

**Methodology:** Results are based on a survey administered by Think for Actions. A total 564 on-line surveys were administered with Muslims in the Calgary region from November 10, 2015 to February 28, 2016. The survey was designed by Insights Matter, a Calgary based market research firm, and a non-discriminative snowball sampling approach was used to obtain survey respondents. Because snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling technique, results are not necessarily representative of the Calgary Muslim Community. Despite this, the research revealed significant insights into the perceptions of Muslims, and challenges facing the Muslim Community. The insights from the research are important and will be used to inform future, more significant research efforts.

#### **Goals and Objectives of the Conference**

- To deconstruct islamophobia / alienation.
- Showcasing challenges faced by Muslim youth and parents as a result of Islamophobia.
- Educating Canadian Institutions to decrease Discrimination and Marginalization.
- To create a network and platform for researchers, scholars, and intellectuals.
- To bring about change by prevention, education, and intervention.

#### **Some other results are:**

##### **Calgarian are proud Canadian Muslims and integrated in the society**

- 97% of Calgarian are proud Canadian Muslims and 89% are happy with the quality of life
- 85% Muslims strive to maintain their religion/cultural practices and adopt Canadian customs and values.
- Social, civic and political measures indicate that Canadian Muslims are integrated in the Society

##### **Religion is an important part of Canadian Muslims**

- 92% report religion is a very important part of their life
- 74% are familiar with the initiatives and programs in and around the local community that support the maintenance and growth of the Islamic culture

##### **Not many Muslims are satisfied with Imams and Muslim leaders**

- 54% are overall happy with Muslim spiritual leaders
- 35% are overall happy with Muslim leadership

##### **Discrimination and marginalization has increased in the last 5 years**

- 51% Muslims in the last 5 years have personally experienced discrimination due to your race, ethnicity or religion?
  - 23% were verbal abuse or attack
- 76% think in the last 5 years discrimination against Canadian Muslims have increased

##### **Average Canadian's understanding of Islam is fair to poor**

- 83% believe that an average Canadian's understanding of Islam is fair to poor
- 68% of Muslims feel embarrassed by Canadians in their attitude towards Muslims
- 58% reported that average word(s) that the average Canadian uses to describe Islam are
  - Terrorist, ISIS, Violent, extremist, barbaric, oppressive

##### **New media contribute extremely to negative portray of Muslims**

- 60% reported that television news reports contribute extremely to negative portray of Muslims
  - 54% reported internet reports
  - 50% reported newspaper reports
  - 42% reported radio news reports

## **Lack of government policies and ineffective Muslim leadership responsible for negative portray of Muslims**

- Approximately 1/4 identified Lack of federal, local and provincial government efforts
- Approximately 1/3 identified Ineffectiveness of Muslim leaders at the community and national level

## **Major issues faced by Muslim Canadian are lack of unity and effectiveness of Imams**

- 12% reported lack of unity among Muslims to the important problem facing Canadian Muslims presently?
- Lack of knowledge and sincerity among Imams was a major reason in preventing one from putting more effort into learning and practicing your religion

## **Responded recommended actions that can improve the community are:**

- Unity among Muslims
- Home grown Imam that can speak English and effectively communicate
- Effective communication within and outside of the Muslims community.
- Good quality of youth education programs
- Sincere leadership with effective communication

The results will be disseminated at the conference, which begins at 3pm at the University of Calgary, ST 140 on Saturday May 14, 2016. Conference will include 5 sessions that feature speakers from all over Canada. For detailed information on the conference, its partners, or to obtain tickets (\$25 for general admission), please visit:

<http://thinkforactions.com/risc2016/>

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