

Social Discord and Second-class Citizenship

*A Study of the Impact of Bill 21 on Québec Muslim
Women in Light of the COVID-19 Pandemic*

Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

About the Study

Question: What was the impact of Bill 21 in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic on Muslim women's employment experiences in Québec?

411

Quebec Muslim women surveyed

750

General population of Quebec surveyed

10

Quebec visibly Muslim women interviewed

1,016

Minutes of interview

86,743

Words of transcribed interview data

Findings

#1. Social Discord and Second-class Citizenship

Muslim women are facing more hostile work environments, more discriminatory workplace practices, and are disadvantaged and ostracized in multiple ways in a climate of increasing social discord.

“ Bill 21 has clearly made people uninhibited about their racist views”

54%

of Muslim women have heard racist or prejudicial remarks about their religious identity from their colleagues at work (vs. 9% of the general population)

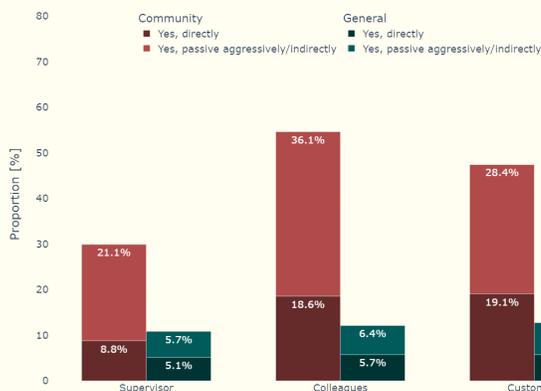
39%

of Muslim women have faced microaggressions at work

1 in 5 Muslim women have experienced physical threats or aggression at work



Have you heard any prejudicial/racist/Islamophobic remarks about your religious identity?



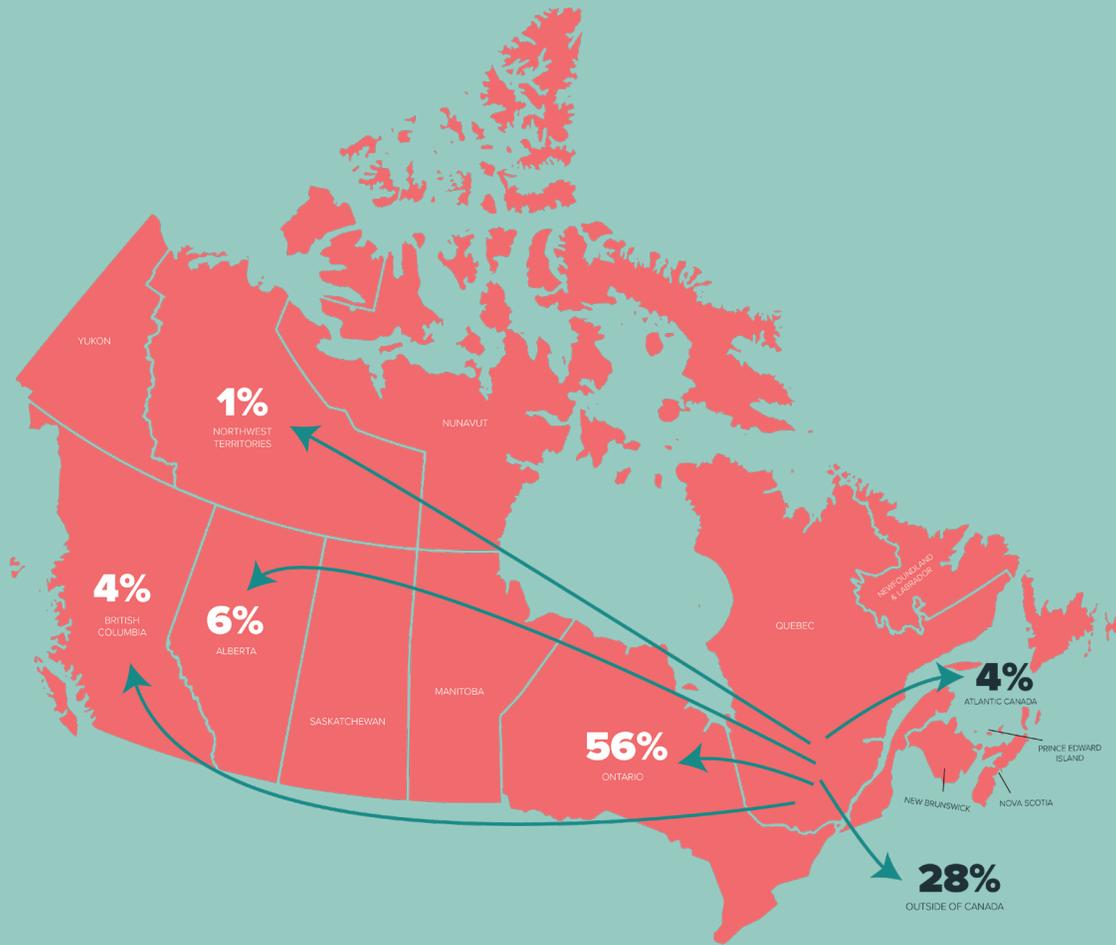
73%

of the women we surveyed felt that Bill 21 impacted their job search experience (vs. 8% of general population)

66%

of Muslim women have applied or are considering applying for work within Muslim communities as a result of Bill 21 (Muslim-owned businesses, community organizations etc.) leading to concerns around the ghettoization of Muslim communities.

#2. Muslim Emigration from Québec



\$3.2 Billion+

in estimated lost income for the province



“**A climate of tension**”

An alarmingly high number of Muslim women (including employed and unemployed) are considering or are planning to leave the province. Most of these women are from francophone communities.

71%

of Muslim women have considered leaving the province.

73%

of Muslim women have applied or are considering applying for work outside of Québec

#3. COVID-19 Impact

“ Yes, it’s sad to say, but it took a global pandemic to breathe a little.”

1 in 4 Muslim women found it easier to look for or to do their jobs while COVID-19 measures were in place.



COVID-19 measures such as lockdowns and masking brought a sense of respite from everyday experiences of hate and discrimination, raising concerns about the transition back to working in person.

#4. Declining Mental Well-being

“ Before Bill 21, I had the freedom to dream like my colleagues.”

Since Bill 21 became law, Muslim women in Québec report feeling a loss of a sense of belonging, alongside high levels of alienation and a bleak future outlook. Muslim women are also trying to go about their everyday lives in a social and political climate where they feel they are marked as targets because of Bill 21.

73%

expressed concern about the future

64%

feel mistrust towards the government

54%

report feeling stressed

39%

expressed a sense of hopelessness

64%

indicated that Bill 21 adversely affected their well-being



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