



Research Proposal 2019

TITLE: Perceptions of Discrimination Amongst Minorities in Canada Following Bill 21

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE:

With 1 in 5 Canadians being foreign-born, Canada stands its ground as one of the most diverse places on the planet. Having people from all different faiths and nationalities allow Canada to create a unique cultural mosaic. However, with great diversity lies challenges such as discrimination against minority groups.

On June 16, 2019 Coalition Avenir de Québec (CAQ) passed Bill 21, a bill that has been extremely controversial and will impact Canadians from all different cultures and religions. This polarizing bill will prohibit wearing any form of religious articles for workers in the public sectors of the provinces. This law affects teachers, judges, police officers, prison guards and others. While the bill claims to treat all religious symbols to be equal, Muslim women wearing hijabs, Sikh men and women wearing turbans will be impacted the most by this bill adding to the xenophobic nature of the bill.

With the recent rise in xenophobic behaviours across Canada and the west, Think For Actions would like to study the perceptions of xenophobic behaviours targeted towards minorities (Aboriginal people, Muslims, Sikhs, etc.) and their overall thoughts about the recent passing of the bill, attitudes towards the levels of intolerance in the community, Perceptions of common stereotypes and its impact to the community.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How is hate and racism perceived by minorities?
- Genesis of hatred towards minorities?
- What are some common perceptions against a certain minority communities?
- What are some preconceived notions against their communities?
- What are some commonly held stereotypes for their communities?
- Has the level of intolerance and racism against their communities been increasing or decreasing?
- What are their opinions on the bill 21?
- How will bill 21 affect their community?
- Do they support bill 21?
- Does bill 21 reflect their values or Canadian Values?
- How should we react to Bill 21?

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Focus Groups:

Data will be collected at different minority communities throughout Calgary. Participants will have the opportunity to volunteer in the research study. The main method of data collection will be semi-structured interviews held in focus groups in different religious institutions/cultural/community centers in Calgary. Focus groups will consist of people of minority backgrounds. Audio will be recorded for future transcriptions and usage of data. Only Pseudonyms will be used such that the identity of the participants remain completely anonymous.

Qualitative Analysis:

After data collection has been completed, the information obtained through focus groups will be thematically coded by researchers for a qualitative analysis.

Furthermore, using this data, the researchers at TFA will write scientific literature for publication. This data will allow us to see communal perceptions from the point of view from the people most affected by Bill 21. It will also give us a clearer picture of future steps and recommendations towards reducing discriminatory behaviours in the Canadian society.

PLAN OF WORK & TIME SCHEDULE

This research study will span across 9 weeks.

The first 4 weeks will be spent collecting data from various locations through focus group interviews in different religious institutions/community and cultural centers. The last 5 weeks will be spent analyzing collected data and writing literature based on collected data.

Implications of Research:

From this project, we plan to have multiple scientific publications, presentations and talks based on the collected data. Through this research we will be able to disseminate our findings to policy makers and stakeholders, such that changes (policy changes/attitudes) can be made in the future to reduce discriminatory behaviours in Canada. Information will also be used to educate the public about the implications of Bill 21 as well. Through knowledge dissemination, this research project will provide Canadians to view society through the lens of minority and marginalized populations of Canada.

Funding:

This project is will be funded by Think For Actions (TFA), Canadian Muslim Research Think Tank (CMRTT) and Calgarians Against Racism Violence and Hate (CARVH) with a budget of \$21,000.