslimness, participants understood that aligning oneself with the values, virtues, and teachings of Islam and physically performing certain behaviours such as prayer and good manners, meant that one is considered a ‘Practicing Muslim.’ Participants describe and define their identity as Practicing

Muslims by listing the ways in which they perform this identity. The performance of the ‘Model Muslim’ however, is less clear cut and includes several aspects that interact to construct this performance. The ‘Model Muslim’ rests on the socially constructed idea of Muslimness in the West, or in other words the conflict between the ‘good’ Muslim and the ‘bad’ Muslim. The ‘Model Muslim’ is contextually defined, meaning that it mirrors the metric of ‘goodness’ that is represented in society. Ideas of citizenship, especially ‘good’ citizenship are inherently intertwined with the construction of the ‘Model Muslim’ as a representation of a Western Muslim. Here, evidence of hybrid identities are discussed alongside the impacts of modernization and Westernization.

Finally, the latter portion the chapter discusses belonging as a concept and as a lived experience, utilizing Antonsich’s (2009; 2010) framework of belonging. Sense of belonging to Canada is discussed through five factors of place-belonging, as well as through the politics of belonging. While participants express a sense of belonging to Canada, place-belonging proves to be more localized to the city or community level rather than generalized to the nation. Moreover, belonging proves to be a nuanced and unique experience, where like identity, it is not fixed or determined as either belonging or not belonging. Participants come to understand their sense of belonging through their own personal experiences and through constructions of belonging to the nation. This chapter concludes with a discussion of community belonging, specifically belonging to the Umoja community. Community is further discussed as existing beyond physical boundaries, and in the case of the Umoja community, predominantly existing virtually. Through data collected from the Umoja Outreach Instagram and through interviews, we come to understand community and belonging through faith based, community sport engagement and participation, further contextualizing the Umoja experience.

4.2 PERFORMING THE PRACTICING MUSLIM IDENTITY

In Islam, there are Five Pillars that act as the foundation to being a Muslim. The first is *Shahada* (the declaration of faith), which is the proclamation that there is one God and that Muhammed is His Messenger. Obligatory prayer, almsgiving, fasting during the month of Ramadan, and pilgrimage to Mecca are the other four pillars that act as the foundation to being a Muslim. Beyond the Five Pillars, there are many practices that a Muslim must engage in as a part of identifying as a Muslim. However, across the 1.8 billion Muslims in the world, not all will practice their faith in the same way; in fact, many believe that there is more than one interpretation to practicing Islam (Desilver & Masci, 2017). Practicing religion is characterized through actions (i.e., praying, fasting, giving to charity etc.) Following this logic, the non-practicing Muslim then is one who does not engage in such actions even while still identifying as Muslim. Those who identify as Muslim but do not practice Islam are usually called Cultural Muslims (Milani, 2014). Such Muslims identify with Islam due to family backgrounds, personal experiences, or the social and cultural environment in which they grew up.

While all the participants identified as Muslim, they specifically identified as Practicing Muslims. When asked to describe who a Muslim is, the participants used the term ‘practicing’ in reference to three main aspects: praying five times a day, wearing Hijab (for women), and embodying certain attributes and behaviours such as kindness, patience, and honesty. This section discusses how these three aspects significantly shape the performance of the Practicing Muslim among the participants.

4.2.1 PRAYER

For the participants, identifying as a practicing Muslim significantly structures their daily lives, in the ways they plan their days, and the ways they behave daily. Performing the mandatory

prayer five times a day was often mentioned by the participants throughout both interviews. In fact, many participants indicated that they plan their days around prayer time specifically. When asked how being a Muslim shaped her daily life, Sarah replied:

I am a practicing Muslim. So I follow a lot of the rules and regulations that we have. So for example, I pray five times a day. And then, you know, like just doing what you are supposed to do as a Muslim. I think that, honestly, namaz (prayer) is a huge factor to how my day goes, like, plays out. In terms of school, and like praying and stuff, my break is always around dhuhur (noon) time. Like, I think that's how I schedule out my school as well, I dedicate that hour, obviously praying is like less than 15 minutes and the rest is eating or whatever. And then my goal every day is to always try to get as much as I can done before Maghrib and Isha (evening prayers). (Sarah, Interview 2)

For Sarah, a practicing Muslim is one who follows the rules and regulations of Islam, and who does what is expected of Muslims. Praying five times a day (on time) acts as the framework around which she plans her daily schedule. She is diligent about her prayers which directly reflects how she practices Islam and identifies as a practicing Muslim. Similarly for Amira, planning events or outings are contingent on prayer times, where she tries to make plans with her friends so as to not miss any prayers. She also brings a prayer mat and prayer stone (exclusively used by Shia Muslims during prayer) in case she has to pray while not home. This indicates the importance of prayer to Amira and is indicative of the ways in which the participants who identify as Practicing Muslims spoke of their faith as embodied. This embodied or ritualized body, with its “characteristics of formality, fixity, and repetition, constructs, upholds, enforces and maintains Muslim identity through its rituals of salat (prayer), sawm (fasting), and hajj (pilgrimage)” (Hidayat, 2017, p. 4).

Participants also mentioned the importance of praying on time when participating in sport. This was especially prominent when comparing experiences between Muslim sporting spaces and non-Muslim sporting spaces or ‘mainstream’ sport. Mahdi shared his experiences with prayer in ‘mainstream’ sport by stating:

I think it was mainly when I was traveling with my team, the non-Muslim team, the regular Academy team. For example, one time we had gone, and we were staying at a hotel and whatnot. And we had tournaments like the whole day. So it was tough for me to kind of, you know, actually take a break to pray on time. And later on that evening, I was with my friends at the hotel and it was like, ‘Where do I pray?’ And, you know, definitely you could find your way around it. It was just, it was a bit tough to figure out. Yes, it's because like no one had really thought of that because the coach he isn't a Muslim. So he isn't really thinking of how you can pray, he just assumes everyone is okay. (Mahdi, Interview 2).

Mahdi recognizes that when he is with his “regular” team, he must rely on himself to accommodate for his prayers, noting that it is tough to find the time and space but it is manageable. Despite the challenges, Mahdi feels that prayer is important enough not to skip or reschedule.

Conversely, when discussing their experience playing at the Umoja Games, participants noted that at Umoja, games are specifically structured around prayer time whereas in non-Muslim or ‘mainstream’ sporting spaces, finding the time and place to pray is one of their main concerns. Through this comparison, participants indicated that prayer is a significant aspect of performing the Practicing Muslim. Given the value that participants place on prayer, the Umoja Games becomes a space where participants feel their concerns for praying on time are met. The importance of prayer

can be observed from the 2019 Umoja Games game schedule posted on the Umoja Foundation website (Umoja Foundation, 2020). One quickly notices the large, highlighted block of time reserved for noon prayer. From my own experience at the 2019 Games, I recall shuttle buses running from the venue where we played to the nearby hotels, allowing players to bathe and change before performing prayer as a group on the soccer field. Therefore, spaces for exclusive Muslim sport participation like Umoja Games, facilitates the performance of the Practicing Muslim by accommodating for and even prioritizing prayer during sporting events.

4.2.2 HIJAB

In addition to prayer as an integral part of being a Practicing Muslim, wearing the hijab by women was often reiterated, by both male and female participants, as a visual representation and visual evidence of a Practicing Muslim. Often, female participants reference themselves as Practicing Muslims since they wear the hijab. For example, when asked what it meant to be a Muslim, Sarah immediately responded with, “well I am a practicing Muslim so I wear hijab.” Hijab was also perceived as visual evidence for others, where the hijab acts as symbol of practicing Islam. Alisha shared:

The fact that I like, represent the Muslim religion, or people see it that way right? Because obviously you see a hijab outside, you automatically associate it with being Muslim. Wearing Hijab means that I represent my religion.

(Interview 2)

Like Alisha, many of the other participants also recognized that hijab is the primary identifier of being a Muslim. For example, Mahdi, a male interviewee, recalled that when grocery shopping with his mother who wears hijab, they sometimes get “weird” looks because “obviously you can tell she's a Muslim” (Mahdi, Interview 2). Regina also echoed this feeling, stating that as a

practicing Muslim wearing hijab, she feels that when people see her, “they know I am a Muslim” (Regina, Interview 2). For veiled Muslim women, hijab functions as a visible marker of one’s identity as Muslim (Droogsma, 2007). Muslim women know that when it comes to hijab and the associated image, despite the diversity that exists among them, “the Muslim Woman image overrides all others to constitute these women's primary identity” (Cooke, 2001, p. 131). Both interpreting hijab as an obvious sign of Muslimness by others and Practicing Muslimness for themselves, speaks to the function of hijab as a factor in identity construction.

The meanings of hijab therefore are multi-dimensional and go beyond the physical cloth, embodying constructed meanings of those who wear the hijab and those who do not. However, the dynamic connection between the hijab and identity is not confined to and shaped solely by the relationship between the ingroup (in this case Muslims) and the outgroup (non-Muslims). In fact, among Muslims (ingroup), one would find two sub-ingroups, Muslim women who do wear hijab and Muslim women who do not wear the hijab. The ways in which the hijab is attached to the meaning and performance of the Practicing Muslim are evident through the dynamics between these two sub-ingroups. Laila discusses some complexities of the hijab in relation to Muslims who do not wear the hijab by stating:

I think it is especially challenging when I am around other Muslims who don’t, well I don’t want to say aren’t as -- but other Muslims who perhaps don’t wear hijab or go with tighter clothes, things like that, it’s a lot harder for me. And you know when I am with my white friends or whatever it’s a little bit easier because you know what, I feel empowered because I am the only one. But around your own people, your own community, it becomes more challenging because you’re like damn, that could be me, like that girl is doing it and we’re the same but not

really, you know what I mean? (Interview 2)

Here, Laila attributes wearing hijab and dressing modestly as a part of being a Practicing Muslim. She stops herself from labelling or categorizing the “other Muslims,” instead opting to only state that the challenge is seeing that she too could be doing the same (i.e., “that could be me”) and feeling different from those who are supposed to be her “people.” She refers to her “own people” as the “same but not really,” recognizing that within the perception of similarity exists the perception of difference.

Laila’s identity and how she draws on similarity and difference reflects Jenkins’ conceptualization of identity as involving comparison between things or persons to determine similarity *and* difference, which simultaneously informs one’s notion of identity (Jenkins, 2004). Although the people in Laila’s community are similar in that they are all Muslim, wearing hijab becomes a significant point of difference in identifying as a Muslim. In effect, hijab acts to further define her identity as not only a Muslim, but a ‘Practicing Muslim’ different from “other Muslims.” In the same way that hijab is perceived as an obvious symbol of Muslimness to others, it also becomes an obvious marker of a Practicing Muslim in comparison to “other Muslims.”

Laila’s description of her sense of identity and hijab also speaks to the nuances within the process of identifying as a Muslim and associating belonging to a particular group. Laila feels empowered wearing hijab around non-Muslims because she is the only one wearing it, which explicitly demarcates her connection to Islam. Wearing hijab around non-hijab wearing Muslims also symbolizes this affiliation, demonstrating her identity not just as a Muslim but a Practicing Muslim. Despite saying “that could be me,” in regard to “other Muslims” in her community, she continues wearing hijab, displaying her commitment and identity as a Practicing Muslim. Laila’s quote shows the negotiation between similarity and difference where hijab acts as the axis of

comparison. However, distinguishing between ‘us’ and ‘them’ proves to be difficult and nuanced, as Muslims who do not wear the hijab float between being recognized as ‘us’ or ‘them.’ Meanings attached to the hijab in relation to practice, commitment, and Muslim identity become more complicated when considered at the inter-group level (when assumed difference is perceived to be more pronounced).

Furthermore, this particular performance and identity of the Practicing Muslim is gendered, reflecting the experience of Muslim women specifically. While Mahdi recognized that the hijab is a visual representation of a Practicing Muslim woman, he did not offer further insight about Muslim women who did not wear the hijab. Nonetheless, the perceptions of hijab from the male point of view can offer further insight into the associated meaning of hijab regarding the Practicing Muslim identity performance. For example, Alghafli, Marks, Hatch and Rose (2017) conducted a study exploring the personal understandings of the hijab among 20 married Muslim couples in the United States, showcasing male and female perspectives of the hijab. The study found that Muslim husbands understood hijab as a symbol of religious commitment for a woman and is a tool of protection rather than oppression for women and families. Muslim men also believed that the hijab should not be understood superficially as a physical piece of cloth, but instead as something with deeper meaning that encompasses modest behaviour such as refraining from engaging with the opposite sex, shyness, and other behaviour related characteristics. The female and male participants in Alghafli et al’s (2017) study express similar perceptions of hijab, viewing it as a symbol or proof of commitment and practice; however, it should be noted that all female participants in Alghafli et al’s (2017) study were veiled. However, the way in which the Muslim husbands associated wearing the hijab with religious commitment and particular modest behaviours, is indicative of associating the hijab with the performance of the Practicing Muslim, just as the male and female participants of

the current study in discussion.

4.2.2 (A) HIJAB IN SPORT

Hijab is clearly an important identifying marker of Muslimness, a connection that was explicitly expressed by participants. Thus, it came as no surprise that participants often mentioned hijab as they spoke of their sporting experiences. As discussed in the literature review, various studies exploring the sporting experiences of Muslim women have found that Muslim women experience tension, conflict and barriers while wearing hijab and participating in sport. In turn, wearing hijab is often utilized to explain the lack of Muslim female participation in sports (Walseth, 2016). However, participants in this study did not view hijab as a barrier to their sport participation. In fact, many of the participants felt empowered to be wearing hijab and playing in ‘mainstream’ sport teams (meaning non-exclusive, non-Muslim teams). Often, participants expressed that wearing hijab did not impact whether they played sports or how they play. Depending on the sport, hijab was almost negligible. For example, Alisha has been involved in competitive taekwondo for many years and currently teaches taekwondo at her local dojo. Alisha explained that she had seen many Muslim women taekwondo players wearing hijab and practicing comfortably, which made her feel that it was not a big deal to wear hijab and play. Other sports, like swimming, can pose a challenge to maintaining full hijab. Sophie recalled being an avid swimmer but choosing not to wear revealing swimsuits and instead wearing a rash guard. At her junior high school, she felt that her teammates and coaches knew and accepted that she swam wearing a rash guard since she did not wear revealing clothing generally; however, once she transferred schools, she began to receive comments and questions about why she wore a rash guard instead of a swimsuit like everyone else, ultimately causing her to stop swimming. During our discussion, Sophie paused and admitted that she had really enjoyed swimming as a child and was quite good at it. In retrospect, she regrets quitting on

the account of other people's opinions and stated that if she was as confident when she was a young teenager as she is now, she would have not even considered quitting. For Sophie, the aspect of confidence is a recurring theme in her life when it comes to wearing the hijab. She feels that as she transitioned into adulthood, her regard for other people's comments diminished significantly, allowing her to feel confident in her choice to wear hijab. The choices she makes now are solely dependent on her own feelings and perceptions which evidently has allowed her to explore activities that she enjoys like volleyball, basketball, and soccer.

By analysing the participants' responses about hijab in various settings and experiences (i.e., everyday life, 'mainstream' sport, community sport etc.), it becomes apparent that the significance of hijab varies from superficial to deep, sometimes even holding both meanings simultaneously. For example, when discussing hijab in sport, participants often spoke to the physical aspects of hijab as "just a piece of cloth" that does not impede or restrict their ability to play sport. Participants intentionally rejected the assumptions made by FIFA for example, that saw hijab as a piece of cloth that poses danger to players (i.e., choking hazard, pulled off by opposing players, etc.), by repeatedly emphasizing that hijab is just a piece of cloth, and that they can do and play just as well as other non-hijab wearing players. At first, I would consider this understanding of hijab as superficial or mainly physical in nature; just a piece of cloth on a player's head. Nonetheless, this observed emphasis on the superficialness of hijab is noteworthy. In some ways, participants prioritize the superficial meaning of hijab to reject the deeper significance of hijab constructed by Othering narratives as a symbol of danger, oppression, and weakness. By emphasizing that hijab is just a piece of cloth, they attempt to remove the linked associations made by such narratives to hijab because they do not reflect their own lived experiences. Participants genuinely felt that they can and do play sports with hijab without feeling restricted or dangerous to themselves or other players. At

the same time, some participants explicitly reference a deeper significance to this piece of cloth, acknowledging its significance as adherence to ‘proper’ Islamic behaviour, but also attributing a sense of strength, empowerment and confidence, elements that could serve them well in a sports setting.

Similarly, it could be argued that FIFA’s Law 4 of banning the hijab on the field, is founded in a deeper understanding of what hijab means and symbolizes globally and politically. While the reasoning behind banning the hijab may have been framed as purely physical or superficial, within a hyper-Islamophobic context (Thobani, 2007), the hijab ban has been critically examined to have been gendering and racializing, deeply “rooted in a colonialist and Islamist alliance” (Hamzeh, 2017, p. 11). Thus, while hijab has a deeper significance, as it is understood in relation to individual experiences, perspectives, practices and politics, it can still possess other levels of meaning and significance depending on the context. This further adds to the discussion of hijab and its significance amongst hijab wearing Muslim women, highlighting the nuances of how hijab is understood by Muslim women themselves, rather than how others understand the significance of hijab.

4.2.3(B) EMBODIMENT AND MODIFICATION OF BEHAVIOUR

Tertiary to prayer and hijab, intentional and purposeful behaviour modification was commonly mentioned by the participants regarding performing the Practicing Muslim. It is important to note here that behaviour modification is already a large component of practicing Islam; being kind, peaceful, compassionate, modest, and respectable, amongst other positive attributes, ‘should’ be standard attributes of one who identifies as a Muslim. Being raised as a Muslim myself, the way Muslims ‘should’ behave is taught as essential to presenting oneself as a practicing Muslim in front of others as well as Infront of God. This foundational expectation is taught through Islamic

teachings and in the Quran by which Muslims then apply to their own behaviours. In addition, I argue that the participants view active behaviour modification as an indication of the ‘good’ Practicing Muslim, one that is juxtaposed against the mainstream image of Muslims and Islam (in media and popular culture) as violent, unpeaceful, and uncompassionate. In this way, the given standard becomes questioned, meaning that what is understood as baseline behaviour for all Muslims by Muslims themselves must now be proven to others. As such, participants spoke about behaviour modification in two ways: first, as a part of their lifestyle of being a Practicing Muslim and second, as the pressure to represent Muslims as ‘good’ people as a response to or rejection of the misrepresentation of Islam and Muslims in mainstream media and popular culture in Western society.

First, participants often considered being a Muslim as adopting a certain lifestyle. When discussing the meaning of being a Muslim, Regina stated, “Well, for me, it means like, I have chosen this way of life, which is Islam because I’m Muslim. And so really like every day I am trying to live the lifestyle” (Regina, Interview 2). Sarah further elaborates on this lifestyle:

I think a Muslim is a person who lives an Islamic lifestyle, and that Islamic lifestyle is what we consider the best way to live life. And with that lifestyle, you know, obviously incorporates the way we act, the way we talk to others, even the way we think, how we spend our money, you know, obviously the way we dress, things like that, so honestly, like, it's just a lifestyle. That's the best way I could explain it. (Sarah, interview 2)

To Sarah, as well as most participants, being a Muslim entails living an Islamic lifestyle which includes embodying Islamic social values through speech, actions and behaviours. Participants often noted watching their behaviours and purposely modifying their reactions and

responses to align with Islamic social values. The participants frame their behaviour modification as an act of exercising agency, as they emphasize their choice to behave in ways that aligned with their chosen identity as a Practicing Muslim. This internally imposed behaviour modification can be understood through Benn's (2009) work on embodied faith. For young Muslims, embodied faith is reflected by the physical representation of the body, such as hijab for women, but also by behaviour, social interactions, and speech that is representative of Islamic values (Benn, 2009). This was exemplified by the participants' responses to represent their identities as Practicing Muslims in tangible ways such as through wearing hijab, performing prayer, and behaviour modification.

While participants understood behaviour modification as a part of living the Islamic lifestyle, it is impossible to negate the impact of mainstream perceptions of Islam in media and popular culture on individual behaviour modification patterns of Canadian Muslims. Being a 'good' person and exhibiting positive attributes are essentially to practicing Islam; however, it is also a response to how 'Muslims' are portrayed in media, news, and popular culture, and being actively 'good' serves as a strategy to distinguish individual Muslims from the Othered image of Islam and Muslims. In this way, behaviour modification overlaps between performing the Practicing Muslim and the Model Muslim, which is discussed in greater detail in the next section.

4.3 PERFORMING THE MODEL MUSLIM: THE 'GOOD' OTHER

Before delving into the discussion of the 'Other', this section largely describes the contextual factors that make up this study. While one may argue that such factors are not inherently exclusive to the case in study i.e., the Umoja Games, the data that will be discussed serves to highlight the case and the nuances of such environments, illuminating the choice made by participants to be involved in such spaces as well as the choices made by the facilitators or such an event. The data collected and discussed below may not fully be exclusive to the case in study, as

participants also shared opinions and thoughts not pertaining to their participation at the Umoja Games, however I believe this context (explicitly and inexplicitly) aids and supports the discussion of identity formation and the sense of belonging to communities and the nation. Thus, this section utilizes larger themes and concepts in conjunction with participants' narratives, and contextual information about the Umoja Games to draw a semantic web in order to understand how 'Otherness' is perceived, embodied or perhaps even rejected by Umoja Games participants.

The category of the 'Other' or Otherness is the result of a discursive process where the ingroup (i.e., 'Us' or the Self) constructs the outgroup (i.e., 'Them' or the 'Other') through stigmatizing a real or imagined difference. This difference is presented as a negation of identity, thus providing the basis for potential discrimination (Staszak, 2008). Central to the construction of otherness is unequal power dynamics and relations (e.g., Mondal, 2014; Hall & Gieben, 1992; Chakrabarty, 2009). Said's Orientalism refers to this as "colonial discourse" – a hegemonic discourse that presents the Orient as the Other through all forms of discourse including history, literature, science, and media (Said, 1978, p. 3). The Orient (East) is constructed to be backwards, barbaric, uncivilized, and essentially opposite of the Occident (West). Since the Self (i.e., the Occident or the West) is constructed through the Other (i.e., the Orient or the East), by definition, the Self is forward thinking, civilized and superior to the Other (Mondal, 2014).

The media in the West has played a key role in the rise and proliferation of these Orientalist notions. For example, the ways in which Muslims and Islam are represented in the news, television shows, newspapers and other forms of media perpetuate a specific stereotype about Muslim women and men which categorize them as Other. These representations, stereotypes, and categorizations did not go unnoticed by the study participants. When asked about Muslim representation in the media they consumed, participants felt that, especially on television shows and in the news, Muslim

women are stereotypically portrayed as weak, disempowered, submissive, and obedient, while Muslim men are portrayed as violent, oppressive, manipulative, and misogynistic.

Moreover, participants tended to separate the representation of Muslims into two categories: 'old' and 'new.' 'Old' representation included the stereotypical representation of Islam as a violent, barbaric religion comprised of members who oppress women leaving them weak and vulnerable in need of saving by the 'White man.' The participants felt that this type of representation is slowly being phased out and was more common in media 10 years ago. Instead, participants referenced a 'new' wave of representation, one where Muslims are portrayed as modern and moderate individuals, seemingly assimilated to Western life. Participants critiqued television shows, social media and the fashion industry as spaces where the stereotypical image of the Muslim woman has been reconstructed to be more 'modern' and 'normal.' These terms were used by participants in reference to the reconstruction of the Muslim as aligned with Western liberal ideals and values. Participants felt that this 'new' representation was not necessarily an improvement or progress away from the previous misrepresentation of Muslims, but rather, simply another form of egregious misrepresentation.

For example, with regards to hijab in the media, participants expressed dissatisfaction with the 'new' narrative of hijab. Both Amira and Sarah referenced a show called *Elite* as an example of 'new' and 'modern' representations of hijab and Muslims. *Elite* is a Spanish drama series, streaming on Netflix, that revolves around the relationships between students enrolled in a private school in Madrid. The first season originally starred a Hijabi (a woman who wears hijab) Muslim character, Nadia; however, as the season progresses, Nadia decides to remove her hijab due to threats from the school administration and from other students. At first she is hesitant to engage in non-Islamic behaviours such as dating, premarital sex, and drinking. However, as the season progresses Nadia is

portrayed as finding herself and her 'true' identity by deciding to date, kiss and engage in premarital sex with a male character who shows interest in her. Nadia often finds herself conflicted as she engages in such behaviours that are not permissible actions/behaviours in Islam, constantly afraid of her family's' reaction. Later on in the season, Nadia discovers that her brother Omar is gay, which ultimately brings the two siblings closer together. Participants expressed that such representations of Muslims in the media negatively represents the ways in which Muslims live in the West, noting that they do not feel that such representation resonates with them as Muslims living in the West. To the participants, Nadia progressively disregards her values and identity in favour of adopting European values that allow her to fit in with the other characters in the show.

In addition, some participants noted that Muslim characters in television shows identified as Muslim but did not represent the Islamic lifestyle. For example, Laila referred to a television show in which a Muslim woman wearing the hijab identified as a lesbian. Homosexuality remains a controversial topic among Muslim people and is often referred to as a sin by numerous scholars, commentators and practicing Muslims (De Sonny, 2011). Laila felt that Muslims are being represented the way that "...*they* want us to be like" (Laila, interview 2). By 'they,' Laila meant the media which controls the narrative about Muslims in popular culture in the West. Thus, Laila felt that the media purposefully constructs Muslims in this 'new' way not as an improvement from the 'old' representations but rather as another form of misrepresentation. Indeed, participants who referred to these examples, had misgivings about this 'new' representation emerging in the media that participants consumed. They perceived this 'new' writing of Muslim characters as assimilated, 'modern' versions of themselves, and as the result of the manipulation of their lived experiences as practicing Muslims in the West. They felt that they did not relate to such characters and that in fact, these 'new' social constructions were further ruining the image of Islam and Muslims. Most

participants referred to such representations as worse than the ‘old’ representations, even going as far as saying they would “rather have no representation than *this* type of representation” (Amira, Interview 2).

4.3.1 THE BEGINNINGS OF HYBRIDIZATION AND THIRD SPACE IDENTITIES

Thus, the ways in which participants accept, reject, or question the representation of Muslims in the media such as through the example of *Elite* and other media representations of Muslims, speaks to the process of understanding one’s identity amid perceptions and constructions that surround them. This can be analysed in two ways: first, the perceived construction of the Muslim body and the Other in the media as assimilated and Westernized; and second, the participants’ sense of dissonance regarding their identity as Muslims living in the West. This process of understanding their identity cannot be separated from the influences of good Othering. While hybrid identities exist in a space separate from the constraints of colonial binaries, they are the product of this constriction. Hybrid identities can be seen as the reaction to or the rejection of such constraints, in a way where identity is not defined narrowly instead it is seen as fluid and highly contextual. This space, the Third Space (Bhabha, 1994), allows for a new conception of identity, one that rejects and does not rely on essentialist narratives of identity, membership or category that reproduce and maintain Otherness.

These fictional narratives represent the Westernization of Islam, specifically the hijab, which historically has been characterized as a visible symbol of Otherness. In these examples, the Other (i.e., the Muslim Woman) is seen to be assimilating to Western liberal values, practices and ideals, in an attempt to become more modern, contemporary or accepted by Western standards. In

comparison to the uncivilized, backwards, 'bad' Other, this narrative modernizes the Other, thus constructing a subset outgroup: the 'good,' 'modern' and 'acceptable' Other. Although participants referred to this observed Westernization of Islam in media as "new," European governments attempted to construct an 'acceptable Islam' soon after 9/11, over two decades ago, by adopting interventionist policies in the religious affairs of Muslims (Haddad & Golson, 2007). Islam was viewed as a major security issue in Western countries, prompting governments to find solutions for their newfound 'Muslim problem.' These solutions ranged from more benign Muslim integration and denouncing of 'extremist' Islam, to more explicit state-approved policies on the organization of Muslim communities (Haddad & Golson, 2007). Governments were no longer asking how to facilitate belonging for Muslims in foreign societies; rather, the question was how to create the 'right' kind of Muslim citizen, one who is loyal and shares European values (Haddad & Golson, 2007). In other words, as Said's concept of Orientalism illustrates, those in power continue to manipulate and construct the Other in ways that ultimately benefit the Self and impose power over the Other by dictating who is considered 'good' and 'bad.' The 'right' kind of Muslim is the 'good' Other, one who can be tolerated and/or accepted in Western society. Participants were critical of the 'new' representation for its inaccuracy, but perhaps also because of the colonial binary of the 'bad'/backwards Muslim versus the 'good'/modern Muslim that is being reinforced via the 'new' narrative. Writing characters who take off their hijabs because of love interests or to fit in with their friends does not resonate with the participants' lived experience as a hijabi Muslim women in the West, because that is not *their* reality. Instead, these representations reflect the Western solution to the 'Muslim problem.' Thus, regardless of 'new' or 'old' representation, dominant media culture needs to continue the stereotypical misrepresentation of Muslims in the West to maintain its power over the conceptual construction of the Other and "the desire for an originality" (Bhabha, 1994, p.

104).

Through the participants' critique of 'new' and 'old' media stereotypical representations, participants seemingly observe dissonance in their identities as Muslims and Westerners. 'New' representations attempt to exemplify what it means to be a Muslim in the West but participants cannot see themselves in this representation. Alongside the understanding of dominant cultures' continued Othering, I suggest that this search for an accurate depiction of their perceived identity in the existing paradigm has been futile because the participants, in some ways, are beginning to experience a reality beyond the binary colonial paradigm that continues to be reproduced by dominant culture media. Instead, participants experience a reality that neither constitutes strictly Western culture nor Islamic culture, but one that is equally shaped by both.

Homi Bhabha (1994) has addressed this phenomenon in cultural discourse through the concepts of hybridity, mimicry, and Third Space. Bhabha's analysis of culture is contextualized in postcolonialism as it "bears witness to the unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation involved in the contest for political and social authority within the modern world order" (p. 245). The misrepresentation of Islamic culture/Muslims in the West is representative of dominant essentialist culture controlling narratives that maintain the colonial binary paradigm where Islam (culture, values etc.) is incompatible with Western culture and values. The dominant culture of the colonizer maintains the essentialist perspective of cultural identity, "the belief in invariable and fixed properties which define the 'whatness' of a given entity" (Fuss, 1991, p. xi) which Bhabha challenges, instead contending that cultures are continuously in the process of reinvention, open to ambivalence and interpretation, including the dominant culture of the colonizer. This ambivalence allowed for stereotypes, fixed, baseless representations of the Other, to function as discriminatory power by denying the acknowledgment of difference (Bhabha, 1994). However, it is this same

ambivalence that allowed for the adoption of mimicry. Mimicry is “the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which ‘appropriates’ the Other as it visualizes power” (p. 122). Mimicry is a metonym of presence; it appears as the taking on or imitation of colonizer culture. The instance referenced by participants of the hijabi character in *Elite* removing her hijab and partaking in more Western behaviours such as dating and premarital sex, alongside similar Muslim-living-in-the-West representation in the media, can be understood as the media’s attempt to showcase assimilated Western Muslims. However, this type of representation in fact serves as an example of Bhabha’s concept of mimicry and the colonist's desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is, “almost the same, but not quite” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 125). The character finds herself unable to fit in with her peers given the significance of her difference as a hijabi Muslim woman, which of course is caused by the discourse of difference that is maintained by colonialist power. Thus, by removing her hijab and engaging with the behaviours of those she desires to be like, she becomes more like the ‘us,’ a European in this case. Bhabha (1994) describes this as the “desire to emerge as authentic through mimicry” (p. 125). When Nadia unveils, she is unveiling to be more like the ‘us’ of European identity. Unveiling is a partial representation of the ‘authentic’ European, meaning that in taking off her hijab Nadia *partially* claims European identity. This partial identity affords Nadia an unrecognizable Otherness (given that hijab is a recognizable symbol of Otherness) that allows for a seemingly integrated experience. The representation of a partial identity, in the example of *Elite* and beyond, signifies the ‘Good’ Other which in this case is being rejected by the participants. The rejection of the represented partial identity and mimicry in media by the participants can be understood as the negation of meanings constructed by such identities. By doing so, participants are recognizing that their perceived identity as Muslims living in the West lies beyond the limitations of mimicry and

colonial binaries. Instead, participants begin to describe a ‘hybrid’ identity resembling what Bhabha (1994) describes as existing in the ‘Third Space’.

Third Space is a transition space where postcolonial power relations and norms are destabilized by political, aesthetic or everyday practices; a space where hybridity in regard to identities and culture exists (Bhabha, 1994). For Bhabha, “hybridity becomes the moment in which the discourse of colonial authority loses its univocal grip on meaning and finds itself open to the trace of the language of the other, enabling the critic to trace complex movements of disarming alterity in the colonial text” (Young, 1995, p. 21). Thus, hybrid identities move beyond the dichotomy of the ‘us’ and ‘them,’ and instead, cultural transformations and new meanings are created in the Third Space that allow for a performance and practice of difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy.

The ways in which participants articulated their self-labels as different combinations of nationality, cultural or religious identification depending on different contexts and situations shows evidence of hybrid identity conceptualization (Boland, 2020). For example, when asked to describe how she identifies herself, Ella described her own self-label through a combination of religion, nationality, parental lineage and language:

I mean obviously I am Muslim, I was raised as a Muslim here. I’m also Canadian, born in Toronto ... I’m also Arab. Well, my mom is from Iraq and my dad, like his family and stuff, he is from Iran, so kind of like half. I do speak Arabic though and English and I guess French but, like, not really. So like, I am all of those really.

In this account, Ella presents her identity as multi-faceted and combined, consciously

selecting, pairing or retaining particular identity labels, stating that she is “all of those”. By using the term “also” she is able to describe her identity without limiting herself to one particular category or label. She also consciously emphasizes some labels by saying she is “obviously” Muslim and quantifies her ethnicity by saying “half” Arab but reinforces her claim to Arabness by saying she does speak Arabic. In this way, Ella has curated an identity that is shaped by the languages she speaks, the specific place in Canada where she was born, ethnic background(s), and her religion. However, she is “all of those” combined, not “all of those” individually. This is an important distinction in regard to hybrid identities; rather than understanding identity as sum-of-the-parts, it is instead a new identity and new meanings are formed, equally or unequally shaped by various identity labels. Likewise, similar presentations of multifaceted, hybridized identity were found in Boland’s (2020) qualitative study of self-identification and identity formation of self-identifying Muslim youth of migrant origin in Madrid. Much of the 1.5-generation or second-generation Muslim youth “combined one or several aspects of religious, cultural or ethnic identity alongside an identification with Spain or Madrid” (Boland, 2020, p. 1) and presented as a hyphenated or hybrid identity. Other participants, Amira, Alisha, and Regina also presented themselves in a similar manner, incorporating their religion, nationality, ethnicity and language to holistically represent themselves.

Thus, there is some evidence of the formation of such identities in the participants' narratives, as they reject common Othering limitations and boundaries, expanding beyond colonial dichotomies and creating new meanings of ‘goodness’ and identity in the metaphorical Third Space.

4.3.2 PERFORMANCE OF THE ‘GOOD’ OTHER: BEHAVIOUR MODIFICATION

As discussed in the previous section, good behaviour was understood through participants’ sense of religious identity and in terms of behaving according to Islamic values and teachings to

exemplify or perform their Muslimness. In addition, participants also spoke of good behaviour from the lens of their national identity. As Muslim youth born and raised in Canada by immigrant parents, participants are exposed to various meanings of 'good behaviour.' As Canadians, participants perceived "goodness" through stereotypical performances of 'Good Canadianess', or stereotypical Canadian behaviour. When asked to describe a Canadian, Alisha described Canadians as "stereotypically very nice people, they're very accepting ... in general people are just positive and like they are always nice and good to you" (Alisha, Interview 2). Amira further elaborates by stating that Canadians are "inclusive and appreciate diversity ... but I mean from a stereotypical standpoint, you can say, like, they are more polite and nicer and more like proper" (Amira, interview 2). Regina also adds that, "obviously there are stereotypes of being Canadian like the little different things that they say like 'oh, I'm sorry' cause we're just so, like, nice" (Regina, Interview 2). Participants also categorized 'good' Canadians as law abiding citizens, people who are involved in their community and try to make their communities a better place. The recurring usage of the term 'stereotypical' alludes to the participants' perception of 'good' behaviour being seen as inherently Canadian. Participants admit to purposely and actively attempting to exhibit nice, kind, and positive behaviour because that is "the Canadian thing to do." However, being a Canadian who is also visibly Muslim adds further nuance to their behaviour modification practices and their attempts to align oneself with 'goodness.' In this way, the measure of this perception of goodness for participants was expressed as subjective and evaluated through several interconnected criteria (i.e., family, culture, Canadian law, religion), reflecting the environment in which they live.

For example, perceptions of being a hyper visible Muslim in a non-Muslim society, led to feelings of "being the only one," which was commonly expressed by participants. Some participants felt that they stood out compared to others around them, making it hard for them to

blend in because “it’s so obvious that I am a Muslim” (Alisha, Interview 1). Participants often expressed being hyper-aware of their visibility as Muslims, specifically when they felt that they *looked* Muslim. The ways in which participants described ‘looking’ Muslim is heavily dependent on the stereotypical construction of how a Muslim is physically supposed to look, such as having a darker complexion and facial features, having a long beard (for men), wearing an *abaya* (long garment typically worn by women) and wearing a hijab (for women). Of course, Muslim people are ethno-racially diverse; thus, ‘Muslim-looking’ is not an effective method for typifying or discerning who is a Muslim and who is not. However, the repercussions of such a category and methods for identification are valid and real. Sophie, for example, is mixed-race and expressed that oftentimes people are shocked when she says that she is Muslim since she does not ‘look’ Muslim because of her lighter complexion and features. In fact, Sophie did not wear hijab until early adulthood and thus, did not feel that she looked Muslim most of her life. It was not until she wore hijab, did she start feeling the repercussions or consequences of ‘looking Muslim.’ Participants who felt that they ‘looked’ Muslim expressed heightened vigilance to behave in a particular way. Even for Sophie, although she always behaved according to Islamic values and morals, it was not until she became visibly Muslim (through wearing hijab) that she realized “the reality ... anyone who sees you is just going to take whatever you do and extrapolate that to an entire faith” (Sophie, Interview 2). This “reality” is described by most of the participants as a burden, one that is carried by visibly Muslim people every day and dictates the ways in which they respond to situations and choose to behave with others.

As a result of this sense of responsibility to represent a ‘good’ image, coupled with the aforementioned view of how Muslims are portrayed in popular media, participants engage in behaviour modification through self-policing practices to prove that they are moderate, ‘nice’

Muslims. The participants of this study felt the need to play the role of the “Model Minority” in public and when interacting with others daily to not only avoid being perceived in negative ways but also to be perceived as ‘good’ Muslims and ‘good’ Canadians. For example, Alisha says she makes note to smile at strangers who make eye contact with her, not as an automatic response out of awkwardness, but as a purposeful action. She also says she makes sure to hold the door open for strangers and be as polite as possible when interacting with others. These experiences are mirrored in Tahseen Shams’ (2018) ethnographic study on the experiences of South Asian Muslim women in Los Angeles, California. Shams (2018) explored the ways in which individuals and collective Muslim communities understood and responded to their hyper-visibility. It was found that Muslim Americans actively engaged in behaviour modification and self-policing to avoid being perceived as outsiders or un-American (Shams, 2018). By engaging in self-policing practices, the participants in Shams’ study actively attempted to prove themselves as innocent, moderate, nice Muslims through their everyday interactions. In the case of my study, performance of particular behaviours is a significant factor in ascribing to a particular identity and *proving* that one belongs to particular groups.

Therefore, we can see that the measure of this perception of goodness for participants was expressed as subjective and evaluated through several interconnected criteria (i.e., family, Canadian culture and norms, religion, societal expectations), reflecting the environment in which they live. This means that the ways in which participants defined ‘goodness’ and chose to behave relied on the existing essentialist ideas of ‘goodness’ as defined through a national, religious or cultural lens but also went beyond the limitations of those definitions. In this way, a new unique definition of ‘goodness’ manifests arguably one that exists in the Third Space. Raised in Canada, participants have come to understand ‘goodness’ via the knowledge structures of this particular society. At the

same time, being raised as Muslims, they come to understand ‘goodness’ through Islamic behaviours and values taught by via their religion, parents, and family. Furthermore, the construction of ‘goodness’ specifically imposed upon Othered people, namely Muslims in the West, plays a significant role in the shaping of this new definition. The result then is the emergence of a new meaning of ‘goodness,’ one that combines multiple understandings and reflects the space from which it came to exist. This exemplifies the process of hybridity or the emergence of new cultural forms by drawing on multiple discourses to make sense of the world (Bhabha, 1994).

Often, participants caught themselves conflating ‘goodness’ as understood in a Muslim sense, and as associated with ‘Canadianess.’ For example, after describing who a ‘good’ Canadian is, Sophie paused and realized, “actually a lot of times being a Canadian is pretty much the same as being a Muslim. If you are nice to others, kind, respectful uh, basically a good human being, then you are doing them both well.” Ella echoed a similar realization when describing an instance when she was walking down the sidewalk on a busy street in her neighbourhood on garbage collection day. It was a particularly windy day and some of the recycling bins had been blown off the sidewalk. People ahead of her dodged the bins and continued walking, but she chose to stop and move each bin back onto the curb because they belonged to her neighbours, and she felt like it was the ‘nice’ thing to do. Although Ella did not explicitly say she did this so people will think of her as a ‘good’ Canadian, her account reflects the ways in which she understands goodness and good behaviours in the context of living in Canada as a Muslim.

Although this may be a small example, participants often inexplicitly (or unknowingly) conflated being a ‘good’ Muslim to being a ‘good’ Canadian by listing the same behaviours and characteristics they understood as being good for both being a ‘good’ Muslim and a ‘good’ Canadian. Later on in the interview when asked about good Muslim behaviours, Ella went back to

the example and added that being neighbourly and respecting others' property as traits of being a good Canadian citizen *and* a Muslim. Her active decision to move the recycling bins was based on what it meant to be a 'good' person in that moment, which was informed by what it meant to be a good Canadian *and* a Muslim.

At the same time, some participants were aware that the essentializing of goodness did not resonate with their understanding of goodness. Laila for example, exemplified this recognition by rejecting the limitations of the Model Minority where goodness or value, is defined through the colonialist discourse of overcompensating in certain aspects of behaviour, such as mimicking essentialist, 'authentic' definitions of goodness, in order to mask difference. Laila's realization is illustrated through a racially motivated experience she had during a soccer game:

This is the prime example. [Another player] was like, she was like, 'Go fetch Osama's daughter' or something like that. And I wasn't going to take it obviously, I wasn't gonna take it. So I turned around, and I punched her in the nose. I got a red card, and I got ejected off the field. And you know what, it felt so good. Because at that moment, the girls on the team who didn't perhaps like me were like, shit, like, don't mess with her you know what I mean? They thought that I won't do anything and that I would stay quiet and be a good little girl and take it but I won't (Laila, Interview 2).

Laila recognizes that others expected her to behave in a certain way, to remain silent and accept the abuse without causing a scene. Being silent, obedient, and submissive are socially constructed behavioural expectations of the Model Minority and the stereotypical Muslim woman; however, Laila did not feel that such a construction aligned with how she viewed herself. Although violence should never be condoned, it is interesting to note how Laila chooses to react in this

situation by purposely rejecting what was expected of her and what good behaviours looked like. She added that she felt good about the way she reacted because this way the other player would never say that again to “the next brown girl she sees or the next one” (Laila, Interview 2). This behaviour is neither in line with being a ‘good’ Canadian, a ‘good’ Muslim or even a good sport, but to Laila this action was ‘good’ because she was in control of her actions and her perception and chose not conform to what was expected of her.

Therefore, as exemplified through the participants' experiences, ‘goodness’ is highly subjective and is constructed through multiple discourses that contextually exist. The ways in which participants expressed their understanding of goodness was through the ways in which they engaged with socially constructed meanings of goodness and made conscious modifications to their behaviours as a result of this understanding. The meaning of ‘goodness’ is implicitly cultivated through various knowledge discourses that participants learned and took up throughout their upbringing in Canada. To the participants, ‘goodness’ could be exemplified or performed through their behaviours and reactions to certain occurrences. While their own expressed behaviour played a major role in understanding the ways in which participants understood ‘goodness,’ the ways in which they engaged with existing narratives of Othered goodness, such as media representation of the Good Other, allows for more insight into how participants are processing that information and reacting to it. Participants displayed a similar reaction, in terms of negotiating, rejecting or accepting existing narratives, in the realm of sport, specifically in regard to the Nike Pro Hijab which is discussed in depth in the next section.

4.3.3 CONSTRUCTING THE ‘GOOD’ OTHER IN SPORT THROUGH ‘MODERNIZATION’

Throughout both rounds of interviews with each participant and the interview with the

Founder of Umoja Foundation, evidence of the ‘good’ Other identity (i.e., Model Muslim) became more prevalent in the realm of sport. Sport participation was seen as an indicator of practicing (and performing) ‘modern,’ ‘acceptable’ Otherness. The relationship between modernization and sport is historically and anthropologically undeniable. Indeed, modern sport systems (such as the International Olympic Committee) and globally dominant sports (such as cricket and soccer) played an important role in Western colonialism and imperialism serving imperial, colonial and civilizing purposes (Besnier, Brownell & Carter, 2018). The spread of organized, competitive, and team sport was tied to the “emergence of modernity, the emergence of the modern state as a regulatory entity, the ascendance and naturalization of capitalism and the concomitant ideological transformations of the body and self” (Besnier, Brownell & Carter, 2018, p. 448). By the late 18th century, the modernization paradigm fundamentally differentiated ‘traditional’ sport (or folk sport) from ‘modern sport, so much so that the English word ‘sport’ had come to refer to Western sports exclusively. In this way, Western sports had come to occupy a “privileged position because of their identification with modernity” in many parts of the world (Besnier, Brownell & Carter, 2018, p. 446). The sport forms that emerged in 19th century Europe were closely linked to modern, Western principles of masculinity, nationalism, and colonial aspirations. Physical education and sport participation was linked to national strength and racial purity. Furthermore, the British model saw that sports racing and ball games were imbued with the doctrine of Muscular Christianity -- the understanding that the body must be cultivated as a healthy, manly, Christian body – and promoted sport to strengthen religious purity, promote masculinity and as action in the service of God, country, and Empire (Besnier, Brownell & Carter, 2018; MacAloon, 2008; Mangan, 1981). In this way, the body that engaged in sport became attached to a particular meaning or performance of modernity, that of which was defined by the Christian European paradigm of the 18th and 19th

century.

The context of this study prompted the analysis of ‘modern’ sport as a product of Westernization and modernity, and by proxy, the body that engages in ‘modern’ sport. Interestingly, while participants usually recognized and criticized the attempts to reframe the stereotypical image of Muslims and Islam in media into the ‘modern’ or ‘acceptable’ version of Islam in the West; their responses are starkly different in the case of sport, Islam, and modernization, often expressing more positive responses. The tensions regarding sport and modernization in conjunction with religion is discussed through the example of the Nike Pro Hijab, an often-referenced sub-theme amongst female participants.

4.3.3(A) NIKE PRO HIJAB AND MODERNIZATION OF MUSLIM FEMALE

ATHLETES

The Nike Pro Hijab, as Bahrainwala and O’Connor (2018) argue, was created and designed as a symbol of modernity and palatable Otherness, deeming those who wear it as also modern and palatable by proxy. Participants' support for the Nike Pro Hijab not only speaks to the performance of the Good Other, but also speaks to the ways in which they have come to understand the representation of the Good Other (in this case the Muslim hijabi woman) in sports specifically. Furthermore, the Umoja Games itself comes to be a space whereby the Good Other identity is facilitated and performed. By designing the Umoja Games to be comparable to mainstream sport, as well-organized, professional and competitive, participants come to recognize Umoja Games as ‘real’ sport, dubbing their participation as ‘real’.

Before delving into the discussion of how the Nike Pro Hijab exemplifies colonial agendas of modernizing the Other to produce an unrecognizable Other, an explanation of the Nike Pro Hijab

is needed. The Nike Pro Hijab was launched December 1st, 2017 and was specifically marketed towards Muslim women athletes who wore the hijab. Nike decided to design this product after meeting with top athletes and realizing “the many availability and performance problems associated with wearing a traditional hijab for sport over the past couple of years” (Nike News, 2017). As a result, Nike designers produced prototypes and tested the hijabs with various female athletes both top athletes and everyday athletes. With the feedback from these women, the designers were able to produce a sleek, inconspicuous, lightweight, soft and breathable hijab that surpassed the functionality of a traditional hijab. It was first released in the colours black and obsidian on the nike.com website and via select retailers in Europe, North Africa, North America and across the Middle East. In January, other colours, including white and vast gray, were released on the nike.com website and select retailers in over 20 countries. The face of this campaign was Ibtihaj Muhammed, a an American-Muslim Olympic champion fencer sponsored by Nike. Muhammed’s experience wearing the hijab as a young girl playing sport up until participating at the Olympics is an important narrative through which Nike frames its product as ground-breaking, essential, and radically impactful towards the future of Muslim female sport participation.

On the day of the Nike Pro Hijab release, Nike published an article on their platform, Nike News. The first photo featured is a black and white side profile of Ibtihaj Muhammed wearing the Nike Pro Hijab whilst holding a fencing sword. The article quotes Muhammed’s experiences as a hijab wearing athlete highlighting the struggles she experienced as a young athlete in school and the struggles of finding a hijab that “interacted well with her uniform” (Nike News, 2017). The article continues repeatedly mentioning the incompatibility of traditional hijab with athletics and sport, stating that, before the Nike Pro Hijab, many hijab wearing athletes struggled with comfort as well as with sport officials. Throughout the article, Nike frames its Pro Hijab as a garment that has

radicalized the Muslim female sporting experience, often claiming that before their product, the ‘traditional’ hijab was hindering Muslim female athletes, and that the Pro Hijab is a symbol of empowerment and a reminder “that Muslim women can do anything” (Nike News, 2017). The manner in which the Nike Pro Hijab is framed in the launch article, exemplifies Bahrainwala and O’Connor’s (2018) argument that in producing such a product, Nike continues producing the age-old Orientalist notions of difference being incompatible with dominant culture, modern life and in this case sport. This of course is not true, as Muslim female athletes have been successfully participating in high level sport far before 2017 and hijabs designed for sport usage have existed in the market prior to the Pro Hijab.

The release prompted a range of responses, from backlash and boycott to praise for the corporation’s’ efforts to include Muslim female athletes in sport. While some laud the corporation for moving towards diversity, acceptance and inclusivity, a more critical discussion evaluates the Nike Pro Hijab as a means to render Muslim bodies as more acceptable, ‘moderate’ and safe to white audiences (Bahrainwala & O’Connor, 2018). The Nike Pro hijab was crafted and advertised as a product for serious, professional (Muslim women) athletes, women who potentially could represent the United States at the Olympics. Bahrainwala and O’Connor argue that the sporting arena in the United States “is a locus where nationalism and exceptionalism are on display — two categories from which U.S. Muslims are categorically excluded,” making this shift of displaying hijab in sport that much more meaningful (Bahrainwala & O’Connor, 2018, p. 1). Interestingly, sport hijabs manufactured by Muslim owned companies existed far before the Nike Pro hijab but were often met with xenophobic backlash. Only when the largest supplier of athletic apparel in the world began to manufacture one, did this product begin to be framed as ‘mainstream’ and ‘ground-breaking.’ In this way, Nike created a new unrecognizable Other category of Muslim women, the

Muslim Women *athlete*, one who is ‘moderate’ enough to be accepted in nationalist and exceptional spaces such as sport (Bahrainwala & O’Connor, 2018). Furthermore, in the launch article published on Nike News, in describing the process of producing and testing prototypes, “Nike Pro designers, who are responsible for creating base layers (the layer closest to the skin) for athletes, examined how to make a performance hijab *inconspicuous*, and crafted more prototypes with this goal in mind” (Nike News, 2017). Afterall, in Nikes own words, the goal was to make a hijab that is “discreet” and “unnoticeable” (Nike News, 2017).

The acceptability of this new, moderate Muslim women athlete is nonetheless precarious since the Nike Pro hijab was designed and made for Muslim women. Western Orientalist discourse has already framed hijab as an instrument of misogyny, one that does not align with Western democratic liberal values. The Nike Pro Hijab must therefore be read as secular to maintain ‘mainstream’ (i.e., white) appeal (Bahrainwala, O’Connor, 2018). Bahrainwala and O’Connor argue that this is accomplished through the commodification of hijab, whereby Nike rewrites the image of hijab and those who wear it. In order to modernize the hijab, Nike employs marketing and design strategies to untether the hijab from religion, instead aligning it with athleticism and offering it contextual fluidity. On the design level, the Pro Hijab is form-fitting, streamlined and made from breathable, ‘high performance’ mesh fabric, signalling that it is athletic wear. Nike also places the Pro Hijab under the category of ‘Women’s hats, caps and headbands’ reifying this contextual fluidity and uncoupling it from religion and culture. The commodification of hijab in sport attempts to disprove the Orientalist notions that Muslim women cannot be involved in sport and are systematically oppressed by the hijab. However, the foundational reasoning behind the need for a sport hijab and the process of designing, manufacturing and marketing it, *is* Orientalist from the start. That other sport hijabs were not met with the same enthusiasm as the Nike Pro hijab exposes

the conditional nature of tolerance, diversity and inclusivity.

Several participants mentioned the Nike Pro Hijab while discussing representation -- or lack thereof -- of Muslims in the media, specifically in sport. Participants often referenced the Nike Pro Hijab as a positive step towards representing Muslims in media and sport. For example, Sarah expressed a positive reaction towards the Nike Pro Hijab, stating that it allowed others to change their views of Muslim women participating in sport and it also “changes the ways Muslim women viewed themselves in sport” (Sarah, Interview 2). She felt that the Nike Pro Hijab allows Muslim women who wear hijab to feel that they can play sports too. Sarah, along with several other participants, subscribe to the notion that the Nike Pro Hijab promotes inclusivity and diversity within mainstream sport, often referencing Ibtihaj Muhammed as proof of such inclusive practices. However, some participants like Sophie and Ella, supported Nike’s endeavours but felt no personal emotional impact such as feeling included within sport as a result of the Nike Pro Hijab. Sophie expressed that although the Nike Pro Hijab itself did not invoke such feelings of personal inclusivity within sport, she still purchased the Pro Hijab and wears it, because she “support[s] the idea of it, even though it’s ugly” (Sophie, Interview 2).

When participants commented on Muslim representation in media, Laila thoughtfully noted that, “the only representation we get is what they want us to be like” (Laila, interview 2). Similarly in this case, the acceptable hijab in sport is designed in the ways that ‘they’ (i.e., white audiences) feel are acceptable. Sarah also mentioned a conversation she had with her soccer coach about the Nike Pro Hijab. Her coach expressed that she should wear one when she plays because it’s made for sport and would be ‘better’ than the hijab she usually wears. Sarah’s coach referring to the Pro Hijab as ‘better’ than her usual hijab is an example of the effects of rewriting the hijab as modern, acceptable and contextually fluid. Bahrainwala and O’Connor’s (2018) critical analysis directly

speaks to such reactions to the hijab from white audiences: Nike's creation of the Pro Hijab untethers hijab from religion and instead reframes the hijab as modern, sleek athletic wear, essentially making it more palatable for white audiences. Furthermore, the Nike Pro hijab is visually completely opposite to the loose-fitting, long hijab and garments Muslim women adorn and to which Orientalist narratives of violence, oppression and fear for safety are attached. The Nike Pro hijab then becomes the modern, acceptable, safe version of hijab and those Muslim female bodies who wear it, they too become modern, acceptable and safe versions of 'bad' Muslims.

It is worth noting here the relationship between the 'moderate Muslim,' sport and the Nike Pro hijab. The term 'moderate' inherently implies that Islam is extreme, and that the 'moderate' Muslim is able to align with national exceptionalism in contrast to the 'radicalized' Muslim. Western discourse often constructs Islam as incapable of modernity which results in Muslims themselves feeling compelled to prove their moderation (and modernity) by joining the political battle against the 'bad' Muslims and that they are indeed 'modern' and 'good' (Mamdani, 2005). This burden of performing moderation falls on individual Muslims, often engaging in essentialism of their own identities (Kahani-Hopkins & Hopkins, 2002) and conforming to and aligning themselves with the perceived values of a liberal democracy (Eickelman & Piscatori, 2018). The participants in this current study engage in separating themselves from 'bad' Muslims by attaching themselves to the moderate, acceptable narrative of well-integrated Muslims and rejecting the narrative of the 'bad' Muslim. Participants modify their behaviours in two ways: first, by explicitly separating themselves from the identities of the radicalized, violent and extremist schools of thought who identify as Muslim; and secondly, implicitly separating themselves from immigrants who are thought to be not as assimilated, integrated or established as Canadian-born citizens, and therefore are 'bad' Muslims. Through self-surveillance and self-modification of behaviour, as discussed

above, participants attempt to separate their identities from their two-fold understanding of ‘bad’ Muslims. Furthermore, the emphasis on sport participation becomes especially significant for participants as a way to identify (and be identified) as ‘modern’ and ‘moderate’ Muslims.

Previous research shows that Muslim women may experience barriers and obstacles to sport participation, be they related to religion, cultural expectations, personal beliefs, and available opportunities (Dagkas, Benn, & Jawad, 2011; With-Nielsen & Pfister, 2011). However, when discussing experienced barriers to sport participation, participants felt that religion and culture are not particularly significant barriers to their participation. In fact, some participants referred to those who believe that women cannot play sports as “backwards,” stating that religion and culture should not prevent women from activities like sport. While most participants felt support from their family in regards to sport participation, some participants noted that there are people in their communities, namely older individuals like parents or grandparents, who do not agree with women playing sports, especially in mainstream environments. Participants felt that these individuals are influenced by culture rather than religion and simply did not understand life in Canada because they were not born here and were raised in a different environment. In this way, participants see themselves as different and separate from older generations in their communities and feel that they are more forward-thinking for not having the same “backwards” thinking. Sport participation then becomes attached to meanings of forwardness or evolution from such beliefs (i.e., the ‘modern’ and well-integrated.) The Nike Pro Hijab acts as the symbol of this evolution and comes to represent the assimilated, acceptable Muslim female, one who represents the ‘good’ version of Muslims, especially in mainstream sport.

4.3.3 (B) ‘REGULAR’ VS. COMMUNITY SPORT

Alongside the attached meanings to mainstream sport, participants often compared their

experiences with Umoja Games, an exclusively Shia Muslim tournament, with their mainstream sporting experiences. Participants used the term ‘regular sport’ to refer to mainstream sport. I believe this usage is neither negligible nor accidental. In fact, referring to mainstream sports as ‘regular’ indicates how it serves as the baseline for participants’ perceptions of sports they were involved in, especially community sport like Umoja Games.

During interviews, participants expressed that the Umoja Games was surprisingly well organized, insinuating the expectations they previously held for community-led and organized sport competitions as disorganized and uncompetitive spaces. The high level of organization was demonstrated in various ways. For example, the tournament hired external referees and held the tournament in a large, highly rated, indoor turf venue every year. Women can play without hijabs in a completely closed off section of the venue, which was especially significant for the female players who would usually have to wear hijab when playing mainstream sport. Overall, the organization of the event, including registration, sign in, checkout, and accommodation, was seemingly flawless in the eyes of the participants. This experience is markedly different from other community organized competitions and events in which participants have played, regarding organization and especially in terms of level of competition. These expressions of surprise and pleasure for the level of organization and competitiveness are similar to the views of participants in Nakamura’s (2017) studies involving Muslim participants in mainstream sport. Indeed, the level of competition was a key means for participants to determine how close the Umoja Games is to “regular” tournaments. Some participants like Amira, Laila and Mahdi play competitive or elite soccer, and still regard Umoja as a fairly competitive tournament. Other participants also referenced the level of competition and skill level of other teams to discern if participating in such tournaments would count as ‘real’ or ‘regular’ sport. A similar parallel can be drawn from other studies like

Nakamura's (2019) study on the sport experiences of Muslim men in the Greater Toronto Area where participants found that the competition levels in Islamic sports teams and leagues were generally low, sometimes leading to participants choosing to leave such spaces for a more competitive space.

Some participants mentioned that winning awards, medals and trophies added to the 'real' experience of participating at the Umoja Games. At the end of the Games, a large awards ceremony is held where all participants, parents, coaches, and organizers attend to honour players and teams. These awards include recognition of the winning teams, a Most Valuable Player, Best Goalie, Best Striker and Most Improved Player, from each category. Pictures are taken with the individual players and teams with their awards and are later posted online on the Umoja Foundation website and Instagram page. After the awards ceremony, interviews are conducted with the winning teams which are also posted on the website and on the Umoja Foundation Instagram. Such aspects of the tournament add to the experience of a 'real' tournament, where achievements are recognized and celebrated. When asked why she returns to play at the Games every year, Alisha laughed and said, "gotta come back and defend the title! The trophy is still on my shelf actually!" (Interview, 1).

Participants attached meanings of professionalism, organization and 'realness' to mainstream sport, often comparing their experiences at the Umoja Games to their previous mainstream sport experiences. The Umoja Games offers a competitive, organized space where achievements are recognized and awarded, fostering a sense of 'real' sport. Mustafa Dinani, one of the co-founders of the Umoja Foundation, recognized that while community sport is important in fostering a sense of belonging to the community, it often lacks organization and competition, ultimately hindering the experience for players who want to play and improve in their sport. This leads to players feeling that community sport will not support the goals they have as athletes and

turning to mainstream sport instead. Thus, the organizers of the Umoja Games aim to merge the social benefits of community sport with the professionalism, organization and ‘realness’ of mainstream sport, and believe that the two are not mutually exclusive.

During our interview, Mustafa expressed his hopes and goals for this event as “forward-thinking,” propelling the Shia Muslim community to move forward, away from the religious and cultural inhibitions and hesitations that he believes exist in the community. The Umoja Foundation is not affiliated with a particular mosque, specifically stating that the Foundation does not attempt to become a space where religion is practiced or taught. Instead, the Foundation aims to provide the space and opportunity for the Muslim community to engage with each other and grow, primarily through soccer at the Umoja Games, but also through other branches of the Foundation like UMentor and UCare. In some ways, The Umoja Foundation, but more specifically the Umoja Games, is a by-product of the good Other narrative, facilitating the space where the good Other is fostered and maintained. While the Umoja Games is exclusive, it is designed to mimic ‘modern’ mainstream sport in terms of organization and sense of professionalism. It also removes the aspect of playing while wearing hijab for women by providing an exclusive space where women do not need to cover up. I argue that this factor, while intended to provide comfort for women, in some ways reinforces the dominant idea that wearing hijab is uncomfortable or unaccommodating for sport. Female participants unconsciously reference this by saying that they can “play normally without hijab,” even after stating that hijab itself does not impede their level of comfort or ability to play any sport. Here, the term “normally” carries a heavy weight, especially as participants are not only comparing their sporting experiences at the Umoja Games to “normal” mainstream sport, but also negotiating their Otherness via what they perceive to be “normal” in a broader sense outside the context of the Umoja Games and sport all together.

Finally, while participants agreed that the Umoja Games bore a similar experience to mainstream sport, all concurred that the Umoja Games provided something that mainstream sport did not significantly provide for them: community belonging. The next section discusses the varying levels of belonging experienced by participants as Canadian Muslim athletes.

4.4 SCALES OF BELONGING: LOCAL TO TRANSNATIONAL

Previous research has often conflated belonging with the notion of identity and citizenship, when in fact belonging is attached and negotiated on a plurality of scales (Antonsich, 2010; Wood & Waite, 2011). Belonging is a “dynamic emotional attachment” that links individuals to the social worlds that they experience and inhabit (Wood & Waite, 2011, p. 1). Belonging is about feeling ‘at home,’ but it is also about being recognised and understood by those around you (Ignatieff, 1994). Antonsich’s analytical framework avoids the conflation of belonging to identity and citizenship by discussing belonging via two major analytical dimensions: “belonging as a personal, intimate, feeling of being ‘at home’ in a place (place-belongingness) and belonging as “a discursive resource which constructs, claims, justifies, or resists forms of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion (politics of belonging)” (Antonsich, 2010, p.4). This duality of belonging is highlighted in this case study, as participants negotiate and perform belonging to the nation within Canada as visible minority citizens and across the border as Canadian Muslims interacting with American Muslims.

4.4.1 BELONGING AS FEELING ‘AT HOME’ (PLACE-BELONGINGNESS)

This first analytical level in the study of the notion of belonging is the understanding of how belonging as an emotional feeling, comes to be attached by an individual to a particular place to generate what Antonsich (2010) calls ‘place-belongingness.’ If a place is felt as ‘home,’ then to belong to a particular place is where an individual can feel ‘at home.’ Feeling ‘at home’ (or belongingness) can be conceptualized at multiple scales (Morley, 2001), whether it be one’s own

house (Walsh, 2006), the local neighbourhood (Savage, Bagnall & Longhurst, 2004; Fenster, 2005; Mee & Wright, 2009), the national homeland (Westood & Phizacklea, 2000; Ho, 2009), or even beyond as transnational or diasporic belonging (Nakamura, 2009; 2012).

The participants in this study conceptualized their sense of belonging at multiple scales as well. In fact, participants often attached different meanings to multiple scales simultaneously. For example, Laila was born and raised in a town about an hour north of a major urban centre. She went to school in her hometown, played soccer on the local town team for many years, and introduced/identified herself as a resident of the town. To Laila, her hometown is her ‘home’ because of the cherished memories and experiences associated with that place. During the second interview, I noticed Laila was wearing a sweater by a local company, Peace Collective, which manufactures clothing and other merchandise branded with the slogan “Home is Canada.” This observation prompted a conversation of how Canada feels like ‘home’ to her. She began to describe Canada as a place where one can freely express one’s beliefs and ideas, a place with kind, diverse people. More specifically though, it was a place that is not America. Indeed, non-Americanness is a key point in defining ‘home,’ not just for Laila but for other participants as well. The meanings, experiences and emotions associated with her town as ‘home’ differ from those associated with Canada as ‘home,’ although she referred to both places as ‘home.’ While her hometown is ‘home’ because of personal attached meanings, Canada is her home because of her perceptions of what kind of place a ‘home’ should be for one to feel that one belongs. In fact, this sense of freedom of expression and diversity in Canada was reiterated by every participant when asked how Canada felt like ‘home’ to them. This aspect becomes significant as participants negotiate and understand what a ‘home’ should be, in effect merging place-belonging with the politics of belonging, which is discussed later in this section.

Laila, among other participants, quickly identifies Canada as her 'home,' but there are multiple factors that shape the feeling of 'home as Canada.' Antonsich (2010) breaks down place-belonging into five factors: autobiographical, relational factors, cultural factors, economic factors, and legal factors. Participants leaned on their own experiences and perceptions of Canadian life to negotiate their feelings of place-belongingness to Canada. In what follows, I examine these five factors to exemplify the nuances of negotiating place-belongingness while drawing on participants' experiences in the Umoja Games.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL FACTORS

Autobiographical factors relate to one's history such as personal experiences, relations, and memories which attach a person to a particular place (Dixon & Durrheim, 2004). The place where one is born and raised often becomes a central place in one's life, where childhood memories and experiences become emotionally attached to this particular place. In the case of this study, all participants were born and raised in Canada but in different cities around the Greater Toronto Area. Canada is geographically vast, and participants noted that although Canada is their home, they really only resonate with the Greater Toronto Area. They recall camping trips, field trips, and sporting events they experienced within the GTA and recognize that Canada is too large and diverse to strongly associate themselves with Canada as their 'home.' Some participants like Sophie, even felt that Ontario is too large to form an emotional attachment. Sophie reflects on this aspect by stating:

...like when I think about, like, Canada I think about what I know which is, like, quite limited you know, even within Ontario. Like most of Ontario, I've never been in Northern Ontario, which is pretty much hours and hours away. And like

how many of us know what goes on in Northern Ontario? Like not many people at all, which is kind of wild because it's our province.” (Sophie, Interview 2)

Sophie realizes that she lacks sufficient knowledge of Canada or most of Ontario which then reinforces the lack of connection to as places of belonging via autobiographical factors. She has no emotional attachment in the form of personal experiences, relations or memories outside a particular location for her to be able to conclude that Canada/Ontario is her ‘home.’ Mahdi also describes a similar sentiment by stating that only when he started travelling and camping within Canada did, he start to feel “more Canadian.” As he made more memories outside of his hometown, an emotional attachment to different places in Canada grew. The way in which Mahdi described Canada was reflective of his experiences and memories associated with places in Canada outside of his hometown. He describes Canada as a country with incredible natural beauty, untouched wilderness and vast national and provincial parks that must be experienced to feel “truly Canadian” (Mahdi, Interview 2).

Another significant aspect to autobiographical factors is having family and extended family living in Canada. Of the eight participants, seven participants indicated that their extended family (e.g., aunts, uncles, cousins etc.) lived in Canada and that they frequently saw their relatives. The continued presence of family members in a place contributes to the feelings of place-belongingness (Antonsich, 2010). When one is surrounded by family in a place, a sense of stability and longevity are fostered, both of which are important to nurture feelings of place-belonging to a particular place.

RELATIONAL FACTORS

A second element of place-belongingness is relational factors, which refer to personal and social ties that enrich an individual's life in a given place (Antonsich, 2010). These ties range from emotionally dense relations, such as relationships with family and friends, to what Buonfino and

Thomson (2007, p. 16) call “weak ties,” meaning those occasional interactions with strangers with whom one may come in contact in public spaces. According to the Baumeister and Leary’s (1995; as cited by Antonsich, 2010) belonging hypothesis, for relations to generate a sense of belonging, relations must meet certain criteria. Relations must be “long-lasting, positive, stable, significant (i.e., filled with affective concerns, with ‘care’); plus, they should also ‘take place’ through frequent physical interaction” and occur enough times to reach a certain number of interactions (as cited by Antonsich, 2010, p. 9). From the perspective of Baumeister and Leary (1995, as cited by Antonsich, 2010) then, occasional everyday encounters (Amin, 2002) would not be sufficient to generate a sense of belonging.

Contrary to this view though, participants described acts such as holding the door for strangers, saying ‘thank you’ and ‘sorry’, smiling at strangers or the bus driver and getting a smile back, saying hello to people walking in their neighbourhoods or in the park, and talking about the weather with people in public shared spaces, as everyday encounters that make them feel that they are Canadian. Similar results were found in Mozzafarian’s (2019) study where Eritrean participants felt that particular acts and behaviours, as done onto them by strangers, illicit positive feelings of belongingness to Canada. While participants did claim their Canadian identity through these acts by recognizing that these actions are in some ways inherently Canadian, they did not indicate that these acts made them feel that they belong in Canada. Nonetheless, this subtle difference between claiming Canadian identity during these occasional encounters versus while reflecting on these behaviours, becomes noticeable when participants speak on their experiences of how others treat *them* instead of how they treat others. When other people held the door for them, smiled at them as they passed on the sidewalk or started up conversations about the weather with them, participants felt recognized as members of the same group (i.e., as Canadians), reinforcing their feelings of

belonging. Acts such as the ones listed, however brief in time they may be, were actually far from fleeting and were deeply significant considering the Othering that they felt via their visibility as Muslims. For example, Sarah recalls being in downtown Toronto with her friends four years prior and having a woman stop her to ask for directions. She remembers feeling that the woman trusted her and felt safe enough to approach her and ask her for directions instead of anyone else. Regina stated that small talk about the weather with strangers makes her feel connected to the geographical community in which she lives. Participants understood the connotations that come with being visibly Muslim and as such, even a small interaction like this one can convey positive feelings like inclusion and belonging, or at the very least, acknowledgement from others with whom they share public spaces.

CULTURAL FACTORS

The third factor of place-belongingness involves cultural factors such as language, cultural expressions, traditions and habits that generate feelings of belonging to a specific place (Antonsich, 2010). Language is usually considered the most important cultural factor in fostering a sense of belonging (Buonfino & Thomson, 2007). Speaking the language that others around you speak and understand is central to feeling belonging-ness to a place. Language does not only take the form of the particular ways of constructing, conveying, interpreting and defining meaning; it also takes the form of tacit codes, gestures, signs, including ones that are not actually uttered (Antonsich, 2010).

Moreover, Portes and Schauffler's (1994) assessment of the scholarship concludes that most research treats language acquisition as a source of social capital that can produce economic outcomes such as better job opportunities or higher academic achievement (Feliciano, 2001; Lutz & Crist, 2009). However, migration scholars exploring linguistic isolation within immigrant minority populations find that language should be understood as social capital that can also shape non-

economic outcomes like feelings of belonging and exclusion, and thus argue for consideration of how power relations are embedded within linguistic interactions (Nawyn, Gjokaj, Agbényiga & Grace, 2012). For example, Bourdieu (1991) connects language use to power by referring to ‘linguistic capital’ as the obtained skills of speaking the ‘official’ language according to those in power. The inability to speak the dominant language constructs the non-dominant speaker as inferior to those who are fluent in the dominant language (Murray, 1998; Peirce, 1995). Repeated interactions with dominant speakers lead to positioning the non-dominant speaker as an outsider, reinforcing feelings of isolation and exclusion (Beiser & Hou, 2001). Although Canada has two official languages, English and French, English is the most spoken language. For participants born in and raised in Canada, speaking English fluently is often overlooked or taken as a given as it was seldom mentioned as a significant factor to facilitating belonging. It only became an important factor in understanding belonging to Canada when others, especially strangers, noted their ability to speak fluent English.

For example, Regina and Alisha both shared their experiences with strangers and their reactions of surprise that they spoke English well and without an accent, given that they are non-white, hijab wearing Muslims. Regina stated that, “they are so shocked and like, say ‘oh wow I didn’t think you would speak English so well!’” (Interview, 2). These types of comments indicate to Regina that speaking English well is associated with a certain image, mainly “white people” (Interview, 2). Language then, as exemplified in the comment made to Regina by the stranger, can be activated in the politics of belonging to demarcate ‘us’ from ‘them.’ Similarly, Alisha recalled an interaction with a stranger who commented, “wow sounds like you’ve been here for a while!” (Interview, 2). This comment, although short, is quite loaded. First, the stranger reads the way Alisha looks as a non-white hijabi woman and compares Alisha’s characteristics against a perceived

social category. Simultaneously, the stranger recognizes that Alisha speaks fluent English, which clashes with their perception of non-white hijabi women, thus leading to their shock and “oh wow” remark. Secondly, the stranger associates English fluency with length of time “here” in Canada. The stranger saying, “you’ve been *here* for a while” insinuates that at some point in time, Alisha was ‘there’ and not “here” in Canada, reinforcing her Otherness.

This conversation between Alisha and the stranger could have been under 30 seconds, yet years or a lifetime of stereotypes are embedded within the language and chosen words. As Beukeboom and Burgers (2019) state, “language use plays a crucial role in the consensualization of stereotypes within cultural groups” (p. 1). To better understand how stereotypes are shared through language, they propose the framework of ‘consensualizing’, the “process of acting according to what is ‘known’ through social interaction” (Cottone, 2004, p. 8). The choice of words by the strangers while interacting with Regina and Alisha are not random; rather, the language is the manifestation of the consensualization of stereotypes. While it is beyond the scope of this particular study, analyzing the language used during interactions with strangers like the ones mentioned above, can reveal linguistic biases that are perpetuated and maintained through language.

Language and word choice are significant in labelling and placing others in social categories. Interestingly, participants often used ‘they’ instead of ‘us’ or ‘we’ when labelling Canadians. Participants used language of inclusion/exclusion i.e., ‘us’ and ‘we’ to discern between identity groups deemed as dominant and non-dominant. Throughout both interviews, participants would use ‘us’ when speaking about Muslims and ‘they’ when referencing non-Muslims, which makes sense, given that participants clearly identify as being Muslim as an identifying category. However, participants were not as consistent with pronouns in regard to being Canadian. Sometimes participants would use ‘us’/‘we’ and ‘they’ within the same sentence as Regina did when describing

stereotypical Canadian behaviour. Although this may seem minor, pronoun usage is noteworthy in this case because it exemplifies the internal, subconscious negotiation of belonging and identifying to a particular identity category. Theorists of difference such as Hall (2011) and Benhabib (1996) state that the category 'us' is ultimately hinged on the fact of not being 'them,' suggesting that 'us' and 'them' are clearly delineated identifiable groups, similar to how participants refer to Muslims as 'us' and non-Muslims as 'them.' However, it is not as clear when participants use 'us' and 'them' when categorizing Canadians. Although all participants are Canadian born citizens and introduced themselves as Canadians, the switch between 'us' and 'them,' especially when describing identifiable Canadian behaviour, exemplifies the nuances, fluidity and contextual nature of identity.

While language can be used to discern and segregate groups, language can also serve as an element of intimacy resonating with one's autobiographical sphere, and subsequently generating a sense of belonging 'at home' (hooks, 2009). Participants acknowledged that Canadian expressions or slang such as 'eh,' referring to Tim Hortons as 'Timmies,' and 'bud,' signal Canadianess. Indeed, many participants, used 'eh' in various instances throughout the interviews. Participants expressed certain words and behaviours as inherently Canadian, and associated with Canadianess and Canadian culture, thus incorporating such words and behaviours in everyday interactions, and symbolizing to others that they belong to said culture. Food production/consumption can also generate a sense of feeling 'at home' (Duruz, 2002; Fenster, 2005). Participants expressed that consuming Canadian foods, like poutine, 'double-doubles' and Beavertails, generate a sense of comfort since the participants associate these foods with 'home.' Participants also utilized food as a point of contention between Canada and America, noting that America does not have Tim Hortons and have comparatively larger sized items on their menus. While these may be common comparisons between Canadians and Americans, participants express a clear affinity towards

‘Canadian’ foods, distinguishing between what is Canadian and what is not.

Participants repeatedly compared and contrasted Canada to America when describing how they perceived Canadians, Canadian culture, values and morals, and Canadian Muslims. At the Umoja Games, participants utilized said words and behaviours associated with Canadianess to differentiate Canadian players from American players. Participants also perceived America as a place with cultures, values, morals, and an identity very different from their own as Canadians. For example, Laila recalled a particular American team she competed against and indicated that American players played “differently” than players on her team. Other participants specified that these differences were evident in sportsmanship, fair play, playing rough, and more generally, being “not as nice” (Ella, Interview 2). Participants also described Americans as more “intense” (Sophie, Interview 2) and considerably more patriotic than Canadians. This difference in nationalism was particularly evident and a commonly mentioned difference between Canadians and Americans, as illustrated through the use of national flags. Research participants remarked on the size and number of flags they saw from the moment they crossed the US/Canada border by car until they reached the venue in Detroit. They commented on how large the flags were and that there were many flags displayed everywhere. Participants associated these behaviours, values, and expressions as American and therefore un-Canadian.

For the participants, being in America for the tournament exposed them directly to American culture that they recognized as non-Canadian. American-ness then became the model against which participants defined and negotiated their identity as Canadians, and by proxy, place-belongingness to Canada in this particular case. Antonsich states that feelings of belonging to a place and the processes of self-formation (identity) are mutually implicated (2009). In other words, the question, ‘Who am I?’ cannot be separated from the other question of ‘Where do I belong?’ (Loader, 2006).

The ways in which participants ascribe belongingness to Canada is mutually implicated in the ways in which participants understand their identity as Canadians.

ECONOMIC FACTORS

The fourth factor in place-belongingness is economic factors. Economic factors are significant in the creation of safe and stable material conditions for individuals and their families (Antonsich, 2009). Yuval-Davis and Kaptani (2008) for instance, found that a sense of belonging to British society was stronger amongst Kosovan, Kurdish, and Somali refugees who had built a professional life instead of engaged in casual labour. This sort of economic embeddedness not only can guarantee safe and stable material conditions but also garners a sense of longevity, stability, and future stake in the place where one lives (Sporton & Valentine, 2007; Jayaweera & Choudhury, 2008). Similar results have been found in Kitchen, Williams and Gallina's (2015) study which examined differences in sense of belonging between Canadian-born and immigrant residents in three small-to-medium sized urban cities across Canada. However, interestingly, the results differed within Canadian-born populations. The study found that for immigrants, a positive sense of belonging was associated with full-time work and home ownership, both factors indicative of economic embeddedness and safe, stable material conditions. However, these factors did not generate a sense of belonging for the Canadian-born population. The main conclusion of this study was that there are no significant differences in levels of belonging between the Canadian-born population and the immigrant populations unless the number of years residing in Canada was below five (Kitchen, Williams & Gallina, 2015).

In this study, all participants (excluding the co-founder of Umoja Foundation) are Canadian-born and between the ages of 18-25. Seven of the eight participants are still in university working towards either an undergraduate or graduate degree. It may be that given the participants' ages, full

time employment and owning a home do not resonate with belonging to a particular place. Interestingly, participants connected the feelings of longevity, stability and future stake in Canada by describing characteristics of the ‘good Canadian citizen.’ Participants described the ‘good Canadian citizen’ as the stable, well-integrated Canadian resident, one who serves their community and cares about the future of their country. Some factors participants mentioned that embody the ‘good Canadian citizen’ entails completing an education that can be meaningfully used to help others or serve the community, contributing to the economy by supporting Canadian business, and paying taxes. Considering the participants' ages, these factors may exemplify economic embeddedness in a place. When asked about what they hoped for Canada in the future, some participants expressed concern for the Canadian economy and employment opportunities for Canadians in light of the recent disruptive effects of COVID-19. In this way, participants understand themselves as future contributing members of Canadian society and economy, indicating a sense of longevity and having a future stake in Canada.

LEGAL FACTORS

The final factor for place belongingness is legal factors (i.e., citizenship and resident permits) which are regarded as an essential factor in producing a sense of security, an essential dimension of belonging (Alexander, 2008; Buonfino & Thomson, 2007; Ignatieff, 1994; Loader, 2006; Nelson, 2007; Sporton & Valentine, 2007; Vieten, 2006). Ignatieff states “where you belong is where you are safe; and where you are safe is where you belong” (1994, p. 24). Security and safety can be a matter of feeling protected from material violence (Ignatieff, 1994) or being equipped with the resources to manage uncertainty from any potential risks present in a particular place (Loader, 2006). Being a citizen or a subject with legal rights to live, work, and obtain social

benefits from the state is significant in fostering a sense of security and thus a sense of belonging to a place. The participants in this study are all Canadian citizens and thus have the legal right to participate in and actively shape the environment in which they live. Fenster describes this as the “formal structure of belonging”, which is deemed important in fostering a sense of belonging to a particular place (2005, p. 245). To gain an understanding of how participants engaged with this formal structure of belonging, participants were asked to share their general thoughts as to how they can make Canada a better place in the next five to 10 years. Sophie spoke on the right to vote and the responsibility of voting for representatives who prioritize correcting the historical and present day injustices committed by governments towards Indigenous peoples in Canada. She gave the example of Indigenous peoples as natives of this land who, despite being in Canada long before its inception, are systemically disadvantaged in comparison to other Canadian citizens. This continued injustice proves to Sophie that legal citizenship does not guarantee safety, security or legal rights for citizens, and thus is apprehensive about claiming Canadian identity proudly.

In addition, feelings of safety and security in Canada are a point of contention for the participants. Sophie, for example, in addition to her hesitation to claim Canadian identity because of the treatment of Indigenous people by the Canadian government, stated that being a Muslim in Canada often meant living in fear of either being attacked or being blamed for an attack. Participants often expressed uncertainty in regard to feeling safe living in Canada despite being Canadian-born citizens and living in Canada their whole lives. Participants discussed their feelings of safety and security in three ways: travelling outside of Canada, terrorist attacks committed by so-called Muslims, and Islamophobic attacks targeting Muslim people.

Instances of security and safety while travelling outside of Canada were common experiences shared by all eight participants. Participants recounted being stopped and searched at

the airport, being interrogated by border security officers, and being asked to take all their items out of their luggage to be examined. For example, Sophie recalled a memory while driving to the U.S for family vacation when she was a child. She remembered her father stopping before they reached the border and switching seats with her mother, who is Italian and white, to avoid any issues or confrontations with the border police because her father had a longer beard at the time and looked visibly Muslim. While crossing the border to the Umoja Games in Detroit was a smooth experience for some, Mahdi recalled being held at the U.S border in 2018 for six hours of questioning before finally being released. Alisha remembered the border officer asking her father many specific questions about their intentions and whereabouts before allowing them to cross into Michigan. Also on her way to the tournament in 2018, Regina was stopped by the border police and asked to empty all the contents in the trunk of her car to be thoroughly searched by police dogs. Participants expressed feelings of unease and anxiety when travelling, constantly fearing a public humiliation of being pulled aside to be searched from head to toe.

Unfortunately, such experiences are not uncommon amongst Muslim Canadians travelling outside Canada. Heightened security post-9/11 has resulted in many cases of racial profiling of Muslims across the world under the pretext of the ‘War on Terror.’ In 2006, the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice affiliated with the New York School of Law published a briefing paper analyzing the consequences of racial profiling and the use of lethal force in the ‘War of Terror.’ Since 9/11, the United States and many countries have adopted counter-terrorism policies and methods that directly violate human rights norms and laws (Center for Human Rights and Global Justice, 2006). In the name of the ‘War on Terror,’ individuals are profiled based on their race, religion, ethnicity, and/or nationality (specifically Arabs, Muslims, South Asians and/or those who are perceived to be so) and have been subjected to stops and searches while driving, flying, and

travelling (Center for Human Rights and Global Justice, 2006). In the name of ‘national security and safety,’ feelings of safety are stripped from Muslims as they go about ordinary activities such as driving or flying.

The second way in which feelings of safety and security are understood and negotiated by participants is through the aftermath of terrorist attacks committed by so-called Muslims. Amira recalls watching the news on June 3rd 2017, when a man in London, U.K killed seven people via truck on the London Bridge. She comments, “all I was thinking in my head was, ‘I hope he isn’t Muslim, I hope he isn’t Muslim’...” (Amira, Interview 2). Amira, feared reaction from others when going into public spaces, a sentiment echoed by other participants as well. Amira recalled feeling scared to go to school that day because of what people might say to her or worse, if someone might do something to her. Ella likewise felt anxious to go out alone for days after a highly publicized terrorist attack because her parents feared people acting upon their anger towards or disdain of Muslims. In this way, participants express feeling unsafe and in constant fear of imminent danger following terrorist attacks.

Finally, participants negotiated and understood their feelings of safety and security as Canadian citizens through attacks targeting Muslims living both in Canada and in other countries. The interviews in this study occurred prior to the London, Ontario attack on June 6th 2021, where Nathaniel Veltman deliberately drove his truck into a Muslim family of five, killing four members of the family. The attack was deemed Islamophobic in nature and later a terrorism charge was added to the murder charges. Unfortunately, Islamophobic attacks have continued to occur in Canada, leaving Canadian Muslims apprehensive and feeling unsafe. Interestingly, during the first half of the second interview, most participants described Canada as a multicultural country, a place where one feels free and safe to express their religion, values, and beliefs. During the second interview,

participants answered questions around their perceptions of ‘good citizenship’ and what it means to be a ‘good Canadian citizen’ specifically. Participants described some ‘good Canadian citizen’ behaviours such as accepting others' differences, embracing diversity, and standing up against injustice. Laila gave the example of attending protests for issues that may not pertain to you specifically because “... Canadians are like that, we just don’t stand for injustices against anyone” (Laila, Interview 2). Once I began to ask questions about what made them proud to be Canadian or what did not, it became apparent that participants were understanding the contradictions with their previous answers. Sophie especially became critical of her previous answers recognizing that Canada is not the multicultural safe haven that it claims to be, especially with the ongoing injustices occurring to Indigenous peoples on Canadian soil, but at the same time she seemed to temper her critique, indicating that “at least it isn’t America” (Interview 2).

As exemplified above, it becomes clear that negotiating belonging to a particular place is a nuanced, complex and ongoing process, constantly being (re)negotiated and redefined in relation to the environment in which one resides. Furthermore, it becomes clear that equating belonging and identity with legal status of citizenship is superficial and acritical, for feeling ‘at home’ in a place is an intimate and emotional sensation entangled with all aspects of one’s life. Participant responses shed light on the fluidity of belonging, as a feeling that is not granted by satisfying criteria but rather, can be shaped by political and social dynamics over time. This next section discusses belonging via the second analytical framework: belonging as “a discursive resource which constructs, claims, justifies, or resists forms of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion (politics of belonging)” (Antonsich, 2010, p.4).

4.4.2 THE ‘POLITICS OF BELONGING’

While feelings of belonging to a place is a personal matter, it is also a social matter. This

means that if an individual feels rejected or excluded by the people in a place, inevitably feelings of belonging to that place will be difficult to develop (Jayaweera & Choudhury, 2008). In this way the personal, intimate feelings of belonging are inexorably socially constructed and parallel discourses and practices of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion (Yuval-Davis et al., 2005; Antonsich, 2010). Antonsich explains that “every politics of belonging involves two opposite sides: the side which claims belonging and the side which has the power of ‘granting’ belonging” (2010, p. 13). Those who claim belonging are often claiming the right to stay and work in a particular place (i.e., obtained from permanent residency or citizenship), which is why citizenship is often used synonymously with political belonging (Varsanyi, 2005). However, to claim political belonging may not be enough to generate a sense of belonging to a place (Antonsich, 2010). As discussed in previous sections, participants expressed a sense of pressure to perform an identity that is synonymous with the ‘good Muslim’ and ‘good Other’ tropes. In addition, the pressures of being visibly Muslim impacted the ways in which research participants felt they could truly express their own identities, insofar as needing to balance their sense of authentic identity and representing a palatable, ‘acceptable’ version of themselves to others. In this way, equal rights, equal treatment and political entitlement may not always be enough for individuals to feel ‘authentically’ (Taylor, 1989) accepted and recognized in their diversity (Antonsich, 2010).

Empirical studies on multiculturalism find that in order for individuals to feel that they belong, they should feel that they can be their true selves *and* be recognized as a valuable part of the community or place they are in (Sporton & Valentine, 2007). They should be able to feel that their opinions are valued and that they are listened to (Runnymede, 2000; Ameli, Elahi & Merali, 2004; Buonfino & Thomson, 2007; Mulgan, 2009). In this study, participants touched upon their feelings of being devalued and ignored when discussing their perceptions of Muslim mainstream media

representation. The overwhelming consensus from participants is that the current representation of Muslims (especially women) was not the representation they wanted or needed. Laila felt that an accurate representation of Muslim women living in the West would be impossible since, in order to be represented within mainstream media, “we have to be exactly what we are not” (Laila, Interview 2). In other words, accepting, representing and appreciating diversity comes with boundaries; up to a certain point, differences can be accepted but belonging to a group itself assumes the rhetoric of sameness or simplified homogeneity which impedes any meaningful recognition of difference within a group (Antonsich, 2010; Abdel-Shehid, 2005).

Belonging to a group often requires one to assimilate to the dominant group’s language, culture, values, behaviours and religion (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Yet even if one is willing to assimilate, there still may be some dimensions of difference, like skin colour or place of birth, that cannot be changed to match the dominant group. In this way, it may be impossible to achieve full sameness, leaving the individual exposed to discourses and practices of socio-spatial exclusion (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Even with the modernization attempts of Islam through media representation and marketing of products (i.e., Nike Pro Hijab), some elements of difference simply cannot be changed to fit within the dominant criteria of sameness (see Abdel-Shehid, 2005). Or in the case of the participants, they align themselves with Canadian behaviours, values, and language but refuse to change themselves (either by taking off their hijab or compromising their beliefs) to fit within the dominant group.

On the other hand, Antonsich’s and Yuval-Davis’ understanding of the politics of belonging is framed through colonial binaries of the ingroup and outgroup or the side the claims and that which grants belonging (Antonsich, 2010), which essentializes belonging by assuming that some differences can never be reconciled and ‘true’ belonging can never be achieved, since belonging

itself is defined by those in power. The weakness with this approach is that it excludes hybrid identities completely. While participants may have felt that their differences sometimes proved incompatible with what is perceived as ‘true’ belonging or Canadianess, participants also showed some evidence of a constructed hybrid identity that is continuously evolving beyond postcolonial power relations and norms that dictate belonging as conditional, essentialized or limited. In this way, frameworks that focus on the politics of belonging through colonial binaries may not efficiently encapsulate the negotiation of belonging as understood in the Third Space, for a hybrid identity is a new consciousness that exists in between cultures; in between the ‘us’ and the ‘them’.

In some ways, the Umoja Games fosters a space where belonging does not feel as ‘conditional’ since the community is exclusively Shia Muslim and participants are able to authentically express their identities in an environment where differences are less salient. The next section discusses these dynamics of community belonging, specifically belonging to the Shia Muslim community fostered by the Umoja Outreach Foundation and the Umoja Games.

4.5 COMMUNITY BELONGING: BEYOND GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES

Belonging up to this point has been discussed in terms of place-belonging or belonging to a geographically bound place. Traditionally, a community was defined as a socially cohesive group of individuals who have collocated themselves around a shared common understanding of values, goals and beliefs or a shared geographical area (DeWall, Deckman, Pond, & Bonser, 2011). However, communities have evolved alongside humanity and societies. Communities are now understood to surpass physical boundaries, fostering a sense of belonging, shared interests, and identity with its members. The concept of community varies based on different factors, circumstances, and settings in the contemporary world. For example, community can be used to define and segregate groups of people from others based on race, ethnicity or socioeconomic status

(Capece & Costa, 2013), physical proximity (Walton, Cohen, Cwir and Spenser, 2012), or type of geographical location (i.e., rural, city or urban places) (Mahar, Cobigo & Stuart, 2013).

Community belonging was a commonly mentioned theme that emerged when discussing the purpose of the Umoja Games, namely belonging to the Shia Muslim community beyond geographical boundaries. A sense of belonging includes community support, solidarity, and unity built around the rhetoric of shared similarity and acceptance of difference to create a harmonious environment (Mahar, Cobigo & Stuart, 2013). A sense of belonging to and within a community relies upon two factors: first, a sense of belonging to a community is nurtured through repeated, positive interactions with members of the community; and second, the bonds between members should be strong, stable, and built on mutually acknowledged care, meaning members understand that they are mutually concerned with each other's wellbeing (Charles & Crow, 2012).

These two factors are apparent in the structuring of the Umoja Games, which is specifically designed to be a travelling tournament held in different cities every year, such that participants have the opportunity to interact and make friends with new Shia Muslims communities every year. This Shia Muslim community is comprised of smaller local sized Shia Muslim communities dispersed all over the world. Umoja Games brings these geographically dispersed communities together to form a larger geographically boundless community. Thus far, Umoja Games has brought together 53 separate communities from around the world.

The mission statement of the Umoja Games is: to unite and empower the Shia Muslim community. Mustafa elaborated on these two components of the mission:

The strongest goal, and it's probably broad ... but we're just there to unite and empower the Shia community. And I would say, that's very broad. But within the Shia community, there's so much division, whether it's through ethnicity,

whether it's through culture, whether it's through geography, and but at the end of the day, we all believe in the same faith, we all, you know, we all pray in the same direction, we all do the same, you know, fast, we all, you know, you know, basically beat our chests during Muharram and Saffar, but yet there are divisions. So, part of the, or the big goal of the organization is to unite, despite, no matter where you come from. (Mustafa, Interview 1)

In general, the notion of a community means members share something, whether that be interests, identity or in this case religion. Nonetheless, there are differences therein, which Mustafa acknowledges, like ethnicity, culture, and geography; however, the focus should not be on the differences that divide the community. Instead, the focus should be on what makes the community similar, and that is faith and soccer. Interestingly, Mustafa is not talking about all Muslims who share the same faith; he is referring to Shia Muslim faith specifically. He emphasizes this by stating “we all beat our chests during Muharram and Saffar” but “we” is specifically referring to Shia Muslims, as the beating of the chest or *latim* during Muharram and Saffar (holy months in the Lunar calendar) is characteristically a Shia Muslim tradition. This is significant in understanding sameness, difference and community within the Muslim population. The Umoja Foundation has a vested interest in uniting the Shia Muslim community specifically, not to separate itself from the larger Muslim community but because they recognize issues and gaps in this particular community that need to be addressed. Addressing issues in the larger Muslim community is an onerous task that cannot be tackled by one organization alone. Thus, Mustafa feels it is feasible to start with the Shia Muslim community and address the “divisions” within the community that stem from, in his view, ethnic, cultural, or geographical differences. Mustafa felt that these differences do not matter since the members of this community belong to the same faith, specifically Shia Islam, and that should be

enough to unite the community.

Some study participants also briefly mentioned these divisions in the community, specifically ethnic-based conflicts. Laila, for example, mentioned that her community mosque is predominantly Khoja (while she is not) and believes that sometimes Khojas at her community mosque can be self-centered, protective against, and exclusionary towards those who are not Khoja. In fact, prior to 2015, the Umoja Games was only open to Khoja Shia Muslims. When asked about this exclusionary rule, Mustafa commented that it was a mistake on their part, realizing that by excluding certain ethnicities, they were creating further divisions within the community. Throughout the interview, Mustafa often talked about uniting the community and strengthening the community despite these divisions. Unity is a keyword mentioned in the mission statement of the Foundation, is a key component of fostering belonging within a community, and along with *Ummah* (meaning community in Arabic) are key components of Islam. The *Qura'an* mentions the word *Ummah* 64 times, semantically meaning a group of members who share a common belief, identity, and goals (for a more in-depth semantic analysis of the term see Abubakar, 2020). This cross-geographical community, as created by and centred around the Umoja Games, brings together Shia Muslims who share an interest in playing soccer and want to interact and meet other members of the(ir) community.

Thus, Mustafa concludes that the main goal is to connect as many Shia Muslims with each other as possible, with the hopes of growing and fostering a large community where individuals can lean on each other for support the other 363 days of the year, despite not living in the same city or country. This ambitious goal is also reflected in the mission statement of the Umoja Foundation, and is evident throughout operations of the Foundation's other branches. The Umoja Outreach Foundation website provides the mission statements for every branch, all with the purpose of

serving the community in ways that foster growth and belonging. In large font, the homepage of the site states: “By stretching between communities and across generations, our programs - uGames, uAcademy, uMentor, uCare, and uBrains - create intergenerational bonds.” (Umoja Outreach Foundation, 2021). The intergenerational aspect of this statement reflects the type of community the Umoja Foundation intends to build and strengthen. Mustafa believes that many youths in the community lack the guidance from older people who have experienced life and can provide useful information and structure to younger generations. uMentor specifically targets this issue by providing a platform where adult professionals in the community can connect with other members, including youth, in the community to share their experiences and knowledge. By creating these types of intergenerational bonds, the community begins to rely on itself to grow and strengthen. The community becomes a space where the welfare of members is a collective concern that is addressed collectively as a community. During the interview, Mustafa spoke about the involvement of members of the family, especially mothers, within the Umoja Games, whether they come as players, organizers or spectators, as an integral component to the success of the Games. Mustafa believes that getting the entire family involved in community activities and events will only further strengthen the community in the long run. Ultimately, the goal is to create a community that will pass the test of time and continue to grow and strengthen for years to come.

The second component of the mission statement is empowerment. Mustafa states:

The second big part of the organization is power, and empowering the youth, empowering the adults, empowering everybody. And that's basically the other part which is whether it's empowering through soccer, you know, because actually making you a better player, or empowering through scholarships, or mentorship and other things like that. So that's basically how I would say, that's

the, that's the broad, you know, vision and the mission that we want to achieve

(Interview 1).

Empowerment in this sense refers to providing the means for youth to become better soccer players, better students, and ultimately better people. However, the mission is to empower everybody which means providing the space for involvement across the generations, from the young child to the grandparent. Following this logic, Mustafa explains the importance of involving the entire family in participating at the Umoja Games. He explains how the Games provided the opportunity and platform for women (mothers specifically) to become involved in organizational aspects of the Games. Inclusion of the whole family is reflected in the available categories for team registration. From ages two to 35-plus, any and all members of the community are invited and encouraged to participate in the tournament.

Outside the Games, the Umoja Foundation has created an online community to connect its members throughout the year, through the Umoja App and Instagram. The Umoja App is specifically designed to connect members of this extended community online, facilitating networking between members who have the app. The app is meant to connect the community and create a 'virtual family,' one that is always connected no matter your geographical location. By providing networking, mentoring, and volunteering opportunities through the app, one can stay connected with members of the community throughout the year. The app becomes the hub for connection across geographical borders, along with social media and the TED talk style podcast series hosted weekly by career professionals across the Umoja community. In addition to the app, the Foundation is active on Instagram where posts regarding the podcasts, community achievements, and updates on the Umoja Games are posted weekly. According to the Social Media Manager, the Instagram content that is posted is a mix of photos, videos, and graphics (both posts

on the page and on their stories) that capture the different aspects of Umoja including sport, mentorship, and community involvement. They try to arrange the content to be a mixture of tournament details (registration deadlines, Games information etc.) and posts from previous tournaments highlighting winning teams, goals, and memories.

Admittedly, the participants in this particular study did not utilize the app nor significantly interact with the online community on Instagram. Some participants felt that they did not particularly find purpose in the other services provided by the Foundation, as their local community centre or community mosque provided such services as well. The participants' engagement with the app and online community may not reflect broader usage, as interviewees reside in the GTA, and are a small subset of the participants of the Umoja Games. Moreover, one must take into account the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on travel and sporting events in the past two years. The Umoja Games attracted many Canadian teams to travel across the border to the various tournaments across America, and given the situation in 2020 and 2021, many Canadian teams decided not to attend the tournament in Virginia at all. Their interaction with Umoja Games Instagram may have been limited as a result. On the other hand, although the participants of this study reported little to no interaction with the Foundation's Instagram page (@/umojaoutreach), it does reflect the Foundation's goal to reach members of its community beyond the scope of the three-day tournament. Moreover, according to Mustafa, many members of the community currently have the app and use the services provided by the Foundation.

The data collected through Instagram in relation to content interaction, accounts reached, and new followers acquired were requested from the Social Media Manager through an Umoja co-founder. Instagram insights are private and only accessible through the account owner, providing the account owner with information on content interaction in customizable increments. The data

provided reflects the period of July 8th 2021 to September 8th 2021, the two months after the most recent tournament in July 2021 in Virginia, USA. As of September 2021, the Umoja Instagram page has garnered 1605 followers. During the same period the account reached 3269 accounts, 1173 of which were previous followers and 2096 non-followers. In the two months after the tournament, the page made 30 posts and shared 143 stories all pertaining to the various services, events, and aspects of the Foundation. According to the Instagram insights, the page received 2568 content interactions which is 45.6% more content interactions than two months before the tournament (May 9th to July 9th). Of the 2568 interactions, 1917 were likes on posts, 70 were comments, 35 were post saves, and 247 were post shares. It seems that in the duration after the tournament, content interaction was much higher compared to the months prior.

With the data that was provided (July 2021 to September 2021), it is difficult to conduct a trend analysis or make any conclusions on how the Umoja Games participants engage with the content posted on Instagram; however, from the given data there is evidence that content interaction significantly increases post-tournament, which I would attribute to ‘post-tournament high’ or nostalgic effect from the page posting throwback photos and memories from the tournament. In discussing social media engagement with the participants of this study, some participants mentioned that during the tournament or shortly after the tournament were the only times they felt that they would interact or engage with the content posted, mainly because the photos taken during the tournament would get posted to the Instagram page and study participants were interested in seeing those. This supports the increase in engagement seen during and post-tournament reflected in the insight data. Again, this data alone cannot be utilized to make a correlation between social media engagement and the successful fostering of an online community mainly because of the limited data that was provided but also because in order to make such a conclusion the scope of this study must

be widened to include individuals who actually engage with the content and find value in the content. However, this data were included to showcase the efforts of the Umoja Outreach Foundation in attempting to create a space in which its members can find useful information in regards to the services provided and a space where members can connect with each other. For example, a large portion of the posts made on their Instagram is dedicated to showcasing members of the Umoja community presenting their current professional careers or academic pathways, and advising other members on how to pursue said career or education pathway. These types of posts are directed towards the younger generation who are figuring out their academic goals and aspirations and are meant to create a space where they can ask questions, receive feedback and potentially connect with the individuals for more information. These efforts go beyond sport or religion and are solely community-focused efforts in fostering a space that individuals can feel supported and empowered. Such efforts are made to foster a space where members feel they are cared for and that their futures are important to the community, which indicates a sense of responsibility to the wellbeing of others a factor of fostering belongingness to a group. However, while the Foundation may think they are promoting a sense of community and a bond between its members that permeates geography and ethnicity through their social media, the participants themselves did not perceive this element as critical to their sense of belonging to the community (physically or virtually) or their identity as Canadians, Muslims or otherwise. Despite this, social media as a means of promoting the broader goals and message of the Foundation remains valuable and could have significance for other Umoja Games participants.

Finally, while this community is built on shared religion primarily, it is also built on shared values and interests. Mustafa made it clear that the Foundation was not interested in becoming a religious centre, as mosques already provide such services. Instead, the Foundation aims to fill the

gap in connecting the Shia community that is fragmented by ethnic, cultural and geographical differences. Mustafa envisions a Shia Muslim community that utilizes their love for soccer to transcend beyond their differences and is united on the basis of similarity. The posts on the Foundations Instagram page and the Umoja App shows evidence of this attempt to create spaces where community can be strengthened, supported and fostered.

4.6 SUMMARY

This particular case study provides insight into a multitude of aspects in relation to identities, national belonging, and community belonging through the intersection of sport in a faith-based, community environment. Although this study focuses on the Umoja Games and its participants as one particular case, the results illustrate the interconnections between a broad range of external factors such as political climate, media representation, and societal norms and expectations, to provide a more nuanced understanding of the identity negotiation processes that are experienced by Muslim youth born and raised in Canada. By situating the case within this broad context, one can understand how Muslims born and raised in Canada, and who identify as Canadian citizens, actually may be experiencing identity beyond singular, bound categories.

Given the identified gap in the literature in regard to faith-based community sport (Walseth, 2016; Amara & Henry, 2010), the results of this study exemplify the possible wide reaching impact of community sport spaces on Canadian Muslim identities and belonging. Furthermore, this case study revealed the multiplicity of being a Canadian Muslim, exposing the multi-faceted, interconnected, experiential web of identifying as a Canadian and a Muslim. As participants shared their experiences as Canadian Muslims participating in sport, it became abundantly clear how socially constructed concepts and narratives shape the lives of young Canadian Muslims. Othering narratives, colonial binaries and boundaries not only shape but limit the ways in which participants

understand themselves and experience the world around them.

However, this study reveals some evidence of participants experiencing a reality beyond the limitations of colonial binaries of ‘us’ and ‘them.’ Instead, they are creating new meanings in a space where their cultures and identities supersede the constrictive hierarchies of colonialism: the Third Space. In this space, hybrid identities are able to thrive and continue to evolve, creating new meanings and a new culture namely through the ways in which Canadian born Muslims understand media perceptions and narratives of Islam, come to accept or reject said narratives and then situate themselves in the broader Western society. The Umoja Games then becomes a space where hybrid identities can negotiate and understand themselves better by interacting with other individuals who are similar to them but also have recognizable differences, specifically national differences. Participants were able to recognize that Canadian Muslims are different from American Muslims via the enunciated stereotypes of being a Canadian versus being an American. Simultaneously, the Umoja Games represents unity between Muslims from all over the globe, regardless of ethnicity or nationality. Thus, despite recognizing that all participants of the Games are Shia Muslim and are part of one community, national differences are still significant enough for participants to recognize and comment on signalling that national identification is significantly tied to their overall perceived identity, meaning that while they acknowledge that all the participants at the Games are members of the same community and are all Muslims, they in fact are *Canadian Muslims* and present themselves as such, especially when interacting with their American counterparts. This again exemplifies this hybrid identity that participants have developed, one that is neither Canadian-Muslim or Canadian *and* Muslim, but instead is Canadian Muslim.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Employing qualitative research methods, specifically case study and content analysis, this study aimed to address the following research questions:

1. Do second generation Muslim people in the Greater Toronto Area negotiate and understand their identities and sense of belonging to Canada through their participation in faith-based community sport, and if so, in what ways; and
2. How is their sport participation shaped by common othering narratives of citizenship and belonging to Canada?

To answer these questions, this study endeavoured to

- understand how participants come to understand and perceive themselves as Canadians and as Muslims;
- explore the ways in which faith-based community sport can (or cannot) become a space where Canadian, Muslim, and athletic identity formation is fostered; and
- examine how participants conceptualize belonging, and the relationship between sport participation and their feelings of belonging to Canada

Chapter 2 highlighted the key bodies of literature in relation to sport participation in Muslim populations and narratives of citizenship and belonging in sport, which informed the ways in which the data were analysed and contextualized to the case in question. Chapter 3 offered an overview of both the methodological and theoretical structure of this research project. In this chapter, I summarize the key findings of the study and the significance of this case study in relation to existing literature on Muslim sport participation experiences and the lived experiences of citizenship

and belonging in Canada. The strengths and limitations of the study are discussed, followed by recommendations for future research.

5.1 DISCUSSION OF KEY FINDINGS

This case study included a specific group of individuals who identify as Muslims, as Canadian born citizens, and as participants in an exclusively Shia Muslim sporting event. By utilizing their experience at the Umoja Games as an entry point, interviews revealed the ways in which participants came to understand and present themselves as Muslim Canadians in a variety of contexts, both on and off the field. The Umoja Games itself acted as the platform or space where participants were able to negotiate, compare, contrast, claim, and attach meaning to the social categories of a Muslim, a Canadian, and an athlete. Participants perceived themselves as Muslims, Canadians, and athletes by negotiating and reflecting on their experiences as Canadian Muslim players at the Umoja Games, as well as their experiences in mainstream sport and daily activities.

This study originally aimed to explore if and how participation in community-based sport impacts identity, sense of belonging, and citizenship. Building off the extensive literature on Muslims in sport, this study falls in between the boundaries of Walseth's (2016) third and fourth research foci: exploring the experiences of Muslim youth in diaspora participating in community-based sport. As discussed in the literature review, research regarding community-based sport in Muslim populations (specifically with second generation Canadians) is fairly scarce. Amara and Henry (2010) provided European examples of sport clubs in Muslim communities which revealed the theological influence of engagement in particular sporting activities, but did not address reasons for establishing such spaces or any discussion of such spaces fostering belonging to the community, nation etc. Furthermore, Fink (2016) provided various American examples of Muslim sporting organizations that sought to develop and improve their communities through community-based

sport, and addressed the ways in which such organizations sought to achieve their goals. Several of the organizations mentioned in his book are faith-based community sport spaces that are also open to non-Muslim players residing in the community. Such spaces foster relationships across religious and ethnic boundaries and act as a safe space for youth to learn more about themselves and their religion. Throughout the book, Fink (2016) discusses the ways in which sport in America, especially basketball, is attached to meanings of nationhood and masculinity. Sport organizers reflected these meanings in their programs by explicitly focusing on brotherhood and fellowship between Muslims and non-Muslims. While such results are valuable to the understanding of the Muslim experience in community-sport in the West, such studies vaguely discuss the significance of these spaces for negotiation of belonging, citizenship, and identity, instead focusing on the experience of sport participation in exclusive spaces regarding non-exclusive/ 'mainstream' spaces. My particular study takes this discussion one step further by delving deeper into the processes that result in the feelings of inclusion and exclusion, by questioning the social construction of Otherness, understanding the ways Otherness is adopted by participants into their daily lives and how sport then acts as the space where meanings of Otherness and behaviours, actions and practices of nationality and membership can be reinforced.

Based on the literature and exploration of conceptualizations of citizenship, I anticipated citizenship to be understood as the uptake and development of active and passive citizenship characteristics. However, in contrast to what was expected regarding the relationship between sport participation and citizenship development, participants' narratives revealed that they understood citizenship to be the performance of behaviours, attributes, and characteristics. Participation at the Umoja Games did not facilitate explicit citizenship development in the same ways that other sporting initiatives mobilize some form of social development, whether it be 'good citizenry'

(Parker, Morgan, Farooq, Moreland, & Pitchford, 2019), social inclusion and acceptance (Morgan & Parker, 2017), reducing vulnerability in vulnerable youth (Haudenhuyse, Theeboom & Coalter, 2012) or positive youth development (Fraser-Thomas, Côté & Deakin, 2005). Instead, the focus of the Umoja Games was to facilitate community membership and belonging that expanded beyond geographical boundaries. While the Foundation itself had larger goals for the community, such as empowering its members through mentoring and leadership, facilitating positive youth development, and increasing volunteerism in the community, the Umoja Games itself served less as a space for citizen development per se, and more of a space for identity negotiation on a larger scale. Identity became the forefront of the discussion, as participants came to understand themselves as not only Muslims who are also Canadian, but Muslim Canadians beyond the Othering dichotomies of ‘us’ and ‘them.’

Participants negotiated and understood their Canadianess and Muslimness as both separate and interconnected by drawing on their own experiences and social representations of Muslimness and Canadianess in the environment around them (i.e., media representations, sport participation, etc.). Intertwined with identity are the feelings of belonging to and citizenship in a place. These are concepts that can be best understood as ongoing processes of negotiation, meaning that the way in which we come to understand and situate ourselves in society is constantly changing and evolving as we process what it means to ‘be’ or belong as an identifiable member of a particular group (or groups). The participants’ narratives illustrated the complex and nuanced relationship between identity, sense of belonging, and citizenship as self-identified Canadian Muslims participating in faith based, community sport.

According to Jenkins (2004), despite the ubiquitous and elusive nature of identity as a concept, the popularity of identity in the media, politics, and academic journals to name a few,

makes identity an experiential reality, therefore making it worthy of study. Identity is the process of ‘being’ and ‘becoming’ (Jenkins, 2008); it is an ongoing process, a network of multiple social identities, constantly intersecting and overlapping, which ultimately shapes how we become to understand ourselves and others, and how others view us. This study intended to approach identity in this manner to shift our attention from the process of how identity ‘works’ to the process of ongoing reflexivity, as a means to understand ourselves and others, and to the institutional and interactional social construction of identity (Jenkins, 2004).

As stated, one of the goals of this study was to explore individual experiences of Canadian Muslims participating in community sport, as a point of entry to understand identity formation within the broader context of living in a diaspora community. Previous research studying social identity within this particular group often approached identity through social psychological approaches such as the bicultural and acculturation models, derivatives of social identity theory (e.g. Britto & Amer, 2007; Sirin & Fine, 2007; Stubbs & Sallee, 2013; Zaal, Salah, & Fine, 2007). However, such models have been found to be “deficient in their employment” (Younis & Hassan, 2018, p. 3) for second-generation Muslim Westerners for several reasons. First, these identity models were initially developed for first generation migrants, with a lack of research demonstrating applicability with second-generation and beyond since descendants often take different integration pathways than their parents (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005). Second, these models are unable to distinguish between group membership and political categorization, potentially allowing for the reification of political discourses that depicts Muslim and national identities as mutually exclusive (Younis & Hassan, 2018). Third, the categorization of Muslim and national identities themselves are subject to debate (Oudenhoven & Ward, 2013; Said, 1978). Ethnicity, culture, and religion are regularly conflated within public discourse and thus “confounds a sense of belonging based on

shared commonality as well as *a priori* group categorisation reproduced externally through political discourse” (Younis & Hassan, 2018, p. 3; see also Jenkins, 2004). Fourth, while scholars do acknowledge the multiplicity of identities for individuals outside the migration context, little is still known about the relationship between social identities within second generation Muslims in the West (Ramarajan, 2014; Roccas & Brewer, 2002; Younis & Hassan, 2018).

The foundation of Younis and Hassan’s (2018) argument resonates with the outlook and outcomes of this case study. Younis and Hassan (2018) raise a concern with the employment of social identity as an analytical concept specifically in relation to Western Muslims, since ‘identity’ among Western Muslims is deeply connected to, what Norton (2013) calls, ‘the Muslim question.’ The Muslim question relates to the moral panic that surrounds Muslim identity, Islam, and Muslims in Western countries, whereby Muslim identity has been heavily subjected to political attention in matters ranging from civic integration to the war on terror (Younis & Hassan, 2018). The Muslim question thus depicts the comprehensive political ‘othering’ of Western Muslims where the integration of Western Muslims is not a matter of civic concern but is a matter of national security. This means that the concept of identity with regards to Western Muslims is endowed with conflict. Younis and Hassan (2018) argue “that the supposed conflict between national and religious identities comes part and parcel with the object ‘identity,’ when made specifically in reference to Western Muslims” (p. 4). As such, research that explores Muslim identity may inadvertently reproduce “the boundaries of meanings in which Western Muslims experience and express their identity” (Younis and Hassan, 2018, p. 5).

These contentions become extremely important when discussing the impacts of the results of this particular study, namely in regard to identity and belonging for Western Muslims. Consciously utilizing bicultural and acculturation models in this study whilst considering that I myself am a

second-generation Muslim born and raised in Canada, seemed futile, even harmful, to the progression of understanding and exploring Western Muslim identity, namely Canadian Muslim identity. One must consider the potential of reifying the moral panic surrounding Muslim identity especially in conducting research where Muslim identity is an *a priori* object of study, built upon implicit socio-political structures that perceive religious and national identity as incompatible (Amer, Howarth & Sen, 2015; Younis & Hassan, 2018). As such, this study intentionally attempts to explore Western Muslim identity without reifying the Muslim question underlying identity discourse through thoughtful questioning that allows participants to reflect on their own positions and experiences, researcher reflexivity, and intentional theoretical applications that reflect a post-colonial approach to identity.

Participants exemplified ongoing reflexivity, as they came to understand their own Muslim identity in relation to how others understand and represent Muslimness, in relation to their Canadianess, the social construction of ‘goodness’ and acceptance in Canadian society, and what it means to be/feel like they belong. A key finding in this study is understanding the ways in which participants engaged with the social constructions (i.e., beliefs, values, patterns etc.) of particular identities. ‘Being’ Muslim, Canadian, and an athlete meant visibly looking, behaving, and participating/practicing in particular ways that reflect and are associated with what it means to belong to an identity. Participants ‘became’ Muslim, Canadian and/or athletes by performing in a way that they perceived is in alignment with these identities. By engaging with prayer, hijab and specific behaviours, participants were able to align themselves with ‘being’ and ‘becoming’ a Muslim, since to them, the category of ‘Muslim’ is constructed around performing and behaving in particular ways.

Specifically, in regards to Canadian Muslim identity, despite common Othering narratives dictating the exclusive nature of Muslimness to Canadianess, participants expressed that to them, 'being' a Muslim is deeply connected to the ways they 'become' Canadians, and vice versa. In other words, performing Muslim identity was closely intertwined with the performance of Canadian identity. Participants perceived the compatibility of being both Canadian and Muslim, finding connections between the performed behaviours, values, and morals they understood as essential to 'being' and 'becoming' either a Canadian or a Muslim. These findings are supported by Younis and Hassan's (2019) qualitative study analysing the multiple social identities of second-generation Western Muslims. The authors explored the identity narratives of second-generation Muslim young adults from diverse ethnicities and backgrounds from Montreal, Berlin, and Copenhagen to better understand how they negotiate their social identities and the process of identity development in this group. They consequently observed that participants understood their Muslim Western identity as not merely "sum of parts" but instead existing completely in the 'third space' where their religious and national identities are "discursively independent yet founded on the same underlying network of meanings" (Younis and Hassan, 2018, p. 14). The 'third space' is often regarded as the 'space' where identity hybridity occurs (Amer, Horwath, & Sen, 2015; Aveling & Gillespie, 2008; Sirin & Fine, 2007).

However, it becomes difficult to exist or claim one's identity in a space where Islamophobic acts, such as the recent fatal attack on a Muslim family in London, Ontario in 2021, threaten one's life and shatters the sense of safety in and belonging to a place. Such acts expose the perceived compatibility of being a Muslim and living in Canada as a self-identified Muslim Canadian. Although participants felt their multiple identities and cultures are compatible, media narratives and real threats against Muslims exist in Canada that jeopardize their perceived compatibility. In certain

contexts and spaces, the existence of this threat becomes evident such as in the media representation of Muslims in television shows. However, participants combat this perceived incompatibility by rejecting the narratives that continuously reproduce essentialized identities and instead seek representations that reflect the compatibility of Muslimness and Canadianess, in other words, their lived experience. In some spaces, participants are able to perform a specific identity: Canadian Muslim, in which all identities can co-exist and can be compatible. One of these spaces is in sport, both mainstream and exclusive community sport. Participants vehemently expressed those visible markers of Muslimness, namely hijab, did not interfere with their ability to participate in sport despite the negative interactions they have had or continue to have with non-Muslims in sport. More often than not, participants expressed that while some may feel that hijab can feel like an obstacle or a barrier to sport participation, they personally did not feel that their hijab was an obstacle to their own sport participation. The discussion around the Nike Pro Hijab provided further insight into how the hijab is framed in sport versus the ways in which participants understood hijab themselves. Whilst hijab played a major role in their identities as visible Muslims, the contextual fluidity in understanding hijab allowed participants to experience hijab at various levels of significance ranging from purely superficial (i.e., a piece of cloth) to deeper significance (i.e., essential component to identifying as a Practicing Muslim). Previous research exploring the significance of hijab supports this finding in that hijab itself is understood in a multitude of ways and levels by Muslim women especially in the West, therefore resisting the Orientalist meanings of oppression, weakness and subserviency that are attached to the hijab and proliferated through the media (Droogsma, 2007; Alghafli et al., 2017).

Based on the literature exploring the ways in which community sport or sporting programs facilitate citizenship development, personal development, and belonging (Parker, Morgan, Farooq,

Moreland, & Pitchford, 2019; Morgan & Parker, 2017; Fraser-Thomas, Côté & Deakin, 2005; Spaaij, 2015), it was anticipated that the Umoja Games in some capacity may facilitate these types of development for the participants. However, for the study participants, the Umoja Games itself (aside from other services provided by the Umoja Outreach Foundation) did not directly serve as a space where such types of development can be achieved. Instead, the Umoja Games represented a baseline experience where three main feelings/ideas are generated: feelings of comfort and belonging generated by observed sameness, hyperawareness to Canadianess in comparison to American counterparts, and feelings of ‘real’ sport participation. Participants felt comfortable and acknowledged when participating at the Umoja Games, noting scheduled prayers, segregated play and exclusivity as factors that aided their comfort. Participants shared that it was easier for them to socialize and make new friends at the Umoja Games. Many participants even stated that they maintain their friendships throughout the year despite only seeing each other once a year for three days. These factors are compared against their experiences in mainstream sport where they may not have felt as comfortable making friends and socializing off the field. Surrounded by other people of the same religion at the Umoja Games (read as having similar values, practices, beliefs etc.), participants felt a sense of membership and belonging. Walseth (2007), drawing on Putnam’s notion of social capital, refers to this as bonding social capital in sport, where maintaining relationships with people who are similar to oneself. Similar results are reported in studies concerning the accumulation of social capital for refugee, and first and second-generation individuals with immigrant backgrounds participating in sport clubs (Walseth, 2007; Spaaij, 2011). The sports clubs were found to be well-suited arenas for bridging social capital among immigrants from various ethnic minority backgrounds.

In addition to sense of belonging through social capital, the Umoja Games also served as a site that fostered feelings of belonging through sameness and difference, particularly in relation to participants' identities as Canadian (and not American). As the conceptualization of identity (see Chapter 3) illustrate, sameness and difference underpin the ways in which we come to understand ourselves as members of groups, communities and nations. In this case the feelings of sameness allowed participants to not only feel membership but also created a space where 'us' and 'them' can be defined. Although sameness was generated by the exclusive Shia Muslim nature of the tournament, nationality became the detected difference. Participants explicitly separate themselves as Muslim Canadians from Muslim Americans, categorizing 'them' through the characteristics of what made them different. The Umoja Games became a space where participants could 'be' Muslim and recognizably Canadian in comparison to their American counterparts. This environment allowed for the recognition of inherently Canadian visible or expressed actions that participants then went on to claim and know themselves as Canadian by.

Although identity, belonging and citizenship are separate concepts not to be conflated with each other, there is significant intersection and interdependence between them. In addition to understanding identity negotiation, this study focused on the ways participants come to understand their sense of belonging to the nation, and whether community-based sport fostered this sense of belonging and in what ways. Belonging can be understood similarly to identity, in that it is an ongoing process of attaching meanings to aspects of one's life that leads them to feel a sense of belonging to a place, group or community. As Antonsich (2010) notes, belonging and citizenship are closely related concepts often used uncritically and interchangeably; however, through observing the processes of identity and belonging amongst the participants, this study illustrated the nuances and complexities of these concepts. The participants' narratives illustrated that regarding

belonging to the nation, as Canadian Muslims negotiating a hybrid identity, the experience of participating at the Umoja Games alone was insufficient to generate feelings of *belonging* to the nation. The Umoja Games as a space facilitated a sense of sameness and membership to a community and highlighted visible markers of Canadianess (behaviours, mannerisms etc.) to the participants which they recognized and claimed as Canadian. However, belonging to the nation was negotiated and understood via Antonsich's (2010) understanding of belonging: the life-long experience of physically being in Canada or in other words, through five factors of place-belonging, as well as the politics of belonging, meaning the socio-political contexts of belonging in Canada.

Participants expressed the auto-biographical, relational, cultural, economic and legal factors that allow them to feel that they belong in Canada; however, most participants found it difficult to conclude that they felt they belonged to the nation due to several reasons. Some participants felt that they had not seen a vast majority of this country, unable to conceptualize what Canada even 'is,' instead while others felt that in travelling and seeing other parts of Canada, they were able to build a stronger connection to this country, both of which are related to the auto-biographical factor. The main contentions rose regarding the politics of belonging, namely the structural lack of acceptance of difference in Canada. The politics of belonging is concerned with the maintenance and reproduction of the boundaries of the political community of belonging (i.e., the boundaries that separate the world population into 'us' and 'them') (Yuval-Davis, 2006). For many participants, this point of contention proved irreconcilable with multiculturalism, diversity and inclusion claims in Canada. Participants found it difficult to affirm the image of a multicultural, welcoming and accepting Canada, given the historical and ongoing injustices committed towards Indigenous Peoples in Canada. The exclusionary practices towards Indigenous Peoples in Canada signifies the myth of multiculturalism in Canada, that citizenship alone does not garner belonging to a place nor

does it guarantee the socially promised benefits of citizenship to a nation (i.e., rights to live, feel safe, work etc.). Participants offered as evidence the reality of injustice towards Indigenous Peoples in Canada as well as their own experience as Canadian citizens ostracized and threatened for their own differences. Incidents like the attack and murder of the Muslim family in London, Ontario in 2021 destabilize the image of a welcoming, inclusive Canada, and threatens the social guarantees of citizenship.

Indeed, especially in these post 9/11 times, conditions of belonging and “who is ‘a stranger’ [are] continually being modified and contested with growing ethnic, cultural and religious tensions in, as well as in between, societies and states” (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 213). Following the understanding of belonging through the politics of belonging, Othered identities are not granted belonging in comparison to how it is automatically claimed by the dominant group, given that the boundaries of ‘us’ and ‘them’ are continuously maintained and reproduced. In the words of Hall, unless “either one group [i.e., the less powerful group] ha[s] to become the imitative version of the dominant one – i.e., an assimilationism – or, on the other hand, the two groups hat[e] one another, or projec[t] images of degradation ... how can people live together in difference?” (2004, p. 257). The politics of belonging in this way are limiting, forced between the boundaries that are constructed by dominant cultures and hierarchies. However, beyond these boundaries there exists a Third Space where knowledge, meanings, and cultures are continuously evolving and changing, free from colonial boundaries, Othering hierarchies, and dominant norms (Bhabha, 2004). The politics of belonging do not account for those in between the boundaries of ‘us’ and ‘them’ (i.e., hybrid identities). While hybrid identification amongst participants in this particular study seemed to be more at a preliminary stage rather than a more established sense of identity, it nonetheless

demonstrates how knowledges and meanings of belonging in such identities are constructed in a space beyond the boundaries of ‘us’ and ‘them’ as understood through the politics of belonging.

Nuances and complexities of conceptualizing and understanding belonging, citizenship and identity have been addressed through iterations of belonging frameworks (Antonsich, 2010; Yuval-Davis, 2004), citizenship frameworks (Westheimer and Kahne, 2004) and identity frameworks (Jenkins, 2008; Hall, 2011; Fanon, 1963; Said, 1978; Bhabha, 1994). One of the foundational similarities between these concepts, which is also one of the overarching themes in this study, is the ever-changing, fluid, modifiable nature of belonging, citizenship, and identity. As social, cultural, and political contexts and landscapes change, the boundaries of belonging, citizenship and identity may shift to include or exclude individuals at the community, national, and transnational levels. While feelings of belonging, citizenship and identity negotiation are largely personal and individual processes, they are shaped by broader social constructions and narratives produced by dominant cultures and paradigms. As a result, there are many variables involved in the ongoing negotiation of belonging, citizenship, and identity, and individuals’ experiences are unique, contextualized within and operating on multiple levels simultaneously. Figure 2 illustrates these multiple levels in which participants negotiated their identities as both ‘sum-of-the-parts’ but also as emerging Third Space identities.

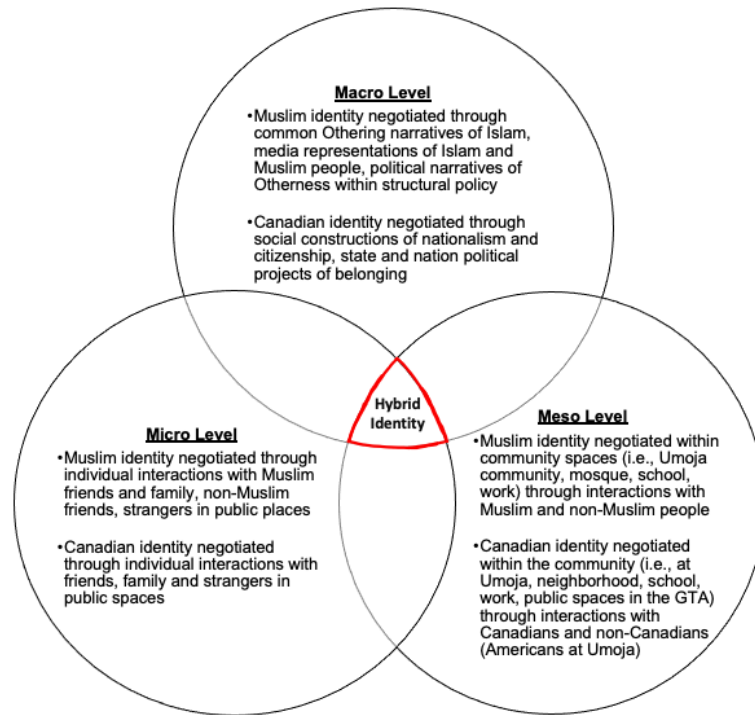


Figure 2. Schematic that clarifies the three interconnected levels to identity negotiation observed via participants' narratives. Hybrid Identity/Third Space is highlighted as the overlap of all three levels of analysis.

At all three levels, participants engage with their surroundings and constructed meanings of Canadianess and Muslimness, as well as reflecting on their own positionalities and personal experiences to then construct the ways they see themselves and others. It is important to note that while the figure separates Canadian identity negotiation from Muslim identity negotiation, it is for the sake of clarity and exemplification of overlap of participants' understanding of their identities rather than sake of reinforcing the exclusiveness of such identities. Identities cannot be separated from each other regarding the negotiation process as they are overlapping, interconnected and reliant on each other. On the micro level, participants understood 'being' and 'becoming' Muslim through individual inter- and intrapersonal relationships with their friends and family. Individual daily interactions with strangers are also included given the significance observed through the participants' perspectives. The interactions at this level shaped and strengthened the ways in which participants viewed themselves as Muslims and as Canadians. At the meso level, community and

group level interactions shaped the ways in which participants negotiated their identities and fit themselves into their identified groups. Community level interaction and engagement, including spaces like the Umoja Games, community mosque, school, work, and mainstream sport engagement, expose participants to socially constructed norms and values by which they come to understand themselves as members of particular communities. Identities are formed via the ongoing reflective process individuals must endure to either accept or reject norms and values that they feel align with who they believe they are (Jenkins, 2008). Such spaces allow for such reflections that ultimately shape one's identity and sense of self as well as their sense of belonging. At the macro level, individual's sense of identity is shaped by the larger structural or systemic power dynamics that construct the ways in which identity is framed and negotiated. Political narratives of Otherness, norms, and values, implicitly and explicitly shape the ways in which identity, belonging, and citizenship are constructed and understood. At this level, knowledge and meaning production are constructed via power relations such as the continued proliferation of colonial binaries of 'us' versus 'them.' Through colonialist, Western, Othering paradigms, boundaries are constructed and in turn, categories of (and therefore criteria for) conditional belonging are defined, applied, and maintained. Third Space/Hybrid Identity, as seen in Figure 2, as the overlapping or interstitial space between the three levels of analysis, can then be understood as a unique space resulting from the simultaneous and continuous process of negotiating Muslim Canadian identity (and related feelings of belonging) at all three levels of analysis occurs and Muslim Canadian hybrid identity is formed, producing new knowledges, meanings, and cultures to understand identity, citizenship and belonging.

5.2 STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

This study focused on understanding identities and the sense of belonging fostered in sport, which predominantly relied on the lived experiences of participants alongside the interview with the co-founder of the Umoja Foundation and data collected from their website and Instagram page. The Umoja Foundation and the Umoja Games have not been explored or studied previously, making this study the first to examine this faith-based community sporting event. Although previous research has laid the foundation in our understanding of the role of sport in identity building and fostering belonging, this study addresses the multidimensional, multifaceted nature of identity and the complexities of negotiating belonging to Canada as Othered minorities. In this case, using the Umoja Games – an exclusively Shia Muslim sporting event – as the entry point to discussions around identity, belonging and citizenship, provides for a unique opportunity to examine sporting experiences adjacent to socio-political issues that Muslims experience daily such as Islamophobia, discrimination, and Othering narratives. Furthermore, speaking with the co-founder and gathering information from the Umoja Foundation Instagram gave some insight into the community building capacity that this event fostered.

Thus, utilizing a case study approach in this project proved beneficial to understanding complex interrelationships grounded in participants' lived reality. Discussing the Umoja Games a unique site to examine belonging and identity, both of which are personal and complex processes. By focusing on the Umoja Games, rich description and analysis of the case was able to be conducted to better understand participants' experiences in this setting specifically. The organization, purpose and goals of the Umoja Foundation for the Umoja Games framed and supported participants' narratives by providing context to why they chose to play in this setting and how they perceived themselves as athletes, Canadians, and Muslims. In this way, this study was

able to facilitate rich discussions of belonging, citizenship, and identity formation, guided by participants' experiences at the Umoja Games and in mainstream sport.

Especially in this case study, the expertise and intuition of the researcher are considered a strength but can also be seen as a limitation. Case studies are strongest when researcher expertise and intuition are maximized; however, this brings up the issue of objectivity within a study (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001). In a case study, a researcher must choose what questions to ask and how to ask them and decide on what remains as an observation and what is recorded. The researcher draws out issues of interest from the data and constructs stories about those issues and study participants. As a researcher who has participated in the Umoja Games and identifies as a Canadian Shia Muslim, I was privy to an insider's level of understanding that I believe allowed for a certain customization that may not have been possible from an outsider's point of view. From recruitment to interview design to execution and analysis, my own experience in the Umoja Games as a Canadian Shia Muslim significantly aided the ways in which I approached this study. As the researcher, I decide which issues and stories within the data are included and examined, and what data are excluded. In this way, case study researchers are constantly making decisions about what is significant and what is not (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001). The question of rigour and objectivity is raised especially in case studies where, regardless of steps taken to ensure rigour (as discussed in the reflexivity section), the "research is not, and cannot be, completely objective, nor can we easily make transparent all the judgments we have made" (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001, p. 9). Some researchers may have dubious thoughts on case study rigour and objectivity; however, the steps taken in this study to ensure rigour and objectivity allow for my insider expertise and intuition to only strengthen this case study. Given my own experience at the Umoja Games, I was not surprised when participants narratives resonated with my own. However, in many instances my insider

perspective did not align with the participants' experiences in sport, especially mainstream sport. Some participants shared that their visible Muslimness did not significantly impact their sport participation suggesting that hijab is just a piece of cloth that does not necessarily impede their participation. The motivations of this study were largely driven by my experiences as a hijabi woman in sport, but as the researcher my experiences cannot cloud my observations by choosing to focus on the aspects of their experiences that mirror mine. I believe that by reflecting on my own position and my own experiences before beginning the interview process, I was able to avoid unconsciously conflating my experiences with that of the participants, instead I saw myself as an observer first and an insider second. In this way my expertise and intuition is valuable to contextualize and empathize but does not impede the rigour of the case or overstep the boundaries of my role as the researcher. Furthermore, member checking with my advisor proved crucial especially in regulating inadvertent conflation or assumptions.

A common limitation to case studies, not excluding this study, is that the amount of data collected, and the complexity examined are often difficult to present simply. For this study, 19 recorded interviews were generated, ranging from 30 to 90 minutes alongside contextual data collected from the organization's Instagram page. When such data are analysed, much must be omitted (Colley & Diment, 2001). Even the most detailed of the stories and narratives recorded in this study have been simplified to analyse issues across the stories instead of focusing on each one as well as to maintain anonymity. Larger case studies will draw upon a small number of their participants to make connections to the larger issues that were observed. This case study is considered relatively small, and the lower number of participants proved beneficial as I was able to draw upon the specifics of each participant's story and narrative. Still, it is quite possible, indeed likely, that a revisiting of the data would reveal other issues and aspects of the participants' stories

and narratives that are just as interesting and important as the data recorded and analysed in this study.

In a conventional sense, the generalizability of this study is limited. Since the sample is small and idiosyncratic, it is difficult to conclude that Canadian Muslims experience community sport in the same ways that the participants in this study do. Furthermore, because the data in this study are predominantly non-numerical, there is no way to establish the probability that this data can be representative of larger populations. In a traditional sense, this may render this study weaker; however, generalizability is not one of the aims of this study. The observed gap in the literature in relation to community sport and Muslim participation (Walseth, 2010; Amira & Henry, 2010) fuelled this project, leading to the questions of how community-based sport can act as a space where processes of belonging and identity can be facilitated. This study revealed that such spaces, specifically the Umoja Games, acts as the space where participants negotiate and understand themselves as Muslims, Canadians, and athletes. Although the results cannot be generalized to all Canadian Muslims or to all community-based sporting spaces, the results of this study contradict previous studies conducted on the Muslim population and sport participation especially regarding highly discussed topics such as hijab and religious considerations when participating in sport. Furthermore, although it was not anticipated, the result of this study speaks to the de-homogenization of the term ‘Muslim’ and the common narratives that are associated with that term. Participants were given the opportunity to express what it meant to them to be a Muslim, to practice Islam and identify visibly and publicly as a Muslim in Canada. Through the lens of sport participation, this study revealed narratives are important precisely because they are unique.

Another limitation of this study was not being able to physically be at the Umoja Games 2020 for data collection. Due to COVID-19, the tournament was cancelled and rescheduled for July

2021. This resulted in participants relying on recall to describe their experiences from the 2019 tournament. Had interviews commenced directly after a tournament, the narratives from participants may have been more detailed. Originally, the intention was to attend the tournament to interview participants as well as take extensive field notes that could be incorporated into the study to inform the context in which participants structure their narratives. This would have also facilitated the recruitment of participants and allowed for a much larger sample.

Finally, it is plausible that a more diverse set of participants in this study could have led to development of other common patterns and themes. For example, of the eight participants who participated at the Umoja Games, only one participant, Mahdi, was male. The insights provided by Mahdi spoke to the male perspective of being a visible minority and could have led to a more in-depth comparative gender analysis had more male participants been recruited. In understanding sporting experience, sport in itself is understood to have been shaped by patriarchal and heteronormative ideologies in which hyper masculine, heterosexual men are the ideal sport participant (Messner, 2002). Although this study did not focus on gender as a mitigating factor to the sporting experience at the Umoja Games, the similarities and patterns that appear in the participants' narratives, may have been identified as related to gender. However, this study intentionally did not specifically speak on gender differences in sport participation experience due to the observation that much of the existing research focuses on the relationship between gender (namely women) and sport participation behaviours and patterns. Oftentimes participants reflected on their experiences as women or as men and commented on how their experiences as Muslims has largely been shaped by their gender. This was addressed in the Good Muslim discussion where female participants felt their gender had a large impact on the ways they performed their Muslimness. The one male participant did provide some insight; however, a larger sample with a

more heterogeneous composition may have led to themes directly related to gender related differences and experiences particularly in relation to Muslim identity and the performance of the ‘Good Muslim.’ Had the sample been larger or more heterogeneous, these emerging themes may have been more pronounced instead of briefly mentioned.

5.3 FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND FINAL WORDS

Possible research for future studies can take many shapes from further exploring community sport as a space for participants to understand their own identities and sense of belonging to a particular place, to exploring themes that could not be discussed in depth within the scope of this study. An unanticipated emerging theme of this study that can be further explored was the production of hybrid identities and the construction of the Third Space within Canadian-born Muslims in Canada. Given the design of the study and scope as a case study, purposeful recruitment as well as the nature of the Umoja Games as a tournament rather than a sport club or sport initiative, may have limited the ability to fully address or observe hybrid identities at play in sport and the construction of the Third Space. Possible future studies can recruit several generations of immigrants (first generation, 1.5 generation, second generation and so on) who participate in sport clubs or sport initiatives that span a longer duration of time such that a more thorough understanding of the process can be observed and evaluated. Studies like Boland’s (2020) study recruited several generations of Spanish Muslims to better understand hybridity and hybrid identities as an ongoing process. Similar directions can be taken and applied through the sporting lens to broaden our understanding of sport and the social structures that shape the ways in which we interact with the world around us.

As mentioned in the literature review, there seems to be a gap in the literature in regard to the role of exclusive faith-based community sport clubs/initiatives outside mosques in Muslim

communities. While this study addresses the experiences of participants in such spaces, further research can explore the inner workings of such organizations meaning the functions and purpose behind such endeavours, and the practice and implementation of services and events conducted within the community. Furthermore, a larger scale study can drastically expand the scope by including multiple organizations across Canada, giving voice to many Muslim-led organizations aiming to facilitate community growth and betterment.

The study of identity and belonging are infinitesimal, as these processes are highly nuanced and complex along with the theory that surrounds both processes. Taking a constructivist approach to such processes opens the doors to a multiplicity of ways to understand human perceptions of themselves and of others. Engaging with frameworks that encourage questioning and challenge the implicit and explicit norms, constructions, and narratives, produces research that propels forward thinking discussions that can in turn address social issues and phenomena impacting members of our communities, societies, and nations.

As a Muslim woman who has participated in various levels of sport, both ‘mainstream’ and community-based, this study reflects a personal journey. Understanding who you are as a person and where you fit in in the world around you is an ongoing plight for humans; some may spend decades trying to find where they belong to answer the coveted questions of their existence. I am no different; neither are the participants in this study. We want to know what it feels like to be safe, grounded, and at ‘home.’ The search for belonging is one factor that can drive global migration, urging people to leave their homes in search for a new home for their children to feel secure, be safe and achieve success. But it is not as simple as being born in a country and automatically belonging. What does it take to belong somewhere, truly belong? At 24, I think I am starting to understand. Even though the participants did not feel like the Umoja Games fostered a sense of belonging to

their community or their nation, for me it really did. In recent years, I felt distanced from the Muslim community. I couldn't go to mosque as often because of late classes or work and rarely saw any of my Muslim friends from mosque. My family and I do attend Eid prayers and Ramadhan dinners when we can but not nearly as frequently as we had when I was younger. I did not feel like I was a valued member or any particular place really; I simply just existed in spaces like school and work.

Although the Umoja Games congregation was not a weekly occurrence, the environment of the annual three-day event rejuvenated my connection with the Muslim community. Practicing, travelling, and playing with my team not only grew my sense of belonging to the Muslim community but also fostered a stronger sense of Canadianess, especially when travelling to the United States and interacting with American Muslims. The participants shared similar sentiments indicating that the environment and the people allowed for an experience that is unique to the Umoja Games in comparison to other tournaments or sporting organizations they had previously been involved in.

The direction of this study was not at all what I had anticipated, especially regarding citizenship and belonging. My own experience was not always mirrored despite having similar social, geographical, and historical backgrounds as the participants themselves. The ways in which each participant understood their experience at the Umoja Games rested on decades of personal experiences and memories, all converging to vocalize how they came to understand themselves as individuals. While there are similarities of course, the difference in our experiences is what makes us unique and also what makes this case unique. This study approaches participants' sporting experience in a space and time where identity is shifting and evolving away from the socially constructed binary constraints of their parents' time into a new space, where previous attachments

to meaning are severed and reformed. Thus, my one line of sight into this case is simply just that, and there may be other ways to approach, understand and analyse the multiple emerging themes and meanings that were discussed throughout this thesis.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: EMAIL RECRUITMENT TEMPLATE(S)

Text message template

Salaams [Participant Name]! Hope you are doing well and staying safe! I'm currently working on my Master's thesis and my project is actually a case study on Umoja, sport participation and its impacts on identity building practices in Canadian Muslims. I'm recruiting right now and was wondering if you are interested in participating? It's 2 interviews about 30-45 mins each, via zoom, one on one. If you're too busy I totally understand, but if you can think of anyone else who would be able to participate let me know I would greatly appreciate it. Thanks again!

Email to Founders

Salam Alaikum,

My name is Hadeth Rassol and I am currently a Master's student at the School of Kinesiology and Health Science at York University. My long participation in the Umoja Games has inspired my research passion which leads me to the request for your assistance. For my thesis, I will be conducting a case study investigating ideas of citizenship, belonging and nationhood for young Canadian Muslim athletes specifically within the context of the Umoja Games. Through interviews with Canadian participants, I hope to shed light on Shia Muslim experiences of sport. To this end, I would like to interview the Umoja Founders in order to understand the purpose and the role of the Umoja Games to our communities. Your participation would include 2 one-one-one online interviews via phone.

The goal of this research is to understand the experiences of Canadian Muslims both as athletes and as citizens within the context of the Umoja Games but also to gain insight into the organization itself. This study will be richly informed with understandings drawn from both the points of view of the participants and

the Founders, which allows for a larger picture to be drawn on the impacts of such an organization and event on the lives of the participants as both athletes and citizens. I greatly appreciate your assistance with this endeavour and look forward to hearing from you soon.

For more information on the study, please feel free to contact myself, Hadeth Rassol, at (416)707-5957 and/or by email at hadeth12@my.yorku.ca

Thank you for your time and Wassalam,
Hadeth Rassol

Email template sent to participants after agreement

Dear X,

Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in my study! I appreciate your time and would like to work with your schedule. I have attached a link to a survey for you to choose the best time for you. There will be 2 interviews: one will pertain to your specific experiences at Umoja and the second will pertain to your personal experience with sport participation.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VDQQJ8X>

I have also attached an informed consent form below. Please take some time to read through it and digitally sign on the appropriate lines. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me via email or text (416 707 5957).

Again, I appreciate your help with this project!

Hadeth Rassol
MSc Candidate
York University -- Kinesiology and Health Science

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE(S)

Interview Questions: Participants

First Interview: Umoja Games related Questions

- 1) Tell me a little about yourself.
 - a) What are your hobbies?
 - b) What sports do you play etc.?
 - c) Where were you born and raised? How about your parents?
- 2) How did you get involved with Umoja?
 - a) How did you hear about it?
 - b) Who told you about it?
 - c) Why did you get involved in Umoja? What piqued your interest in Umoja?
- 3) Tell me about your first experience participating with Umoja.
 - a) Who did you go with?
 - b) Describe the atmosphere.
 - c) What were your initial impressions?
 - i) Any surprises?
 - d) Tell me about a particular memory/experience that stands out for you from that first tournament.
 - e) How did you feel when the first tournament ended?
 - f) Tell me about your return to Canada.
 - g) What made you decide to participate again after that first time?
- 4) Looking back on the different tournaments you have participated in, tell me about a particular event/memory that stands out for you?
 - a) Why did this particular experience/event leave such a strong impression?

- 5) Tell me about the most recent 2019 tournament you went to.
 - a) When did training start?
 - i) Did you have a coach?
 - ii) What was emphasized during the training for the tournament?
 - iii) Tell me about your teammates.
 - b) How did you get to the tournament? Tell me about how you traveled to the tournament.
 - i) Who did you travel with?
 - ii) Tell me about when you crossed the border.
 - c) Tell me about where the tournament was held.
 - i) Tell me what stood out to you about the place where the tournament was being held.
 - ii) What was going through your head when you saw the Trump/Pence signs? When you saw the American flags? When you saw the 4th of July celebrations?
 - d) Where did you stay?
 - e) What were your goals for the tournament?
 - f) What were you looking forward to?
 - g) Was there anything you were not looking forward to?
 - h) Were you nervous about the tournament?
 - i) What stands out for you from that first tournament?
 - j) Tell me about the return home from your first tournament.
 - i) Crossing the border?
- 6) Tell me about a memory that stands out for you from last year's tournament.
 - a) What makes this stand out for you?
 - b) If sport/match related memory, ask for a memory that stands out that was unrelated to playing soccer.
- 7) Tell me about the relationships you have through the tournament.

- 8) Tell me about your involvement, if any, with the Umoja foundation efforts outside of the soccer tournament,
 - a) The academy?
 - b) Activities led through social media?
- 9) How would you describe Umoja if you were recruiting someone to participate?
- 10) How do you explain/describe Umoja to people who are not Muslim?
- 11) Do you play any other sports outside of Umoja?
- 12) How different or similar is your experience playing in Umoja versus what you perceive (or have experienced) in 'mainstream sport'?
 - a) Give me an example of a similarity and/or difference that stands out of for you.
 - b) Do you continue participating in mainstream sport? Why or why not?
- 13) Is there anything I have missed about your participation in Umoja that you want to share?
 - a) Is there anything else you want to share about your participation that you want to share?

Second Interview: Canadian, Muslim, Athlete

- 1) Tell me how being a Muslim person shapes your day-to-day life.
 - a) How does it shape your life more generally?
- 2) What does it mean to you to be Muslim?
- 3) Tell me about a time when you relied on your religion (faith).
 - a) Relatively small to more significant events/challenges.
- 4) In your experience, what are people's responses to you for being a Muslim?
 - a) Positive/negative? Comments?
- 5) Tell me when being a Muslim can be challenging for you.
- 6) Can you share a specific example where being Muslim influenced your sport experiences?
- 7) What types of stereotypes/racialized behaviour have you experienced?
 - a) On the field?

- b) Off the field?
- 8) How are Muslim people portrayed in the media that you consume?
- a) Can you give specific examples?
 - i) Muslim girls/women specifically
 - ii) Muslim boys/men
 - b) How does this portrayal of Muslim people influence your own experience
 - i) Generally?
 - ii) In sport?
- 9) What does it mean to you to be an athlete? Using how you define an athlete, are you an athlete?
- a) How has sport shaped who you are?
 - b) What do you think would prevent you from playing sports?
 - c) What does it mean to you that you are a Muslim athlete?
- 10) What has been your response from others (family, friends, acquaintances, teammates, opposing players, strangers), regarding your sport participation?
- a) Positive/negative? Comments?
 - b) How does their response relate to your Muslim identity, if at all?
- 11) What does 'Canadian' mean to you?
- a) Tell me when you feel 'Canadian.'
 - b) Describe someone who exemplifies the 'good' Canadian
 - i) What do they look like?
 - ii) What are the qualities of a 'good' Canadian'?
 - iii) How do they talk?
 - iv) What do they do?
 - (1) What sports do 'Canadians' play?
 - (2) What has been your experience playing 'Canadian' sports?
 - v) How do they dress?

vi) Do you exemplify the ‘typical Canadian’? Why or why not?

12) While playing at an Umoja tournament game, tell me about an instance, if any, that made you more aware of your Canadian-ness?

Note: Questions 11 and 12 will only be asked for the players not the Founders

Interview Questions: Founders of Umoja (These additional questions will be asked of the Founders)

1. Tell me about how this organization began?
 1. What was the driving force behind the founding of this organization?
 2. Tell me more about the start of UGames.
2. What are some of the goals you hope to achieve from this organization?
 1. Which goals have you met so far?
 2. How have the goals evolved from the beginning of this journey till now?
 3. Has UGames played a role in achieving these goals? If so, how?
3. What role do you perceive this organization plays in terms of shaping the next generation?
 1. If you could describe the ideal vision of the next generation, what would they look like?
 2. What benefits do you foresee for those who participate in the UGames?
 3. What type of impact are you, as an organization, aiming for?
 4. In your opinion and expertise, how does sport participation impact a child? What are tangible changes/benefits that you see?
 5. If so, can these changes/benefits be translated into the future of that child? How would that look like?
 6. What kind of feedback have you received from Canadian participants?
 7. How do you perceive the role of sport in people’s lives as members of the community?
 8. How do you perceive the role of sport in people’s lives as members/citizens of this country?
4. What hopes do you envision for this organization in the future?
 1. In 10 years, how will this organization look like in terms of activities and events offered?

5. Your website identifies that soccer is the language that unites our communities. How has this been exemplified in your opinion within the communities that have been involved?
 1. Why only a soccer tournament?
 2. Why only one sport and not multiple sports?
 3. How has soccer proven to ‘unite’ across communities?
6. This organization is faith-based but does not provide any faith related services. Why did you choose to run this organization outside of the mosque environment?
 1. How did this complicate or aid the success of this organization?
 2. How do you think this organization would have looked like had you chosen to operate with mosque affiliations?
 3. What makes this sporting event different, better etc. than those that operate out of a mosque?
7. Why choose to limit the eligibility of this event to Shia Inthna Asheris’ only rather than allow all Muslims to participate?
 1. On average, as of 2019, from which nationality do the participants hail from? Meaning, where do the participants come from?
 2. How about ethnicity wise?

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT FORM(S)

Informed Consent Form

Date: October 2020

Study Name: *Score! Now you are more Canadian: A case study approach to understanding citizenship and national belonging in sport*

Researcher name:

Hadeth Rassol (Principle Investigator)
hadeth12@my.yorku.ca
Masters level
York University

Purpose of the Research:

The purpose of this research study is two-fold: first, to shed light on the experiences of Canadian Muslim sport participants in the Umoja Games, a faith-based community sport organization, to understand the larger connections between sport, citizenship and national identity; and second, to examine the role of such organizations in the construction of the ‘good citizen’ and feelings of national belonging. This research study will be conducted via one-on-one semi-structured interviews with both participants and the founder(s) of the Umoja Foundation.

The data will be presented as a Masters Thesis.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:

There are two groups of participants in this study: participants of the Umoja Games and the founder(s) of the Umoja Games.

The participants of the Umoja Games (players) will be interviewed two times via one-on-one interview with the researcher for a duration of 30-60 minutes each interview. Interviews will be scheduled on two separate days within the same week. Each participant will be compensated for their time with a \$10 Tim Hortons gift card.

The founder(s) of the Umoja games will be asked to participate twice in an one-on-one 30-60 minute semi-structured interview with the researcher. This will be the only form of data collection for this group of participants.

Risks and Discomforts:

There may be some discomfort in recalling experiences regarding racism. You have the option to skip the question or withdraw from the study all together. Additionally, at the end of the interview you will be provided with the link (<https://mhw.info.yorku.ca/finding-help/>) which provides 24-hour mental health services for students who do not require medical attention and are in crisis or in serious distress.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You:

This research is meant to spark the conversation of how sport can be utilized to explore how popular narratives impact the way of life for minorities in Canada. The intent is to better understand faith-based sporting organizations and their role in the lives of Muslim Canadians as well as the larger Canadian society. Involving both the narratives of players as well as the founder(s) allows for a multi-perspective approach to understanding this particular organization. Additionally, granting Muslim Canadian players the opportunity to share their stories allows for the conversation to shift from theory to lived experience which provides us with a deeper understanding of how they associate meanings to sport participation, national identity and citizenship. This can empower them to think about their experiences and the benefits of participating in sport. Moreover, for founder(s) this research acts as feedback to the value of their organization and the role they may play in their players' lives. Finally, this research adds to the growing body of knowledge on Muslim sport participation and organizations that provide the opportunity to their communities.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer, to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions will not influence the nature of the ongoing relationship you may have with the researchers or study staff, or the nature of your relationship with York University either now, or in the future.

If you decide to stop participating, you may withdraw without penalty, financial or otherwise, and you will still receive the promised inducement.

In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible. Should you wish to withdraw after the study, you will have the option to also withdraw your data up until the analysis is complete.

Confidentiality:

- The data will be collected via audio recordings of phone calls made with the participants. Documentation will be in form of electronic voice recordings.
- The data will be stored on one device and can only be accessed by the primary researcher. The device is password protected and the files will be zipped.
- The data will be stored until January 2022
- The data will be destroyed after January 2022 by completely deleting the data collected from the device. Handwritten notes will be destroyed through a shredder

- Unless you choose otherwise, all information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and unless you specifically indicate your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research.

- The data will be collected via audio recordings of calls made with the researcher. Your data (electronic and hard copy) will be stored safely and securely on a device and only the researcher will have access to this information.

- The data will be stored until the culmination of this research study and will be destroyed thereafter by deleting all audio recordings from the device. It will be destroyed January 2022.

- Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

Questions About the Research? If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact me at hadeth12@my.yorku.ca or my supervisor, Dr. Yuka Nakamura at nakamura@yorku.ca and/or 416 736 2100 Ext. 22372. You may also contact the Graduate Program in Kinesiology and Health Science at kahs@yorku.ca and/or

This research has received ethics review and approval by the Delegated Ethics Review Committee, which is delegated authority to review research ethics protocols by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University’s Ethics Review Board, and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact the Sr. Manager & Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, Kaneff Tower, York University (telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca).

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I _____, consent to participate in _____ conducted by Hadeth Rassol. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature _____ **Date** _____
Participant

Signature _____ **Date** _____
Principal Investigator

Additional consent

Audio recording

- I consent to the audio-recording of my interview(s).

Signature:

Date: _____
Participant: _____

Consent to waive anonymity

I, _____, consent to the use of my name in the publications arising from this research.

Signature:

Date: _____

Participant: _____

APPENDIX D: LINKS FOR MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

1) York University Mental Health & Crisis Support: <https://counselling.students.yorku.ca/health-education/support-services/mental-health-crisis-support/>

2) York University Coping with Race Related Stress via Student Counselling, Health & Wellbeing: <https://counselling.students.yorku.ca/coping-with-race-related-stress>

3) Good2Talk free and confidential helpline for Ontario post-secondary students in need of resources, counselling and referrals for mental health, addictions and well-being.

Phone: 1-866-925-5454

Text: GOOD2TALKON to 686868