

Neighbourhood experience and Islamophobia in Sydney and Melbourne: survey findings



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This report is part of a larger project titled ‘The impact of ethnic diversity, socioeconomic disadvantage and sense of belonging on Islamophobia and social cohesion locally and nationally: a mixed-method, longitudinal analysis (July 2018 - Dec 2020)

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Executive summary

Stage 3 of the project titled ‘The impact of ethnic diversity, socioeconomic disadvantage and sense of belonging on Islamophobia and social cohesion locally and nationally: a mixed-method, longitudinal analysis’ focused on two constructs: ‘Islamophobia’ and ‘Neighbourhood Experience’. Islamophobia refers to indiscriminate negative attitudes or emotions directed at Islam or Muslims. Neighbourhood Experience is a composite of elements included in the concepts of social capital, local participation and satisfaction with one’s suburbs—its physical and built environment as well as its residents.

Our central research questions were:

- Is neighbourhood experience different in Muslim concentration suburbs (‘target areas’) when compared to other metropolitan suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne (‘metro areas’)?
- What are the levels of Islamophobia among residents of metro areas compared to target areas?
- Is there a relationship between neighbourhood experience and Islamophobia?

Stage 3 research draws data from a survey of 1020 respondents of metropolitan Sydney and Melbourne. The survey data were collected through a combination of Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) and an online survey. The online respondents (n=520) were residents of two metropolitan cities, while those reached by phone (n=500) lived in ten suburbs with the highest concentration of Muslim residents (e.g. from 59% in Lakemba, NSW to 30% in Dandenong, Vic), our target areas. Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

Main findings of the survey data analysis are:

- Among non-Muslims in both cities, Islamophobia was significantly lower in suburbs with a high proportion of Muslim Australians; therefore, Contact Theory was confirmed at a high level of confidence.
- Respondents who identified as Christian had higher Islamophobia than those professing no religion or other (non-Islam) religions; in the latter case the respondent numbers were too small to draw reliable conclusions.

- Younger people (18-34) and those with a higher level of education (Year 11-12 or University) are less Islamophobic than older age groups or those with lower levels of formal education (10 years or less); respondents with TAFE or trade qualifications showed Islamophobia on par with those with 10 or less years of schooling.
- Non-Muslims with lower socio-economic status were more Islamophobic and less satisfied with their neighbourhoods; interestingly, satisfaction with income was a better predictor than the level of income itself.
- Islamophobia was lower in Muslim concentration suburbs in Sydney than in comparable areas of Melbourne.
- Neighbourhood Experience in highly ethnically diverse and socio-economically disadvantaged (according to the ABS' Socio-economic indexes for areas (SEIFA)) target areas was comparable to that in metro areas.
- Neighbourhood Experience was better among overseas born, those whose first language was not English and those with university education. Length of residence in Australia or in the current suburb did not have a significant effect on Neighbourhood Experience.
- Men had higher Neighbourhood Experience scores than women.
- Better Neighbourhood Experience was associated with lower Islamophobia, but the association was weak.

Introduction

This is the Report from Stage 3 of the project titled ‘The impact of ethnic diversity, socioeconomic disadvantage and sense of belonging on Islamophobia and social cohesion locally and nationally: a mixed-method, longitudinal analysis’ (Aug 2018 to July 2020). The report centres on the analysis of a survey of 1020 respondents in the metropolitan cities of Sydney and Melbourne. The survey analysis focuses on two constructs: Islamophobia and ‘neighbourhood experience’—the latter is, primarily, a composite of elements included in the concepts of ‘social capital’ and ‘local participation’ (Colic-Peisker & Dekker, 2017). This introduction provides a concise overview of concepts and theories that contribute to the framework for our research questions/hypotheses, data collection and data analysis, as elaborated below.

Islamophobia

Research into ‘Western’ Islamophobia has proliferated over the past two decades, reflecting the concerning reality of this growing phenomenon. This research was ‘launched’ by the 1997 Runnymede Trust’s report ‘Islamophobia: A challenge for us all’.¹ Studies and findings reflect different historical and political contexts of different Muslim-minority countries e.g. UK, Germany, France, Spain, US, Canada, the Netherlands. Much theoretical and conceptual effort has been invested in producing a perfect definition of Islamophobia, especially pinning down its relationship to racism.

A generally accepted definition of Islamophobia refers to ‘indiscriminate negative attitudes or emotions directed at Islam or Muslims’ (Bleich, 2011; 2012, p. 182). Essential in the definition is the word ‘indiscriminate’, which means that all or most Muslims or aspects of Islam are assessed, without differentiating, and essentially, without a cause that could be traced to the real-life experience of an ‘Islamophobe’. According to Bleich (2012), negative attitudes or emotions that constitute Islamophobia may include ‘aversion, jealousy, suspicion, disdain, anxiety, rejection, contempt, fear, disgust, anger and hostility’ (p. 182). Other definitions are similar and focus on prejudice towards Islam and Muslims, racism targeting Muslims, especially those who are visible, and fear and dislike of Muslims (Colic-Peisker & Dekker, 2017; Sayyid, 2011; Stolz, 2005; Trust, 1997). Islamophobia often leads to discrimination and therefore affects the lives of Muslims in societies where they constitute minorities. This report focuses on Islamophobia in the two largest and most diverse

¹ see <https://www.runnymedetrust.org/about.html>

Australian cities, Sydney and Melbourne and our data indeed shows that there is more Islamophobia in the general population that has little to do with Muslims than among people who rub shoulders with their Muslim neighbours (details in the analysis section).

Islamophobia is often understood as a form of (cultural) racism. Many studies argue that Islamophobia also intersects with a general xenophobia and even sexism. A British study shows that 'white' UK converts to Islam are perceived as 'not-quite-white' (Moosavi, 2014), which suggests an association of Islamophobia and racism. Similarly, Rogozin-Soltar (2012) found that Spanish converts to Islam, compared to Muslim immigrants, were less discriminated against in Andalusia, historically the part of Spain with the largest Muslim minority. The other side of the coin is that non-Muslims are sometimes mistaken for Muslims because of their phenotypical features indicating a 'Middle Eastern' origin (Chao, 2014). Based on the above, it is clear that Islamophobia is a form of cultural (but not fully 'colour-blind') racism with strong historic roots ('Orientalism', anti-Arab sentiment etc.). Islamophobia homogenises the 'Muslim community' and Islam as a way of life and makes many Muslims feel that they are marginalised in societies that are majority non-Muslim (Phillips, 2015).

The relationship of Islamophobia with sexism is less clear. More women than men report being victims of Islamophobia (Iner, 2016; Pedersen & Hartley, 2012), but it is unclear whether this also indicates sexism and misogyny or simply the fact that if a person is aggressively Islamophobic, they are more likely to attack a Muslim woman than a Muslim man (or a mixed-gender group) because women are an easier targets of racist verbal abuse and physical violence compared to men.

The definition of Islamophobia inherently differentiates Muslims from non-Muslims, which potentially creates the false dualism where 'all non-Muslims' are different from 'all Muslims'. Obviously, Muslims, just like any other large population group, come from a variety of ethno-cultural and socio-economic backgrounds (Halliday, 1999; Mac an Ghail & Haywood, 2014). Moreover, there is no such thing as a 'culturally fixed' Muslim identity. Especially younger (second and third generation migrant) Muslims may resent being marginalised as Muslims and as immigrants, whereas neither of these characteristics may be important for their self-concept. These young men and women feel entitled to full inclusion in Western societies but often experience 'being watched' and mistrusted because of their faith (Kahani-Hopkins & Hopkins, 2002).

Which factors affect and predict Islamophobia? Hassan (2018) used a survey of 1000 Australian residents, and found that less than 10 per cent of respondents had Islamophobic opinions and values. Those who scored higher on the Islamophobia scale had fewer Muslims in their social network, were more likely to be less educated, unemployed, lower income earners, live in the Australian State of Queensland, identify as 'other Christian', be of non-English-speaking background (NESB) and over 75 years old. Our earlier research in two disadvantaged suburbs in Melbourne's north focused on the impact of visibility of the local Muslim population and Islam: most residents in Muslim-concentration suburbs were not Islamophobic, although many expressed dislike of the face veil worn by some Muslim women, seeing it as a barrier to communication (Colic-Peisker & Dekker, 2017).

A different approach by Iner (2016) analysed reports of Islamophobic attacks. This study provided insight into the experiences of Muslim Australians reporting incidents: mostly, Muslim women (72%) were harassed by male perpetrators (71%). Most perpetrators were identified as middle-aged men of white Anglo-Celtic background. Iner's (2016) findings were based on self-reporting of Islamophobic incidents and cannot necessarily be generalised to the overall Australian population. In general, self-reporting of Islamophobic and other racist abuse is likely to under-represent the real prevalence of the phenomenon.

German study by Eyssel, Geschke and Frindte (2015) shows that local acceptance of Muslim minorities is influenced by global events, where Islamophobia was media or peer-pressure induced. Depending on how the media presents global events, a positive, neutral or negative picture of Muslims is sketched (Colic-Peisker et al., 2016). One of the most extreme examples of such media-induced Islamophobia comes from Eastern Europe; Buchowski (2017) calls it 'phantom Islamophobia' because there were hardly any Muslims in Poland, yet the fear and loathing of Muslims, including violence against them, was high. Clearly, local Islamophobia has a global aspect, filtered down to the local level through conventional and social media.

On the other hand, Islamophobia can be affected by local encounters of Muslims and non-Muslims in schools, workplaces, neighbourhoods and public spaces. Iner (2016) reported that many Islamophobic incidents took place in diverse suburbs in, for example, shopping centres. Respondents in our earlier Melbourne study indicated they felt safer in diverse neighbourhood with a considerable presence of other Muslims (Muslim residential concentrations) than in other parts of the city (Colic-Peisker & Dekker, 2017). Some studies

suggested that the perception of ‘Muslim threat’ could best be understood when studied at the local level where the suburb is seen as a ‘performative space’ of citizenship, belonging and otherness (Phillips, 2015; Uenal, 2016).

The ‘neighbourhood experience’: theorising interethnic encounters at a local level

Despite an abundance of studies on both urban diversity and Muslims in the West, so far little research has been done on Muslim and non-Muslim coexistence in diverse urban neighbourhoods. Several theories may be helpful in doing so: contact, threat, invasion-succession and suburb cycle theories. The contact theory has been tested extensively, and shows that usually, but not always, contact between people of different background reduces prejudice between groups (Allport et al., 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). The threat theory can be considered the other side of the coin: it proposes that encounters between individuals from different groups may, in certain circumstances, increase the feeling of anxiety and threat (Stephan & Stephan, 2013).

Evidence on the contact and threat theories in neighbourhoods where minority Muslims share spaces with non-Muslims and encounter them daily is mixed. For example, a recent UK study by Schmid et al. (2014) shows that people living in diverse suburbs with a considerable Muslim presence have more positive contacts with Muslims and are in consequence less Islamophobic. On the other hand, a Dutch study revealed that direct contact between Muslims and non-Muslims increased a feeling of threat as well as prejudice against Muslims (Velasco González et al., 2008). Our own research in two northern suburbs of Melbourne provides tentative evidence that socio-economic disadvantage, more than the visibility of Muslims, may affect Islamophobia (Colic-Peisker & Dekker, 2017).

The invasion-succession theory is related to the suburb cycle theory. Both explore different stages in a suburb’s development over time, in terms of migration and demographic change. Suburb cycle theory typically identifies different stages of demographic change which occur in the lifetime of a suburb (Wiesel, 2012). Through its ‘life cycle’, a suburb may change from a predominantly white and wealthy area populated by young families, to higher densities when lower income and smaller households move in, finally followed by an influx of recent ethnic minority migrants (Galster et al., 2000; Galster, 2000; Grigsby et al., 1987). However, an opposite process may take place, usually encapsulated by the concept of ‘gentrification’.

Invasion-succession theory is first formulated in the 1920s within the Chicago School of Sociology, at the time of intense growth of US cities. This theory refers to the situation where new groups rapidly move into a neighbourhood, displacing the existing residents. At a certain moment, called ‘the tipping point’ (Taub et al., 1984), older residents no longer feel at home in their suburb and decide to either move out or in some way resist the incursion of new residents because they feel threatened by the newcomers. Earlier studies, including our own in Australia and the Netherlands, identified processes of invasion-succession (Colic-Peisker & Robertson, 2015; Dekker, 2012; Park, 1915). Phillips (2015) presents an interesting case study where British Muslims feel threatened by the influx of white but deprived Eastern European immigrants destined for the bottom of the labour market. Therefore, ‘whiteness’ and privilege are not aligned in this case. Similarly, our findings show that Muslims from South Asia and the Middle East, and further generations from these backgrounds, can be increasingly found in Australian neighbourhoods with higher socio-economic profiles.

Apparently, all these theories explaining neighbourhood demographic and social dynamics are products of a certain era in which they were formulated, and some aspects may seem superseded; yet, they are considered classical theories because their main tenets have endured changes in circumstances.

Social and community cohesion, social capital and local participation

A growing body of research literature critically examines conceptual, ideological and policy implications of an emphasis on community or social cohesion. There are many definitions of the concepts in the academic literature. In Australia, non-Anglophone, and especially non-European immigrant groups may encounter considerable mainstream prejudice. Such migrants may be perceived as a threat to social cohesion and even national identity, as the nation is still perceived as predominantly ‘white’/European and English-speaking/‘Anglo’ (Hage, 1998). Over time, through years of contact, some groups have become accepted by the ‘mainstream’ population as a welcome addition to the nation’s diversity, ‘multiculturalism’ and ‘cosmopolitanism’ (Markus et al., 2009). This trajectory from being at the receiving end of prejudice and discrimination to acceptance as part of the nation has been most pronounced in relation to ‘white ethnics’, that is, non-Anglophone continental Europeans in Australia but also in the US (Markus et al., 2009; Waters, 1999). Clearly, social and community cohesion is not threatened by the mere presence of visibly or culturally different groups, but by majority prejudice against them and the resulting segregation and discrimination.

Studies, including our own, consistently show that xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment, and also Islamophobia, are more present among people with lower socio-economic characteristics (including income, education, occupation).

Jensen (1998) proposed a multidimensional framework for social cohesion which includes five elements: belonging, inclusion, participation, recognition and legitimacy. Participation can have a local and a wider aspect; our present study included local participation into a broader construct of a neighbourhood experience. Participation is also related to inclusion, which can be defined as access to local (or wider level) resources by community members from different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Both participation and inclusion are positively related to local community cohesion, and all are needed as elements of positive neighbourhood experience. In this sense, in Muslim concentration suburbs, positive neighbourhood experience has to be antithetical to the presence of Islamophobia. We address this in our data analysis below.

A related concept is social capital, which includes trust of people we do not know well, or of complete strangers; social networks that are important to social functioning of individuals and groups; and shared norms or values. Putnam (1993) examined 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital and their relationship with the concept of social cohesion. Bridging social capital can take a form of social ties that cut across ethnic, linguistic and religious differences. In general, social capital contributes to social cohesion and social participation through connections or integration of individuals and groups into a local or wider society. Putnam's (1993) work also contributes to understanding of the relationship between social cohesion and socio-economic disadvantage. Strengthening local community cohesion or more abstract wider-level 'social cohesion' seem to include investment in the development of social capital through policies and programs that connect different groups of people and enhance pathways for civic engagement at local and broader levels. Addressing socio-economic disadvantage and supporting economic development is considered beneficial for community cohesion, especially by policymakers in Australia and similar countries. However, the relationship between social cohesion and socio-economic dis/advantage is complex and context specific, especially at a local level, as elaborated in our own and other research (Cheong et al., 2007; Colic-Peisker and Dekker 2017).

Contrary to dominant public perception in Western countries, Muslim presence may have a potential to enhance social cohesion: Mansouri (2017) argued that 'taking care of one's

neighbours,' is an 'important civic virtue integral to Muslim beliefs'. Religious teachings of the Qur'an emphasise responsibility for public welfare (Mansouri et al., 2017), in contrast to the Anglo-Australian values of privatism and individual consumption, the values that, in the context of anonymous urban living in large cities, militate against an idea and practice of 'community cohesion'. However, these un-cohesive Anglo-Australian values, in socio-economically advantageous contexts, have never been a policy concern.

Methodology

Stage 3 of the project addressed project research questions (RQs) 4 and 5 of the project:

RQ4. Is neighbourhood experience (local attachment and belonging, satisfaction with living in a local community) different in Muslim concentration suburbs ('target areas') when compared to other metropolitan suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne ('metro areas')?

RQ5. What are the levels of prejudice, specifically Islamophobia, in general metropolitan population of Sydney and Melbourne, compared to areas with significant Muslim minorities in the two cities?

These RQs were operationalized through the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1a: Islamophobia is lower in Muslim concentration suburbs than elsewhere in Australia (contact theory).

Hypothesis 1b: This relationship is stronger for residents with good neighbourhood experience (mediation effect).

Hypothesis 2a: Islamophobia is higher in Muslim concentration suburbs than elsewhere in Australia (threat theory).

Hypothesis 2b: This relationship is weaker for residents with good neighbourhood experience (mediation effect).

Hypothesis 3: Non-Muslims with a lower socio-economic status have higher Islamophobia scores than those with higher socio-economic status (threat theory).

RQs were addressed and hypotheses tested through the analysis of survey data. The survey targeted a sample of N=1000 respondents, 500 online and 500 by phone. It was conducted in Sydney and Melbourne, the main Australian gateway cities with the largest proportion of migrants, including our target group, Muslim Australians. The survey data collection was a combination of Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) and an online survey. The final sample slightly surpassed the plan. About half of the survey sample (the online sample, n=520) comprised of residents of the two metropolitan cities, while the other half (n=500) was reached by phone.

The phone survey sample was sourced in 11 suburbs with the highest proportion of Muslim residents in Australia. These suburbs, as recorded by the 2016 Australian Census, are located in the two largest cities. In Sydney, these suburbs were Auburn, Greenacre, Mt. Lewis, Lakemba and Wiley Park (n=250); in Melbourne, these suburbs were Broadmeadows, Campbellfield, Coolaroo, Dandenong, Fawkner and Meadow Heights (n=250).

The survey was conducted in collaboration with an external social research agency that specializes in large sample surveys (I-view: <http://www.iview.com.au/>, based in Melbourne). The survey questions built on past relevant attitudinal surveys in Australia and overseas, as well as on our previous projects (Colic-Peisker & Dekker, 2017; Dunn, 2003; Dunn et al., 2015; Forrest & Dunn, 2007). The lead researcher briefed the research agency and worked closely with its survey team in order to ensure high data quality and the representativeness of the survey sample.

We consulted with the agency's principal and the research team leader while designing the survey and discussed the phone survey delivery with the team of interviewers in a face-to-face meeting. The team was also debriefed after the phone survey was completed. The survey was piloted through 50 phone interviews and then conducted in August 2019, after survey introduction and questions were reworded and adjusted to their final form.

The composition of the survey sample allows a comparison of the acceptance of Muslims and conversely, Islamophobia levels, in specific high-diversity, high-disadvantage locales, with the acceptance of Muslims / Islamophobia in the general population of the two largest and most diverse Australian metropolitan cities.

The CATI survey delivery took about 15 minutes per respondent. The survey was introduced as 'asking about people's views on ethnic diversity' in Sydney or Melbourne. The respondents were assured of strict confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, and informed that the data will be used purely for research with no commercial or political purpose.

Survey questions were divided into four sections (the full questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1 below):

1. Introductory screening questions
2. The Neighbourhood Experience Scale (NES) – 6 items

3. The Islamophobia Scale (IS) – 8 items
4. Supplementary demographic and socio-economic questions

The Neighbourhood Experience Scale consisted of six questions (Survey Qs 3-8). The Islamophobia scale was made up of eight questions (Survey Qs 9-16). The two research instruments were created using our experience with an ‘Islamophobia scale’² in our recently completed project; we also conducted an extensive review of similar scales used in Australia and overseas (e.g. the one used by Hassan et al., 2015; Monash-Scanlon survey etc.). We adjusted the wording of each question in order to achieve maximum clarity and suitability to the target sample of respondents. The contracted research agency delivered the dataset entered into a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) file in September 2019.

Consultations with our partner investigator, Professor Kevin Dunn were especially valuable at the stage of the research instrument (the survey questionnaire) construction. Prof. Dunn conducted several research projects where large telephone surveys, mainly focused on racism, were used as the data collection method. In 2002, he conducted the first such survey with a sample of 5056 in Queensland and NSW. The survey tested the following constructs of racism: tolerance of cultural difference, perceptions of the extent of racism, tolerance of specific groups, ideology of nation, perceptions of Anglo-Australian privilege and racialism (including segregation and hierarchy). The data showed strong Anti-Muslim sentiment in the two states; it is important to note that the survey was conducted during Oct-Dec 2001, at the time the 9/11 terrorist attack was fresh in people’s memory and likely to have magnified negative attitudes towards Muslims (Dunn, 2003). We also consulted several other experienced researchers who provided comments and suggestions on our survey questions.

² ‘Scale’ is a ‘battery of questions’ with evaluated internal validity and consistency (usually through a small pilot survey and/or evaluation by experts), asking about a specific issue.

Sample characteristics

This section describes the survey sample, presenting detailed information about respondents' demographic and socio-economic characteristics. In the analysis section, these characteristics will be related to respondents' scores in the Neighbourhood Experience Scale (NES) and Islamophobia Scale (IS).

To place the sample in context, relevant characteristics of the target areas (Muslim concentration suburbs) are given in Tables 1 (Sydney) and 2 (Melbourne). The tables are sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Census data.

Table 1: Relevant characteristics of target areas (Muslim concentration suburbs) and Sydney metro area.

	Median age	Overseas born (%)	Main LOTE spoken at home (%)	Main religion (%)	Median weekly household income	Unemployed (%)	Bachelors degree & above (%)	SEIFA rank (IRSD)³
Auburn Central⁴	30	69.1	Arabic (15.2)	Islam (45.7)	\$1,260	13.0	20.2	Decile: 1 Percentile: 5 Score: 858
Auburn South⁵	31	59.0	Arabic (21.3)	Islam (41.8)	\$ 1,287	10.9	17.5	Decile: 1 Percentile: 8 Score: 888
Greenacre-Mount Lewis⁶	33	46.8	Arabic (41.3)	Islam (41.3)	\$ 1,184	8.8	15.5	Decile: 2 Percentile: 12 Score: 911
Lakemba⁷	31	68.5	Bengali (18.7) Arabic (13.7)	Islam (59.2)	\$ 1,012	13.5	26.4	Decile: 1 Percentile: 5 Score: 852
Wiley Park⁸	31	66.5	Arabic (17.8) Bengali (17.1)	Islam (50.3)	\$ 1,074	12.0	26.4	Decile: 1 Percentile: 7 Score: 875
Greater Sydney⁹	36	42.9	Mandarin (4.7) Arabic (4.0) Cantonese (2.9)	Catholic (25.1) No religion (24.7) Islam (5.3)	\$ 1,750	6.0	28.3	

³ Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage, at <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/2033.0.55.0012016?OpenDocument>

⁴ http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/125011582?opendocument

⁵ http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/125011584?opendocument

⁶ http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/119011357?opendocument

⁷ http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/119021573?opendocument

⁸ http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/119021574?opendocument

⁹ https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/1GSYD?opendocument

Table 2: Relevant characteristics of target areas (Muslim concentration suburbs) and Melbourne metro area.

	Median age	Overseas born (%)	Main LOTE spoken at home (%)	Main religion (%)	Median weekly household income	Unemployed (%)	Bachelors degree & above (%)	SEIFA ranking ¹⁰ (IRSD)
Broadmeadows ¹¹	30	56.5	Arabic (18.3)	Islam (35.6)	\$ 900	15.9	12.3	Decile: 1 Percentile: 2 Score: 786
Campbellfield-Coolaroo ¹²	33	55.2	Arabic (20.2)	Islam (41.1)	\$ 927	14.6	8.6	Decile: 1 Percentile: 3 Score: 795
Dandenong ¹³	32	72.0	Hazaragi (7.9)	Islam (30.1)	\$ 1,026	13.1	14.5	Decile: 1 Percentile: 4 Score: 846
Fawkner ¹⁴	34	55.8	Italian (13.8)	Catholic (33.5) Islam (31.9)	\$ 1,086	10.6	20.3	Decile: 2 Percentile: 13 Score: 915
Meadow Heights ¹⁵	31	52.8	Turkish (22.0)	Islam (41.2)	\$ 1,044	14.1	9.5	Decile: 1 Percentile: 3 Score: 821
Greater Melbourne ¹⁶	36	40.2	Mandarin (4.1) Greek (2.4) Italian (2.3)	No religion (31.0) Catholic (23.0) Islam (4.2)	\$ 1542	6.8	27.5	

¹⁰ Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage, at <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/2033.0.55.0012016?OpenDocument>.

¹¹ http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC20344?opendocument.

¹² http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/210051243?opendocument.

¹³ http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC20702?opendocument.

¹⁴ http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC20903?opendocument.

¹⁵ http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC21624?opendocument.

¹⁶ https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/2GMEL.

It is crucial for our analysis to look at the two sub-samples individually. The first sub-sample is online respondents who represent the population of Greater (metropolitan) Sydney and Greater Melbourne. In further text we refer to this group, for brevity, as the ‘metro’ sub-sample. The second is a sub-sample of respondents who were surveyed over the phone, in order to make sure they live in target suburbs. In further text we refer to them as the ‘target’ sub-sample.

Table 3: Demographic characteristics of the survey sample

		Metro areas (n=520)		Target areas (n=500)		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Age group	18-34	147	28.3	201	40.2	348	34.1
	35-49	152	29.2	168	33.6	320	31.4
	50-64	133	25.6	92	18.4	225	22.1
	65+	88	16.9	39	7.8	127	12.5
Gender	Female	254	48.8	210	42.0	464	45.5
	Male	262	50.4	289	57.8	551	54.0
	Other	4	0.8	1	0.2	5	0.5

Table 3 and Figures 1 and 2 show the basic demographic characteristics of the two survey sub-samples. All respondents were over 18 years of age. The target areas sub-sample is skewed towards younger age groups, with 40 per cent below the age of 34. At the other extreme, the proportion of respondents over 65 years of age is more than double in the metro sub-sample compared to the target group, though both proportions are small (17% and 8% respectively). The proportion of 65+ in the metro sample roughly matches the proportion in the total Australian population (ABS, 2017). The age of respondents is relevant since previous research indicates that

older people typically show higher levels of xenophobia and prejudices against minority groups (Hassan et al., 2015).

The metropolitan sub-sample is close to being gender-balanced though the target areas sub-sample has a small majority of men (58%). Existing research suggests that levels of prejudice are significantly different by gender, but the direction of the relationship is very context dependent (Ekehammar et al., 2003).

Figure 1: Gender distributions of the two survey sub-samples.

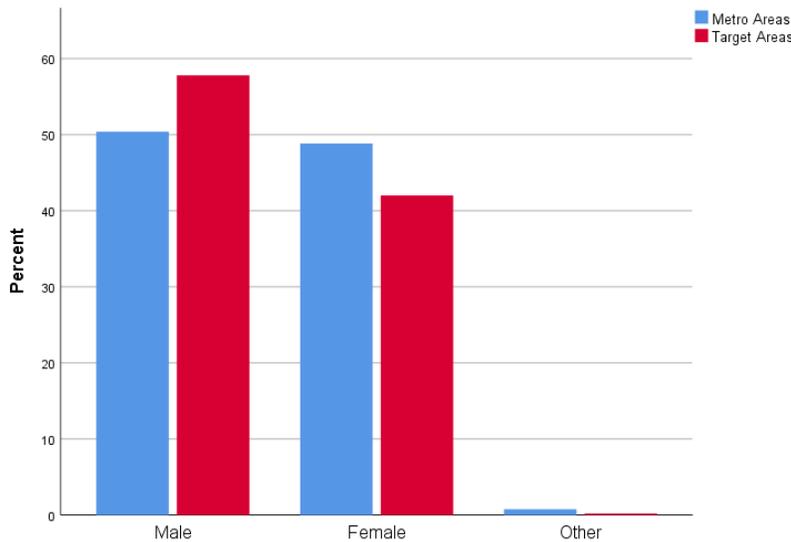


Figure 2: Age distributions of the two survey sub-samples.

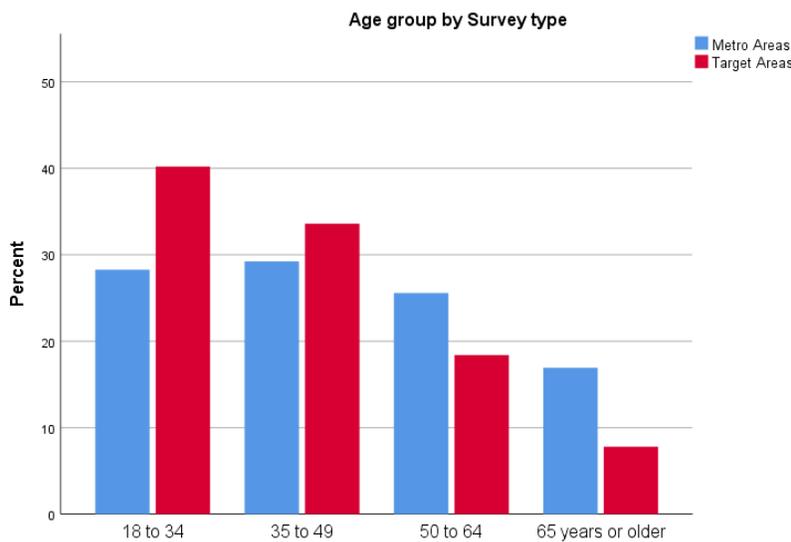


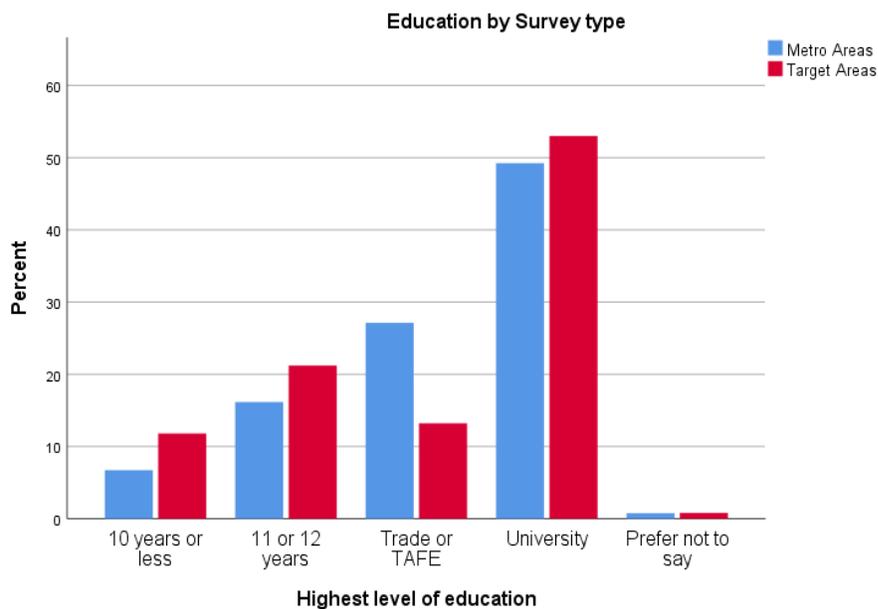
Table 4: Socio-economic characteristics of the sample.

		Metro Areas (n=520)		Target Areas (n=500)		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Education	Primary/Incomplete High	35	6.7	59	11.8	94	9.2
	Year 12	84	16.2	106	21.1	190	18.6
	TAFE	141	27.1	66	13.2	207	20.3
	Bachelor or higher	256	49.2	265	53.0	521	51.1
	Prefer not to say	4	0.8	4	0.8	8	0.8
Language spoken best	English	464	89.2	300	60.0	764	74.9
	Other	52	10.0	198	39.6	250	24.5
	Prefer not to say	4	0.8	2	0.4	6	0.6
Work Status	Employed	337	64.8	366	73.2	703	68.9
	Unemployed	22	4.2	17	3.4	39	3.8
	Outside labour market	158	30.4	116	23.2	274	26.9
	Prefer not to say	3	0.6	1	0.2	4	0.4
Annual income (personal income before tax)	Under \$50k	202	38.8	190	38.0	392	38.4
	\$50-100k	185	35.6	194	38.8	379	37.2
	Over \$100k	88	16.9	50	10.0	138	13.5
	Prefer not to say	45	8.7	66	13.2	111	10.9

Table 4 and Figures 3, 4 and 5 present the main socio-economic indicators for the two groups: education, employment status, income and the language the person speaks best. The latter is not in itself an indicator of socio-economic status, but in the Australian context, those whose first language is English are less likely to be unemployed or to have a poorly paid and low-status jobs.

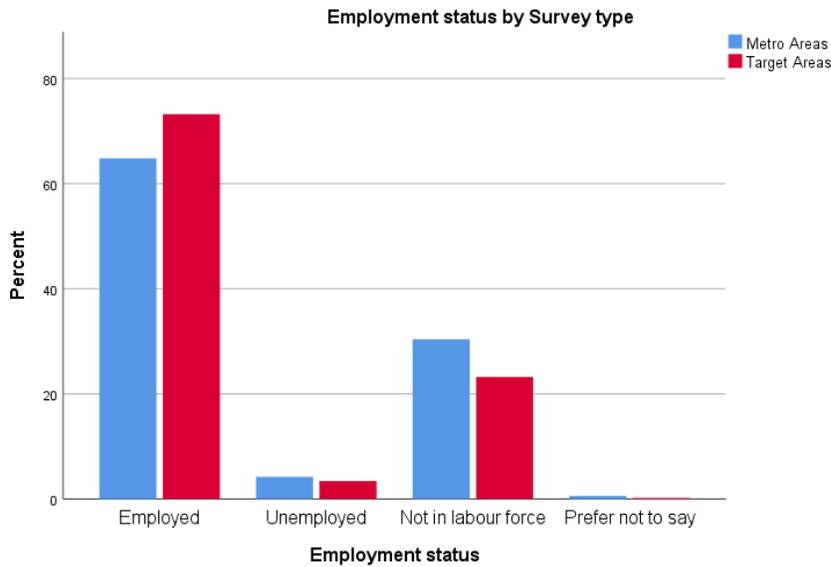
‘Outside the labour market’ category includes students, retired people, and other people not looking for work, e.g. those devoted to ‘home duties’, as well as some other categories, e.g. those on a disability pension. In later analysis, this group is broken down into sub-categories. Socio-economic status, and especially education, is known to have significant influence on attitudes towards ethnic diversity, immigration, minorities and related issues, where higher education is associated with lower xenophobia and prejudice. This is also shown in our earlier research (Colic-Peisker & Dekker, 2017).

Figure 3: Highest level of education.



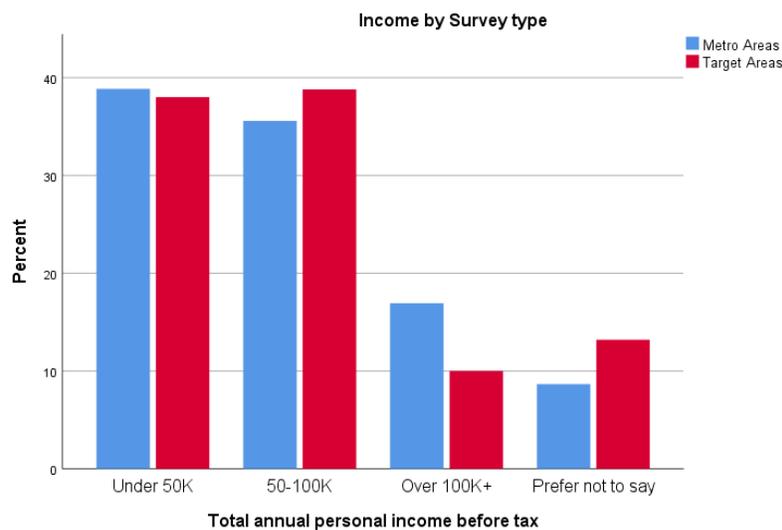
In terms of education status, about half of both sub-samples were tertiary educated, but slightly more target areas respondents had tertiary degrees (53 vs. 49%). However, the target areas sample also had more people with lower education (12 years or less). A major difference is shown in trade or Technical and Further Education (TAFE) qualifications with respondents from the metro sub-sample being twice as likely (27% compared to 13%) to have such a qualification as their highest level of education.

Figure 4: Employment status.



In the target areas, a slightly higher proportion of respondents are employed with correspondingly fewer are not in the labour market; unemployment is comparably low in both groups. The difference in employment rate is likely due to the higher proportion of older respondents in the general metropolitan area, as noted above.

Figure 5: Total personal annual income before tax.



Income distributions are similar in the two sub-samples. The only notable difference occurs in the highest bracket with a larger proportion of before tax income above \$100k per annum (16.9% compared to 10.0%) among respondents in the metro sub-sample. A higher proportion of people in target areas (more minority populations in the sample) were reluctant to disclose their income.

Unsurprisingly, the two sub-samples had considerably different characteristics in terms of their first language. Only 60% of respondents in the highly ethnically diverse target areas declared English to be their first language, compared to 90% in the metro sub-sample. This suggests a much higher proportion of first-generation migrants in the target sub-sample.

Tables 5 and 6 focus on the ethnic and religious diversity of our sample. They show the country of birth, religion and languages other than English spoken in each sub-sample.

Table 5: Country of birth and religions as stated by respondents.*

		Metro Area (N = 520)		Target Areas (N = 500)		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Country of birth	Australia	373	71.7	254	61.5	627	61.5
	India	19	3.7	22	4.4	41	4.0
	Lebanon	3	0.6	31	6.2	34	3.3
	United Kingdom	25	4.8	7	1.4	32	3.1
	Pakistan	2	0.4	24	4.8	26	2.5
	Bangladesh	0	0.0	23	4.6	23	2.3
	China	14	2.7	8	1.6	22	2.2
	Iraq	1	0.2	16	3.2	17	1.7
	New Zealand	8	1.5	5	1.0	13	1.3
	Afghanistan	0	0.0	11	2.2	11	1.1
	Other	75	14.4	99	19.8	174	17.1
Religion	No religion	220	42.3	96	19.2	316	31.0
	Christian	243	46.7	162	32.4	405	39.7
	Muslim	11	2.1	188	37.6	199	19.5
	Hindu	17	3.3	12	2.4	29	2.8
	Buddhist	12	2.3	3	0.6	15	1.5
	Other**	9	1.7	9	1.8	18	1.8
	Prefer not to say	8	1.5	30	6.0	38	3.7
	Total	520		500		1020	

*Countries and religions with over 1.0% of respondents in the total sample are included.

** 'Other' religions comprise respondents who were Sikh, Jewish or Baha'i.

As expected, the target areas had a higher proportion of overseas-born respondents, with Lebanon (6.2%), Pakistan (4.8%), Bangladesh (4.6%) and India (4.4%) being the leading countries of origin. In the general metropolitan sub-sample, the United Kingdom (4.8%), India (3.7%) and China (2.7%) were the only countries outside Australia to contribute more than 2% of the sample, which is reflecting the distribution within the total Australian population, where these are the three main source countries of immigrants to Australia.

By design, the survey target areas had a much higher proportion of Muslim respondents (37.6%) compared to the metro sub-sample where the proportion of Muslim respondents (2.1%) was actually lower than the proportion in Greater Sydney and Greater Melbourne—5.1% and 4.2% respectively (ABS, 2016a) and 2.6% for the Australian population as a whole (ABS, 2017b). The lower than expected number of Muslims in the metro sub-sample possibly reflects the fact that the online survey had a fair geographical spread, while a large proportion of Muslims in Melbourne and Sydney tend to be residentially concentrated in a limited number of suburbs. The number of respondents indicating ‘no religion’ (those indicating atheist, agnostic, free-thinker, pagan or nature as their belief) in the target areas is less than half that of the metropolitan sub-sample. ‘Other religions’, including Hindus, Buddhists and Jews have smaller representation in the target areas, while the number of Sikhs (4) and Baha’is (1) is negligible.

Table 6: Respondents' languages other than English (LOTES) spoken at home.*

Language	Metro Area (N = 520)		Target Areas (N = 500)		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Arabic	5	1.0	45	9.0	50	4.9
Urdu	0	0.0	24	4.8	48	2.4
Mandarin	9	1.7	6	1.2	15	1.5
Cantonese	9	1.7	4	0.8	13	1.3
Hindi	5	1.0	8	1.6	13	1.3
Bengali	0	0.0	11	2.2	11	1.1
Turkish	0	0.0	10	2.0	10	1.0
Hazaragi**	0	0.0	8	1.6	8	0.8
Greek	2	0.4	5	1.0	7	0.7
Spanish	5	1.0	2	0.4	7	0.7
Total***	52	10.0	198	39.6	250	24.5

*Languages spoken by more than 1.0% of either sub-sample are included.

** Hazaragi is spoken by the Hazara people and is one of the two official languages of Afghanistan.

*** Includes all LOTES spoken by respondents, not just those shown in the table.

Languages spoken at home other than English reflect the ethnic diversity of the target sub-sample, with 40% of respondents indicating they speak another language compared to 10% in the metro sub-sample. Arabic and Urdu are the leading languages spoken in the target sub-sample, followed by Bengali and Turkish. The languages of China are the dominant foreign language

spoken in the metro sub-sample. The proportion of Australian born are indicated in Figure 6, while Figure 7 shows the main religions of our respondents.

Figure 6: Proportion of Australian-born in the survey sample.

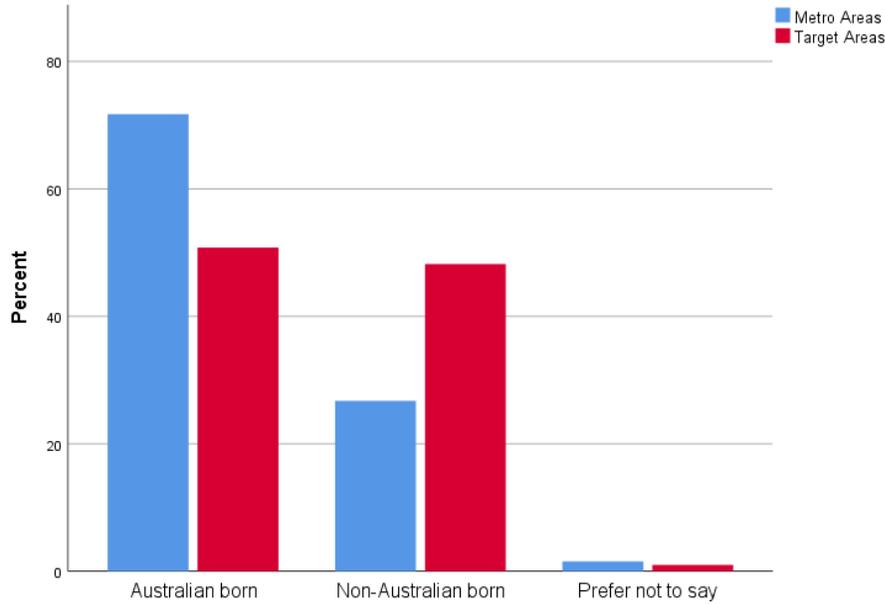
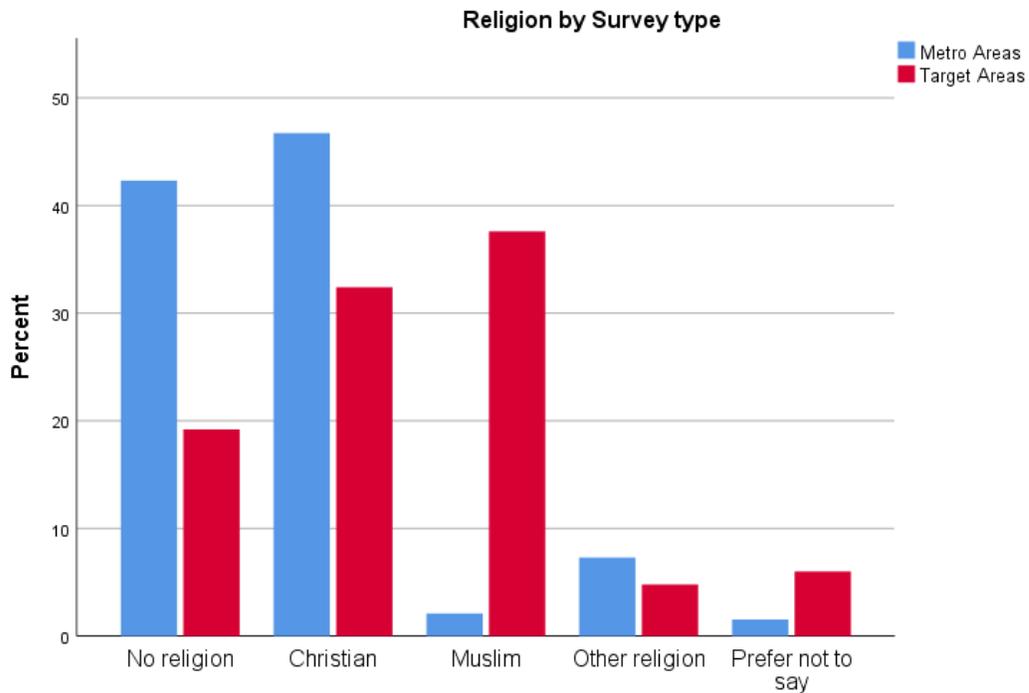


Figure 7: Largest religious groups of the survey sample.



The survey gathered data from two sub-samples, eleven highest Muslim-concentration suburbs in Sydney and Melbourne, and the general population of Greater Sydney and Greater Melbourne. As indicated in this section, the demographic and socio-economic indicators of the two sample groups were fairly similar, apart from the noted difference in trade qualifications and some differences in age distribution, while the religious and ethnic diversity of the two groups varied markedly. This allows us to present a clear picture of the influence of living in a Muslim-concentration suburb on our two main variables of interest, Islamophobia and Neighbourhood Experience.

Data Analysis: Neighbourhood experience and Islamophobia

Once data were collected through the survey and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), we checked and cleaned the data file. All analyses described below were performed using the SPSS software.

We ran the Cronbach's alpha tests for scale reliability for both Neighbourhood Experience and Islamophobia scales. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for both the NES (0.702) and the IS (0.892) indicated validity and internal consistency in the questions within each battery.¹⁷ Neither coefficient can be improved by the removal of any individual question, so all questions were retained in the computation of the scale scores.

Tables on Islamophobia and Neighbourhood Experience against demographic, religious and socio-economic variables are presented below. In the discussion of findings, 'statistically significant' refers to significance at the $p = 0.05$ level unless otherwise indicated. This means that there is still up to a 5% probability of our stated findings being chance correlations. Some of our observations have a much higher significance, meaning that the effect is much less likely to be due to chance. Where statistically significant effects are observed, graphs are used to display the data with error bars indicating the 95% confidence interval for each point. For ease of comparison, all graphs are drawn within the full variable range, e.g. from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) levels of Islamophobia or Neighbourhood Experience.

¹⁷ A Cronbach's alpha score above 0.7 is considered good (DeVellis 2003).

Table 7: Islamophobia score by religion of respondents.

	Metro area			Target areas			Total		
	N	Mean (1-5)	Std. error	N	Mean (1-5)	Std. error	N	Mean (1-5)	Std. error
No religion	215	2.63	0.06	90	2.15	0.09	305	2.48	0.05
Christian	235	3.00	0.06	152	2.40	0.07	387	2.77	0.05
Muslim	11	1.64	0.15	183	1.44	0.04	194	1.45	0.04
Other religion	35	2.54	0.15	22	2.30	0.18	57	2.45	0.12
Prefer not to say	8	2.27	0.28	26	1.78	0.18	34	1.90	0.16

A score of 1 represents no Islamophobic views expressed by respondents, while a score of 5 means that the respondent chose the answer that represents maximum Islamophobia.

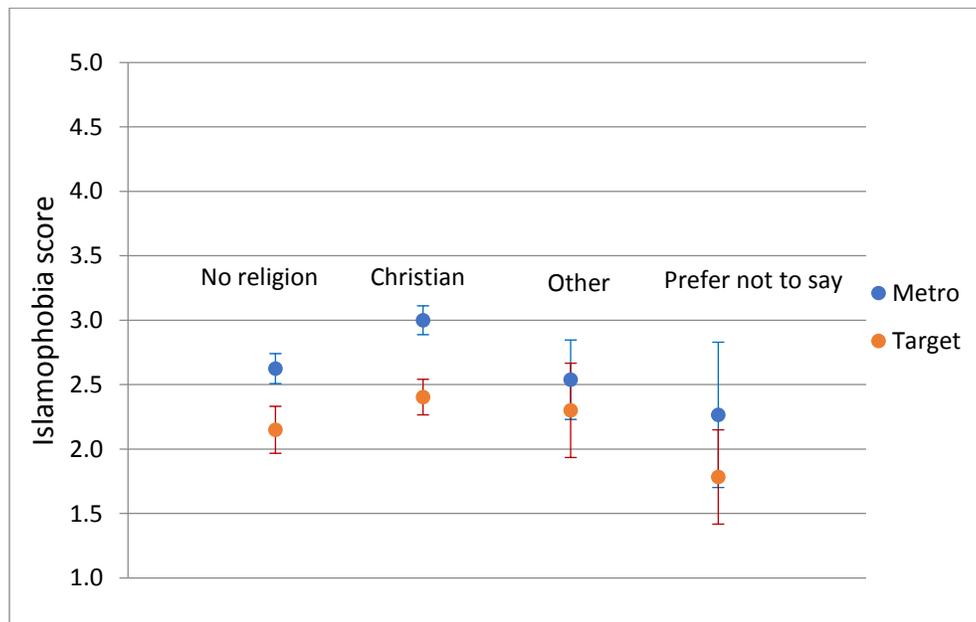
‘Std. error’ refers to the standard error in the mean. It was computed for each group and used to calculate 95% confidence intervals (+/- twice the standard error).

Table 7 shows a comparison of mean Islamophobia scores by religious group and for both target and metro sub-samples. Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Sikhs and Baha’i are grouped together as ‘other religions’ since the individual numbers of respondents for each of these religions is small and no meaningful statistical analysis can be performed for these religions individually.

Christians in our sample show the highest average Islamophobia score, both in metro and target areas. However, Christians in the metro area are more Islamophobic than those who live in Muslim concentration suburbs (scores of 3.00 vs. 2.40). The Islamophobia of all religious groups was lower in the target areas. Given that these areas had an average of 37.6 per cent of Muslims among their residents, this result supports the contact theory, which suggests that tolerance of minority groups increases by frequent contact with members of those groups.

We conducted a t-test for independent samples, which indicates that the differences in Islamophobia for the ‘no religion’ and ‘Christian’ groups are highly statistically significant ($p < 0.0001$ or higher than 99.99% confidence). The numbers of respondents in the ‘other religions’ and ‘prefer not to say’ groups are too small to draw statistically significant conclusions but the trend of lower Islamophobia scores in high Muslim concentration areas is consistent.

Figure 8: Islamophobia score by religion of respondents.



We compared Neighbourhood Experience scores (NES) of religious groups, for the two sub-samples. Table 8 and Figure 9 show that the mean NES is higher in the metro sub-sample for each religious group except Muslims. A score of 1 represents low neighbourhood satisfaction and low connectedness, while 5 represents maximum satisfaction and connection.

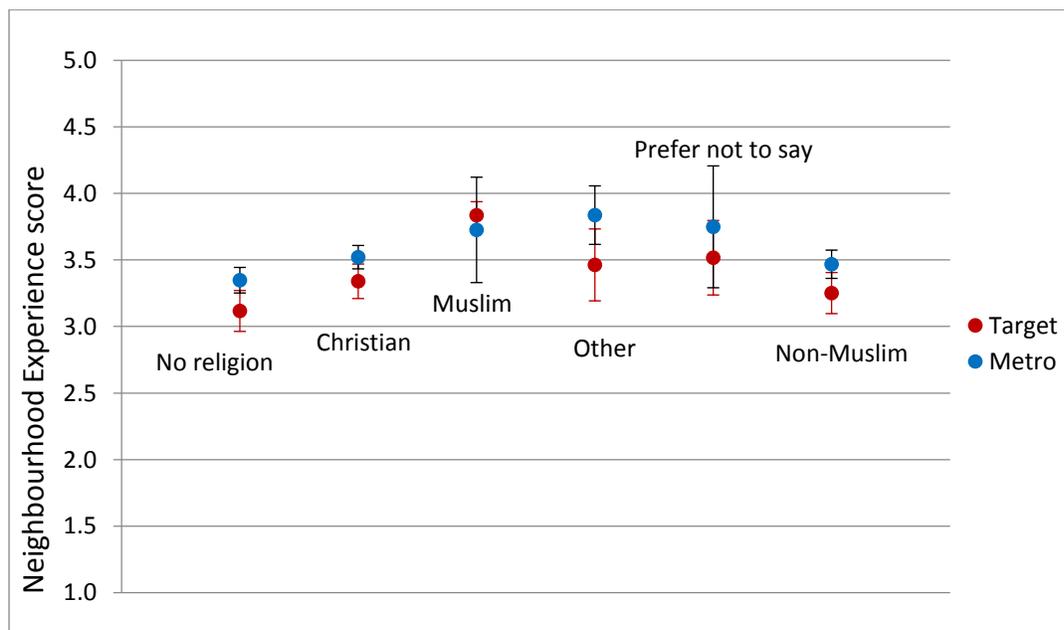
Table 8: Neighbourhood Experience score by religion.

	Metro Area			Target Areas			Total		
	N	Mean	Std. error	N	Mean	Std. error	N	Mean	Std. error
No religion	218	3.35	0.05	96	3.12	0.08	314	3.23	0.04
Christian	243	3.52	0.04	159	3.34	0.07	402	3.45	0.04
Muslim	11	3.73	0.20	187	3.84	0.05	198	3.83	0.05
Other religion	36	3.84	0.11	23	3.46	0.13	59	3.69	0.09
Prefer not to say	8	3.75	0.23	28	3.52	0.14	36	3.57	0.12
Non-Muslim*	497	3.47	0.05	278	3.27	0.08	775	3.40	0.06

*Total of non-Muslims excluding those who did not state their religion ('Prefer not to say').

Using a t-test for independent samples, all differences are found to be statistically significant. In both sub-samples, Muslim respondents had a significantly higher NES than people with 'no religion' and Christian groups, and in Muslim concentration suburbs, Muslims had significantly higher scores than the 'other religions' group.

Muslims have marginally better NES in the target sub-sample than in the general metro area, but this difference is not significant since the number of Muslim respondents in the general metropolitan sub-sample is small (11 out of 520, underrepresented given the proportion in the general metro population, see Tables 1 and 2).

Figure 9: Neighbourhood Experience score by religion.

It is also interesting to compare Islamophobia scores (IS) between Melbourne and Sydney target areas. In the Muslim concentration areas, Sydney Christians showed lower Islamophobia compared to Melbourne Christians. A two-sample t-test shows the effect is significant at $p = 0.05$. It seems that Western Sydney, perceived as a highly diverse but also ‘highly Muslim’ area, invokes less Islamophobia than the more scattered Muslim concentration (target) areas in Melbourne. The target areas in Sydney have higher proportion of Muslim residents (at the time of the 2016 Census, the highest was 59% Muslims in Lakemba, whereas the highest Melbourne proportion was 41% of Muslims residents in Campbellfield, Coolaroo and Meadow Heights (ABS, 2017)). Our data show no significant difference in Islamophobia between Sydney and Melbourne target areas among ‘no religion’ or ‘other religion’ respondents.

Table 9: Comparison of Islamophobia between Melbourne and Sydney target areas, by religion.

Target areas	Melbourne			Sydney		
	N	Mean	Std. error	N	Mean	Std. error
No religion	57	2.14	0.11	33	2.17	0.15
Christian	86	2.52	0.10	66	2.25	0.09
Other religion	12	2.28	0.22	10	2.33	0.32
Prefer not to say	11	1.74	0.29	15	1.82	0.25
Total Non-Muslim	166	2.32	0.12	124	2.18	0.16

In the target sub-sample, all religious groups apart from ‘other religion’ had a higher NES in Sydney compared to Melbourne but the effect was only statistically significant for Muslims (3.95 in Sydney compared to 3.66 in Melbourne) and for the total sub-sample (3.63 compared to 3.37), as indicated in Table 10. The effect on Muslims could be due to the Sydney suburbs generally having a higher percentage of Muslims than the Melbourne suburbs, however, this does not explain how the trend – less strong but still present – continued for Christians and the ‘no religion’ group.

Table 10: Neighbourhood Experience in Melbourne and Sydney target areas, by religion.

Target areas	Melbourne			Sydney		
	N	Mean	Std. error	N	Mean	Std. error
No religion	60	3.10	0.10	36	3.14	0.13
Christian	89	3.28	0.09	70	3.41	0.10
Muslim	72	3.66	0.09	115	3.95	0.06
Other religion	13	3.53	0.20	10	3.38	0.18
Prefer not to say	14	3.45	0.26	14	3.58	0.12
Total	248	3.37	0.05	245	3.63	0.05

We hypothesized that a lower Neighbourhood Experience score should lead to a higher Islamophobia score for non-Muslims. We found this to be the case, however, there is only a small negative correlation between IS and NES scores. Pearson's r coefficient is -0.16 , indicating that only 3%¹⁸ of the increase in Islamophobia can be predicted by a decrease in Neighbourhood Experience. Although the effect is small, the large sample size means this figure is statistically significant at the $p = 0.01$ level. Both IS and NES are similarly affected by socio-economic factors, as we discuss below, so it is these factors that are the likely cause of the correlation.

A number of socio-economic factors were polled in the survey. This allows us to consider the effect of employment status, education and income on NES and IS scores. Table 11 indicates the scale scores as a function of employment and highest level of education for the total sample.

¹⁸ The *coefficient of determination* is the square of the r value, expressed as a percentage.

Table 11: Neighbourhood Experience scores for all respondents and Islamophobia scores for non-Muslims by highest level of education and employment status.

		Neighbourhood Experience			Islamophobia		
		N	Mean	Std. error	N	Mean	Std. error
Education	10 Years or less	93	3.35	0.09	75	2.90	0.09
	11 or 12 Years	189	3.35	0.05	145	2.56	0.07
	Trade or TAFE	205	3.42	0.05	175	2.87	0.07
	University	514	3.60	0.03	349	2.47	0.05
	Prefer not to say	8	3.22	0.34	5	2.95	0.52
Employment status	Full-time	450	3.50	0.03	345	2.54	0.05
	Part-time	158	3.45	0.06	113	2.77	0.08
	Self-employed	94	3.62	0.07	51	2.52	0.12
	Student	56	3.25	0.10	36	2.29	0.14
	Unemployed	39	3.29	0.14	27	2.60	0.16
	Retired	136	3.53	0.07	125	2.78	0.08
	Home duties	58	3.53	0.09	42	2.89	0.12
	Other	14	3.54	0.26	8	2.98	0.29
	Prefer not to say	4	3.67	0.18	2	2.50	0.13
	Total	1009	3.49	0.24	749	2.62	0.03

Figure 10: Neighbourhood Experience by highest level of education.

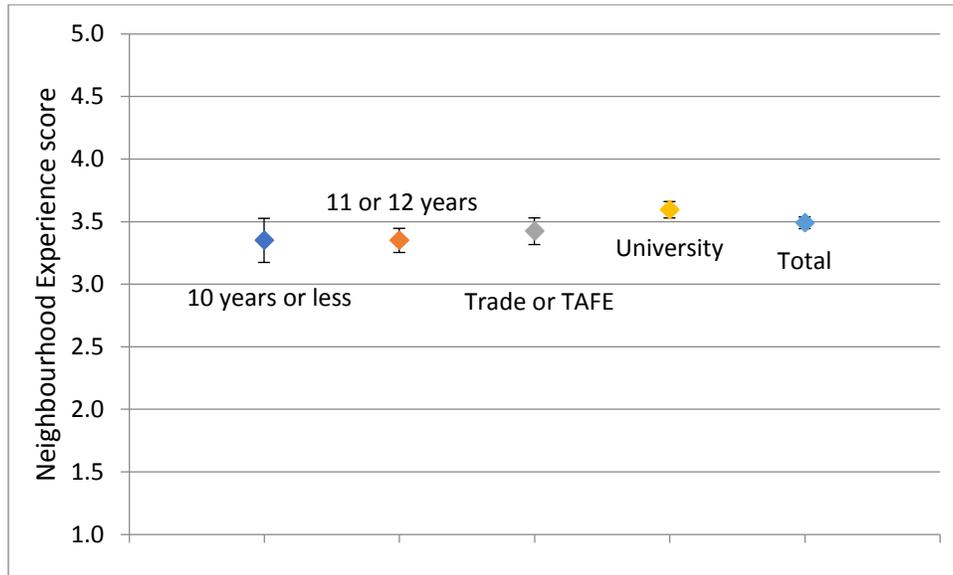


Figure 11: Islamophobia by highest level of education.

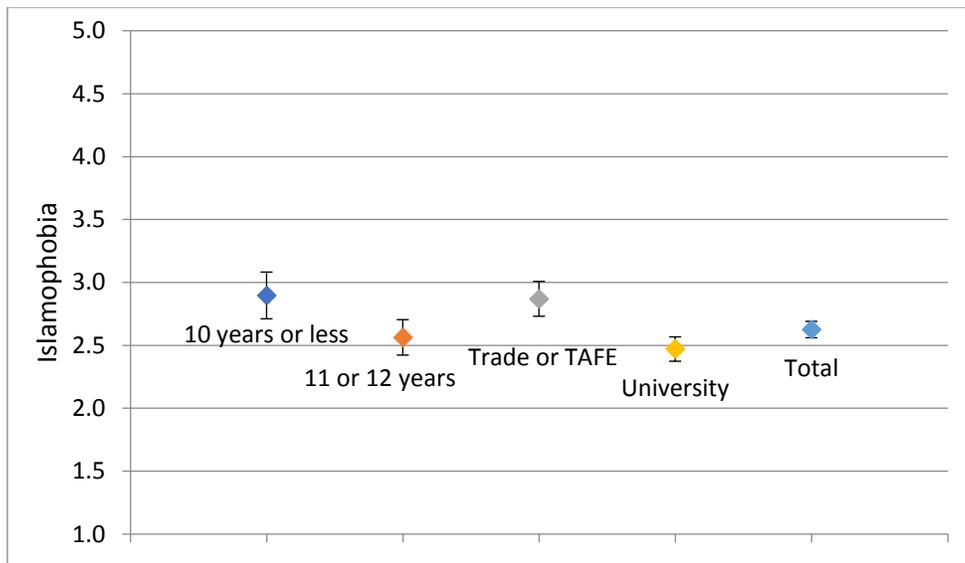


Table 12 and Figures 12, 13, 14 and 15 show the relationship between the scales scores (Islamophobia and Neighbourhood Experience) and income. The survey included two questions about income: the usual questions asking about annual earnings and an additional question about satisfaction with income. The first income question represents the ‘objective’ measure of a person’s income—as long as a respondent is able to report their income accurately, which is not universally the case, and they are also willing to disclose this information (it is worth noting that 111 respondents, or 10.9% of the sample, chose not to disclose their annual income, the highest proportion of any survey question). The second income question asked about the subjective aspect of income, the satisfaction with one’s income. Life satisfaction research shows that the relationship between the two is not as strong as one may expect: some people on higher incomes may feel they are just getting by or even struggling, while people on lower incomes may be relatively satisfied. Our data confirm that the relationship between income satisfaction and actual income is not entirely straightforward.

Table 12: Neighbourhood Experience scores for all respondents and Islamophobia scores for non-Muslims by income and satisfaction with income.

		Neighbourhood Experience			Islamophobia		
		N	Mean	Std. error	N	Mean	Std. error
Annual personal income	< \$50k	387	3.39	0.04	281	2.72	0.05
	\$50 – 100k	377	3.56	0.04	289	2.51	0.05
	> \$100k	137	3.59	0.07	109	2.63	0.10
	Prefer not to say	108	3.48	0.07	70	2.75	0.10
Satisfaction with income	Struggling	180	3.32	0.06	130	2.86	0.08
	Getting by	446	3.48	0.03	347	2.64	0.05
	Comfortable	366	3.59	0.04	264	2.49	0.06
	Prefer not to say	17	3.44	0.26	8	2.58	0.36
	Total	1009	3.49	0.24	749	2.62	0.03

Figure 12: Neighbourhood Experience score by income.

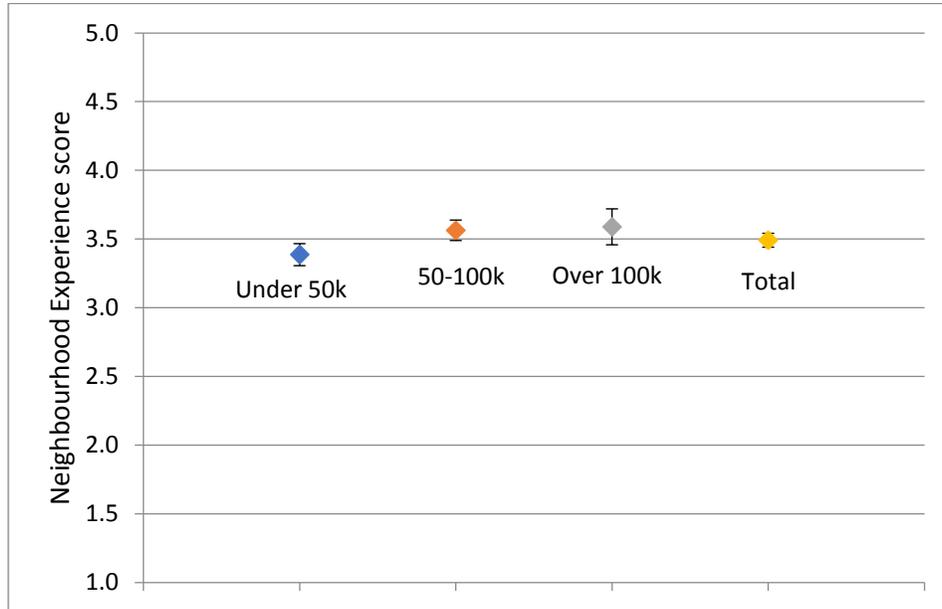


Figure 13: Neighbourhood Experience score by satisfaction with income.

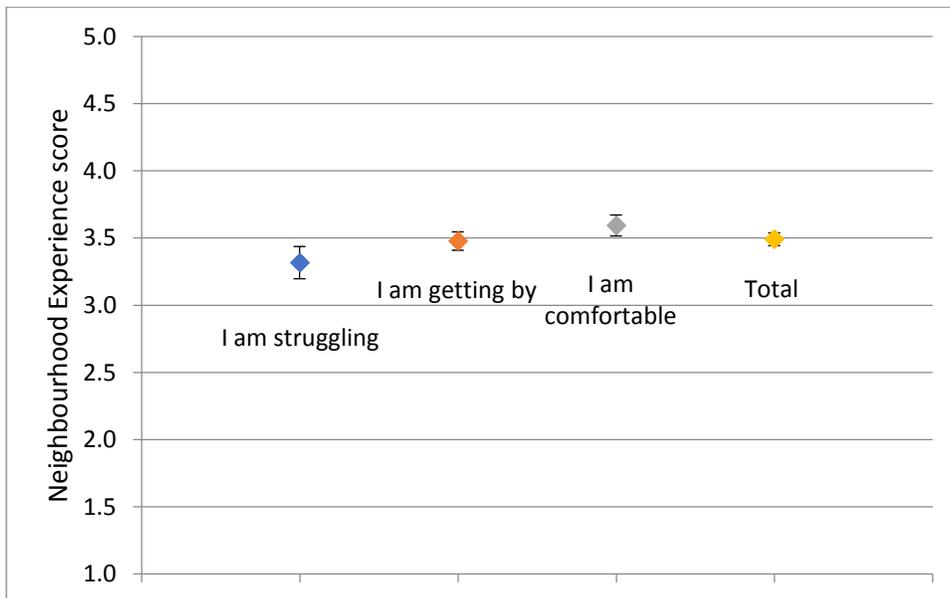
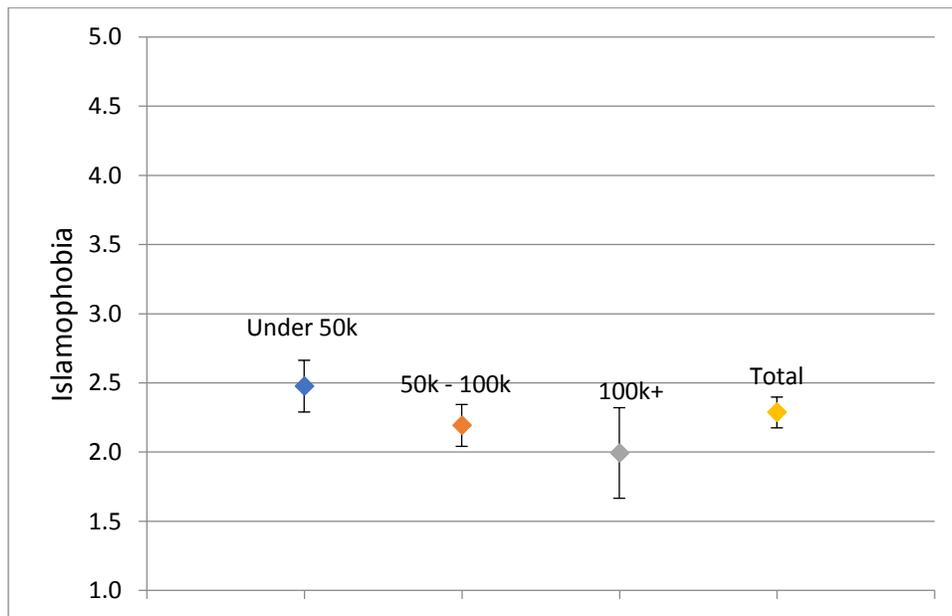


Figure 14: Islamophobia of non-Muslims by income in target areas.**Figure 15:** Islamophobia of non-Muslim by satisfaction with income.

Our data show no clear trend between Islamophobia and income; in metro areas higher income is associated with lower Islamophobia but the trend is not statistically significant. However, satisfaction with income shows a stronger correlation, with higher income satisfaction being associated with lower Islamophobia. Those 'comfortable' with their income showed a

significantly lower Islamophobia than those ‘struggling’. When considering metro areas only, the trend is the same but the decline in Islamophobia in those more satisfied with their income is less prominent and not statistically significant.

Tables 13 and 14 and Figures 16 and 17 show the relationship between occupation and scores in Islamophobia and Neighbourhood satisfaction. Our data show that those occupations associated with higher levels of education tend to be associated with lower Islamophobia, though the only statistically significant difference was between managers (1.97) and those in sales, labouring or machinery operator positions (2.57). This difference was smaller and no longer statistically significant when considering only target areas. This again indicates that contact with minorities may decrease prejudice.

Table 13: Neighbourhood Experience scores for all respondents and Islamophobia scores for non-Muslims by occupation.

	Neighbourhood Experience			Islamophobia		
	N	Mean	Std. error	N	Mean	Std. error
Managers	143	3.65	0.03	107	2.58	0.09
Professionals	235	3.56	0.06	175	2.53	0.07
Technicians and Trade workers	73	3.50	0.07	54	2.61	0.11
Community and Personal services, Clerical and Administrative workers	193	3.48	0.10	159	2.67	0.07
Sales workers, Machinery operators and Laborers	148	3.38	0.14	102	2.78	0.08
Other	13	3.32	0.22	12	2.77	0.25
Total	805	3.51	0.03	609	2.63	0.04

Table 14: Neighbourhood Experience scores for all respondents and Islamophobia scores for non-Muslims by occupation in target areas.

	Neighbourhood Experience			Islamophobia		
	N	Mean	Std. error	N	Mean	Std. error
Managers	64	3.68	0.08	33	1.97	0.12
Professionals	111	3.54	0.06	56	2.17	0.12
Technicians and Trade workers	40	3.54	0.12	22	2.13	0.14
Community and Personal services, Clerical and Administrative workers	85	3.48	0.07	53	2.32	0.11
Sales workers, Machinery operators and Laborers	80	3.33	0.09	41	2.57	0.13
Other	5	3.00	0.44	7	2.68	0.27
Total	417	3.51	0.03	212	2.27	0.06

Figure 16: Neighbourhood Experience score by occupation in metro areas.

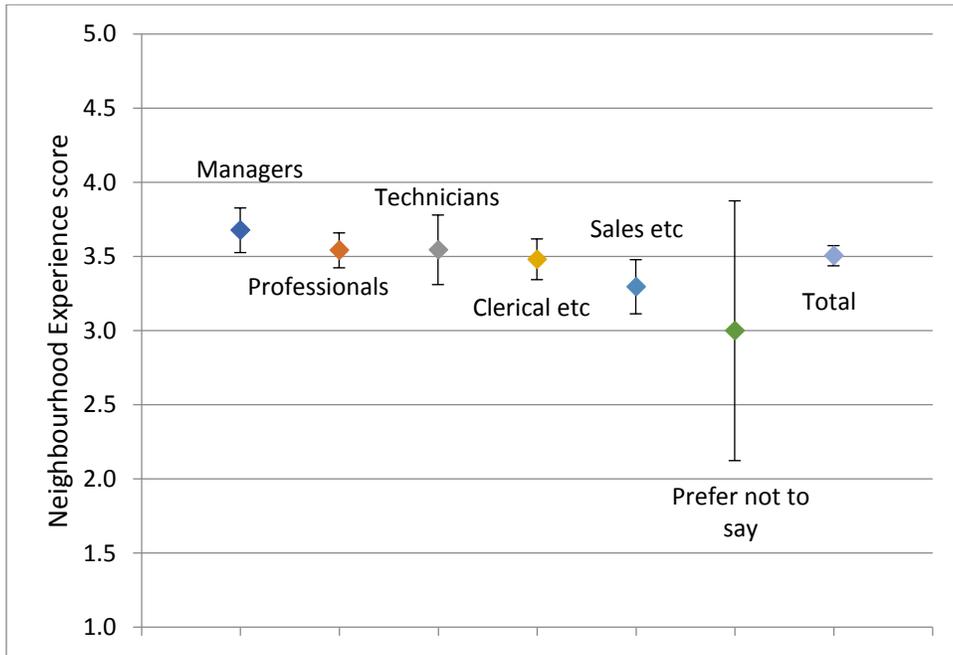


Figure 17: Islamophobia of non-Muslims by occupation in target areas.

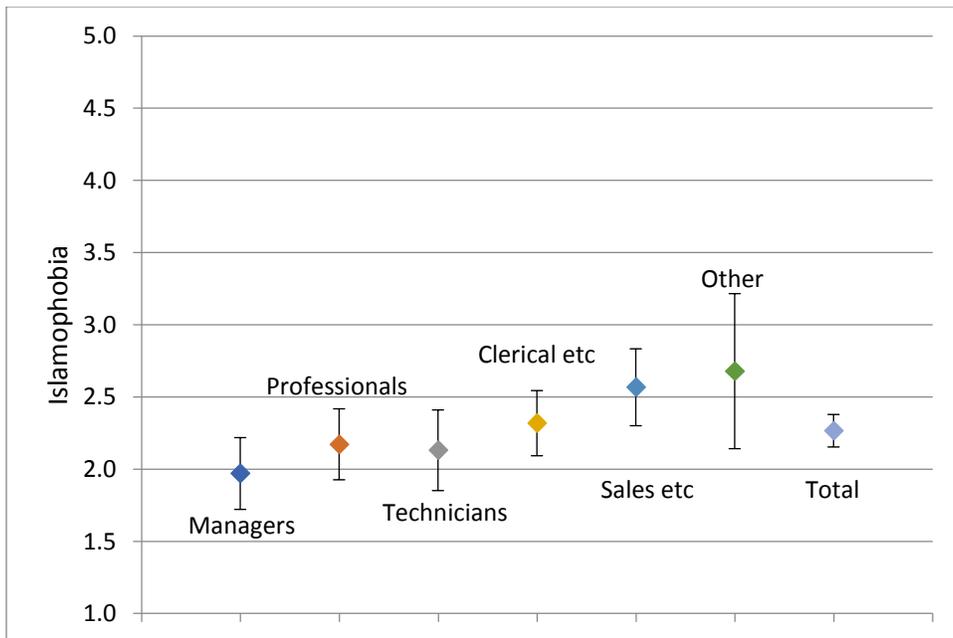


Table 15 cross-tabulates Islamophobia and Neighbourhood Experience scores with gender, age, country of birth (Australia or overseas) and first language (English or LOTE).

Table 15: Neighbourhood Experience scores for all respondents and Islamophobia scores for non-Muslims by gender, age group, country of birth and first language.

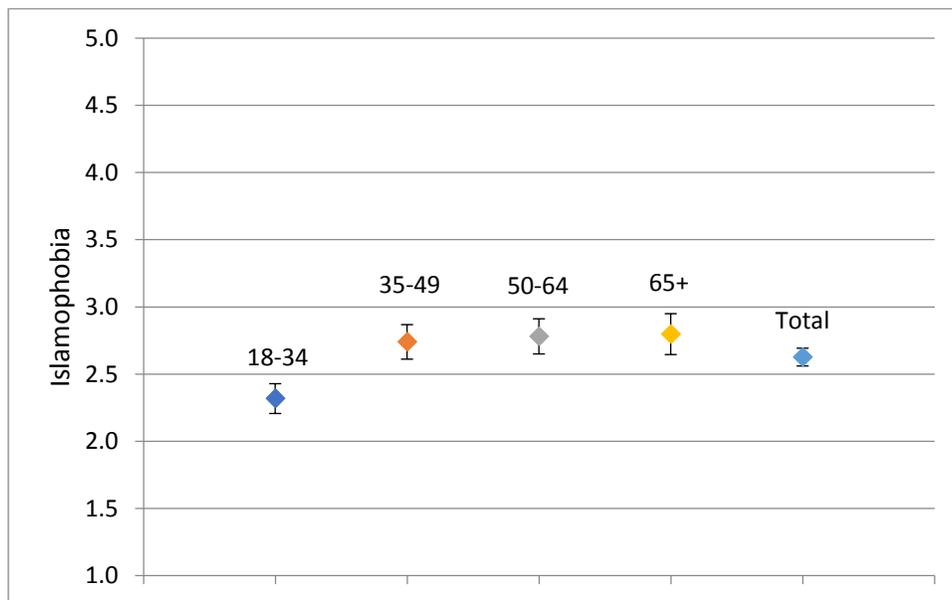
		Neighbourhood Experience			Islamophobia		
		N	Mean	Std. error	N	Mean	Std. error
Gender*	Male	543	3.55	0.03	386	2.58	0.05
	Female	461	3.42	0.03	358	2.67	0.05
Age	18-34	343	3.40	0.04	235	2.32	0.06
	35-49	318	3.56	0.04	212	2.74	0.06
	50-64	222	3.47	0.05	186	2.78	0.07
	65+	126	3.60	0.06	16	2.80	0.08
Country of birth	Australian born	625	3.41	0.04	527	2.63	0.04
	Overseas born	373	3.64	0.04	216	2.61	0.06
First language	English	761	3.44	0.03	633	2.63	0.04
	LOTE	242	3.64	0.05	115	2.62	0.09

*Five people marked 'other' as their gender but this number is too small for a meaningful analysis.

In our survey, Islamophobia is slightly higher for non-Muslim women (2.67) than for men (2.58), on average, and this trend carries over to both the target and metro sub-samples. However, the difference is not statistically significant at the $p = 0.05$ level.

As shown in previous research, Islamophobia, and prejudice against minorities more generally, increases in older age groups, in the total sample and in the metro sub-sample. However, in the target sub-sample, the over-65 age group bucked the trend with a lower Islamophobia than that of 50-64-year-olds. Except in this case, where the gap between Islamophobia of the younger group (18-34) and the older group (65+) was smaller, the younger age group had statistically significant lower Islamophobia than the three older age groups (Figure 18).

Figure 18: Islamophobia of non-Muslims by age.



There is no correlation between Islamophobia and the length of time lived in the current suburb or the number of years in Australia for non-Australian born. In target areas, Australian-born have lower Islamophobia scores than overseas-born but the difference is not statistically significant and in the total sample, mean IS of Australian-born and overseas-born respondents are very close. Similarly, those whose first language is English have a lower IS than those who spoke a language other than English (LOTE) in both metro and target areas, however, the difference is not significant.

Employment status was not significantly associated with Islamophobia levels either. In the total sample, 'home duties' and 'retired' respondents were more Islamophobic than other employment status groups, though in the target areas, retired people had lower Islamophobia, consistent with

the finding about older people in target areas. Students had the lowest Islamophobia, consistent with the finding for the youngest group (18-34)

University educated respondents had the lowest Islamophobia score, on average, closely followed by those with 11 or 12 years of schooling. Both groups had significantly lower scores than the '10 years or less' and 'Trade or TAFE' educated groups. This effect carried over into the two sub-samples. This is consistent with existing studies showing that prejudice in general decreases as education increases.

In terms of Neighbourhood Experience, the scale mean score for the total sample is higher for men (3.55) than women (3.42) and the difference is significant at the $p = 0.05$ level. The trend carries over into each sub-sample but in the target sub-sample the difference is no longer statistically significant, principally due to the smaller sample size.

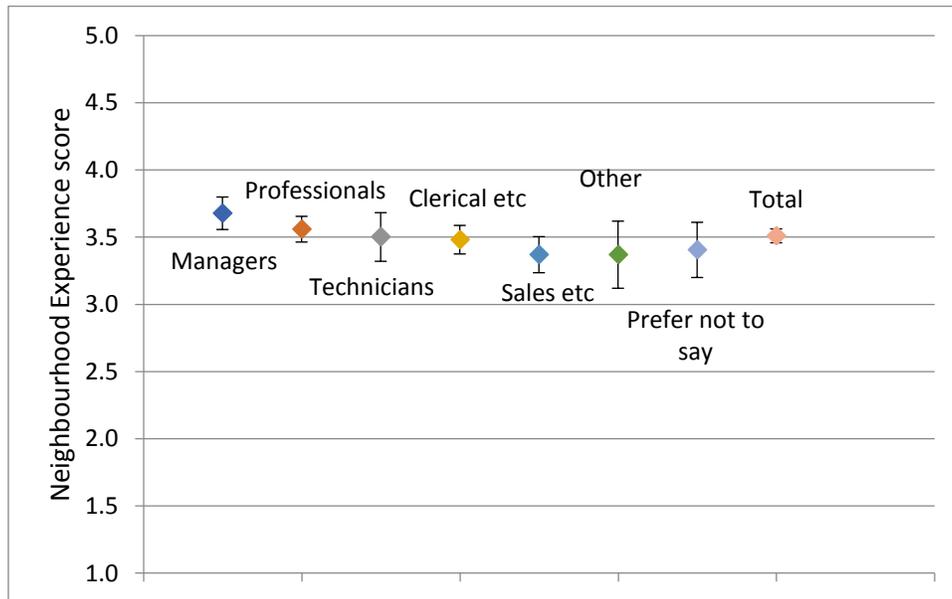
Neighbourhood Experience score (NES) shows no correlation with length of time lived in the current suburb or number of years in Australia for non-Australian born. Interestingly, respondents whose first language is not English have a statistically significant higher ($p < 0.001$) NES (3.64) compared to those whose first language is English (3.44). Similarly, being overseas-born gives rise to a statistically significantly higher NES (3.64 compared to 3.41, $p < 0.05$).

Although students and the unemployed have slightly lower NES than other groups, there are no statistically significant differences in NES by employment status. Neighbourhood experience showed the same positive trend with increasing levels of education as was the case with Islamophobia. The university educated had statistically significantly higher NES than all other groups. The effect carried over into the metro sub-sample, but not into the target sub-sample. In the latter, the trend was the same, but the differences were no longer statistically significant.

The group with the lowest income – under 50k per annum (before tax) – has statistically significant lower NES than the other income groups, (50-100k and 100k+) both of which have similar NES. When considering the separate sub-samples the differences are less marked: in the target areas, NES increases with each income level but differences are small, in metro areas '50-100k' has very similar NES to '100k+'. As with Islamophobia scores, satisfaction with income showed a stronger correlation: NES increased with satisfaction with income; 'comfortable' had

statistically significant higher NES than ‘struggling’ (at $p = 0.05$). This was true for the overall sample and for the target and metro sub-samples taken separately.

Figure 19: Neighbourhood Experience scores by occupation.



The effect of occupation on Neighbourhood Experience parallels its effect on Islamophobia: there is a trend of higher NES for occupations correlated with better education and higher income (managers, professionals), while occupations associated with lower levels of education – sales, machinery operators or laborers – had the lowest NES. Only the difference between this group and managers was statistically significant.

Narrative comments

At the end of the survey, once multiple-choice questions were exhausted, there was an option to provide an open-ended narrative comment (Q26: ‘Finally, is there any other comment you would like to make regarding this survey?’). After removing the trivial ‘no’ or ‘no further comment’ responses, 240 respondents provided substantive comments (24% of the total sample); 159 from target areas (32% of the phone survey sample) and 81 from metro areas (16% of the online sample). This significant difference in proportions from the two sub-samples can be attributed to the way the survey was distributed and characteristics of the two sub-samples. The higher proportion of Muslims in the target area elicited a greater number of comments about the survey and more positive comments about multiculturalism and Australia as a place to live, as indicated in Table 16 below.

Table 16: Overview of substantive narrative comments (N=240).

	Comments on the survey		Comments on Islam or multiculturalism		Other	Total
	Critical	Positive	Negative	Positive		
Metro sub-sample (Online)	6	33	25	11	6	81
Target areas sub-sample (CATI)	34	25	25	45	30	159

Respondents in the metro sub-sample mainly offered positive comments about the survey, considering it interesting or useful. In the target sub-sample, there was more of a spread of comments on the survey, some congratulating the study for tackling the subject while others were critical of aspects of the survey (e.g., why it was ‘targeting Muslims’). A small number of people suggested some questions may have been offensive to some people and that they could have been better worded. This issue was discussed with the research team after piloting the

survey and some questions were reworded in response to similar comments. However, the controversial and value-laden nature of the topic exploring Islamophobia as a version of racism meant that it was difficult to satisfy everyone no matter how questions were worded. In other words, it was impossible to fully avoid respondents' value judgments and criticism.

The verbal remarks that fall into the general category of comments on Muslims and multiculturalism in Australia were more frequently negative in the metro sub-sample, and conversely, more frequently positive in the target suburbs sub-sample, reflecting the effect of the multicultural contact in the neighbourhood and therefore adding evidence to the contact theory that was also substantiated by our quantitative analysis. Critical comments ranged from those mildly negative towards multiculturalism such as:

“People coming to Australia should conform to our way[s], not we to theirs”...

...to a smaller number of respondents expressing strongly negative views on Muslims:

“I'm sick of seeing these free loaders coming to Australia and bludging off our welfare system.”

There were a few comments we classified as 'Other', especially among the respondents in the target areas. Many of these comments were about negative attitudes towards Muslims in the media or by politicians, for example:

“...Whatever propaganda people see in the media does not reflect what Islam teaches.”

Conclusion

In this Report, we tested several hypotheses, derived from theoretical sources through a review of literature.

Hypothesis 1a: *Islamophobia is lower in Muslim concentration suburbs than elsewhere in Australia (contact theory)* was confirmed.

Most of the data presented above strongly supports the contact theory (this result has greater than 99.99% confidence based on our data): Islamophobia is lower among non-Muslims in suburbs with high concentrations of Muslim residents. People who identified as Christians expressed significantly higher Islamophobia than those professing no religion. The numbers of respondents from other (non-Christian) religions (apart from Islam) were too small from which to draw any reliable conclusions but the same trend is observed.

Hypothesis 2a: *Islamophobia is higher in Muslim concentration suburbs than elsewhere in Australia (threat theory)* was not confirmed.

The Islamophobia of all religious groups was lower in the target areas than in the metro areas. When contrasting Islamophobia in Sydney and Melbourne target areas, the mean scores on the Islamophobia scale are significantly lower ($p < 0.05$) in Sydney, where the target suburbs have, in most cases, a higher concentration of Muslims than in Melbourne. Except Muslims, all religious groups showed significantly poorer Neighbourhood Experience in Muslim concentration suburbs. For Muslims, NES was slightly higher in target areas but the number of Muslims who participated in the survey outside the target areas (that is, Muslim respondents in the metro sub-sample) was too small to be able to claim reliable findings.

The youngest age group surveyed (18-34) showed significantly ($p < 0.001$) lower Islamophobia than older age groups; above age 35 there was a marginal trend towards higher IS with age but this was not statistically significant. Males showed higher NES and lower IS than females, but only the difference in NES was statistically significant at the $p = 0.05$ level. The cause of this effect may be the presence in the Neighbourhood Experience scale of questions such as (Q4) “I feel safe walking alone in my local area after dark” where men were highly likely to have had better scores; and (Q6) “I am an active member of local groups (clubs, organizations, religious

community)” where men were more likely to have been involved than women (especially in sport clubs, for example), being in general less burdened with domestic duties.

Hypothesis 1b: *This relationship (contact theory) is stronger for residents with good neighbourhood experience (mediation effect)* was confirmed, whereas Hypothesis 2b: *This relationship (threat theory) is weaker for residents with good neighbourhood experience (mediation effect)* was not confirmed.

Better Neighbourhood Experience (NES) tends to be associated with lower Islamophobia (IS). The positive effect on NES and IS of the various demographic and socio-economic variables described below gives rise to a statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) correlation between the two scale scores.

Neighbourhood Experience scores were significantly (at $p = 0.05$) higher for the overseas-born and those whose first language was not English. This may be due to the fact that most ethno-cultural groups speaking a LOTE tend to value neighbourhood connections more than Anglo-Australians. For example, taking care of and helping one’s neighbours is an important civic virtue in Islam (Mansouri et al., 2017). Conversely, Anglo-Australians tend to value privacy more highly than neighbourhood connections (Hebbani et al., 2017).

Length of residence in Australia and length of residence in the current suburb had no significant effect on either NES or IS.

Hypothesis 3: *Non-Muslims with a lower socio-economic status have higher Islamophobia scores than those with higher socio-economic status (threat theory)* was confirmed, with some qualifications.

Among socio-economic factors, satisfaction with income more than income itself had a positive effect on Islamophobia score (lowering it) and Neighbourhood Experience score (enhancing it). Those stating that they were ‘comfortable’ with their income had statistically significantly higher NES and lower IS than those who stated that they were ‘struggling’.

Of other demographic and socio-economic factors, education had the strongest effect, with higher levels of education, in particular at university level, being associated with lower IS and

higher NES. Those with technical or TAFE qualifications had similar IS to those with 10 years or less of schooling, while respondents with 11 or 12 years of schooling had IS levels closer to the University educated respondents. Occupation, correlated with education levels, showed a similar trend. Employment status had mixed effects – there were no statistically significant effects on average Neighbourhood Experience or Islamophobia scores among different employment status groups.

The most significant conclusion of Stage 3 of this study, based on a survey of 1020 respondents, is that respondents who shared neighbourhood spaces with Muslims expressed less Islamophobic views. This was also the case among younger and better educated respondents, as well as those more satisfied with their financial situation. Neighbourhood experience was also better among those with university level education and among overseas-born and LOTE-speaking respondents. Finally, satisfaction with income, rather than income itself, was associated with better scores in both variables (lower Islamophobia and better Neighbourhood Experience).

The conclusions are statistically robust because they are based on a carefully crafted and professionally conducted survey of 1020 respondents. Half of the survey sample was drawn from the general population of Greater Melbourne or Greater Sydney and the other half from a dozen suburbs within those cities that had the highest residential concentration of Muslim Australians, as reported in the 2016 Australian Census of Population and Housing.

Our findings align with previous studies that showed the effects of individual socio-demographic and socio-economic factors on levels of Islamophobic attitudes. For example, we found similar determinants of Islamophobia to Hassan et al. (2018) Australian research, whose sample of respondents also consisted of both Muslims and non-Muslims representing a wider population. Islamophobia was shown to be influenced by people's exposure to Muslims in neighbourhoods, at work, at school and in public spaces. Our findings suggest that real-life neighbourhood encounters between Muslims and non-Muslims are less likely to be a cause of Islamophobia sentiment than negative media representations of Islam.

It may be worth mentioning that our survey was conducted in the aftermath (less than six months after) of a significant global terrorist event, the March 2019 attack on two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, in which 50 Muslim residents of Christchurch lost their lives. This

event was followed by considerable media coverage which might have created a sense of sympathy and empathy towards Muslim minorities in Western countries and potentially decreased Islamophobic attitudes in the general population.

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Appendix 1. Survey questions

Screeners / intro:

S1. These first few demographic questions are simply for classification purposes – to ensure that we speak to the target groups.

Which of these would best describe where you live?

1. Metropolitan (Greater) Sydney
2. Regional or Rural NSW
3. Metropolitan (Greater) Melbourne
4. Regional or Rural Victoria
99. None of the above

S2 Please tell us which age group you belong to:

2. 18 to 34
3. 35 to 49
4. 50 to 64
5. 65 years or older
99. Prefer not to say

S3 Are you...

1. Male
2. Female
3. Other

Q1a. (online) What suburb do you live in?

Suburb:

Postcode: **2000** → **3999**

Q1a. (CATI) What suburb do you live in?

1. Auburn
2. Greenacre
3. Mount Lewis
4. Lakemba
5. Wiley Park
6. Broadmeadows
7. Campbellfield
8. Coolaroo

- 9. Dandenong
- 10. Fawkner
- 11. Meadow Heights

Q1b. For how long have you lived in this suburb?

Years: Months:

Suburb attachment/belonging questions (Qs 3-8):

How much do you disagree or agree with the following statements, from ‘strongly disagree’ (1) to ‘strongly agree’ (5):

Q3. People in my suburb are friendly and helpful

Q4. I feel safe walking alone in my local area after dark

Q5. I know many local people by name (e.g. neighbours, shop owners/workers, people attending same venues as me etc.)

Q6. I am an active member of local groups (clubs, organizations, religious community)

Q7. I regularly use local facilities (e.g. parks, swimming pools, sporting grounds, libraries, cafes)

Q8. People from different ethnic backgrounds live in harmony in my local area

Islamophobia (Qs 9-16): (8 questions)

The following questions ask about your opinions on ethnic diversity in Australia, specifically regarding the Muslim community. There are no right or wrong answers: this research is designed simply to gather people’s opinions. If you are unsure, or are uncomfortable with any particular question, please feel free to say “Prefer not to answer”. Again using the scale from ‘strongly disagree’ (1) to ‘strongly agree’ (5), how much do you disagree or agree with the following statements?

Q9. I would be opposed to a new mosque being built in my local area

Q10 The number of Muslims in Australia is too high

Q11. I dislike seeing Muslim women with their hair covered (wearing hijab)

Q12. Muslims who come to Australia should change their dress and behaviour to be more like mainstream Australians

Q13. I would avoid talking to a Muslim

Q14. I am worried about Muslims forming enclaves in Sydney and Melbourne

Q14b (if applicable) Can you please let us know why you agree or strongly agree with this last statement?

Q15. It is okay for me if my neighbours are Muslims

Q16. I have friends or acquaintances who are Muslim

Q17a. Do you know what is the percentage of Muslims is in the total Australian population?

Your best guess is fine!

Supplementary demographic questions

Q17. What country were you born in?

1. Australia
2. Afghanistan
3. Albania
4. Bangladesh
5. Bosnia-Herzegovina
6. China
7. Croatia
8. Germany
9. Greece
10. India
11. Indonesia
12. Iran
13. Iraq
14. Italy
15. Lebanon
16. Malaysia
17. Malta
18. New Zealand
19. Pakistan
20. Philippines
21. South Africa
22. Syria

- 23. Turkey
- 24. United Kingdom
- 25. Vietnam
- 97. Other (please specify)
- 99. Prefer not to say

Q18. What year did you first arrive in Australia?

Q19. What is your first language (the language you speak best)?

- 1. English
- 2. Other (please specify):
- 99. Prefer not to say

Q20. What is your highest level of education?

- 1. 10 years or less
- 2. 12 years (HSC)
- 3. Trade or TAFE qualification
- 4. University education (diploma, BA, higher degrees)
- 99. Prefer not to say

Q21. Which of these would best describe your employment status:

- 1. Employed full-time
- 2. Employed part-time
- 3. Student
- 4. Self-employed
- 5. Unemployed
- 6. Retired
- 7. Home duties
- 97. Other (please specify):
- 99. Prefer not to say

Q22. What is your current occupation? Or What was your main occupation before you retired?

- 1 Managers: _____
- 2 Professionals: _____
- 3 Technicians and Trades Workers: _____
- 4 Community and Personal Service Workers: _____

5 Clerical and Administrative Workers: _____

6 Sales Workers: _____

7 Machinery Operators and Drivers: _____

8 Labourers: _____

97. Other (please specify):

99. Prefer not to say

Q23. What is your total annual personal income before tax?

1. Under 50K

2. 50-100K

3. Over 100K+

99. Prefer not to say

Q.24 With your current income, how would you describe your financial situations:

1. I am struggling

2. I am getting by

3. I am comfortable

Q25. What would you consider to be your main religion?

1. No religion

2. Anglican

3. Baptist

4. Buddhism

5. Catholic

5. Christian (not further defined)

6. Eastern Orthodox

7. Hinduism

8. Islam

9. Jehovah's Witnesses

10. Judaism

11. Latter-day Saints

12. Lutheran

13. Oriental Orthodox

14. Pentecostal

15. Presbyterian and Reformed

16. Seventh-day Adventist

17. Sikhism

18. Uniting Church

19. Other Protestant

97. Other (please specify):

99. Prefer not to say

Q26. Finally, is there any other comment you would like to make regarding this survey?