Islamophobia
in Australia - IV
(2014-2021)

Assoc. Prof. Derya Iner
Dr. Ron Mason
Chloe Smith

We acknowledge all First Nations peoples, Elders and Ancestors as the traditional and continuing custodians of the lands on which this report was produced and publicised. We would also like to pay our respect to the Elders both past and present and we honour them for maintaining the cultural and intellectual foundations that ensure these traditions continue in perpetuity.

Message from the Founding Chair

As the founder of the Register, I am immensely proud to see the publication of the 4th Islamophobia in Australia Report by Dr Derya Iner. My own personal experiences and that of countless others in my circle of friends and family were the key drivers behind my motivation to start the Register in an environment where islamophobia was very much normalised. Nine years on, the Register's work has been instrumental in shining a light on how Islamophobia manifests in Australia and most importantly an evidence base to support advocacy efforts towards tackling it. In late 2023, the Register announced the appointment of human rights lawyer Sharara Attai to the role of inaugural Executive Director and an impressive new expanded board to lead Islamophobia Register Australia into its next chapter and boost its growing influence.

The Register's operating model has been commended and replicated by a number of marginalised groups who have approached the Register to support them in the establishment of their own reporting models. This includes the First Nations Racism Register, 'Call it Out' founded by the National Justice Project and the Jumbunna Institute. The Register was also recently invited to provide evidence at the Disability Royal Commission who are looking to make formal recommendations to create a similar organisation to track and tackle disability hate. The collection of data detailing incidents of Islamophobia across Australia is vital in helping advocates and policymakers alike get a better sense of the depth and breadth of the issues they are trying to tackle. As we know, what gets measured, gets acted on.

Mariam Veiszadeh
Founding Chair
Islamophobia Register Australia

Message from the Executive Director

In December 2022, I was appointed as the Executive Director of the Islamophobia Register Australia (the Register). The Register provides a platform for victims, witnesses and proxies to report experiences of Islamophobia. We also offer victim support services by linking victims of Islamophobia to legal and mental health support, and by way of offering advocacy in certain circumstances. This kind of real, tangible support is essential for victims and helps them to begin the healing process.

In addition to victim support,the data that we collect through our expertly crafted reporting tool is vital because it enables us to publish academic reports on Islamophobia in Australia. Through the publication of this report, we can better understand the ways in which Islamophobia manifests on our shores. The report assists us in gaining deeper understanding and insight into Islamophobia in Australia, which will ultimately help us to take more effective action againstit. This fourth Islamophobia in Australia report is particularly significant because it not only covers the 2020-21 reporting period, but also collates and analyses data from the Register's three previous reports.

Through my role, I intend to expand the Register's academic research, as well as other activities. I am committed to raising awareness about Islamophobia and its impact, with a view to ultimately reducing the incidence of Islamophobia within Australia. Alongside my dedicated team and Board, my goal is to increase the Register's impact, influence and reach.

Sharara Attai
Executive Director
Islamophobia Register Australia

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

GLOSSARY

Incident

An event or occurrence of an Islamophobic nature that is a either physical or online event or occurrence characterised as Islamophobia/Islamophobic, including physical attacks, assault, damage to property, offensive graffiti, non-verbal harassment, intimidation and online threats.

Islamophobia/Islamophobic

Islamophobia is a form of racism that includes various forms of violence, violations, discrimination and subordination that occur across multiple sites in response to the problematisation of Muslim identity (Sayyid, 2014).

Online Islamophobia

Online Islamophobia is defined as Islamophobic prejudice that targets a victim in order to provoke, cause hostility and/or promote intolerance through means of harassment, stalking, abuse, incitement, threatening behaviour, bullying and/or intimidation of person or persons via all platforms of social media (Zempi & Awan 2016, p. 6).

Offline Cases

Incidents reported to the Register that take place in the physical world, including physical attacks and assaults, damage to property and threats received in the mail.

Perpetrator

A person who abuses, attacks, harasses, intimidates and/or insults another individual on the grounds of that person's actual or perceived Islamic faith.

Proxy/Proxies

Acquaintances of the victim who submit incident reports to the Register on their behalf.

Reporter

A person who submits an incident report to the Register.

Witness

A person who witnesses an Islamophobic incident.

Victim

A person who is subject to abuse, attack, harassment, intimidation and/or insults on the grounds of their actual or perceived Islamic faith irrespective of whether they identify as a Muslim.

CONTENTS

The fourth Islamophobia in Australia report has been compiled from incidents reported to the Islamophobia Register Australia (the Register) since its inception in September 2014 until December 2021. A total of 930 verified incidents (515 offline and 415 online) were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The research data is based on reported incidents rather than random sampling, which constrains the ability to make generalisations across Australia. Nevertheless, the reported incidents over the past eight years provide a critical and valuable source of data in terms of:

1. Unpacking the characteristics of Islamophobia in the Australian context.

2. Revealing trends over time of the behaviours that characterise Islamophobia.

3. Shedding light on the unique features of each reporting period.

4. Providing real life experiences through respondent comments to provide context for quantitative results.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLAMOPHOBIC INCIDENTS (2014-2021)

The 2014-15 period saw Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) threats overseas including its emerging offshoots in Western countries including Australia. The 2016-17 period marked a resurgence of far-right parties and their anti-mosque and anti-halal online campaigns and nationwide rallies, while ISIS terrorist attacks were still prevalent and being weaponised to heighten anti-Muslim hate in Australia. The 2018-19 period marked growing far-right activism and the Christchurch terror attacks in New Zealand, while 2020-21 was characterised as the COVID-19 period, with its associated lockdowns and restrictions. With these characteristics in mind, the nature and trends of Islamophobia in Australia have varied between 2014 and 2021. The following findings are derived from the 930 incidents (515 offline and 415 online) reported to the Register from 2014-2021.

Offline

Reporters, Victims, Perpetrators

Witness reporting dropped by half (from 47% to 24%) since the inception of the Register (2014-15) until the start of the COVID-19 era (2020-21). Analysis of reporter types indicated that neither multiple types of harassment nor physical attacks mobilised third parties to report incidents. Witness reporting was high for incidents of graffiti and vandalism while hate speech and/or threats were mostly reported by victims (59%).

Most victims were women (78%) and most perpetrators were men (70%). Two in three women were harassed by male perpetrators. Distinctive gender dynamics were observed in the execution of Islamophobic incidents by female perpetrators, who usually harassed female victims (88%) and rarely harassed male victims (12%). Female perpetrators were usually in safe settings like official buildings, workplaces and schools. In most cases, the harassment was verbal (80%), while no Muslim men faced physical

78%

78% of the victims were women while 70% of the perpetrators were men.

2 in 10 children and 3 in 10 vulnerable victims (other than children) were exposed to a physical attack.

8 in 10 individuals from the 40-49 year group targeted victims younger than themselves.

harassment by a female perpetrator. Risk was always mitigated by female perpetrators at the time of the attack by selecting vulnerable victims such as unaccompanied women and children (Case 52-21), harassing victims from a vehicle (Case 39-21) or while being accompanied by a group (Case 70-21) or a male (Case 39-21).

The perpetrator's gender had minimal effect on the victim's gender, with 75% of male and 88% of female perpetrators abusing a female victim. Death threats were almost equally distributed with 12% of males and 10% of females receiving them from a male perpetrator. Male perpetrators were dominant in committing physical attacks and property damage as well as in expressing the most intense level of hate, expressed as a desire to kill Muslims.

Gender dynamics affected the type of incidents and insults that male and female victims faced. Muslim women experienced more verbal intimidation, while Muslim men experienced greater levels of discrimination.

Although both genders experienced the same level of physical violence (8%), the way in which the abuse was articulated or expressed was construed according to the victim's gender. For instance, violence was associated with Muslim men, while religious insults and misogynist foul language were directed at women. Harassing hijabi women with misogynist comments for submitting to a so-called misogynist religious dogma (Case 15-20) is paradoxical.

Vulnerable victims were the most convenient targets of Islamophobia and were exposed to more physical attacks. Women and children continued to bear the brunt of Islamophobia where two in ten children and three in ten vulnerable victims (other than children) were exposed to a physical attack. Half the female victims were alone while one in five women were with children. Women with a male companion were rarely abused (4%) while the abuse of children with a male was almost non-existent (2%).

The most intense hate level (i.e. wanting to kill) was also mostly directed at women alone or those with a child. Women in religious attire experienced a higher proportion of physical attacks than men in religious attire, yet no difference emerged over the type of verbal insult experienced between females and males wearing religious attire.

Age

Older age groups tended to harass younger age groups while young perpetrators tended to harass victims who were their own age. Victims were concentrated in the

20-29 and 30-39 year age groups while perpetrators were concentrated in the 40+ age bracket. Eight in ten perpetrators from the 40-49 year group and half of the 50+ cohort targeted victims younger than themselves. Young perpetrators like the 10-19 year age group (67%) and 20-29 year age group (45%) mitigated the risk by attacking people their own age. This dynamic changed when the perpetrators were in a group, such as multiple teenagers abusing an adult (Case 70-21 and Case 74-21)

Incidents

Three-quarters of reported offline incidents (76%) were directed at individuals and this proportion has not changed over time. Generic cases, which are not directed at individuals, such as graffiti and stickers, continuously reached numerous viewers, especially on public transport.

Verbal intimidation was the most usual form of abuse (45%), followed by graffiti and vandalism (12%) and discrimination by authorities in official buildings, workplaces, schools (10%) written material (9%, n=44), physical assault (8%, n=41), multiple incident types in one case (8%, n=42), non-verbal intimidation (6%, n=42) and other (2%, n=8).

The perpetrators' hate speech content was coded at the time of the incidents. Attacking religion/religious appearance was the most frequent insult (64%) followed by foul language (38%) and xenophobic comments (37%). Apart from the type of insult, the level of hate was also used to assess the intensity. Abuse starts from a feeling of hostility and gradually intensifies to feelings of contempt, dehumanisation, disgust and a desire to harm. Results indicate that verbal intimidation was more apparent with feelings of hostility than it was with a desire to kill, while physical and property attacks were more closely associated with a desire to kill.

Locations

Most perpetrators (85%) were seemingly Anglo/European while most victims were from Middle Eastern or Arab backgrounds (47%), followed by the Subcontinent (18%) and then Asia-Pacific (13%) and Anglo/European converts to Islam (13%). Islamophobic incidents continue to increase, reaching up to 50% in multiculturally diverse suburbs, where ethno-religious diversity is expected to be part of daily life. No significant difference was observed in the nature and type of incidents between multicultural and non-multicultural suburbs. Physical attacks were slightly higher in multicultural suburbs. Other expressions of hate rhetoric were similar, although in multicultural areas, a presumption that Muslims kill was double that reported in non-multicultural areas (10% compared to 5%, respectively).

More than half of all incidents (57%) occurred in guarded areas in 2014-2021. It is concerning that incidents in guarded areas reached 75% in 2018-19 and 70% in 2020-21. The increasing rate of incidents in guarded areas indicates the lack of deterrent effect of security personnel and surveillance cameras in reducing Islamophobic incidents and the increasing insecurity for Muslims everywhere.

Physical attacks were less likely at school or university and more likely in leisure places. Being in a guarded or unguarded setting had little effect on whether an attack was verbal or physical in nature. A greater proportion of property damage occurred in guarded areas such as mosques, indicating that although safety and protection of

64%

Attacking religion/religious appearance was the most frequent insult (64%).

57%

More than half of all incidents (57%) occurred in guarded areas in 2014-2021.

religious institutions is a high priority, guarding these places with security guards and surveillance cameras should be supported by informed prevention strategies and custom-made prevention measures for more effective results.

While women with hijab must be hypervigilant everywhere irrespective of whether the setting is guarded/unguarded or multiculturally diverse or not, Muslim men also need to be hypervigilant while attending mosques as they became more visible and a potential target of harassment (Case 36-21) and physical attack (Case 41-21).

The most intense level of hate (i.e., wanting to kill) was expressed at similar proportions (25%) in guarded and unguarded places indicating that expressions of violent sentiment were not deterred by the presence of guards and surveillance cameras.

Third Parties

The most common hotspots remained as shopping centres (20%), followed by construction sites and streets (14%), public transport (11%), car parks (11%) and schools or universities (11%). Whilst this demonstrates that most incidents occurred in a public setting, in almost three quarters (72%) of cases the incident only involved the perpetrator and victim (given they were unaccompanied). Third parties were more likely to be present in cases of physical attack than in cases of verbal abuse and non-verbal intimidation.

In highly crowded places like shopping centres, such incidents may be deemed unimportant or not noticed by third parties. Therefore, it is essential for victims to alert others in the vicinity about the harassment and thereby potentially inspire bystanders to assist and defuse the incident.

The involvement of a formal third party (i.e., security and store managers) had limited impact on defusing any conflict as only two-thirds supported the victim while one-third remained silent or supported the perpetrator. Even a gentle warning by authorities might discourage attacks in stores and shops where Islamophobic incidents are prevalent.

Emotional Impact

Being the most convenient and frequent target of Islamophobia, hijabi Muslim women displayed hypervigilance in their daily routines such as keeping the car doors and windows locked when a stranger approached (Case 28-20). Both male (46%) and female (58%) reporters expressed one or multiple emotional impacts (compared to 54% male and 42% female who did not express an emotional impact). Male and female victims expressed slightly different emotional impacts. Men tended to express sadness and disappointment while women expressed fright and anger.

Negative emotional impact was more prevalent in younger rather than older age groups, who were 16% less likely to express a negative emotion. Cases involving children were always reported by proxies and witnesses who expressed disappointment (67%). For women with children, sadness and worry (50%), fear or fright (47%) and disappointment (34%) were the most prevalent emotions. While mothers tried to minimise the impact of the incident by remaining calm, some expressed they were affected inwardly. In one case a mother described how she remained "cool for the children," but felt actually "shocked" inside (Case 28-20). When her children were called "Taliban" by an Anglo couple, another mother felt that she could only ignore it in order to limit the emotional

impact on her children, but felt helpless because she could defend neither herself nor her children (Case 69-21).
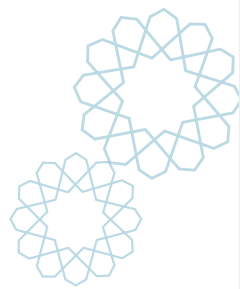
Behavioural responses by victims were categorised as avoidance, an urge to respond and physical expressions of emotions like crying and shaking. Avoidance included ignoring the perpetrator and walking away. In most cases, this was a coping mechanism for women to avoid escalation of the perpetrator's hate and harassment. Accordingly, in two-thirds of cases (66%), the victim avoided the incident, while 22% felt the urge to respond. Those showing avoidance behaviour were more expressive of the emotional impact than those who did not. In most cases, avoidance behaviour was associated with fear and fright, humiliation and disappointment.

An urge to respond was also an outcome of the incident's emotional impact and mostly occurred in cases of physical rather than non-physical attacks. Further, those who expressed negative emotions were more likely to feel an urge to respond than those who did not express a negative emotion.

Two types of insults were significantly related to the expression of emotional impact. Reporters were more likely to express an emotional impact if they were a target of xenophobic comments and and if they were subject to comments associated with terrorism.

Long-term impact

Those who expressed an emotional impact were significantly more likely to indicate a long-term impact than those who did not. Whether the incident was verbal or physical had no bearing on suffering from long term impacts, with approximately one-quarter of respondents suffering a long-term impact from verbal (24%) and physical attacks (25%). This indicates the devastating impact that emotional violence has on victims because of hate speech. This is best expressed in cases of Muslim staff members being associated with terrorism regardless of their work relationship with their supervisors (Case 29-20) and colleagues (Case 5-20). Blatant associations of religion with terrorism in political, legal and public discourse arenas burdened Muslims with having to constantly differentiate themselves from Al Qaida and ISIS terrorists at work (Case 29-20, Case 5-20) and school (Case 42-21) and resulted in them suffering from short and long-term impacts.

Whether the incident was verbal or physical had no bearing on suffering from long term impacts, with approximately one-quarter of respondents suffering a long-term impact from verbal (24%) and physical attacks (25%). This indicates the devastating impact that emotional violence has on victims because of hate speech.

In the absence of trigger events like ISIS terrorism and the Christchurch terror attacks, anti-Muslim hate actors created agendas online by artificially connecting the dominant discussions of the day to Muslims.

Online Incidents

For 2014-2021, 415 online verified cases were reported to the Register by third parties. Facebook was the most reported platform for Islamophobic incidents, constituting three-quarters of all reported incidents. Apart from being a popular online platform for hate actors, there is also an organic overlap between the popularity of Facebook among Australian adults and the adult age concentration for victims, perpetrators and reporters of the Register. The Registration's operation through Facebook might have also contributed to it.

Of the online perpetrators, one-third (36%) were associated with far-right groups and/or ideology. Social media provided a fertile ground for hate groups through the free exchange of divisive and hateful viewpoints, which are largely unregulated and unmonitored. Far-right alternative media and social media outlets reframe, recontextualise and reproduce news stories by carefully selecting information from non-mainstream sources to justify their ideological agenda. Accordingly, news items appearing to be neutral are recrafted as partisan and combined with disinformation and propaganda for the public to consume.

In the absence of trigger events like ISIS terrorism and the Christchurch terror attacks, anti-Muslim hate actors created agendas online by artificially connecting the dominant discussions of the day to Muslims. For instance, the killing of George Floyd by a police officer in the US (Case 11-20), the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban regime and the coronavirus outbreak in Australia (Case 14-20) were used as excuses to demonise Muslims as being dangerous, selfish and in search of favouritism by playing the victim. Furthermore, the hate actors circulated specially selected (Case 10-20) and fake news (Case 7-20) from around the world to problematise Muslims and keep anti-Muslim hate fresh. Beyond sharing disproportionate and misleading content fuelling anti-Muslim hate, such outlets solidified their agenda by engaging local and global followers in heated anti-Muslim discussions. The Facebook page of former Senator Fraser Anning (Case 82-21) and the Jihadwatch Twitter account of Robert Spencer (Case 81-21), a renowned American Islamophobe, posted hateful content about Australian Muslims and engaged thousands to express anti-Muslim sentiments, which sometimes reached extreme levels in times of trigger events or fervent discussions.

Demographics

Muslim women were the most active reporters of online Islamophobia and reported more online cases (61%) than men (39%). Three quarters (75%) of reporters in the period of 2014-21 were Muslim. The ratio of non-Muslim reporters dropped significantly (from 35% in 2014-15 to 2% in 2020-21). Activating male reporters and other online

75%

MUSLIM INCIDENT REPORTERS (ONLINE)

Although 83% of the reported incidents were generic hate posts, they triggered conversations in the comments section, some of which led to personal attacks when the perpetrators were questioned or challenged by third persons in the conversation threads.

Content

Significant differences were observed in relation to the insult content and whether it was made offline or online. The presumption that Muslims kill was used approximately four times more online (30% vs 8%) and an association with terrorism was around twice as likely online (44% vs 21%), while the proportion of xenophobic insults was greater offline (56% compared to 37% online). In contrast, those insulting religion and religious appearance, which dominated offline and online hate rhetoric, was similar (67% and 65%) as was the use of foul language (34% and 36%). Furthermore, the gendered hate rhetoric observed in the offline world was also reflected in the online result, as men were associated with terrorism and women were insulted for their religious appearance.

Within the hierarchy of emotional intensity leading to extremism, the proportion of those "wanting to kill" was at the most intense level of hate in online compared to offline interactions (35% compared to 10%). In contrast, dehumanising people offline was three times higher than in online platforms (21% compared to 7% online). Except for wanting to kill, all other categories of hate were displayed in physical settings and arguably laid the foundation of extreme hate expressed on social media platforms. A significantly greater number of mass killing/civil war comments online suggests the extension of offline hate to extreme levels on social media.

Emotional Response and Impact

In total (including offline and online cases), six in ten people expressed one or more emotional impacts. The proportion of those expressing an emotional impact was higher in physical (offline) cases (70%) than online cases (47%). Witnessing generic hate posts online, which mostly included expressions of intense hate by individuals in the comments thread, was emotionally impactful for half the reporters.

Furthermore, fear/fright was equally felt by online and offline reporters (34% online, 37% offline). This result suggests that online hate cases were perceived as 'real' as offline cases. Feelings of sadness (56%), anger (61%) and humiliation (22%) were more prevalent online while disappointment (42%) was more prevalent offline.

Fear/fright was equally felt by online and offline reporters (34% online, 37% offline). This result suggests that online hate cases were perceived as 'real' as offline cases.

ONLINE ISLAMOPHOBIA

OFFLINE ISLAMOPHOBIA

Online		Offline
30%	Presumption that Muslims kills	8%
44%	Association with terrorism	21%
37%	Xenophobic	56%
65%	Insulting religious appearance	67%
36%	Foul language	34%
35%	Wanting to kill	10%
7%	Dehumanising people	21%
47%	Emotional impact	70%

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COVID-19 PERIOD (2020-21)

Islamophobia in Australia during the COVID period has similarities with Islamophobia patterns around the same time in other Western countries. Under the unique COVID-19 circumstances, reporting dropped significantly (40 physical and 50 online incidents). The challenges of the pandemic, which were felt starkly by minorities and socio-economically disadvantaged communities, seemed to shift the focus of hate away from Islam. Increasing anti-Asian racism during the pandemic temporarily released Muslims as the main target for racism. Lockdowns and distancing rules also limited the conditions for physical harassment. Nevertheless, Muslims were scapegoated for breaching rules, spreading COVID-19 and rejecting vaccination. They felt discriminated due to what has been widely criticised as being double standards in law enforcement during the lockdowns.

The COVID-19 period contributed to a reversion to Islamophobic stigmatisations like the perception of Muslims being backward and dangerous. The media portraying Muslims as flouting pandemic restrictions gave Islamophobes an excuse to harass them for not properly following the restrictions (Case 60-21) or blame them for bringing the virus to Australia from overseas (Case 14-20).

Witness reporting increased from 35% to 53% between 2014-21. However, this was not due to bystander reporting but due to the reporting of news and incidents that were circulated among community members via WhatsApp and other group messages. Most of such reports were underlining incidents of discrimination, over-policing and double standards during the lockdowns especially in Sydney and Melbourne, where the majority of Muslims live in Australia (Case 53-21a, b, c, d).

Generic incidents were more prevalent during the COVID era (33% compared to 15% in 2018-19) while personal incidents were directed at collective entities like Islamic schools, organisations and mosques, blaming Muslims for violating restrictions and

causing new clusters and outbreaks. For instance, a school was targeted for spreading the virus after a teacher tested positive (Case 61-21). Around the same time, some media accused Muslims of spreading COVID-19 during Eid celebrations (Cases 54-21 and 80-21), portraying Muslims as a new threat at a time of heightened anxiety.

The characteristics of COVID-19 were reflected in the hotspots. Due to lockdowns and pandemic restrictions like physical distancing, incidents on public transport (from 11% to 4%), official buildings (from 8% to 4%,), schools and universities (from 11% to 8%) dropped significantly, while not a single case was reported in leisure centres. In contrast, incidents around homes and neighbourhoods slightly increased (from 4% to 8%, compared to the ratios borrowed from 2018-19)

There was a significant jump in expressions of emotional impact offline and online during the COVID 19 period. The highest emotional impact was expressed in 2020 while expressions of emotional impact in response to online cases was higher than in physical ca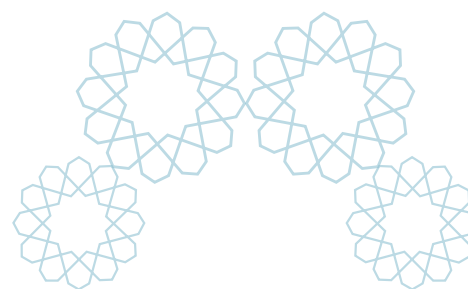ses. It is possible that social, economic and educational challenges faced by socio-economically struggling minorities during the COVID-19 period aggravated the impact of Islamophobia at this time. The question in the reporting tool asking the reporter's emotional state, which was added to the reporting tool as an optional question in 2018, might have contributed to this increase in 2020 as well. During 2014-21, a steady increase was observed for both genders in feeling humiliated because of Islamophobic attacks.

> There was a significant jump in expressions of emotional impact offline and online during the COVID 19 period. The highest emotional impact was expressed in 2020 while expressions of emotional impact in response to online cases was higher than in physical cases.

Trends of Islamophobia between 2014-2021

Victims

The rates of anti-Muslim incidents targeting women remained constantly high. Abuse of unaccompanied children increased steadily until 2018-19. This number dropped during the COVID-19 when children were less likely to be alone outdoors to be alone and consequently less likely to be the target of Islamophobic abuse.

Social relationship

The incidents indicating an existing relationship between the perpetrator and victim (9% overall in 2014-21) increased significantly to 21% in 2018-19 and 24% in 2020-21. This was associated with increased reporting of discrimination at work and school settings in the last two years following the start of victim advocacy services by the Register.

Reporting to police

The incidence of reporting to police decreased for offline and online incidents between 2014 and 2021. The reporting of property damage (i.e., predominantly attacks on mosques) to police increased almost four-fold in the year of the Christchurch terror attacks.

Hotspots

Incidents occurring in guarded places continued to increase, reaching 75% in 2018-19 and 70% in 2020-21. In contrast to the drop in physical attacks in the aftermath of the Christchurch terror attacks, property damage (predominantly attacks on mosques) increased from 14% in 2014-15 to 35% in 2020-21.

Content of insults

In 2016-17, when ISIS attacks were topical, an association between Muslims and terrorism was low (15%) whereas religious appearance was high (75%). It is possible, due to the conflation of Muslims and Islam with terrorism in the media and in public discourse, religious appearance and terrorism might be synonymous from a perpetrator's view. Also, because male victims were associated with terrorism and female victims were harassed by insulting their religious appearance and religion, dominance of religious appearance in the hate rhetoric is expected since more than two-thirds of the victims were women.

A presumption that Muslims kill people, which portrays Muslims as an inherent threat to safety, was steady (4%-6%), except for a sharp increase in 2018-19 (15%), when Muslims were the victims of far-right extremism in Christchurch.

Death threats

Statements about mass killing /civil war, karma/deserving to be killed (35%) were prevalent in the aftermath of the Christchurch attacks, while references to cutting of the throat (by calling it halal slaughtering) and stoning were prevalent amid anti-halal campaigns and descriptions of ISIS atrocities between 2014 and 2017.

More than half the online incidents demonstrated an intensity of hate rhetoric (52%) that was at the highest level (i.e., wanting to kill) when ISIS attacks and anti-Muslim campaigns by far-right groups were gaining momentum in the aftermath of the Christchurch attacks.

Portraying Muslims as a threat to one's life was a consistent form of hate rhetoric. Insulting religious appearance and religion was another dominant theme, which was replaced with the association of Muslims with terrorism in 2018-19. Muslims were associated with terrorism (53%) when 51 Muslims were massacred in shooting attacks at two mosques by a far-right terrorist in Christchurch.

Further, in 2016-17, when ISIS attacks and recruitment were most topical, a Muslim's presence and religious appearance was the most prevalent subject of attack (86%). During the COVID-19 period, religious appearance (65%) and presuming Muslims kill (58%) were the top two forms of online anti-Muslim hate rhetoric. The consistent trend of insulting religious appearance and presuming that Muslims kill reflects the stigmatisation of Muslims and Islam since the War on Terror, and their continual depiction as the enemy.

THE WAY FORWARD

- Islamophobia is a social cohesion problem and requires a whole of society approach to encourage and maintain an environment that has zero tolerance for the harassment of any individual.

- Despite the prevalence of Islamophobic incidents in the most frequented public places, people witnessing incidents often do not appear to be intervening to support victims. Bystanders should be activated to apply social pressure to brazen perpetrators to act appropriately. Signage aimed at repelling hate and encouraging reports of hate crimes in places such as public transport may assist with this. Men should also be encouraged to report both offline and online incidents as they are underrepresented in reporting. underrepresented in reporting.

35%

Statements about mass killing/civil war, karma/ deserving to be killed (35%) were prevalent in the aftermath of the Christchurch attacks

- Combatting Islamophobia as a whole society effort, is an effective means to improve trust and solidarity between members of Islamic communities and mainstream society (bridging capital). It also builds community resilience to social discord that seek to undermine social cohesion.

- Likewise, the similar types and numbers of Islamophobic incidents in multicultural and non-multicultural suburbs demonstrate that multicultural settings do not prevent Islamophobia. Without directly addressing Islamophobia as a problem of social cohesion, the problem will persist.

- Developing cross-cultural solidarity among communities and especially among women is essential to repel the misogynistic face of anti-Muslim racism and the public abuse of Muslims.

- It was mostly men from Anglo/European backgrounds and from older cohorts that harassed mostly younger hijabi women from non-White ethnic backgrounds. Gender, race, age and status (as supervisors, principals, employers etc) can operate as enablers of Islamophobia. Removal of entrenched habits may take time but is possible if:

  - Members of society take action to dismantle gender, race and age enablers in reproducing racism and Islamophobia.

  - Workplaces, schools and official institutions develop strategies that go beyond recognising and addressing discrimination, and proactively aim to reduce Islamophobia through developing policies and procedures that reduce the likelihood of inappropriate behaviours arising in the first place.

  - Vulnerable victims are self-empowered to resist being convenient targets for perpetrators and self-assured about their value to minimise the impact in case of facing Islamophobia.

- The increasing number of Islamophobic incidents in guarded places indicates the limited ability of security personnel and surveillance cameras to contain the problem. This leads to increased insecurity for Muslims everywhere, including in guarded places. It is essential to educate security personnel and store managers about how to handle Islamophobic incidents. perpetrators and self-assured about their value to minimise the impact in case of facing Islamophobia.

- Increasing generic security measures to guarded premises has limited effectiveness since physical and property attacks (mostly at mosques) occurred in guarded places and no difference was observed between physical and verbal attacks in guarded and unguarded places. Every type of guarded place and hotspot has unique features and circumstances. Custom-made security and prevention strategies should be developed by engaging participants, especially targets of Islamophobia.

- Within the emotional intensity scale (hostility, contempt, dehumanisation, disgust and a desire to harm/kill), the most intense hate level was significantly higher online than offline (35% compared to 10%). All other categories of hate were blatantly displayed in physical settings. The fluctuating levels of hate in physical circumstances are often extended to extreme levels in online discussions. The connection between the two and transformation of offline hate to online in extreme levels requires taking a holistic approach to tackling Islamophobia, without a rigid distinction between offline and online Islamophobia.

- The insult rhetoric of perpetrators illustrates that Islamophobia has become heavily normalised by associating Muslims and Islam with violence. Official presentations of terrorism motive within the framework of Religious Motivated Violent Extremism need to be reframed to avoid centring religion as the cause of violence or threat, overtime giving space for Muslim individuals and communities to show the diversity and depth of their stories and identities.

- The expression of emotional impact was higher in physical (offline) cases (70%), but also occurs frequently in online cases (47%). Fear/fright was felt by online and offline reporters (34% online, 37% offline). Online hate cases were perceived by Muslim online users as being as real and frightening as offline hate cases. Technology companies should take greater consideration of the impact of emotional violence on recipients of extreme hate and act on this by reviewing and raising their community standards.

- Islamophobia (expressed whether physically or verbally) hurts men and women in offline and online contexts. Emotional violence left lasting impacts on vulnerable victims, especially hijabi women with children. Researching the impacts of Islamophobia on men and women is an investment in the well-being of target communities now and into the future.

- The comprehensive analysis of 930 reported cases over eight years has provided numerous hypotheses to test on a nationwide scale. The results will be instrumental in combatting Islamophobia at a national level through the development and implementation of informed strategies.

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The data analysed in this report is based on Islamophobic incidents reported to the Islamophobia Register Australia (the Register) by victims or third parties (i.e. proxies and witnesses). The Register was established by Mariam Veiszadeh on 17 September 2014 in response to increasing anecdotal evidence of Islamophobic incidents amid the rise of the 'Islamic State of Syria and Iraq' (ISIS) and the associated panic around the world including Australia. The Register provides a secure and reliable online reporting platform that captures nation-wide data and offers first-hand support to victims of Islamophobia.

The three previous high-profile Islamophobia in Australia reports (2017, 2019 and 2022) were produced in partnership with Charles Sturt University (CSU) and Islamic Science and Research Academy (ISRA) under the leadership of Associate Professor Derya Iner. The reports, which have been widely covered in the media and cited by academic circles, have raised public awareness, influenced political debates and earned the trust and respect of the Muslim community and broader Australian society.

The Impact

According to CSU media metrics (taken from Meltwater media monitoring), Islamophobia in Australia III report was mentioned multiple times in mainstream media and, in media metrics terms, achieved a combined potential reach of nearly 200 million in the first week of its release. Coverage has included articles in The Guardian, The Conversation, ABC radio and online, SBS radio and online, Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and syndicated coverage across the Australian Community Media network.

The Islamophobia in Australia research reports have inspired policy makers like Attorney General Mark Dreyfus and Minister of Multicultural Affairs Andrew Giles to release a statement titled "Report Shows we must Tackle Islamophobia in Australia." After summarising key findings, the statement underlined that "Labor is committed to ending religious vilification and discrimination" (Dreyfus, 2022). The Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Vilification Bill) by MP Paul Lynch in 2021 also extensively quoted the Islamophobia report findings while Senator Mehreen Faruqi of the Greens highlighted the contribution of the reports to the Australian public by stating that "Everyone who cares about human rights and social justice in this country should read the 'Islamophobia in Australia III' report and demand that the government take immediate action" (Faruqi, 2022).

The Register and the Islamophobia research reports based on the third-party incidents and conducted in collaboration with academic units and universities inspired the Jumbunna Institute of UTS and National Justice Project to establish an Indigenous register named "Call it Out." Likewise, the Anti-Asian Racism report analysing COVID-era vilification was inspired by the Islamophobia in Australia research reports. The third-party reporting to the Register and its research outputs also motivated the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability to investigate countering disablism, violence and discrimination directed at

persons with disability. The Islamophobia Register Australia, Centre for Islamic Studies and Civilisation at Charles Sturt University and the Muslim community are honoured to contribute to a hate-free Australia by inspiring new registers and anti-racism reports to the other marginalised communities.

Information About the Data

The fourth Islamophobia in Australia report analyses all incidents reported to the Register from its inception in September 2014 until December 2021. The merged data includes a total of 930 offline and online verified and authentic cases made up of 134 offline and 109 online incidents from 2014-15, 202 offline and 147 online incidents from 2016-17, 139 offline and 109 online incidents from 2018-19, and 40 offline and 50 online incidents from 2020-21.

Number of incidents (offline and online)

Year	Incidents
2014-15	243
2016-17	349
2018-19	248
2020-21	90

Under the unique COVID-19 circumstances, physical incidents dropped significantly due to the lockdowns, physical distancing and other new and demanding challenges, which were reported to be particularly overwhelming for ethno-religiously diverse minority communities including Muslims (Asian Australian Alliance, 2021).

Routine activity theory suggests that criminal events occur when there is convergence of three critical components in time and space: (1) a motivated offender, (2) a suitable target such as a person or property seen as fitting for an offender, and (3) an absence of guardianship such as having little to no people witnessing and preventing such criminal events (e.g. police, school officials). Convergence of all three factors was significantly low during the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns. Physical distancing closed places that were previously hotspots for Islamophobia and limited indoor gatherings only for essential reasons. The absence of suitable targets (i.e. vulnerable people like children, the elderly, unaccompanied women and women with children) decreased the possibility for physical/offline Islamophobia scenarios (Regalado et al., 2022, pp. 2-3).

Although an increase in Islamophobia is generally mentioned within increasing hate crime numbers in Britain, Europe and Spain, the European Islamophobia Report 2021 found that distinctively Islamophobic hate cases, especially in physical circumstances, were noted to be rare during the COVID-19 period and recorded physical cases were not necessarily directed at individuals. For instance, Islamophobic incidents in Germany decreased by 29% in 2021 and slightly more than half were directed at mosques rather than individuals. Likewise, half the incidents in France in 2021 were directed at Muslim places of worship, cultural centres and cemeteries (Bayrakli & Hafez, 2022, pp. 32-34).

Most targets do not report their experiences of hate crime and racism and reported instances of Islamophobia have always been the tip of the iceberg (Iner et al., 2017; Atta et al., 2018; Perry & Poynting, 2006; Larsson & Stjernholm, 2016; Alimahomed-Wilson,

According to CSU media metrics (taken from Meltwater media monitoring), Islamophobia in Australia III report was mentioned multiple times in mainstream media and, in media metrics terms, achieved a combined potential reach of nearly 200 million in the first week of its release.
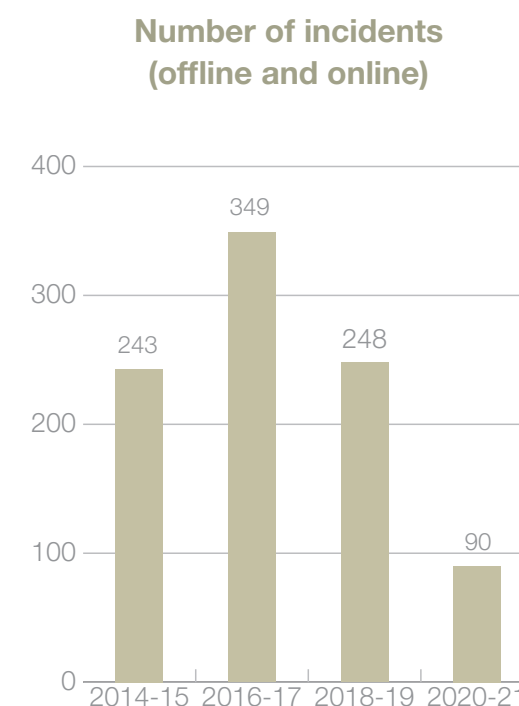
The Islamophobia Register Australia, Centre for Islamic Studies and Civilisation at Charles Sturt University and the Muslim community are honoured to contribute to a hate-free Australia by inspiring new registers and anti-racism reports to other marginalised communities.

Report incidents of **Islamophobia**

Tracking and Tackling Islamophobia.
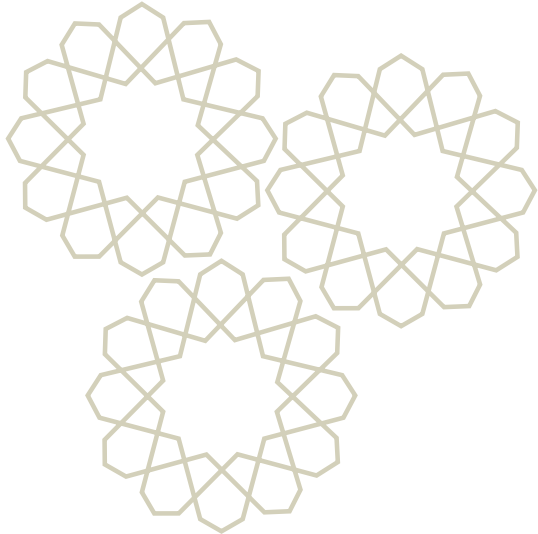
REPORT AN INCIDENT

2017). Reporting dropped further due to the challenges faced by the Muslim community during the COVID-19 pandemic. A number of factors affected the financial, social and mental wellbeing of the Australian Muslim community including, financial instability, family ruptures, inability to plan ahead, dying relatives abroad, language barriers contributing to broken COVID communications and home schooling children, which required multiple devices, internet access, digital literacy and English proficiency (Arashiro, 2020).

The start of the coronavirus in Wuhan, China and its spread to 90 countries in two months led to increasing harassment of Asian communities throughout the world during 2020-21,, including Australia. The New Zealand Human Rights Commission noted that Chinese citizens' experiences of discrimination was high (54%) since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The UK police noted a rise of 300% in hate crimes toward Chinese, East and South East Asians in the first quarter of 2020 (compared to the same period in 2018 and 2019) (Clements, 2021). An increase in anti-Asian racism was also noted in Canada, Italy, Russia and Brazil (Haynes, 2021).

In Australia, the Human Rights Commission recorded more complaints of racist discrimination due to COVID , and one-third of complaints were reported to be related to COVID-19. A national survey conducted by the Asian Australian Alliance in April-June 2020 received 377 reports of COVID-19 related racist incidents against Asians, with the majority being directed at women, with 40% involving casual racist slurs and around 11-12% involving physical intimidation (Asian Australian Alliance, 2021).

The significant increase in anti-Asian racism during the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to have contributed to a temporary reduction reported anti-Muslim hate and racism. The commonly shared characteristics of anti-Asian and anti-Muslim hate also imply the operation of the same hate groups during the pandemic. Also, the fluidity of far-right populist groups and their pragmatic adjustments according to the climate suggests a temporary reduction in anti-Muslim hate and an increase in targeting the Asian community.

Nevertheless, the Australian community continued to suffer from anti-Muslim racism during COVID-19 in two ways: (1) Muslims were scapegoated for breaching rules and spreading COVID-19; and (2) Muslims like other minority groups experienced double-standards in law enforcement and poor crisis management. The first was interpreted in

the literature as ongoing Islamophobia with new excuses of the time such as COVID-19 (Rose, 2021; Bayrakli & Hafez, 2021; Tazamal, 2020) while the second was addressed as an outcome of structural shortcomings in assessing and accommodating the needs of minority communities (Elias et al., 2021).

This experience was not unique to Australia. For instance, false claims were made in the UK by far-right online commentators blaming the Muslim population for violating lockdown orders without any evidence and speculating on the operation of mosques in Britain during COVID-19 (Tazamal, 2020). Similarly, Muslims were associated with COVID-19 in "unusual ways" in the European media (Bayrakli & Hafez, 2021). Perceived double-standards in public health policy were also reported in the UK, with strict restrictions being imposed on household gatherings in the Muslim populated north of England right before the Islamic Eid-al-Adha celebration while pubs and restaurants were still open in other parts of England (Tazamal, 2020).

Australian Muslim communities faced similar experiences. For instance, when Victoria was in the second breakout in June 2020, migrant/culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) populated suburbs were addressed as "COVID-19 hotspots" (Mao, 2020), while the Muslim community was seemingly blamed by some media outlets for spreading the virus (for details, see the Generic – Personal section). Harsher measures were applied to certain suburbs, which were accused of breaching laws and not self-isolating (Weedon, 2020). This "heavy-handed response" was recorded by the Victorian Ombudsman as a breach of human rights (Glass, 2020; Australian Asian Alliance, 2021). Similar issues were observed in South-West Sydney, where CALD communities were blamed for not observing lockdown impositions and what appeared to be heavy-handed policing to reduce the spread of the virus. In fact, a deeper analysis was suggested to the authorities by taking into account the higher casualised workforce, larger households and ineffective public health campaigns targeting CALD communities (Briggs, 2021; Australian Asian Alliance 2021). Another commentary stated a more lenient approach to northern and inner Sydney communities, which was criticised by local community leaders as a poor crisis management and a reflection of deep-rooted racism (Amin, 2021; Australian Asian Alliance 2021).

COVID-19 has also been weaponised by the far-right to further demonise target communities, including Muslims. A series of conspiracy theories and social media posts in the UK scapegoated Muslims for spreading the virus, claiming that new clusters were caused by Muslim religious festivals and communities refusing to take the COVID-19 vaccine (Awan & Carter, 2021).

A survey of Muslim community leaders during COVID-19 by the Council of Europe found all respondents "reported an increase in anti-Muslim conspiracy theories on the Internet, in particular during the COVID pandemic" (Rose, 2021). Associating COVID conspiracies with Muslims and Jews provided a legitimate ground for far-right groups to express

Reporting dropped due to the challenges faced by the Muslim community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 has been weaponised by the far-right to further demonise target communities, including Muslims.

their willingness to use violence against these target groups. Some European faith communities, particularly in Germany, identified an increased perceived threat among Jews and Muslims, where communities feel more scared to express Judaism or Islam publicly due to the proliferation of online hate (Rose, 2021, p. 4).

Noting that most anti-Muslim tweets originated and spread from India (Chak, 2022), the global online community was exposed to coronavirus images of people dressed in Muslim attire with #coronajihad type hashtags, most of which went viral on social media and were reproduced among anti-Muslim Western circles (Awan et al., 2022, pp. 5-6).
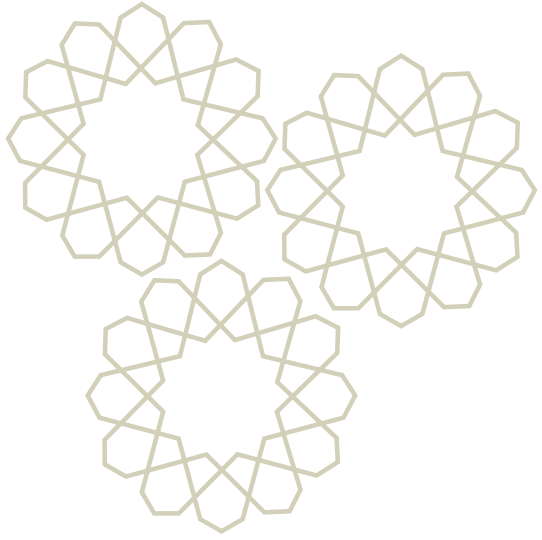
The replication and repercussions of such arguments in physical (offline) and online circumstances were also observed in a sample of 90 cases reported to the Register in 2020-21. While the reduction in reporting during the COVID-19 period limits quantitative analysis, it nevertheless provides insights useful for a national survey to test such hypotheses. The value of this sample of third-party reporting is instrumental in terms of capturing Muslim experiences as narratives disclosing patterns and trends that further clarify manifestations of Islamophobia in Australia between 2014 to 2021 (n=930 incidents), including the COVID-19 period (90 incidents).

Methodology

This report was produced from data collected from the Register during 2014 to 2021. The nature of incidents was assessed according to the definitions of offline and online Islamophobia (see Glossary) and their authenticity was verified according to the incident registration protocol (see Appendix 1). The data was coded according to the perceived demographic and other details provided by the reporter. Likewise, the reporter's reference was considered as the main criterion in assessing what part of the conversation should be coded. In some cases, the incident was reported to the Register without providing any update about any resolution. The number after the case number indicates the last two digit of the incident year. If the same incident was reported by more than one reporter independently from each other, those incidents were recoded as the "a", "b" and "c" versions of the same case number (e.g. Case 56-21a and Case 56-21b).

Quantitative data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive analysis was undertaken employing frequencies and cross tabulations. Frequencies were employed to provide summary data, while cross tabulations were used to compare groups in relation to experiences of and responses to Islamophobia. Analysis of the Register data focuses on physical (offline) and online incidents, trends over the years and comparison of the offline and online cases. Illustrative case studies are included throughout the report. If the categorisation comprises less than 1% of cases, it is omitted from the graph and the decimal numbers are rounded in the graphs.

Although the method used to collect data means that results may not be representative of the Australian population (and most likely is affected by under-reporting of incidents of Islamophobia), they remain a critical and valuable source for understanding manifestations of Islamophobia in the Australian context. Since data collection employed the same method for each year from the same third-party report provider through more or less similar incident registration tools and procedures, it is however valid to derive conclusions based on comparisons between the findings of all four reports cited.

Frequencies were employed to provide summary data, while cross tabulations were used to compare groups in relation to experiences of and responses to Islamophobia. Analysis of the Register data focuses on physical (offline) and online incidents, trends over the years and comparison of the offline and online cases.

Third party reporting is instrumental in terms of capturing Muslim experiences as narratives.

Data transformations
Emotional response/impact

Emotional response/impact was calculated from several variables that measure a person's response to incidents of Islamophobia. These variables included anger, sadness or worry, fear or fright, humiliation and disappointment. Where a respondent answered yes to one or more of these variables, they were deemed to have had an emotional response to the incident; where they responded no to any of these variables, they were deemed not to have had an emotional response.

Level of attack

Similarly, the level of attack was computed from the variable 'severity of the physical,' which comprised nine categories ranging from verbal attacks, attacks against property through to physical violence. These nine categories were collapsed into three categories: low (verbal attacks), medium (property damage) and high (physical attacks).

Statistical testing

Statistical testing (where the sample size was sufficient) was undertaken to determine if any differences observed were genuine and not caused by error (e.g. due to sampling error). Therefore, where the term significant is employed in this report, it refers to a statistically significant difference between groups at the .05 level of significance, meaning there is less than a one in 20 chance that any observed difference is spurious or due to sample error.

Chapter I

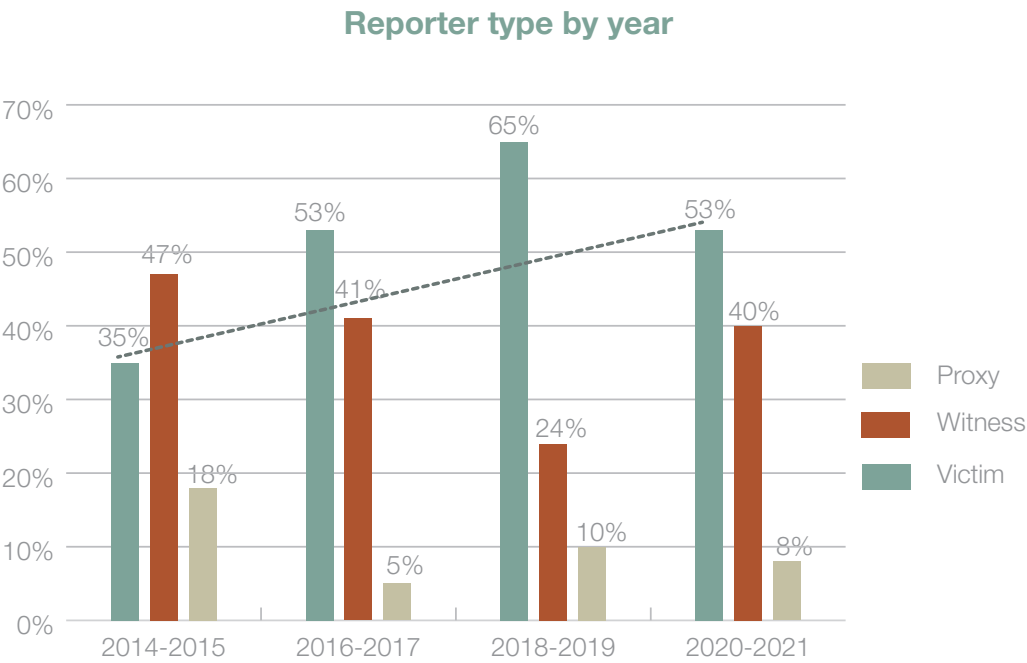# ISLAMOPHOBIA REPORT ANALYSIS OF OFFLINE CASES (2014-2021)

1. DEMOGRAPHICS

1.1. Reporters, Victims, Proxies and Witnesses

From 2014-2021, 515 offline cases were reported by victims, witnesses or proxies. While witnesses consisted of surrounding people (including bystanders and passers-by), proxies were mostly close relatives reporting on behalf of their young children or parents.

Victim reporting increased whereas witness reporting decreased from 2014 to 2021. From a yearly perspective, the number of victim reporters increased significantly, from 35% (n=47) in 2014-15 to 66% in 2018-19 and 53% (n=21) in 2020-21.

During the COVID-19 period (2020-21), of the 40 physical cases, 53% were reported by victims. Witness reporting significantly increased from 24% in 2028-19 to 40% during the COVID-19 period (2020-21), seemingly because people in lockdown reported cases by being informed about anti-Muslim incidents through third parties and platforms like print media, WhatsApp groups, social media and other shared communication channels where news, images and stories were shared.

Reporter type by year

Male perpetrator and female victim by year

Female perpetrator and male victim by year

> Victim reporting increased whereas witness reporting decreased from 2014 to 2021.

> Women attacking women increased from 73% to 89% between 2014 and 2021, while females attacking males decreased over the review period.

1.2. Perpetrators and Victims

Gender of victim and perpetrator

Consistent with previous reports, visible and identifiable Muslim women with their outward appearance and headcovers (hijabs) bore the brunt of Islamophobia. During 2014 to 2021, the majority of victims were women (78%) and the majority of perpetrators were men (70%). Further, in almost three quarters of all cases (75%, n=152), the perpetrator was male, and victim was female, while in one-quarter of cases (26%, n=53), the perpetrator and victim were male.

No significant change was observed in the gender distribution of victims and perpetrators over the eight years. The proportion of men attacking Muslim women continued to be consist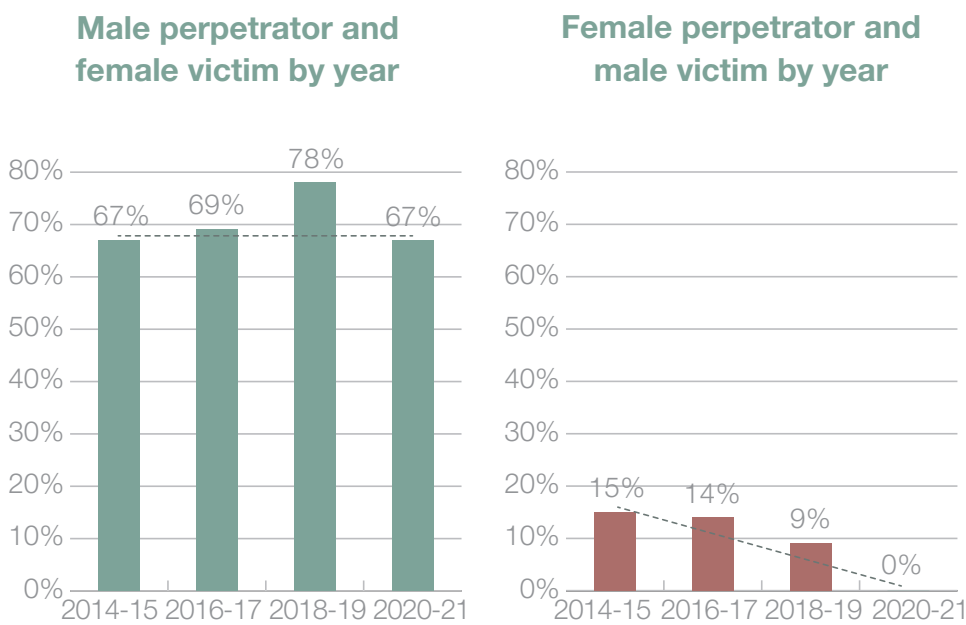ently high. Men attacking Muslim men fluctuated across the years. Women attacking women increased from 73% to 89% between 2014 and 2021, while females attacking males decreased over the review period.

It appeared that women perpetrators were cautious in not taking risks while harassing their victims, especially in cases of women attacking men. For instance, no physical attack against a male victim was committed by a female perpetrator. Female perpetrators demonstrated Islamophobia by verbal abuse and in cases of hierarchical advancement in workplace/school/university settings (see the gender dynamics section). In other cases, there was still a level of social hierarchy or practical circumstances lessening the risk of attack for the female perpetrator. For instance, a young female driver in front of her male company, abused an international male student and his wife who were walking to their house.

> " I was walking near…road (in front of our house) with my wife. My wife was wearing hijab. Suddenly, a girl from a moving black car (with red P plate) started to film us using her mobile phone and violently yelled at us. There was also a male occupant inside the car. It was so shocking. We stumbled for some time and became speechless, and we could not note down the car registration number. (Case 39-21)

The victim was shocked and expressed feeling "helpless," "humiliated," and far from "safe and secure," apparently because of being targeted in front of and together with his wife for whom he could provide no safety. He was a vulnerable and convenient target as a pedestrian and international student.

Women's insults towards other women was more common as it was less risky for the perpetrators. In one extraordinary example a woman abused another woman, despite both experiencing domestic violence from their partners. Instead of developing empathy for each other as the victims of domestic violence, the perpetrator chose to harass her Muslim counterpart in a crisis accommodation centre:

" *Another resident who is a Christian person continues to humiliate me in various ways and made my life miserable while I was here. Many times, I complained to the management but it didn't work…She has made me so emotionally and socially devastated that it has become very difficult for me to stay here. The only reason for this is that I am a Muslim and I follow the Muslim religion strictly. She always makes a lot of fun of my halal food and my hijab and hurts me a lot emotionally. (Case 62-21)made me so emotionally and socially devastated that it has become very difficult for me to stay here. The only reason for this is that I am a Muslim and I follow the Muslim religion strictly. She always makes a lot of fun of my halal food and my hijab and hurts me a lot emotionally.* (Case 62-21)

Apart from the burden of domestic violence, Islamophobic harassment made this victim suffer mentally causing her to be unable to "lead a normal life" and resulting in her seeking help from a counsellor.

Age of victim and age of perpetrator

Results for 2014-21 reveals that younger perpetrators tended to victimise people their own age. For instance, 67% of the 10-19 years cohort and 45% of 20-29 years cohort victimised someone from the same age cohort.

Older perpetrators tended to victimise younger cohorts. For perpetrators 30-39 years old, 49% targeted those under 30, while 78% of perpetrators around 40-49 years old targeted those under 40. Half the perpetrators over 50 years (50%) similarly targeted those younger than themselves.

Although harassment of older age cohorts by younger age perpetrators was not common, in one instance group dynamics mobilised teenaged perpetrators to harass an adult woman with her children aged 12, 9 and 6.

" *…A group of five young teen girls were laughing, pointing and commenting then began filming me. They were a distance away so likely didn't hear me say "get some manners" but walked off swiftly when I did…This is my home suburb, I walk here daily. I did not get pictures/video of them but I spotted a piece of chalk on the pathway and left my own message: "Be kind."* (Case 70-21)

Results for 2014-21 reveals that younger perpetrators tended to victimise people their own age, while older perpetrators tended to victimise younger cohorts.

Although the victim was mature enough to advise the youth on more appropriate behaviour, she was internally "traumatised," especially in the absence of any intervention or reaction from the surrounding people. She expressed her experience as "exhausting, it's traumatising, it's compounded trauma, a thousand tiny cuts among the larger gashes."

The age of victim bars going beyond 100% indicate different age groups of perpetrators victimising a particular group. Hence, the greatest concentration of victims was 20-29 and 30-39 years of age. Harassment of victims by the same age groups was common among the 10-19 years of age (67%) and 20-29 years of age group (45%).

Ethnicity of the victim and perpetrator

Ethnicity was assessed by reporters according to the perpetrators' characteristic features. In cases involving an alleged Anglo/European as the perpetrator, the majority of the victims appeared to have a Middle Eastern or Arab background (47%) followed by Pakistani/Bangladeshi (18%), Asia Pacific (13%) and Anglo/European converts to Islam (13%).

The greatest concentration of victims was 20-29 and 30-39 years of age.

Age of victim and perpetrator

Age of victim (Years) / Age of perpetrator (Years): 10-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50+

Ethnicity of the victim

- Anglo European — 13%
- India/Bangladesh — 16%
- Asia Pacific — 11%
- Africa — 3%
- Balkans/Turkey — 7%
- Middle Eastern/Arab — 50%

Ethnicity of the perpetrator

- Anglo/European — 85%
- Non Anglo/European — 15%

Relationship between perpetrator and victim

From 2014 to 2021, 91% (n=428) of all incidents involved a perpetrator that had no relationship to the victim, while 4% (n=20) indicated a work relationship, 3% (n=15) a social relationship and 2% (n=9) a school or university relationship. Social relationship between the perpetrator and victim increased significantly in 2018-19 (21%) and 2020-21 (24%), indicating discrimination predominantly at work followed by school settings. The increase of incidents in and around the home (as a hotspot) from 4% to 8% since the start of (2020-21) also suggests harassment by acquaintances at neighbourhood settings.

Staff members at work were sometimes harassed by blatant comments from colleagues and supervisors about Islam and Muslims, which were subtly connected to the Muslim staff member. For instance, the reporter's ethnic and religious background and thoughts on political issues were investigated by the perpetrator who dropped a blatant comment about religious people with mental issues being radicals. Reportedly, this experience caused the victim to experience anxiety, fear and loss of trust (Case 5-20).

Comments made to Muslim staff members at workplace, which associate Muslims and religiosity with radicalism and terrorism left deep imprints on the victims.

Association of Muslims and Islamic religiosity with radicalism and terrorism was similarly delivered to a staff member blatantly by his supervisor at work:

> " *In [redacted] Reserve, during working hours, I was reading a book. My supervisor came and asked me what I was reading. I told him that it was a book about foreign policy and relations between the US and Pakistan and their involvement in Afghanistan. He made comments that were not appropriate, as he said "don't read books, such that you may end up blowing yourself up in Australia" and right after that he said, "Do you read the Qur'an, have you read the Qur'an?"*
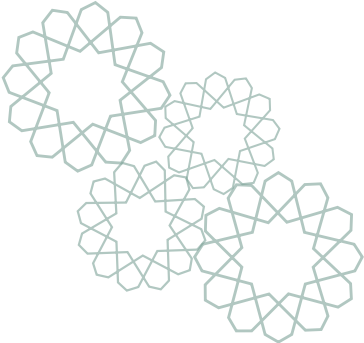> (Case 29-20)

This experience caused stress and left deep imprints on the victim, who found himself crying while talking to a friend about the incident.

It was more stressful for younger cohorts when targeted in a school setting by their teachers. For instance, a 12-year old Palestinian student carrying a Palestinian flag in hand was asked "in front of the whole class 'why are you holding terrorist's flag'" (Case 42-21). Being called a terrorist in front of the class was upsetting for the child who felt "mentally disturbed and …humiliated in front of his classmates."
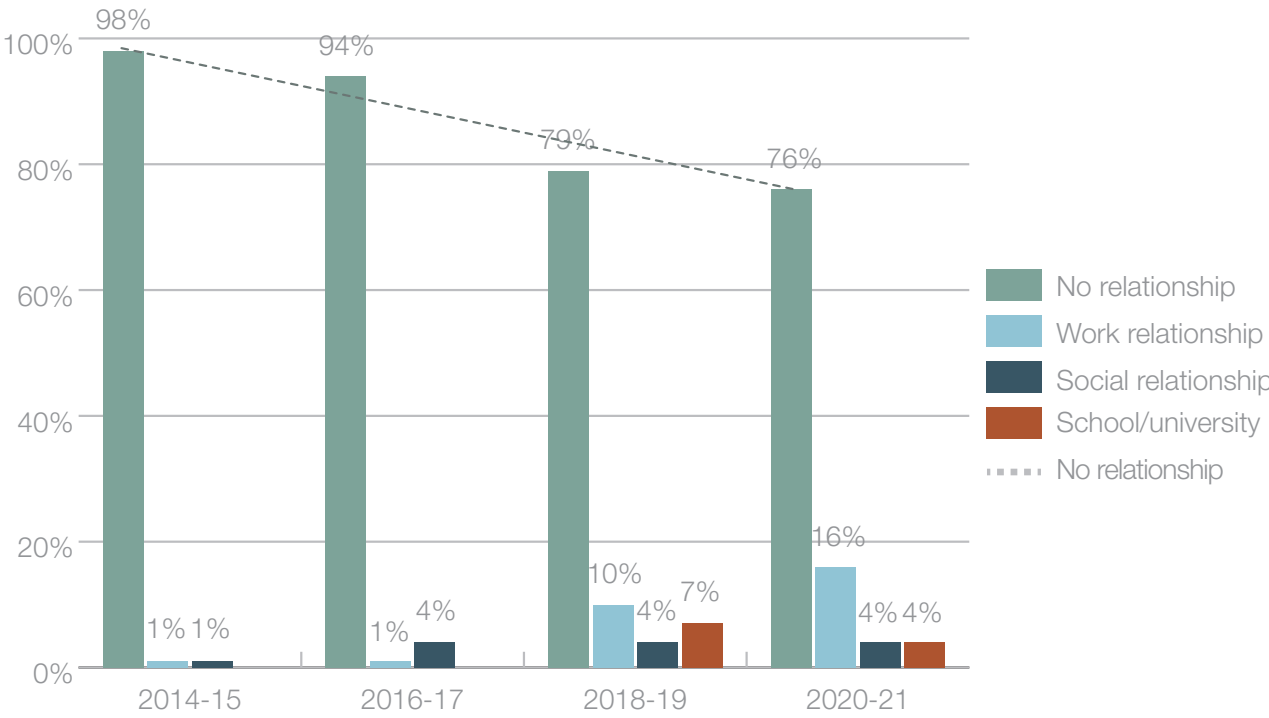
1.3. Vulnerable Victims

Vulnerable people, such as hijabi women, unaccompanied women, women with children and and unaccompanied children, have always been the easiest targets for cowardly perpetrators. From 2014 to 2021, more than half of the women victims were unaccompanied (51%, n=144), with their child/ren (19%, n=55) or together with other women (12%, n=35). In contrast, incidents involving male victims with their wives (4%, n=10) was low and a male victim with a child was almost non-existent (2%, n=5).

While the rates of anti-Muslim incidents targeting women remained constantly high over the review period, threats to an unaccompanied child increased steadily from 6% in 2014-15 to 15% in 2018-19. This pattern was broken during the COVID-19 era with only one report of a child alone experiencing anti-Muslim incident.

Relationship between perpetrator and victim by year

Legend:
- No relationship
- Work relationship
- Social relationship
- School/university
- No relationship (dashed line)

Comments made to Muslim staff members at workplace, which associate Muslims and religiosity with radicalism and terrorism left deep imprints on the victims.

While the rates of anti-Muslim incidents targeting women remained constantly high over the review period, threats to a child alone increased steadily from 6% in 2014-15 to 15% in 2018-19.

Muslim women with children were key targets for perpetrators. While driving her three young children (10 months, 2 years and 8 years) towards the city, an Anglo couple from another car screamed at her "Taliban" and added "Your children are Taliban" (Case 69-21). The victim tried to ignore them to minimise the impact of the incident on her children and "kept cool for the children" despite being "shocked" inside (Case 28-20).

This incident made the victim hypervigilant in her daily actions:

> " *I don't put my window down anymore and always put a window screen, especially when I'm driving alone with my children. I used not to lock my car, now I lock everything while driving, even the window.*
> (Case 28-20)

Likewise, a victim avoided an incident in front of her four-year-old daughter despite the fact the female perpetrator was keen to engage further:

> " *I was about to drop off a book to my local library, the return box outside due to COVID…There were two workers and a passer-by woman with a backpack who was at least around her forties…I heard her talking but I thought she was talking to herself and did not really pay attention to what she was saying. I left the book…and turned back towards the road and saw her stopping on her way, turned towards me although she was heading the other side and looking at me and said something I didn't understand. I was walking towards my car and heard her saying filthy…I realised the two workers were looking at her and then me. I just said I think you are not normal lady. She said "exactly" but it seemed like she was waiting for me to say something so that she could start an incident. I said mind your own business and went into my car because my four-year old daughter was in the car waiting for me. I did not want to have an incident in front of her. None of the workers had said anything to support me.* (Case 52-21)
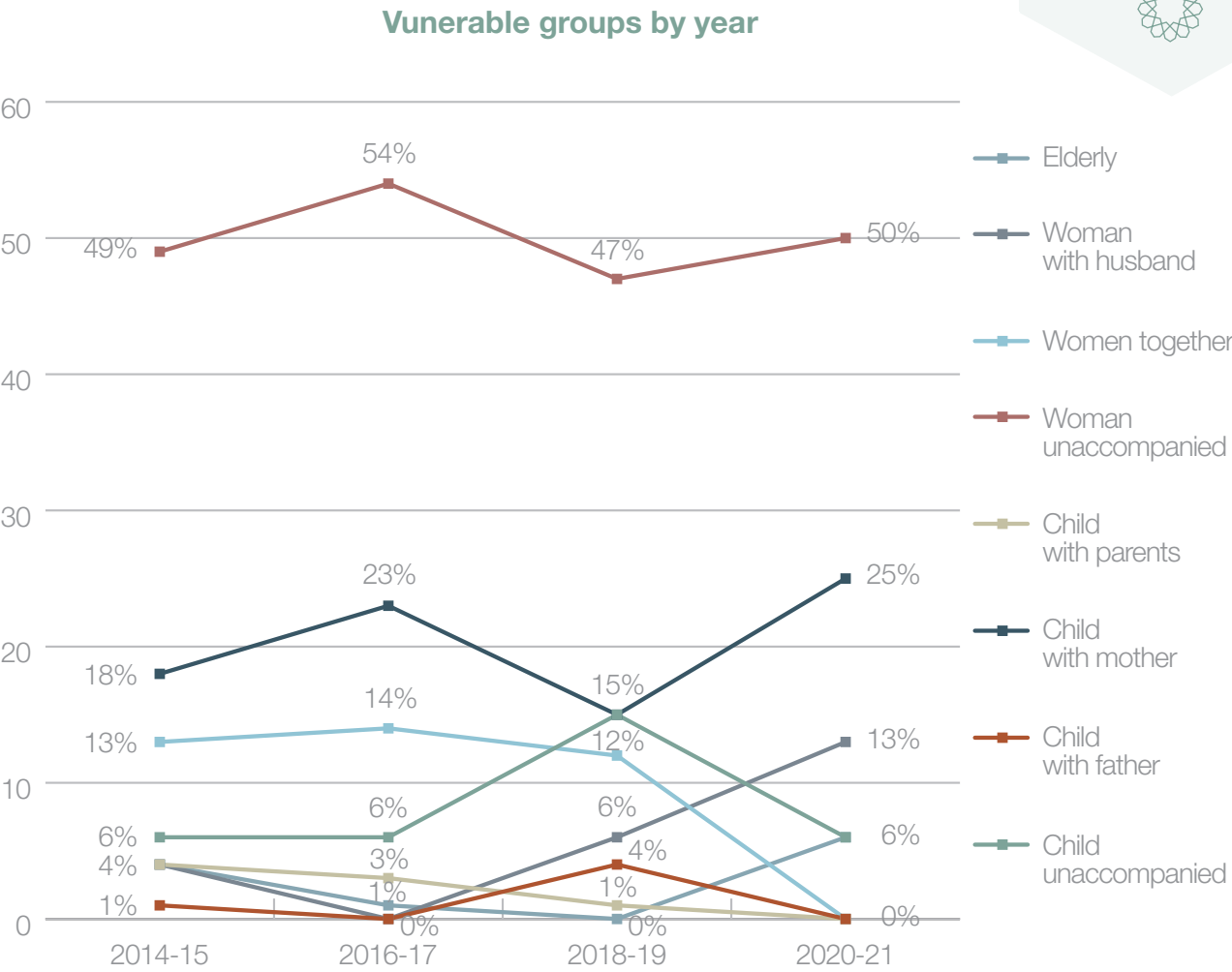
Putting on hijab inevitably made women vulnerable against female and male perpetrators. While a convert Anglo woman with hijab was belittled with misogynist language in front of her two young children at a shop, the victim's non-Muslim Anglo mother coming from the same white culture gave a short lecture to the perpetrator and asked him to apologise to her daughter.

> *A man walked past me and said, hatefully and aggressively, "You STUPID woman." I responded by saying, "Excuse me, I am NOT a stupid woman; I have intelligence and my own voice and can make my own decisions."* (Case 15-20)

The perpetrator seemed to take the point and approached the victim again but aggressively said, "I'm sorry for what you're wearing. I'm sorry that you bow down to men." The attack did not go beyond verbal harassment, but it immediately impacted the victim and her four-year-old son:

> *I don't feel like leaving the house with my children today unless my husband is with me. I think this feeling will pass in a few days, but I feel very anxious and had trouble sleeping last night. My hope is that this man thinks twice next time he feels the urge to treat any woman like this, which is part of the reason I chose to speak up and defend myself fairly.* (Case 15-20)

When accusing Islam of oppressing and enslaving women, the perpetrator took the opportunity to belittle the victim with misogynist language.

The elderly victim was impacted by this incident so much that he was "worried to go out by himself" and felt "traumatised." While the alleged perpetrator was walking towards the train station and yelling at some other people, the son was also "too scared to go there [the train station] in case he was there" (Case 28-20).

The victim effectively articulated the paradox of the perpetrator's Islamophobic attitude with the word "chauvinism." When accusing Islam of oppressing and enslaving women, he took the opportunity to belittle the victim with sexist language.

Elderly cohorts, especially the first generation with limited English, were also easy targets. For instance, a post office employee allegedly threatened a 72-year-old man while showing his ID card on his neck in a way that made the victim feel as if the perpetrator wanted "to make himself look important and scare" the victim. The stressed elderly man immediately called his son to come and help. The son explained, relating the following:

> *I got there and the man started yelling at my father and I and telling him to go back to his own country (my dad has brown skin) and swearing at us and said that this was his country. This was definitely racially motivated as we have never met him before. He also said he will "end us" and was threatening to beat us up. He was blocking the path and would not let us pass (to go back home) until I said I was calling the police.* (Case 28-20)

The post office employee was wearing a gold cross around his neck and allegedly swearing in English and Serbian (or a close European language) at the father and son. The elderly victim was impacted by this incident so much that he was "worried to go out by himself" and felt "traumatised." While the alleged perpetrator was walking towards the train station and yelling at some other people, the son was also "too scared to go there [the train station] in case he was there" (Case 28-20).

2. INCIDENTS

2.1. Generic and Personal

Personal incidents are directed by individual perpetrators to targets in person at a physical location. In contrast, generic incidents are publicly directed at all Muslims in general. Graffiti, stickers, pamphlets and banners displayed in physical circumstances were counted as generic cases.

Vunerable groups by year

Elderly; Woman with husband; Women together; Woman unaccompanied; Child with parents; Child with mother; Child with father; Child unaccompanied

Data points: Woman unaccompanied: 49% (2014-15), 54% (2016-17), 47% (2018-19), 50% (2020-21). Child with mother: 18%, 23%, 15%, 25%. Women together: 13%, 14%, 12%, 13%. Others: 6%, 4%, 3%, 1%, 0%.

Although a lot of Combat 18 stickers from different locations were reported, no graffiti was reported during the COVID-19 period (2020-21). It is possible that during periods of lockdown graffiti was a less effective means of verbal harassment or fewer people were exposed to graffiti as they went out only for essential reasons and therefore had less interaction with racist or Islamophobic graffiti.

From 2014-2021, 76% (n=391) of all incidents were personal. Rates remained stable throughout the period. Generic cases seemed to take new forms and sometimes led to personal intimidation. For instance, a Muslim shopper reported twice finding pork taken from the fridge and put in the halal meat section, which is allocated for Muslim customers.

> *Second time this has happened in my experience: finding pork which someone has taken from the fridge section and placed in the halal section. Few months ago I found a pork leg on the Eid shelf.* (Case 78-21)

Seeing pork for the first time during a Muslim religious festival in the halal meat section and the second time again reduces the chance of it being an accident and supports the likelihood of deliberate intimidation. Since halal certification and the sale of halal food by large Australian retailers have been highly problematised by anti-halal campaigners in Australia since 2014, this case appears to be a new form of Islamophobia, generic and non-verbal but intimidating to any Muslim buyer who may think twice after seeing pork in the halal meat section. The reporter interpreted this behaviour with the comment some "people in the community with anti-Muslim hate and sentiments, who are not afraid to show their disrespect" (Case 78-21).

Personal incidents could be directed at not only individuals but collective entities like Islamic schools, organisations and mosques. For instance, some schools have been publicly targeted and condemned in the media for spreading COVID-19 after a teacher tested positive (Case 61-21). Around the same time, some media also accused Muslims of spreading COVID-19 during Eid celebrations (Cases 54-21 and 80-21), portraying Muslims as a new form of threat at the time of heightened anxiety about the virus.

Generic cases seemed to take new forms and sometimes led to personal intimidation.

In the second wave of COVID-19 in Melbourne in July-August 2020, some media pointed to an Islamic college as the reason for the outbreak by titling the new cluster with the school's name (Case 27-20). In fact, the school was reported to be closed seven weeks before the outbreak and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) explained that 95% of the coronavirus cases at the time were spread at certain hotels where returning overseas passengers were accommodated (Yoldas, 2020).

Community leaders also expressed the Muslim community's frustration about the media spreading "hate and lies and misinformation" (Bosely, 2020), which contributed to the stigmatisation of Muslims as irresponsible and uncontrollable people, rule breakers and a threat to the entire society, all of which increased negative attitude towards Muslims (Case 54-21).

Social panic about Muslims, which was orchestrated by some media, was observed in some incidents of personal vilification reported to the Register, demonstrating a similar type of media bias that Muslims choose not to follow COVID restrictions and rules, thereby putting the entire society in danger. For example, a Muslim woman was rudely chided for not wearing her mask properly. When another Muslim woman interfered and asked the perpetrators to be polite, she faced hateful and xenophobic comments, which clearly indicated the perpetrator's attitude was not only related to improperly wearing a facemask.

Social panic about Muslims, which was orchestrated by some media, was observed in some incidents of personal vilification reported to the Register, demonstrating a similar type of media bias that Muslims choose not to follow COVID restrictions and rules, thereby putting the entire society in danger.

> *…An old white couple were raising their voice at a woman in a scarf for having her mask on halfway. As she was alone, I told them that they cannot speak to her in that manner and have no right to police her actions. This angered them and they began yelling "go to hell" and "go back to where you came from.* (Case 60-21)

The Muslim bystander who acted to defend the victim thereby drawing attention and abuse onto herself wished to be "tougher and be able to deal with them in a way which will really get them to feel like they cannot feel entitled to speak to anyone like that" (Case 60-21).

Personal and generic incidents by year

	2014-15	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21
Personal	77%	72%	85%	68%
Generic	23%	28%	15%	33%

2.2. Incident Type

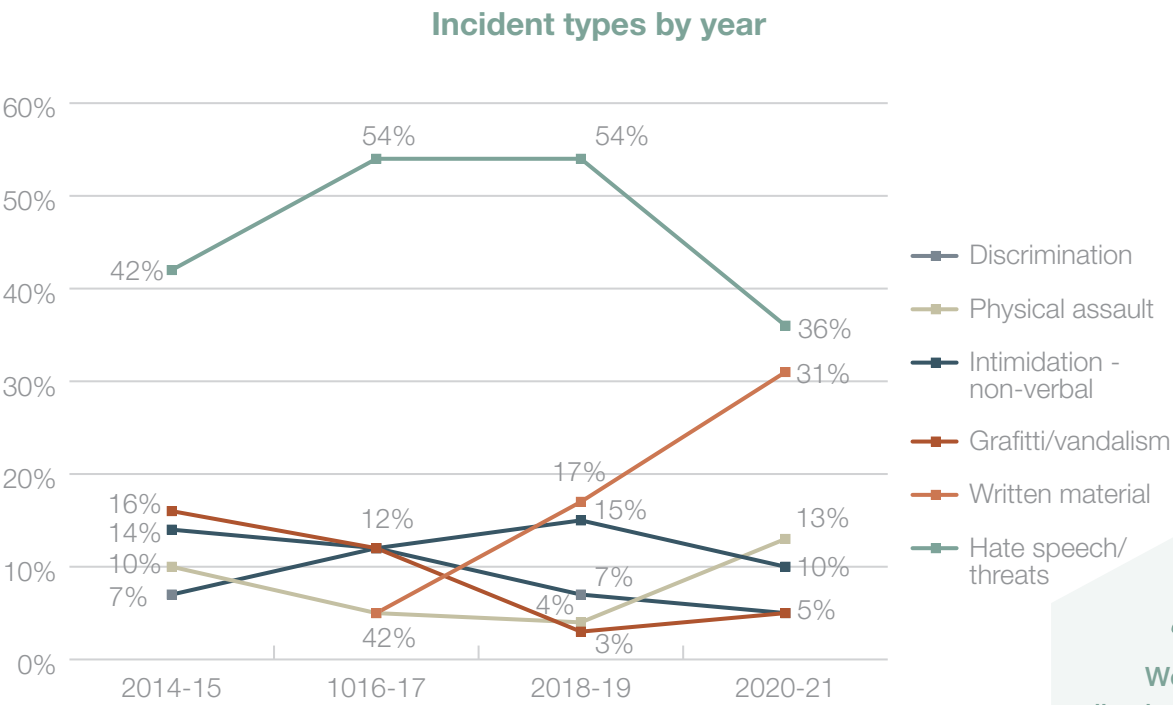For 2014-2021, verbal intimidation was the most usual form of abuse (45%, n=235), followed by graffiti and vandalism (12%, n=55), discrimination by authorities in official buildings, workplaces and schools (10%, n=51), written material (9%), n=44), physical assault (8%, n =41), multiple incident types in one case (8%, n= 42), non-verbal intimidation (6%, n=42) and other (2%, n=8).

There was a significant increase in verbal intimidation from 34% (n=42) in 2014-15 to 54% (n=108) in 2016-17, then reducing to 35% (n=14) in 2020-21. Additionally, there was a significant increase in discrimination from 5% (n=10) in 2016-17 to 14% (n=19) in 2018-19 and 30% (n=12) in 2020-21, while there was a significant decrease in written material from 13% (n=16) to 5% (n=2) in 2020-21.

Incident types by year

Legend:
- Discrimination
- Physical assault
- Intimidation - non-verbal
- Grafitti/vandalism
- Written material
- Hate speech/ threats

Chart data points:
- 60%, 50%, 40%, 30%, 20%, 10%, 0%
- Years: 2014-15, 1016-17, 2018-19, 2020-21
- 42%, 54%, 54%, 36%
- 16%, 14%, 10%, 7%
- 12%
- 17%, 15%, 13%
- 42%, 4%, 3%, 7%
- 31%, 10%, 5%

Case 64-21

Case 33-21

some states, they can be quite active in other states. Because NRVE groups tend to be fragmented and often splinter into other groups, it would be inaccurate to assess them strictly as one particular group active in a suburb or state.

There has been some prolific stickering activity by NRVE aligned groups in various parts of Sydney and Wollongong as well. These incidents of stickering have been taken seriously by the NSW Police Force and a full investigation started, including forensic examination of the stickers to identify the offenders.[1]

Islamophobic discrimination occurs in a variety of forms including discrimination in the workplace by supervisors, managers or colleagues, discrimination at schools and universities by the administration or teaching staff and discrimination at official buildings by official staff. Workplace discrimination cases have been reported to the Register, especially in the last two years with the start of victim advocacy services by the Register. More discrimination cases are expected to be reported as a result of the legal protection and tangible outcomes of reporting workplace discrimination based on religion. Although multilingual health services are available to give equal access to all patients in Australia, one employee was fired from a pathology centre because of speaking with a patient in Arabic (Case 73-21). The victim was employed as a casual collector at a pathology centre. One day, the victim responded in Arabic to a patient who was speaking to her in that language. Her colleague with her at the time said to the patient in an aggressive tone "Excuse me, no one speaks Arabic; we all understand English here." Later this day, one of the senior pathologists advised her not to speak in Arabic with patients in the future. Following this, the victim was rostered for normal hours; however, in the week of her dismissal, her hours reduced dramatically. Next, a senior pathologist took her aside to tell her she would be dismissed. The reasons given were because "colleagues had complained about her speaking Arabic." She was unaware that she was not allowed to speak Arabic to patients. The senior pathologist added there were also complaints that she was a "rough" collector. Although she wanted to know when and where this occurred, the senior pathologist was unable to provide details. This alleged case of workplace discrimination broke the victim's confidence to apply for another job. Anticipating she may experience racism elsewhere, she has been suffering from anxiety significantly since the incident (Case 73-21).

Despite being perceived as less dangerous, some written material like neo-Nazi stickers were concerning since they openly propagated and publicised various neo-Nazi groups who are listed as terrorist groups in other countries. Stickers like "No Islamic takeover" and "White pride worldwide" by Combat-18 have been consistently reported to the Register since 2014. These reports mostly occurred in the suburbs of a particular city (Cases 64-21, 30-20 and 33-21). One reporter noted the frequency of these stickers:

> *Combat 18 stickers are regularly being placed around my suburb. I remove them but they always come back eventually. Text reads "no Islamic takeover" with Combat 18 contact detail. Another design features a fly and reads "Immigrants: spreading disease with the greatest of ease." (Case 35-21)*

Combat 18 is known as a neo-Nazi network, whose armed branch has been implicated in violent actions, including murder and bombings. It is listed on the Canadian government's official countering terrorism site and banned in Germany (Public Safety Canada, n.d.). The Combat 18 group is addressed in Australia under the Nationalist Racist Violent Extremist (NRVE) groups. Although they may be at a low ebb of activity in

⚠ Workplace discrimination cases have been reported to the Register, especially in the last two years with the start of victim advocacy services by the Register.

📢 Although multilingual health services are available to give equal access to all patients in Australia, one employee was fired from a pathology centre because of speaking with a patient in Arabic (Case 73-21).

[1] All hate crime incidents are monitored by the Engagement & Hate Crime Unit.

In another case, the victim was initially offered a position before an official job application but was then clearly discriminated against after she sent her resume that included a photo of her wearing the hijab (Case 59-21).

> *…The job was basically mine until I shared my resume (this features a photograph of me wearing a hijab). She didn't say much but a week later I messaged her and she told me she couldn't promise me anything and to keep searching for a job. The next day she called me and started questioning if I knew what she sold and was only "thinking" about it because I was a Muslim and she wasn't sure how I would feel selling the goods her company sold. Then she started questioning me on how I dress, and if I dressed modestly/daggy. She went on to tell me she didn't know how her clients would react to "dealing with someone like me" and doesn't think they would take it too well. She went on to mention she is only asking this as she works in the fashion industry and doesn't think it will be a good look.*

The victim's experience and qualifications, which initially brought her a job offer by the employer, meant nothing and this situation left the victim feeling helpless and hopeless:

> *If someone who knows me and has been communicating with me and offers me a job and then takes it back because of how I dress - it actually makes me feel helpless...what hope is there for me to ever find another job.* (Case 59-21)

Some reports highlighted alleged negligence by authorities. For example, one reporter shared a news report about the non-halal food provided for Muslim detainees who were evacuated from Nauru and Papua New Guinea and located in a hotel in Brisbane for more than a year (Case 26-20). Multiple news reports were also shared about the disproportional COVID policing between the western and northern suburbs of Sydney, and added COVID restrictions targeting Sydney's Muslim populated areas like south west (Case 53-21). Even the mayors from those areas expressed feelings of hurt in their communities, for being "treated differently than the rest of Sydney" (Gregoire, 2021).
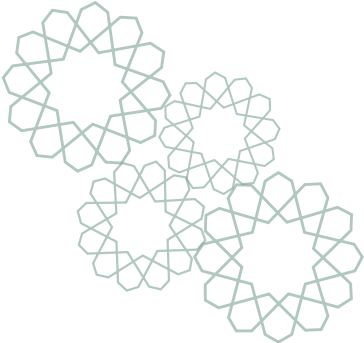
2.3. Physical Severity Levels

Physical severity was scaled according to the level of harm/damage. For further analysis, the detailed categories were reduced to three main categories indicating the incident category.

Between 2014 and 2021, verbal insults were by far the most usual form of abuse (51%, n=249). This was followed by physical attacks without violence (10%, n=49), verbal threats (10%, n=48) and physical attacks with mild to moderate damage (9%, n=44).

Verbal insults fluctuated during the reporting period. Verbal harassment increased significantly from 6% (n=12) in 2016-17 to 15% (n=20) in 2018-19 then decreased to 8% (n=2) in 2020-21, while non-physical intimidation increased from 2% (n=3) in 2014-15 to 19% (n=5) in 2020-21. Non-violent physical attacks decreased significantly from 18% (n=23) in 2014-15 to 4% (n=1) in 2020-21, with a similar decrease exhibited for a mild to moderate physical attack.

The absence of trigger events and attacks related to ISIS terrorism since 2018 might have influenced the decrease in physical attacks. In contrast, online copycat attacks in

Between 2014 and 2021, verbal insults were by far the most usual form of abuse (51%). This was followed by physical attacks without violence (10%), verbal threats (10%) and physical attacks with mild to moderate damage (9%).

The increase in mosque attacks was not limited to property damage. Mosque attendees who were hyper-visible were also targeted by anti-Muslim perpetrators.

Incident Categories	Harm/Damage Level	Description
Low level (1): Verbal/non-verbal	Level 1	Incidents with verbal hate
	Level 2	Dangerous threats like rape and death
	Level 3	Non-physical intimidation (i.e. noticeable staring, stalking and hand gestures)
High level (3): Physical harassment	Level 4	Non-severe physical attacks against people (i.e. dodged attacks, spitting)
	Level 5	Mild physical attacks against people (i.e. bleeding, bruises)
	Level 6	Severe physical attacks against people (i.e. permanent damage, hospitalisation)
Medium level (2): Property damage	Level 7	Non-severe damage (i.e. graffiti, things thrown, not much damage)
	Level 8	Mild damage (i.e. things thrown, temporary damage, scratches, broken windows)
	Level 9	Severe, permanent and/or costly damage (i.e. burning a mosque or vandalising a workplace and damaging it beyond routine maintenance)

physical circumstances in the aftermath of the Christchurch attacks by far-right wing groups was followed by a slight increase in mosque attacks of any level recorded under property damage (increase from 14% in 2016-17 to 35% in 2020-21).
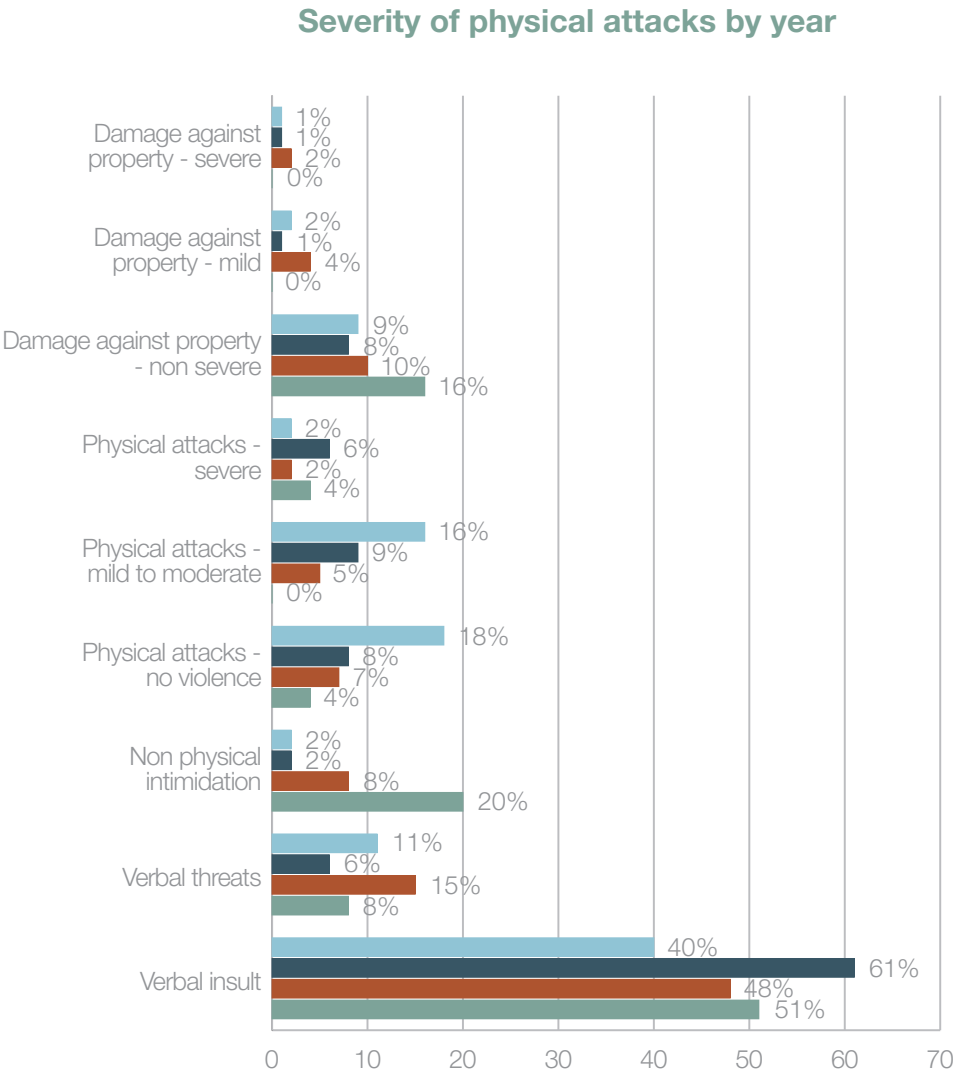
The increase in mosque attacks was not limited to property damage. Mosque attendees who are hyper-visible were also targeted by anti-Muslim perpetrators.

After praying tarawih, which is a voluntary prayer performed in Ramadan and mostly in congregation as the last prayer of the day, five men stayed back and continued talking. Meanwhile, two mosque attendees walked towards their car in a nearby street and stood there for a short chat. Both were attacked in the dark by an attacker, who quickly brought two more perpetrators to physically attack the Muslim men. One victim had a laceration on his forehead from the broken glass bottle and the other was hit several times on his head. One of them managed to run to the mosque to ask for help, but when the five men in the mosque arrived, the attackers had already fled (Case 41-21).

The police investigated and took the victim's jacket for forensic checks. Based on the description from the mosque security and attendees (including the victims), the attackers might be the same persons who were initially hovering around the mosque's parking area around prayer time. The attack on two Muslim men near the mosque meant a threat for the entire mosque community; therefore, the reporter stated "this is a reminder for all of us to be always vigilant" (Case 41-21).

Attendees of different mosques also experienced varying levels of harassment. For instance, a man walking home after isha prayer around 8.20pm was verbally harassed by the driver of a ute passing by "the guy had his head out the window and yelled get
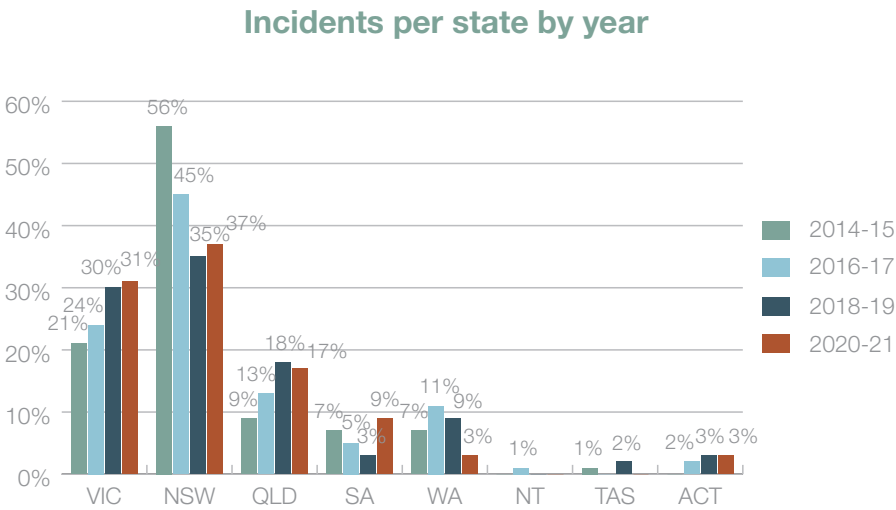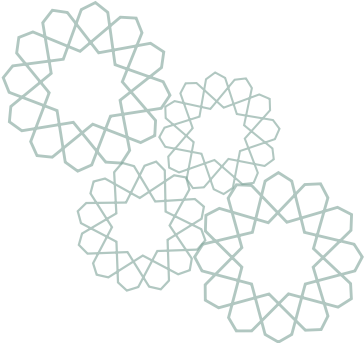
Severity of physical attacks by year

Damage against property - severe: 1%, 1%, 2%, 0%

Damage against property - mild: 2%, 1%, 4%, 0%

Damage against property - non severe: 9%, 8%, 10%, 16%

Physical attacks - severe: 2%, 6%, 2%, 4%

Physical attacks - mild to moderate: 16%, 9%, 5%, 0%

Physical attacks - no violence: 18%, 8%, 7%, 4%

Non physical intimidation: 2%, 2%, 8%, 20%

Verbal threats: 11%, 6%, 15%, 8%

Verbal insult: 40%, 61%, 48%, 51%

Legend: 2014-15, 2016-17, 2018-19, 2020-21

(x-axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70)

Incidents per state by year

VIC: 21%, 24%, 30%, 31%
NSW: 56%, 45%, 35%, 37%
QLD: 9%, 13%, 18%, 17%
SA: 7%, 5%, 3%, 9%
WA: 7%, 11%, 9%, 3%
NT: 1%
TAS: 1%, 1%, 2%
ACT: 2%, 3%, 3%

Legend: 2014-15, 2016-17, 2018-19, 2020-21

(y-axis: 0%, 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%)

---

f… you dog," disregarding the CCTV camera in operation at the time of the incident.

The male victim expressed his "fear of going out at night after 8pm" (Case 36-21). Apparently, mosques made Muslim men as visible as Muslim women with hijab and caused hypervigilance among Muslim men as well, which sometimes limited their freedom and mobility similar to the experiences of female victims of Islamophobia.

3. LOCATION

3.1. State

Most cases of Islamophobia occurred in NSW (45%, n=204), Victoria (25%, n=115) and Queensland (14%, n=62). Minor differences emerged intra state in relation to the proportion of incidents occurring between 2014 and 2019. The exception was NSW where there was a significant decrease from 56% (n=68) in 2014-15 to 37% (n=13) in 2020-21.

Incidents in guarded areas were constantly high, indicating that security personnel or surveillance cameras could not provide safety for citizens suffering from anti-Muslim harassment. From 2014 to 2021, 57% of incidents occurred in a guarded area.
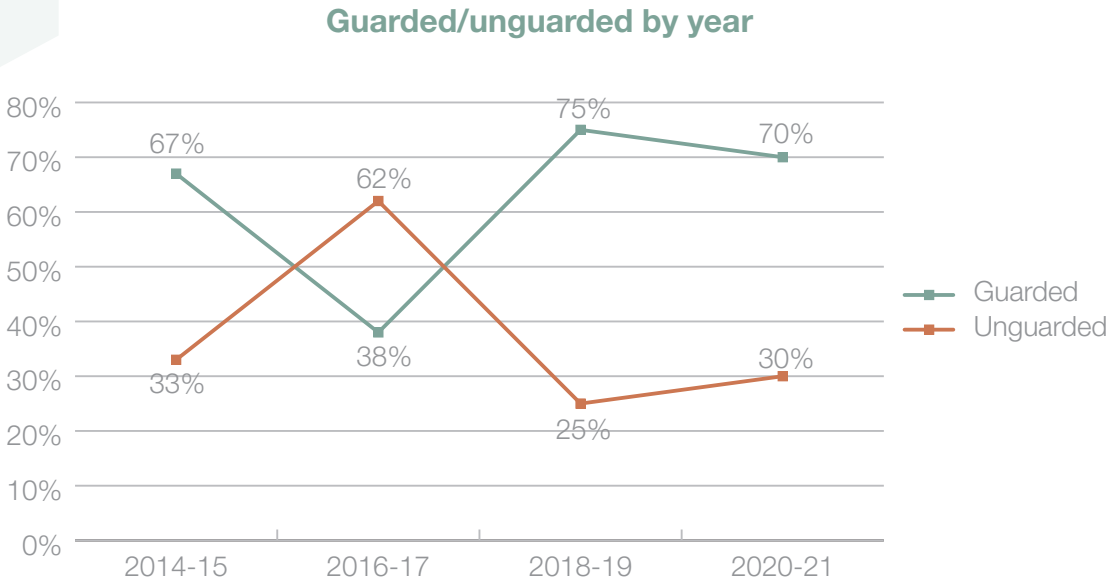
Due to the lockdowns and pandemic restrictions like physical distancing, incidents in public transport (4%), official buildings (4%) and schools and universities (8%) significantly dropped while not a single case was reported in leisure centres, but incidents around the home and neighbourhood slightly increased (8%).
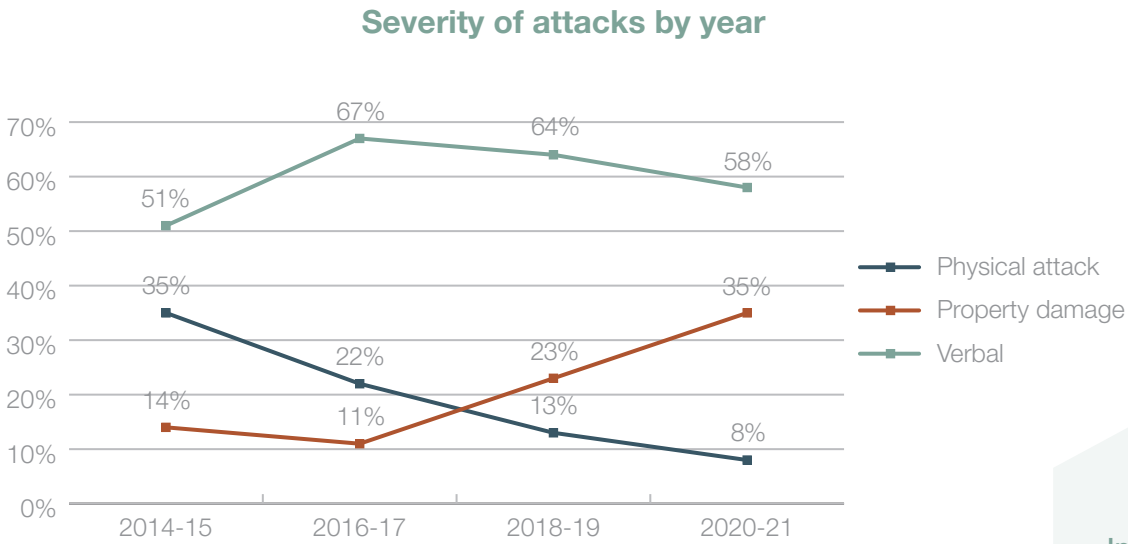
3.2. Guarded/Unguarded

Locations were categorised depending on their safety. Guarded areas were known to have people in proximity most hours of the day, such as police officers, security, trackwork personnel, surveillance cameras and other workers or officials. Unguarded areas included less secure places such as parks, roads, alleyways and playgrounds.

Incidents in guarded areas were constantly high, indicating that security personnel or surveillance cameras could not provide safety for citizens suffering from anti-Muslim harassment. From 2014 to 2021, 57% (n=239) of incidents occurred in a guarded area.
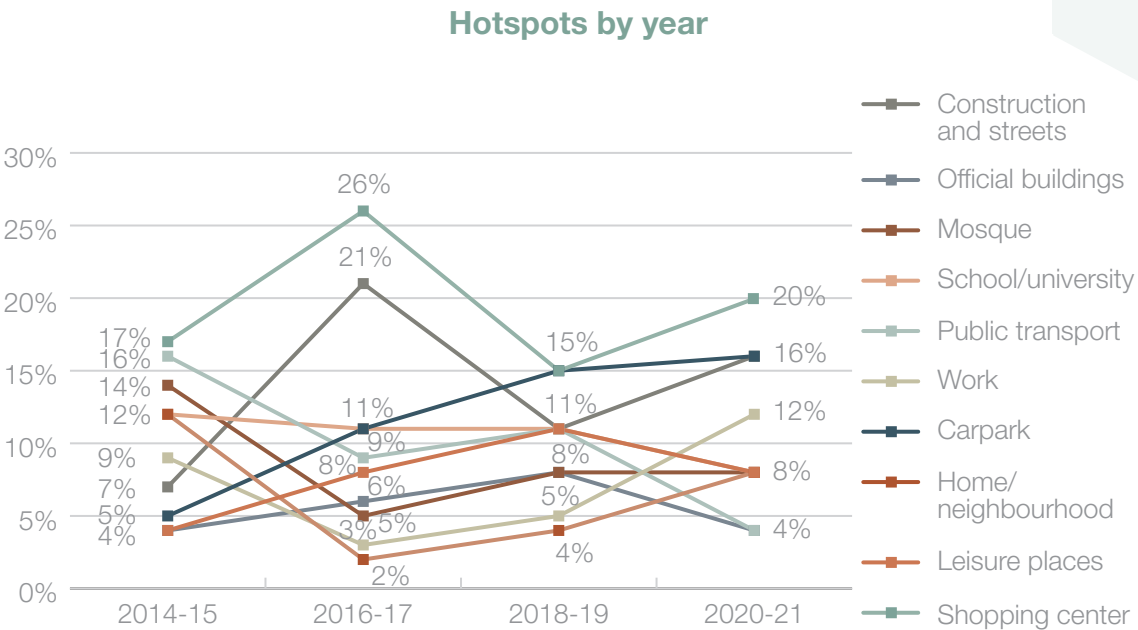
This trend was concerningly high (70% and 75%) in 2018 to 2021 and emphasised the ineffectiveness of security systems to prevent Islamophobia.

Guarded/unguarded by year

Guarded: 67% (2014-15), 38% (2016-17), 75% (2018-19), 70% (2020-21)

Unguarded: 33% (2014-15), 62% (2016-17), 25% (2018-19), 30% (2020-21)

Legend: Guarded, Unguarded

(y-axis: 0%, 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%)

Severity of attacks by year

3.3. Hotspots

The most-frequented places were categorised as hotspots. From 2014-2021, the most common hotspots were shopping centres (20%, n=92), construction sites and streets (14%, n=68), public transport (11%, n=53) car parks (11%, n=52) and schools or universities (11%, n=51).

Hotspots by year

Cases in car parks increased gradually over time, incidents in shopping centres always ranged from 20%-25% and the cases of discrimination at workplaces increased significantly in 2020-21 when the Register started to provide advocacy services. The characteristics of COVID-19 were reflected in the hotspots. Due to the lockdowns and pandemic restrictions like physical distancing, incidents in public transport (4%), official buildings (4%) and schools and universities (8%) significantly dropped while not a single case was reported in leisure centres, but incidents around the home and neighbourhood slightly increased (8%).

Incidents slightly increased in multiculturally more diverse suburbs reaching 50% over time without displaying any significant differences in the nature and type of incidents between settings.

In three-quarters of cases (72%), the victim and perpetrator were unaccompanied.

Construction sites and streets were the second-most common hotspot. People were harassed on the streets as drivers and pedestrians, accounting for around 16% of cases during the COVID-19 period. Standing on the road, two men forced a Muslim driver to slow down and accused her of not fully stopping at the stop sign. The reporter continued:

> *I was very baffled as there is no traffic from the right but I realised maybe I should have allowed all four wheels to stop. My exact words back were 'my apologies, I should absolutely take more care for the greater good of our community.' They were in shock, I thanked them and said have a good day. As I was pulling out the burly man said 'what would Allah think, you guys are a disgrace.' I said some harsh things back and drove off.* (Case 12-20)

The hypervigilance and adaptability of the victims were worth noting. When the two men stopped her, she was sufficiently aware to first lock her doors and put her windows down only a little. Also, although being polite and understanding, she could easily change her tone in response to the rude Islamophobic comments of the perpetrators.

Not all victims were fortunate enough to be safe in their vehicles. Driving perpetrators were a serious threat for pedestrian victims. A driver in a Muslim populated suburb used his vehicle to harass a Muslim pedestrian crossing the road:

> *A man in a van semi-stopped, causing me to think it's safe to keep walking, but the driver didn't make a full stop. He was driving a van and made it drive forward towards me, intimidating me that he was going to run me over or even physically hit me with his vehicle.*
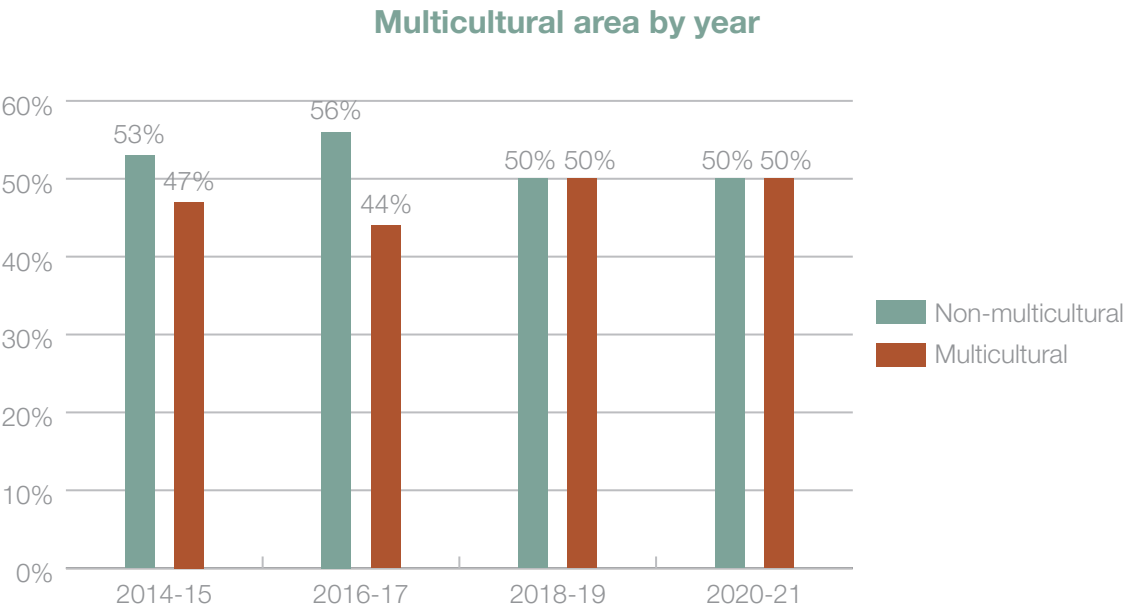
When the victim confronted the driver asking why he was accelerating his car towards her, the perpetrator blatantly replied it was because she is a Muslim and wears a hijab and a face covering (Case 34-21).

3.4. Multiculturally Diverse/Less Diverse Locations

Incidents slightly increased in multiculturally more diverse suburbs reaching 50% over time without displaying any significant differences in the nature and type of incidents between settings.

While a Muslim woman was publicly intimidated in one of the busiest streets of a Muslim populated suburb in Sydney, another woman was similarly abused in a holiday suburb among people whose encounter with a woman wearing the hijab would be occasional.

> *I was walking with my elderly father in a shopping centre at [holiday site]; we were on holiday. A solitary white Australian male was walking in our direction. When we were close enough to hear, he started verbally muttering statements against my veil and anti-Muslim hate slogans from which towel head was the least offensive of his hate speech. He also was angry and red in the face as he passed us by. It was just after lunch, which meant there were people around but none who were in earshot or likely to be witnesses.* (Case 79-21)

Multicultural area by year

Company of the victim

Not only verbal harassment but also the indifference of surrounding people significantly affected the victim's wellbeing as she expected that women wearing the hijab would be normalised in public through the frequency of advertising which included hijab wearing women. She was disappointed to see the opposite in a holiday town.

> *It seems we are still a long way from a cohesive society.* (Case 79-21).

This experience taught the victim to be hypervigilant in local towns where no diversity and inclusiveness was present despite being "one of many popular holiday destinations for multicultural and ethnic Australians (Case 79-21).

Social context by year

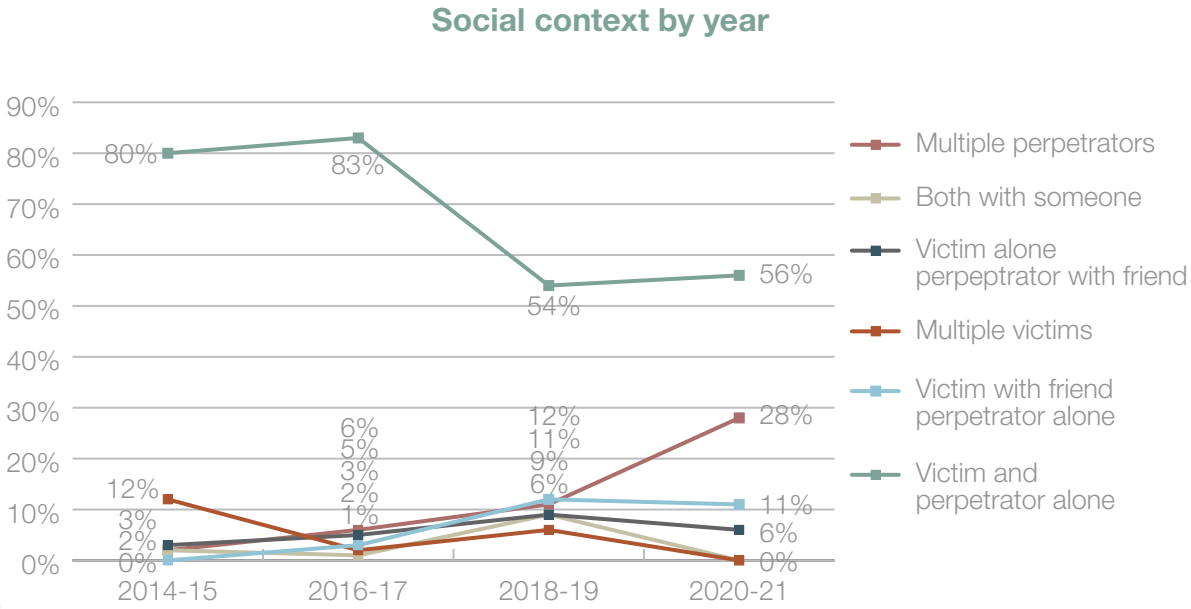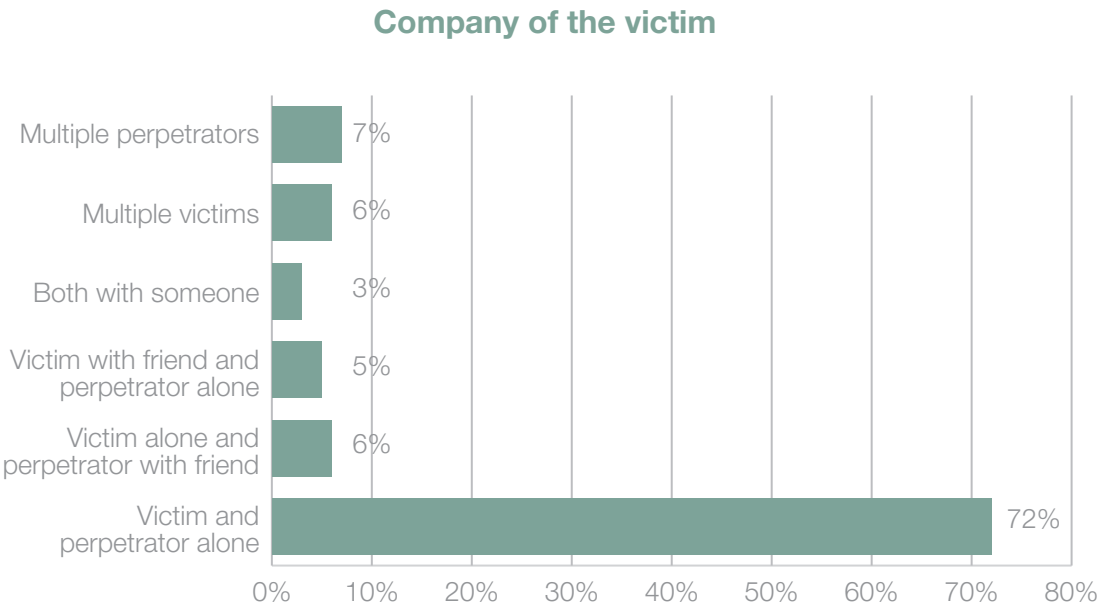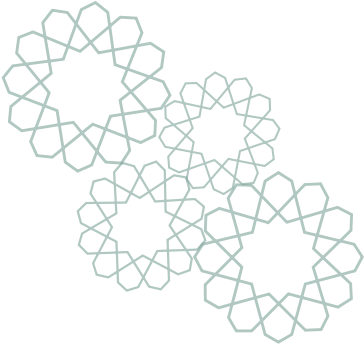# 4. SOCIAL CONTEXT AND THIRD PARTIES

4.1. Company of the Victim

In three-quarters of cases (72%, n=224), the victim and perpetrator were unaccompanied. In 6% (n=17) of cases the victim was alone and the perpetrator was with a friend, while in 6% of cases there were multiple victims and perpetrators.

Multiple perpetrators increased from 11% in 2018-19 to 28% in 2020-21. The group dynamics gave young female (Case 70-21) and male perpetrators (Case 74-21) courage to harass adult age groups. For instance, an adult Muslim woman with her father was verbally harassed by a group of young perpetrators in the car park of a shopping centre:

> *A group of young men drove past me and started to taunt me by saying Allahu Akbar in a disrespectful way and then told me to f… off.* (Case 74-21)

Being surrounded by people was anecdotally addressed in the reports through the victim's expression of disappointment to their indifference.

Even a gentle warning by authorities in such cases would inhibit perpetrators from harassing victims in stores, shops and shopping centres where Islamophobic incidents peak.
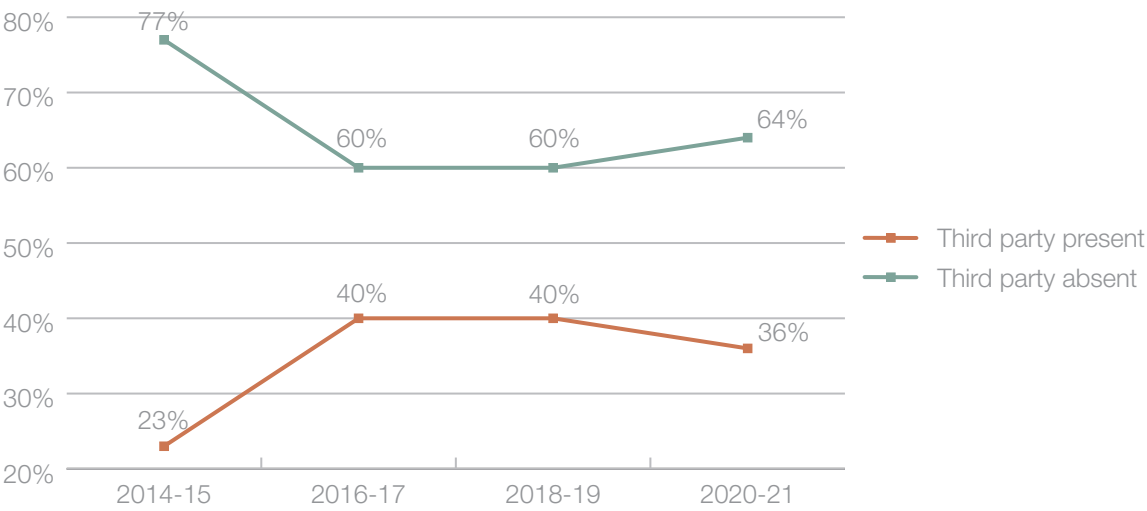
4.2. Third Parties

Third parties consisted of members of the public (categorised as ordinary people in graphs) and security guards, managers (categorised as formal bystanders in graphs) and police officers. Some reporters also mentioned being surrounded by people or in a crowd at the time of the incident. From the list of hotspots, one can also assume the majority of the incidents occurred in places where other people were present. Surrounding people were not taken into consideration unless they took time to stop and observe what was happening. Since the role of the police is slightly different, their responses were coded separately to third party responses.

There was a general decrease in third parties siding with the victim from 64% (n =14) in 2014-15 to 25% (n=2), while third parties observing but not becoming involved increased during the period from 9% (n=2) in 2014-15 to 63% (n=5) in 2020-21.

Third party present by year

- Third party present
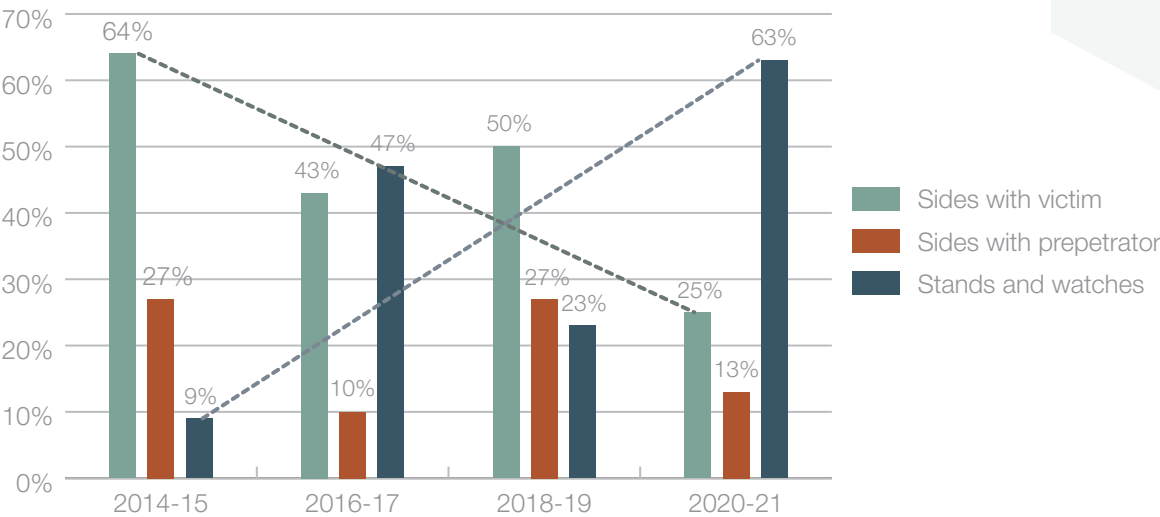- Third party absent

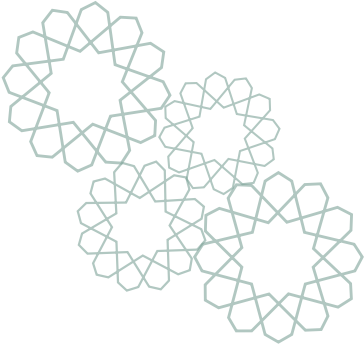## Third-party (ordinary) involvement

In 38% (n=50) of cases, third parties took the side of the victim, 20% (n=27) walked on by, 17% (n=22) watched while 14% (n=19) took side of the perpetrator.

There was a general trend downwards in ordinary third parties siding with the victim, while there was also a slight decline in siding with the perpetrator. Those choosing to walk on by remained fairly steady over the period except for 2018-19 where there was a significant increase in those walking by, while stopping and observing fluctuated over the period of review. The "walked on by" category was not captured in 2016-17.

Third party response by year

- Sides with victim
- Sides with prepetrator
- Stands and watches

Being surrounded by people was anecdotally addressed in the reports through the victim's expression of disappointment to their indifference. For instance, when a woman with three young children was harassed by teenage girls, she observed "there were of course people around and as usual nobody did anything." It disturbed her so much that she could not respond to the polite lady who complimented her on her outerwear (Case 70-21). A similar experience, feeling left alone among the crowd at midday, "mentally affected" another victim (Case 79-21).

Being surrounded by people was anecdotally addressed in the reports through the victim's expression of disappointment to their indifference.

During the pandemic, multiple articles were shared that underlined one dominant theme: over-policing of migrant and Muslim communities during the COVID-19 restrictions in 2020-21.
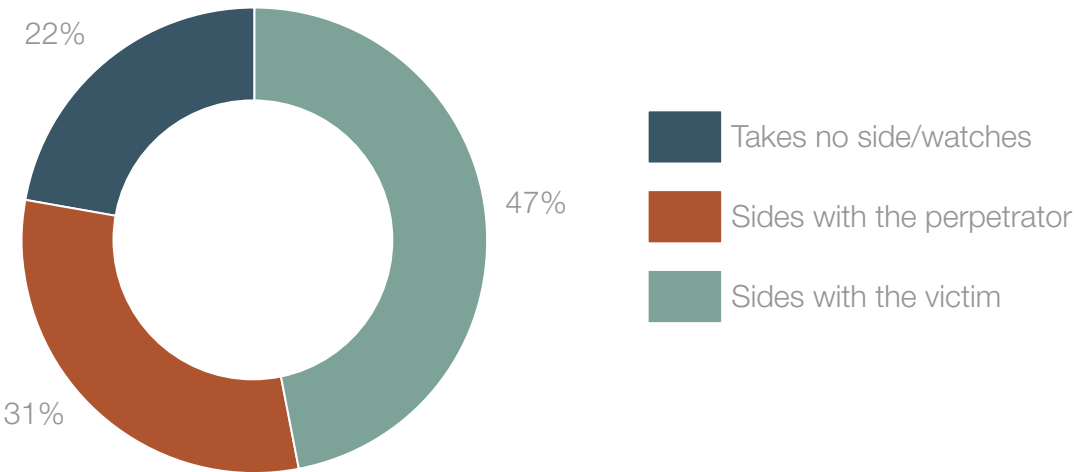
A university student coming from sport also noted that when she was called a terrorist, sworn at and spat on in the bus, that no action was taken by any of the other passengers (Case 38-21). She expressed her general frustration and also mentioned that she reported "Islamophobic things to police once or twice but no one does anything [and] at this point, I am just used to it" (Case 38-21).

In another case, the reporter was satisfied with the surrounding people's support but unhappy with the store manager's indifference:

> *Thankfully, the onlookers gave me support and one staff member in particular was amazingly helpful and calming. However, the store manager didn't seem to be bothered about taking seriously the fact that a woman with young children was made to feel so unsafe by another customer and didn't see a need to remove the man from the store.* (Case 15-20)

Even a gentle warning by authoritiesin such cases would inhibit perpetrators from harassing victims in stores, shops and shopping centres where Islamophobic incidents peak.

Formal third party response

- Takes no side/watches
- Sides with the perpetrator
- Sides with the victim

Third-party (formal) involvement

A formal third party refers to security guards and managers. In 47% (n=15) of cases where a formal third party was involved they took the side of the victim and in 31% of cases (n=10) they took the side of the perpetrator.

There was a general trend downwards in relation to formal third-party involvement siding with the victim between 2014 and 2021. The trend of siding with the perpetrator increased slightly (not significantly) due to the jump in those siding with the perpetrator in 2018-19.
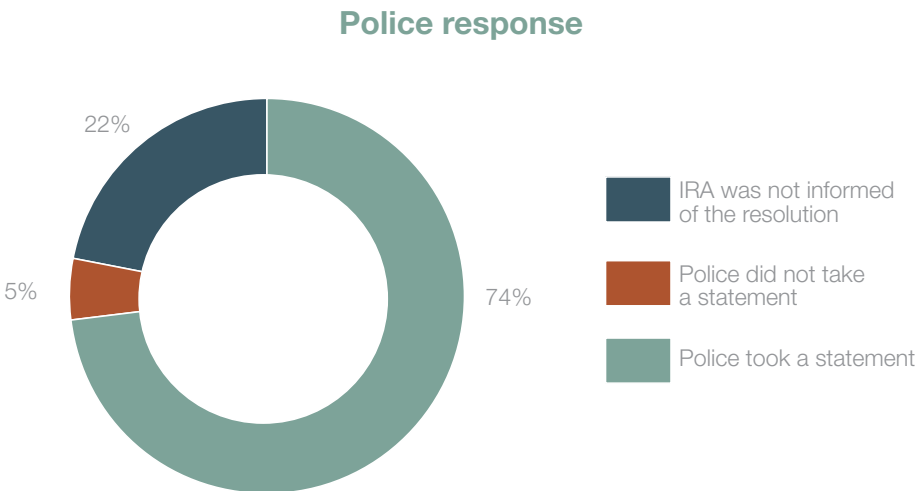
Police involvement

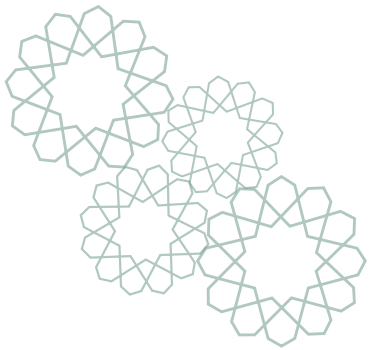Police responses, based on what was reported to the Register by the reporter, were categorised as:

1. Police took a statement from the reporter.

2. Police did not take a statement due to not characterising the incident as a crime or because of insufficient evidence.

3. Resolution unknown since the reporter did not inform the Register about the outcome after reporting to the police.

4. The reporter's calls are not returned or no explanation is given to the reporter for not taking a statement.

5. Police behaviours that may indicate potential bias towards the reporter, e.g. police making rude remarks towards the reporter, questioning the report's integrity without basis, or a seeming lack of concern about the report

The incident was reported to police in 30% of the cases (n=112), which did not change between 2014-15 and 2018-19. No police involvement at the time of the incident was mentioned in 2020-21; however, 18% (n=7) of physical cases were reported to the police in 2020-21.

Three-quarters (74%, n=48) of police were responsive to the victim's complaint (i.e. taking the reporter's statement), and in most of the remaining cases (22%, n=14) the Register was not informed of the details or results of reporting to the police. In 5% of cases (n=3), the police explained that there was a lack of sufficient evidence or police had not characterised the incident as a crime, while there were only a few cases in which the police questioned the integrity of the incident, resulting in the reporter feeling uncomfortable and unheard. No significant difference emerged between years in the police response.

Police response

22%

5%

74%

IRA was not informed of the resolution

Police did not take a statement

Police took a statement

Only a few harassment cases were reported to the police in 2020-21. For example, an incident was reported to the Register where a pedestrian crossing the street felt threatened that she would be run over with the van as the driver drove the van towards her aggressively while making insulting comments about her faith and religious dress. The victim told the Register that she reported the case to the police who she says asked her to come into the station to make a statement and that she could take this to court (Case 34-21).

The incident was reported to police in 30% of the cases.

During the pandemic, multiple articles were shared that underlined one dominant theme: over-policing of migrant and Muslim communities during the COVID-19 restrictions in 2020-21.

During the pandemic, multiple articles were shared that underlined one dominant theme: over-policing of migrant and Muslim communities during the COVID-19 restrictions in 2020-21. A few news reports shared with the Register, which critiqued the deployment of 100 police officers to enforce restrictions in Western Sydney while easing restrictions for beaches and parks in inner Sydney. Criticism for double standard policing was expressed by the western suburbs' mayors and MPs, community leaders and the local residents (Kwan, 2021). The news articles expressing such criticism were also shared on a WhatsApp group by concerned Muslims citizens and parents who felt particularly targeted (Case 53-21a). Greens Senator Mehreen Faruqi echoed their sentiments on social media by stating "This is a terrible turn of events. Over-policing multicultural communities is a recipe for disaster. The mounted police were never called into Avalon or Westfield Bondi" (Case 53-21d). The racial justice organisation Democracy in Colour also described the operation as "thinly veiled racism" (Murphy, 2021).

The Minister for Industrial Relations of Australia Tony Burke, who was the federal Labour MP for the western Sydney electorate of Watson during the time, also critiqued the strict restrictions in western Sydney in contrast to the lenient approach in inner Sydney towards those relaxing on the beach without a mask. "It's impossible to look at that and not say it isn't one rule in my part of Sydney and a completely different rule on the coast. I'm fine with the health advice. I just…fail to work out how a park in western or south-western Sydney is incredibly dangerous and a park next to the water or a beach is not" (Visontay, 2021).

Another article referred "COVID policing in terms of overreach and brutality" (Gregoire, 2021) occurring with the deployment of 500 police officers in Victoria in July 2020 to ensure the compliance of 3,000 Melbourne public housing tower residents. Most of this population were poor migrant families facing a hard lockdown without any warning (Case 53-21b). An article also mentioned the "dramatic" arrest of Rashay's restaurant co-founder owner for not strictly following the facemask rules in their offices in Sydney's South-West (Case 53-21c) (Over60, 2021).
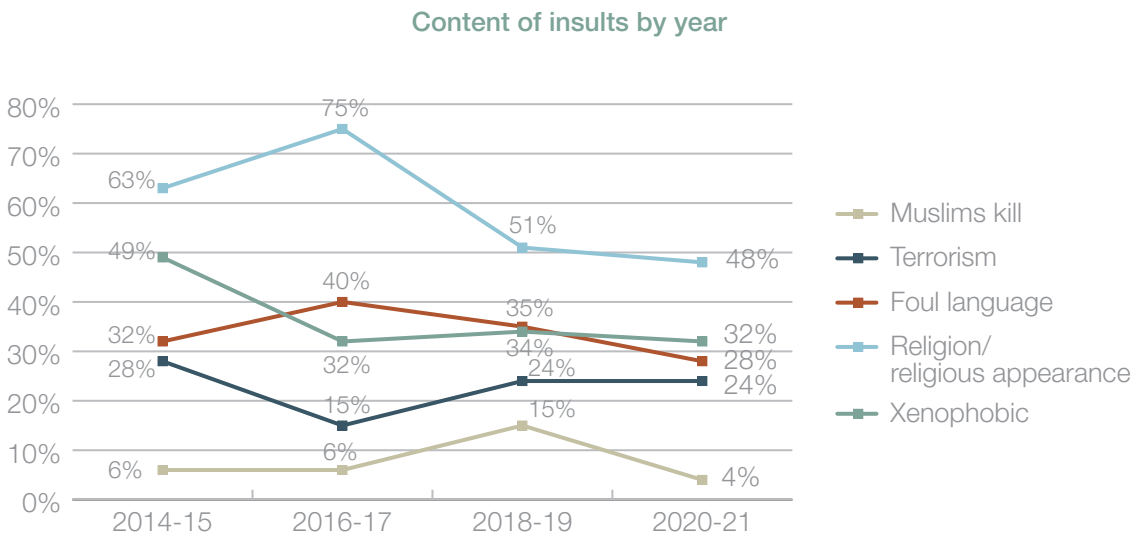
5. CONTENT AND INTENSITY OF INSULTS

5.1. Insult Types

The most usual form of insult was to insult the religion and religious appearance of the victim (66%, n=272), followed by xenophobic comments for Muslims to leave the country (37%, n=156) and foul language (36%, n=151). In comparison, association with terrorism (21%, n=89) was relatively low, as was the assumption that Muslims kill people (8%, n=33). Surprisingly, association with terrorism was the lowest (15%) reference in Islamophobic attacks, whereas religious appearance was the most problematised aspect (75%) in 2016-17 when ISIS attacks were topical. It is possible that the constant conflation of Muslims and Islam with terrorism in the media and in public discourse might have helped attackers equate religious appearance with terrorism. As addressed in the gender dynamics chapter, male victims were associated with terrorism and female victims were harassed by insulting their religious appearance and religion. Since three-quarters of victims were female, the higher number of cases of insulting religion/religious appearance rather than association with terrorism could be expected

A woman perpetrator behind the victim at a market expressed a xenophobic attitude and insulted the victim's religious attire when asking her to move, by calling the victim "you bloody foreigner" and commenting that she should "dress like everyone else" (Case 13-20). Although no apparent danger or risk was involved, the verbal harassment was still impactful. Feeling sad and insecure, the victim expressed that she would "now worry about going shopping alone."

There was a significant decrease in xenophobic comments from 49% (n=53) in 2014-15 to 32% (n=8) in 2020-21. There was also a significant decrease in comments about religion/religious appearance from 75% (n=142) in 2016-17 to 48% (n=12) in 2020-21 probably because Muslims were less visible in public during the COVID 19 lockdowns. A presumption that Muslims kill people, which portrays Muslims as an inherent threat to safety, was steady, except for a sharp increase in 2018-19.

Surprisingly, association with terrorism was the lowest (15%) reference in Islamophobic attacks, whereas religious appearance was the most problematised aspect (75%) in 2016-17 when ISIS attacks were topical.

The increase in intensity of hate is gradual and subtle. Dehumanising is mixed with a sense of repulsion and it may lead to justifying the removal of the disgusted one.

Content of insults by year

5.2. Intensity of Hate Rhetoric

The intensity of hate speech can be conveyed to the victim through the extent of the perpetrator's verbal expressions and body language during the harassment. Following the previous report, the intensity of negative emotions was assessed according to the literature on the psychology of radicalisation and violent extremism.

Studies on the psychology of violent extremism point to similar emotional pathways that start with anger and gradually intensify as feelings of contempt, dehumanisation, disgust and a desire to harm (Koomen & van der Pligt, 2016; Matsumoto et al., 2012). Contempt and dehumanisation reinforce an 'us/them' or 'superiority/inferiority' dichotomy that has no room for tolerance. Contempt and dehumanisation are "a stepping stone to legitimise extreme actions" (Broekhuis, 2016, pp. 3-4).

The increase in intensity of hate is gradual and subtle. Dehumanising is mixed with a sense of repulsion and may lead to justifying the removal of the disgusted one. Hostility (46%, n=149) was the most common form of rhetoric, followed by dehumanising the victim (21%, n=70), contempt (12%, n=39), disgust (11%, n=36) and wanting to kill (10%, n=33).
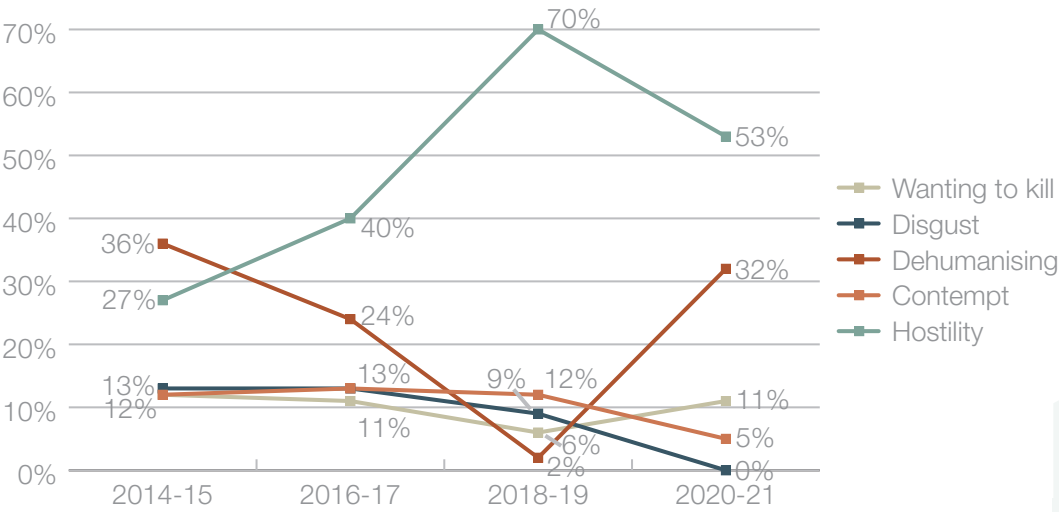
From a yearly perspective there was an increase in expression of hate from 27% (n=18) in 2014-15 to 40% (n=64) in 2016-17 to 70% (n=57) in 2018-19 and 53% (n=10) in 2020-21. Additionally, there was a corresponding decrease in dehumanising comments from 36% (n=24) in 2014-15 to 24% (n=38) in 2016-17 to 3% (n=2) in 2018-19, increasing to 32% (n=6) in 2020-21. No other differences emerged in relation to the intensity of hate rhetoric types between 2014 and 2021.

Intensity Levels - Merged	Intensity Levels - Detailed	Description
Low intensity	Hostility	The first step of hate, which indicates the perpetrator's strong level of annoyance, displeasure or hate.
Medium intensity	Contempt	A feeling of disdain towards a person or thing they perceive beneath their dignity and unworthy of respect. It is followed by dehumanising victims.
	Dehumanising	Depriving a human of any positive human qualities and seeing them as sub-humans. It leads to and is mixed with disgust.
	Disgust	A feeling of revulsion aroused by something unpleasant or offensive. A mix of dehumanising and disgust legitimises extreme levels of hatred.
High intensity	Violence/wanting to kill	This level of hate considers the possibility of harming, killing and even massacring (as suggested in the extreme Islamophobic discourse of hate).

On one occasion, the intensity of hate rhetoric was extended to delivering death threats to a Muslim women's organisation and their staff members in physical and online circumstances for a week, which led to the temporary closure of the organisation as a safety measure (Case 65-21). The threat to the CEO of the women's organisation and the organisation started after the CEO appeared on Q&A following the Taliban's takeover in Afghanistan in August 2021. She had made a mistake with some of the war veterans' names. This offended some viewers and led to the CEO receiving death

and rape threats during the following week. Although the victim was sad for her staff "who seemed rattled by it," she was not upset or regretful about her statement on Q&A, although she stated that she would be more cautious the next time: "Honestly, I would definitely have a risk mitigation strategy next time going on Q&A but it wouldn't deter me from doing it again" (Case 65-21).

Intensity of hate rhetoric by year

6. EMOTIONAL RESPONSE/ IMPACT AND REACTIONS

6.1. Emotional Response/Impact

Reporters consisted of victims, their proxies and witnesses. Emotions expressed or indicated at the time of reporting were additional information. Since 2018, reporters have been asked to pick those emotions that best expressed their state of being. Sometimes multiple responses (emotions) were expressed in one incident. Those emotions were expressed by the victims or their proxies, such as parents, partners or other close family members. Witnesses described the victims' responses or expressed their feelings at the time of reporting. Muslim witnesses reporting a generic anti-Muslim hate case can be interpreted as victims since they were also personally affected and also expressed the emotional effect of the encounter.

Overall, for 2014-2021, the most common reactions to threats or discrimination were sadness or worry (48%, n=133) and disappointment (42%, n=117) along with fear (37%, n=103) and anger (37%, n=102).
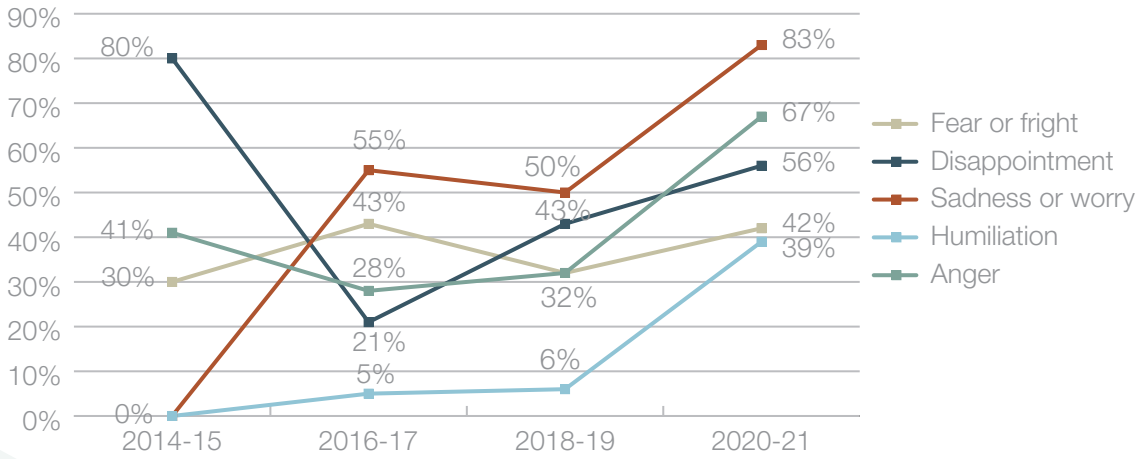
There was a significant drop in people feeling anger from 41% (n=19) in 2014-15 to 28% (n=30) in 2016-17 and 33% (n=29) in 2018-19 but increased to 67% (n=24) in 2020-21. A significant decrease in feeling disappointed, from 80% (n=37) in 2014-15 to 43% (n=38) in 2018-19 then increasing to 56% (n=20) in 2020-21, was also recorded. Being fearful or frightened remained constant in the review period.

Overall, for 2014-2021, the most common reactions to threats or discrimination were sadness or worry (48%) and disappointment (42%) along with fear (37%) and anger (37%).

Frequency and continuity of attacks impacted some people while for others they became used to such behaviour.

Frequency and continuity of attacks impacted some people while for others they became used to such behaviour. A PhD student mentioned the increasing number of incidents around his house where he felt that he "should feel most safe and secure." He expressed how shocked and helpless he felt (Case 39-21).

Emotional response/impact by year

On the contrary, a female victim, who was exposed to verbal harassment many times, normalised it by calling the verbal abuse "not a big deal" and "standard," i.e. a routine in her life, interpreting the perpetrator's abuse as "cowardly behaviour."

> *I was walking from the bus stop to a student's house for a tutoring session. I crossed through a carpark, and there was a white, overweight guy with sunglasses swearing at me. He called me a "c..nt" and said "you and all your f..king brothers and sisters need to go back to your country" and statements of this sort for the few minutes I was walking past.* (Case 56-21)

Interestingly, the male victim cited above interpreted his experience as "shocking," and that he felt "humiliated" and helpless demonstrating a vulnerable viewpoint whereas the female victim handled the situation more confidently referring to it as "not a big deal" and normalising the situation, empowering herself by interpreting the perpetrator's act as "cowardly."

Feeling victimised by authorities caused frustration to another reporter (Case 58-21). Seeing the statement on DFAT's foreign policy white paper (which was included as an attachment in the report) that "the threat to Australia from Islamist terrorism and violent extremism will remain high," the reporter questioned why "Islamic terrorism is the only stand alone religious/cultural group mentioned." The reporter found this statement problematic, especially at a time when there are no Al Qaeda or ISIS threats.

Finding such statements "very polarising," the reporter indicated the impact of frustration:

> *As a Muslim, I am so tired of having to separate my identity from 'Islamic terrorism.' For a non-Muslim, reading that statement feeds the Islamophobic rhetoric we have faced for so long.* (Case 58-21)

6.2. Reactions

Avoidance was a behavioural response, which included ignoring and walking away. In most cases, this was a coping mechanism for women to avoid escalation of the perpetrator's hate and harassment.
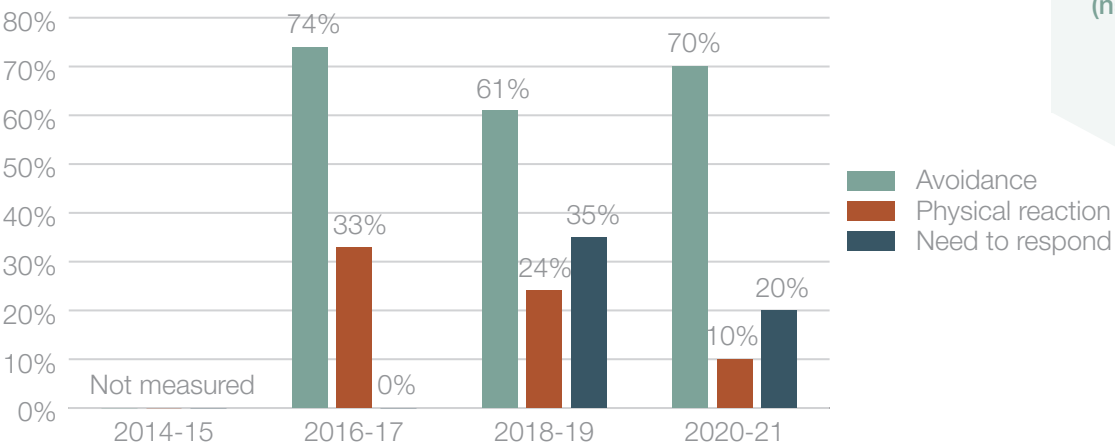
Physical reaction was an extension of emotional responses demonstrated through crying, shaking, going crimson/red and sweating. This category has been included in the dataset since 2016 onwards.

Confrontation cases mostly included a verbal response by victims.

In over two-thirds of cases (66%, n=48), the victim avoided the incident, while 27% (n=20) expressed emotion and 22% (n=16) felt the need to respond.

The proportion of victims either avoiding or expressing emotions did not vary significantly between 2014-15 and 2020-21, while feeling the need to respond was only reported in 2018-2019 and 2020-21, which was 15 percentage points lower than the 2018-19 rate.

Physical reacion by year

In over two-thirds of cases (66%; n=48), the victim avoided the incident, while 27% (n=20) expressed emotion and 22% (n=16) felt the need to respond.

Chapter II

ISLAMOPHOBIA REPORT
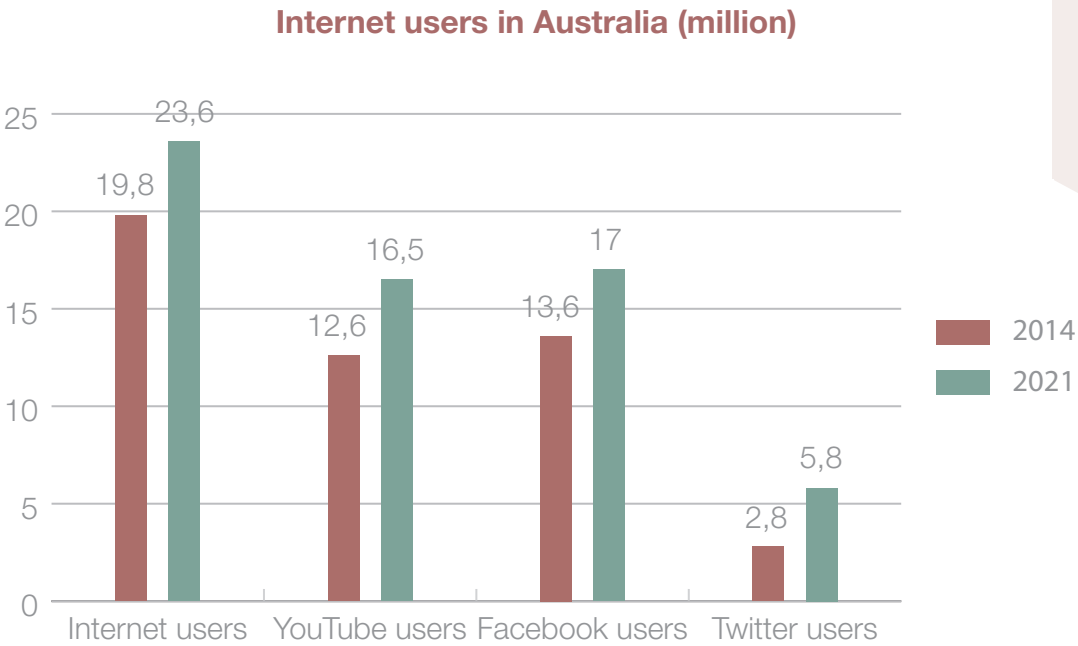ANALYSIS OF ONLINE CASES
(2014-2021)

INTRODUCTION

The use of internet and online platforms for 2104 to 2021 can give context to online incidents (Mitchell, 2022). Australia had 21.822.13 million internet users in 2020-2021. Consequently, 91% of Australians were internet users and the majority were women (53.3%). Social media usage is highest among adolescents and young adults aged 14-24. It is estimated that young men spend 528 minutes a week on social media, while young women spend considerably more time at 822 minutes each week. General concern about false and misleading information online in Australia is high (64%), which is higher than the global average (56%) (Park et al., 2021).

The most popular social media platform for general use in Australia was Facebook followed by YouTube. Approximately 6 in 10 Australians use Facebook. There were 19,569,900 Facebook users in Australia in November 2021, which accounted for 73.8% of its entire population. Most of them were women (54.7%). People aged 25 to 34 were the largest user group (4,800,000). The highest difference between men and women occurs within people aged 35 to 44, where women lead by 1,700,000. In contrast, Twitter had 5.8m monthly active users in 2021, 29.6% of whom were female and 70.4% were male (Correll, 2022).

The below chart shows the number of social media users (million) in Australia from 2014 to 2021. At the end of 2020, there were 21.8 million, which increased to 23.6 million internet users (89% of total population) as of January 2022 (+7.9%) (Kemp, 2021). The spike in internet users was mainly due to travel restrictions and immobility from COVID-19, which increased the need for online shopping and markets (Park et al., 2021). Also, Zoom was the most downloaded mobile app followed by TikTok (SMPerth, 2022).

Internet users in Australia (million)

Australia had 21.8 - 22.13 million internet users in 2020-2021. Consequently, 91% of Australians were internet users and more than half were women (53.3%).

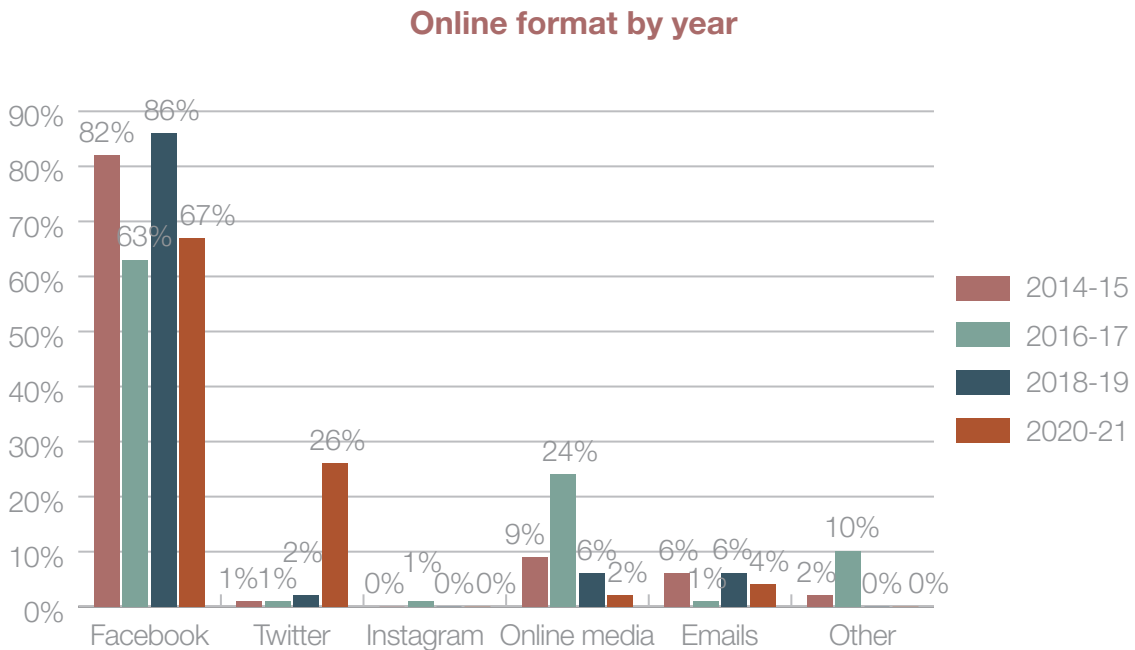36% of online perpetrators reported to the Register were associated with far-right groups and/or ideology.

Online Hate Platforms

The Register has been operating through Facebook since its establishment and was collecting third party reports widely through Facebook until 2017. As a result, most Islamophobia cases witnessed through Facebook were reported fairly easily. Australian internet users', especially adults, tendency to use Facebook also contributed to the prevalence of online Islamophobia cases on this platform. The Register's online presence on other social media platforms and diversified means of collecting incident reports likely diversified the social media hate channels in subsequent years.

For 2014-2021, 415 online verified cases were reported to the Register by third parties. Facebook was widely used by Islamophobic hate actors with three-quarters (n=290) of all incidents appearing on this platform. This was followed by online media (13%, n=50). A significant increase in the use of Facebook occurred from 2016-17 (3%, n=91) to 2020-21 (67%, n=31). There was also a spike in the use of online media in 2016-17 (24%, n=35); however, this dropped to 6% (n=5) in 2018-19 and 2% (n=1) in 2020-21. There was a significant increase in reporting the use of Twitter in 2020-21 with 26% of all online incidents occurring on this platform.

Hate groups, ranging from everyday racists to ideologically motivated far-right groups, use social media platforms to express their diverse views ranging from dislike to violent extremist sentiments. As the previous Islamophobia reports stated, 36% of online perpetrators reported to the Register were associated with far-right groups and/or ideology. Online hate is strategically operated by far-right groups, administrators and followers by quoting biased media content from news reports, editorials and opinion pieces. Media coverage of ideological tropes prominent within far-right online communities are also widely shared (Peucker, 2022). The far-right platforms mobilise their followers by focusing on topical news events that denigrate Muslims and alert society about perceived threats posed by minority groups and especially Muslims (Nouri & Lorenzo-Dus, 2019).

Meanwhile, far-right alternative media and social media outlets reframe, recontextualise and reproduce news stories by carefully selecting information from other sources to justify their ideological agenda. Accordingly, news items appearing to be neutral are recrafted as partisan and combined with disinformation and propaganda for the public to consume (Nouri & Lorenzo-Dus, 2019).

Online format by year

Far-right social media actors use trigger events to intensify anti-Muslim debates. Beyond merely sharing content, they actively engage social media users in heated anti-Muslim discussions and thereby co-create a solidified anti-Muslim hate agenda in public. Social media provides a fertile ground for hate through free exchange of divisive and hateful viewpoints that are unregulated and unmonitored. In the absence of major trigger events like ISIS terrorism or the Christchurch attacks, the hate actors circulate hand-picked news to problematise Muslims and thereby keep anti-Muslim hate fresh.

For instance, as a global source for stirring anti-Muslim hate, Jihadwatch tweets false or distorted news about Australia, such as
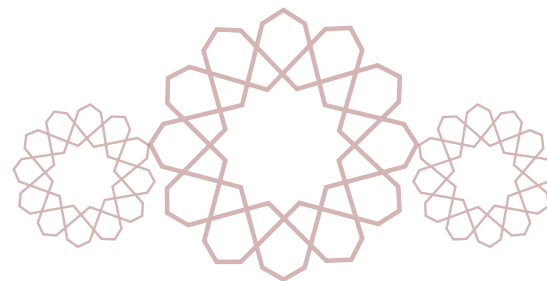
> **"** *Australia: Pro-jihad vandals attack Jewish-owned shop, despite owner's opposition to Zionism" (Case 43-21); "Muslim gouges out wife's eye in front of their children, tells them she 'looks like Dajjal'.* (Case 45-21)

> **"** *Australia: Teen Muslima called on Muslims to stab teachers, poison people in 'haram restaurants'.* (Case 47-21)

Such tweets demonising and dehumanising Muslims, while constantly associating them with violence, attract significant numbers of likes, retweets and Islamophobic commentary.

Under such circumstances, the algorithms of digital and social media help create alternative realities for people with skewed views and increase the risk of self-radicalisation. People surfing on anti-Muslim sites and following anti-Muslim groups are suggested to follow more "divisive, misleading or false" content, which further strengthens their skewed anti-Muslim views and conspiracies while reducing the chance of getting out of their ideological bubble to develop self-criticism and sound reasoning (Laub, 2019).

Taking advantage of social media facilities, hate-motivated groups engage likeminded followers in heated discussions and normalise anti-Muslim hate with minimal effort through quick shares and re-shares by local and global far-right networks.

> **Taking advantage of social media facilities, hate-motivated groups engage likeminded followers in heated discussions and normalise anti-Muslim hate with minimal effort through quick shares and re-shares by local and global far-right networks.**

> **89% of Islamophobic online content was reported to social media channels but not removed despite including hashtags like #deathtoislam and #islamiscancer. The harms of these posts were far-reaching, with some receiving 25 million views worldwide.**

Australian Muslim Advocacy Network (AMAN) reported some harmful content to the Register while making a formal complaint against former Senator Fraser Anning for his Islamophobic social media targeting Australian Muslims by "producing, publishing and sharing content that deliberately dehumanises, denigrates and demonises Muslims, in line with the great replacement and invasion arguments of Tarrant and Breivik" (Case 82-21). Winning this complaint, AMAN could get the harmful content removed, which was, according to AMAN's advisor Rita Jabri Markwell, "restorative and healing for the community" in Queensland under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991, protecting communities from religious discrimination, which is missing from some states like NSW.

Australian Muslim Advocacy Network (AMAN) also reported to the Register allegedly hateful content targeting Australian Muslims through the Twitter account Jihadwatch of Robert Spencer from July 2020-July 2021 (Case 81-21). During that period, AMAN made several requests for Twitter to remove certain accounts that were inciting hatred, severe ridicule or serious contempt for the Muslim community. Those complaints went through an investigation and found by Twitter to be not in breach of its policies.

AMAN's experience may support the assertion made by Butler that only 15% of the over 3 million hateful anti-Muslim tweets in 2019-20 were removed by Twitter (Butler, 2022) and most were only removed after the hateful content seemed to have completed its mission to trigger more hate and violent opinions. Another global report also disclosed that 89% of Islamophobic online content was reported to social media channels but not removed despite including hashtags like #deathtoislam and #islamiscancer. The harms of these posts were far-reaching, with some receiving 25 million views worldwide. Most of the harmful content was retrieved from public pages that regularly post anti-Muslim hate and eight of these 23 social media groups were Australia-based with more than 200,000 followers (Tamer, 2022).

YouTube is the second most popular online outlet after Facebook in Australia. Yet, it is heavily criticised by an anti-Muslim hate actor for broadcasting videos in languages other than English in Australia (Case 4-20). The complaint went beyond criticising multilingual videos from Australia. The perpetrator used foul language and severe hate sentiments against Muslims in his complaint:

> **"** *I want to watch videos in English not some terrorist language buls...it! it's f…ing racism! Wake up YouTube you stupid f…king wankers and get rid of the bulls…t. One would think that because I live in a country where English is the first language, I would be finding heaps of videos posted from Australia or New Zealand, UK or USA but f…ing no way – it's just those God damn pathetic terrorist f…wits in my f…ing search results "f…ing kill them all" get it over and done with already!!!* (Case 4-20)

Comment boxes in digital and social media are best used by hate-motivated actors (ATN, 2020). For instance, one reader was upset with a comment that was allegedly made under an SBS article, portraying Pakistani Australians as terrorists and supporters of Taliban.

> **"** *The comments under SBS News articles about the Afghanistan crisis were utterly unacceptable. To have people calling an entire community of Pakistani Australians terrorists or supporters of Taliban is disappointing. Furthermore, we made a community press release condemning Islamophobia and anti-Pakistan sentiment and called for a community roundtable albeit have heard nothing from any politician at this stage. Nor did SBS respond.* (Case 63-21)

Being concerned about the distorted public perception of Pakistanis as terrorists and supporters of Taliban, the reporter tried to organise roundtable meetings. Around the takeover of Afghanistan by Taliban in August 2021, the Register also received hate emails with some targeting Islam and Muslims as the main source of the problem and critiquing the concept of Islamophobia.

> *Afghan Muslims unable to accept the Taliban and the Qur'an teachings. Have they not read the Qur'an. Are you not displaying Islamophobic behaviour by ignoring the Qur'an doctrine and its guidelines?…This is Islam, this is your religion. Follow the Qur'an, be a true Muslim.* (Case 75-21)
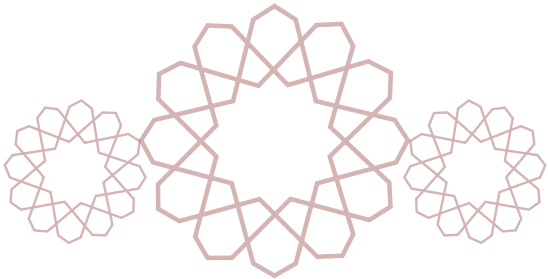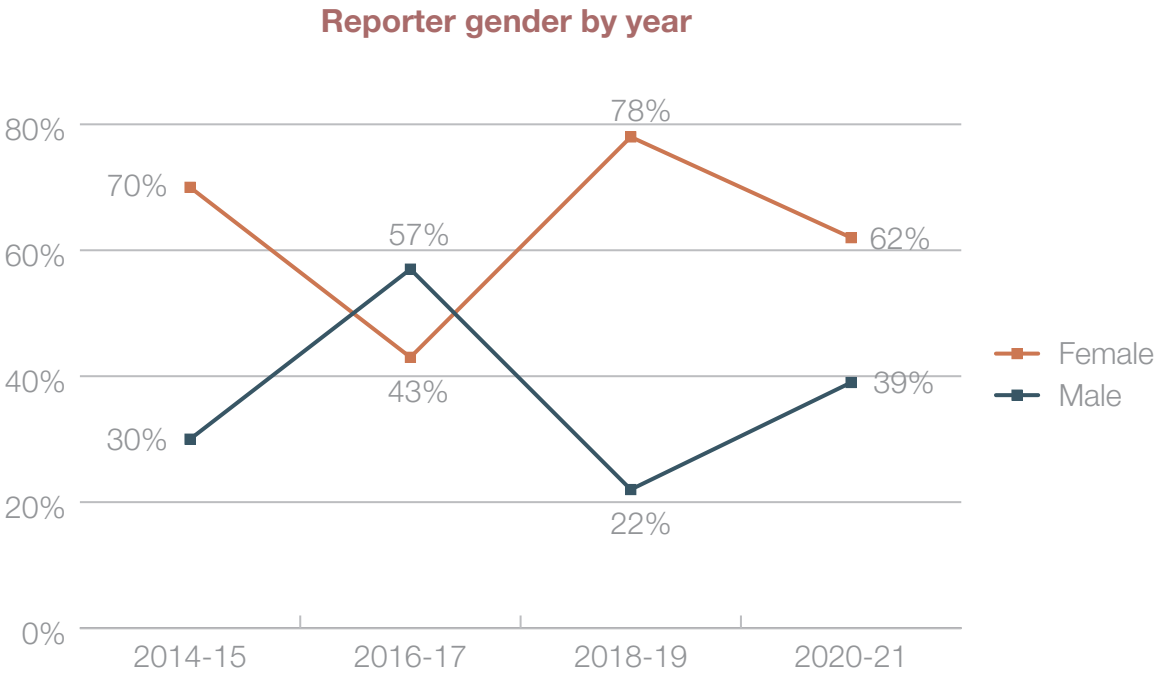
Although the Register continually receives hate messages, the political climate of the time was used to express more anti-Muslim hate in the context of the Taliban's takeover.

1. DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographic details of the victims and perpetrators were mostly available through their social media profiles unless explicitly stated by the reporter in the incident report. The perpetrators network or the reported social media platform were able to disclose the perpetrator's association with far-right groups. Accordingly, 36% of the perpetrators were associated with far-right groups.

1.1. Gender of Reporters

Of the 415 online applicable cases between 2014 and 2021, 61% (n=224) of reporters were female. This may be related to women's hypervigilance and spending more time online and their high use of Facebook among the 35-44 age group.
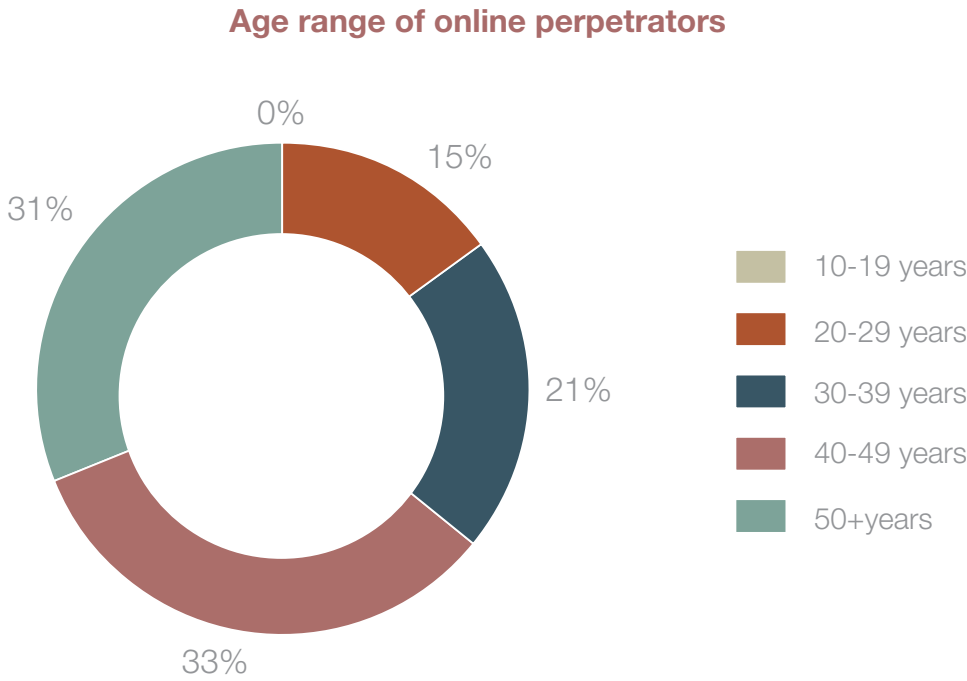
Although the Register continually receives hate messages, the political climate of the time was used to express more anti-Muslim hate in the context of the Taliban's takeover.

The proportion of perpetrators over 50 years of age increased significantly from 25% to 56% in 2018-2021, with a similar increase reported for those in the 30-39 year age group, from 8% to 33%.
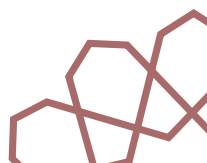
Nevertheless, the difference is not large and some fluctuation occurred in the proportions of those reporting Islamophobia incidents. The gap between the reporter's gender opened wide in 2018-19 with 78% (n=83) female and 22% (n=23) male.
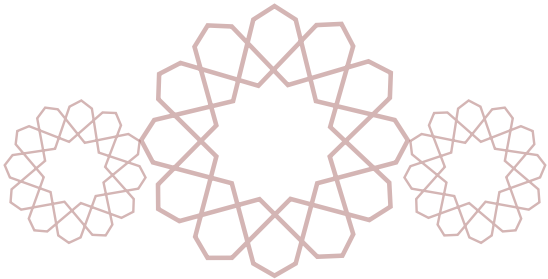
1.2. Age of Victim and Perpetrator

The number of cases for age of victim was very small (n=39) for 2014-2021. One-fifth (21%) between 30 and 39 years of age, while one-third (33%) were 40 to 49 years of age, another almost one-third (30%) were 50+ years of age and 15% were between 20 and 29 years of age. No perpetrator from the younger cohort (10-19 years of age) was reported possibly because the Register did not promote its incident reporting tool via social media channels frequented by younger age groups like TikTok and Instagram during 2014-2021.

Age range of online perpetrators

0%
15%
31%
21%
33%

- 10-19 years
- 20-29 years
- 30-39 years
- 40-49 years
- 50+years

For 2014-2021, of the online perpetrators whose age were identifiable (n=98), 33% (n=32) were between 40 and 49 years of age, 31% (n=30) were 50+, 15% (n=15) were between 20 and 29 years of age and 20% (n=20) were between 30 and 39 years of age, which is consistent with the popular Facebook user age group. The proportion of perpetrators over 50 years of age increased significantly from 25% to 56% in 2018-2021, with a similar increase reported for those in the 30-39 years age group, from 8% to 33%.

Reporter gender by year

- Female
- Male

Age perpetrator by year

Legend: 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50+

Emotional response/impact by gender and year

Legend: Anger, Sadness or worry, Fear or fright, Humiliation, Disappointment

Male

Legend: Anger, Sadness or worry, Fear or fright, Humiliation, Disappointment

Female

1.3. Ethnicity of the Victim and Perpetrator

The identification of ethnicity was limited online since most cases were generic. Of the available 23 cases in 2014-2019, 65% of the victims were Middle Eastern or Arab, while 35% were Anglo/European. For perpetrators (n=78), 92% were Anglo/European and 6% were non-Anglo/European. The period of 2020-21 counts some cases from ex-Muslims and Indian far-right advocates posting from Australia against Islam and Muslims but in their mother tongue, apparently because they were interested in audiences from their own communities.

Seemingly driven by far-right politicians in India, some Indian diaspora members were motivated to use social media platforms to spread anti-Muslim rhetoric originating from the Hindutva (far-right Hindu nationalism) movement that is renowned for extremist and fascist tendencies (Chak, 2022). A list of anti-Muslim hate platforms against Indian Muslims compiled by the Humanism Project notes WhatsApp groups, online portals and events like conferences spreading the spirit of the Hindutva movement in Australia in recent years.
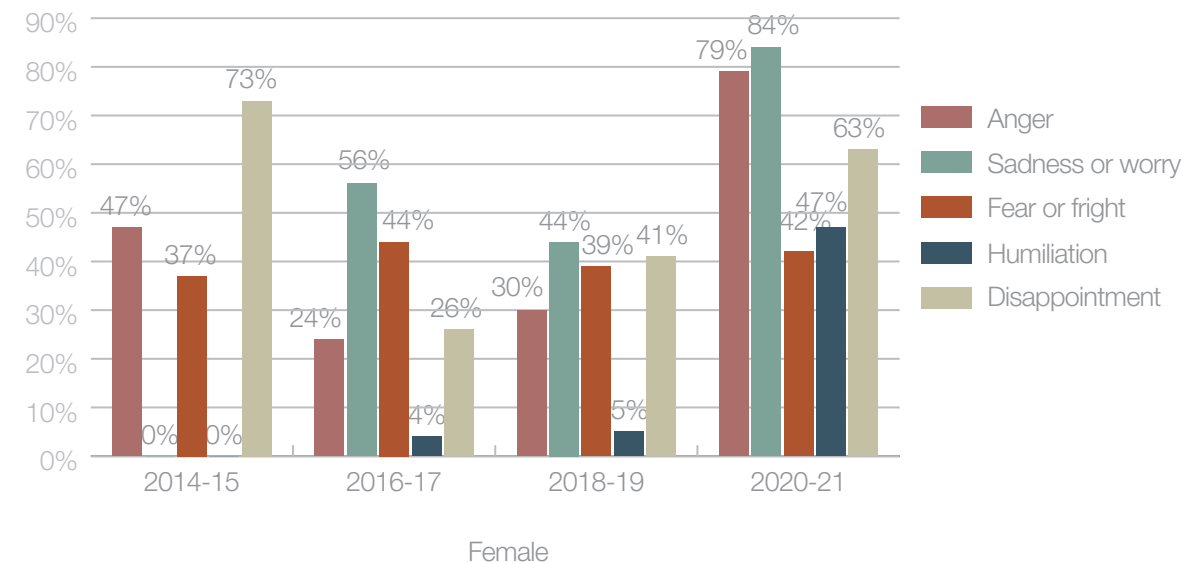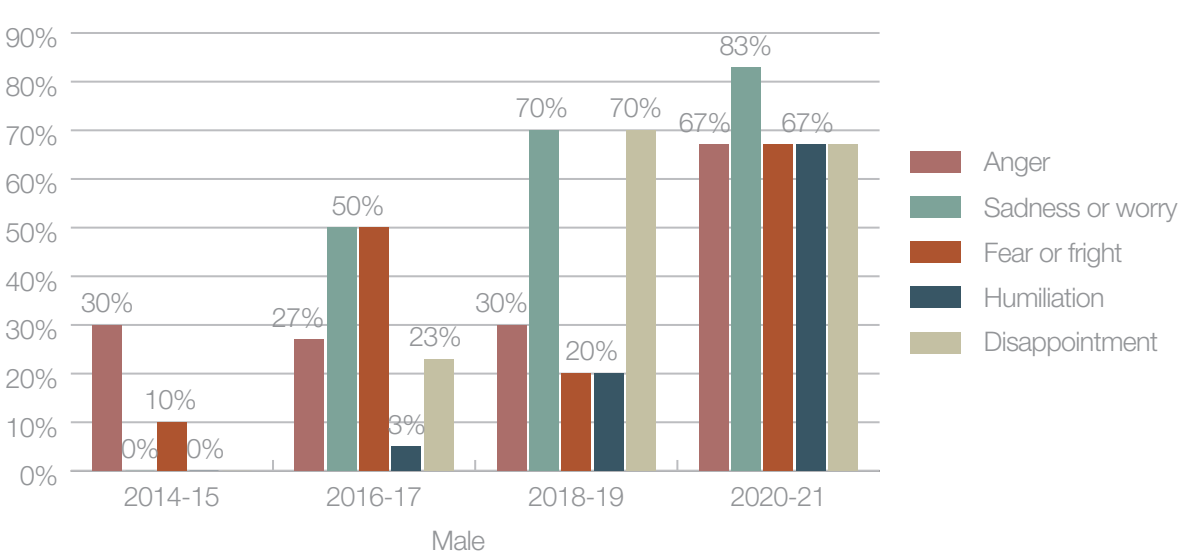
Similar sources and alleged anti-Muslim incidents were reported to the Register during 2020-21. For instance, one YouTube channel broadcasting from Australia in Hindi language is allegedly reported to be a source of anti-Muslim hate "spreading hateful message against Muslim community and individuals and specifically targeting Muslims in India broadcasting from Australia" (Case 48-21).

An Australian Indian posted in Hindi that he has become a big fan of Imran Khan (Pakistan PM), who allegedly said that being tested positive or negative does not matter when no resources for treatment are available. This view portrayed Muslims as backward and was applauded presumably because it meant greater spread of COVID-19 and higher death tolls in Pakistan.

This post associated Islam with poverty and backwardness then took the opportunity to praise the extremist far-right Hindu organisation RSS, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sang, which is an India based paramilitary voluntary organisation supporting far-right Hindu nationalism.

While this journalist has not directly endorsed any anti-Muslim comments, her continued association with these individuals has raised concerns, given she may be amplifying their accounts by simply interacting with them.

Even after praying (worshipping) five times a day, you only face starvation, emaciation, poverty, destitution, contempt and humiliation day and night. What's the use of such education - give it up, learn the RSS syllabus and call out Jai Shree Ram.

The context of this news post was a false accusation of Muslims killing a Hindu Priest. Posting "you would understand the rest," the perpetrator may have been suggesting that if Yogi becomes the Prime Minister of India in 2024, he may kill Muslims through extra-judicial means. Yogi Adityanath, the Chief Minister of a state in India, is alleged to be known for the extra-judicial killings of Muslims (Chitnis & Srinivasan, 2022).
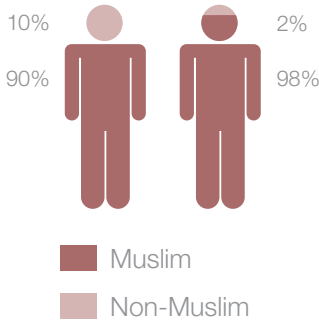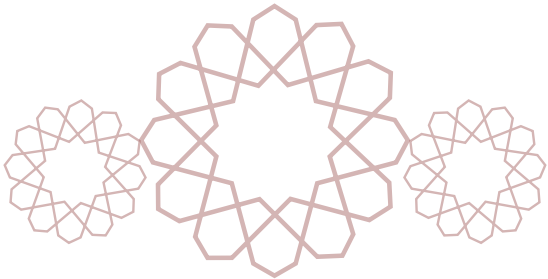
Spread of misinformation to promote violence against Muslims was similarly used by this Indian far-right advocate. A sports journalist at a major news broadcaster, has been reported for her alleged interactions with far-right Indian groups, "who call for ethnic cleansing of Muslims, abuse Islam, abuse Prophet Muhammad." Reportedly, despite being warned by a senior journalist to refrain from engaging with people with extremist views,

> " *she follows dozens of such communal extremist people and has engaged with hundreds of them over the past 10 months.* (Case 76-21)

While this journalist has not directly endorsed any anti-Muslim comments, her continued association with these individuals has raised concerns, given she may be amplifying their accounts by simply interacting with them. It also raises questions about the behaviour journalists are willing to look past and latent Islamophobia that might be in play (Case 76-21).

Get them out and kill the murderers of Guruji. Who do they think they are? Let citizenship bill be tabled and passed and let Yogi Adityanath win in 2024. The rest you would understand.
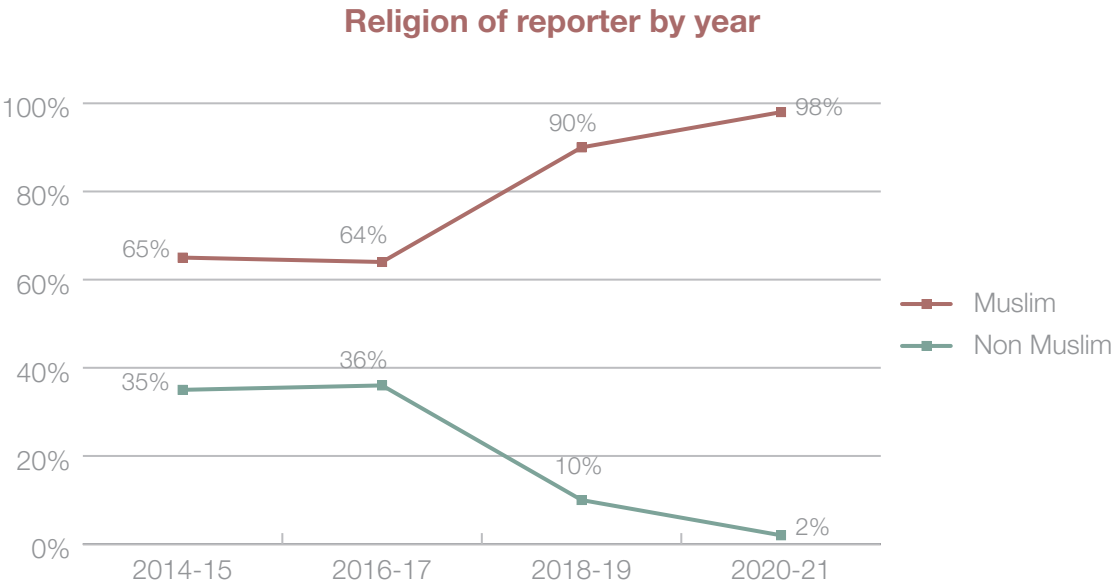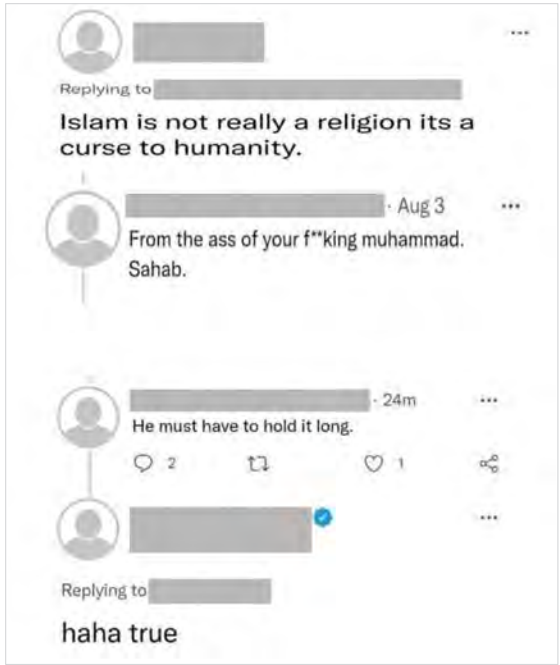
1.4. Religion of Reporters

Of the 415 online cases, three-quarters (75%, n=298) were apparently Muslim and the remainder (25%, n=99) were non-Muslim. Beginning from 2016-17, the number of Muslim reporters steadily increased in tandem with the decreasing number of non-Muslim reporters (90% to 10% in 2018-19 and 98% to 2% in 2020-21). This was a concern since the online rhetoric was severe in content, especially in the aftermath of the Christchurch attacks, and it mobilised mostly Muslims to report to the Register. A bystander activation and reporter mobilisation campaign aimed at the broader society is essential to preserve high community standards and make the online public alert to the upsurging of far-right extremism and their extreme online hate rhetoric.

A non-Muslim reporter found it disgusting to demonise Muslims as terrorists and child rapists on a comment under a YouTube video:

> " *I am not Muslim but this is disgusting. This guy in Australia complains about foreign videos and goes on about Muslims, Indians, Arabs and Pakistanis about terrorism and child abuse.* (Case 4-20)

In 2020-21, an Australian Malay ex-Muslim allegedly defaming Islam and Muslims was reported multiple times (Case 19-20). Her posts in Malaysian were found by different viewers in Australia and Malaysia.

10% / 2%
90% / 98%

■ Muslim
■ Non-Muslim

Religion of reporter by year

- Muslim
- Non Muslim

	2014-15	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21
Muslim	65%	64%	90%	98%
Non Muslim	35%	36%	10%	2%

2. INCIDENTS

2.1. Generic and Personal

Generic cases target all Muslims without focusing on an individual whereas personal cases are aimed at specific individuals in online platforms. Of the 414 online cases, 83% (n=342) were generic and the remainder were personal. Some generic posts triggered conversations in the comments section and where personal attacks occurred. Yet, these were not taken into account unless the reporter reported to the Register the comments section. Personal attacks decreased significantly from 2014-15 (26%, n=28) to 6% (n=3) in 2020-21. Further, there was a significant increase in generic attacks, from 74% (n=81) in 2014-15 to 94% (n=47) in 2020-21.

Many generic posts started conversations in the comment section. When the hate actors were challenged by someone outside of their ideological circles, they were immediately abused by the same perpetrator and/or present hateful group. When a retired Australian army officer posted that he was "proud to have served in Afghanistan," a user responded to him by asking "How many innocents did you kill?" To this, the retired officer asked "How many goats did you rape today?" (Case 40-21). This interpersonal harassment between two social media users expressed the tension and biased views of each other.

The posts of ideological far-right leaders like Fraser Anning stirred anti-Muslim hate. Anning posted about the vehicle attack in Germany in late February in 2020, which injured dozens and was speculated to be a jihadist revenge attack by a Muslim but "pretend otherwise by authorities." Anning stirred hate by his post
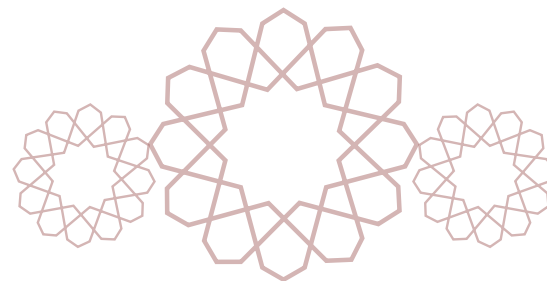
> *German car Jihad looks like a classic revenge attack - unless you are a member of our elite Journalists or Police officers (Case 82-21)*

which attracted 2,700 reactions, 1,000 comments and 1,300 shares for the second post and incited hatred and serious contempt and severe ridicule of Muslim people:

> *"So, how do we put a stop to it? There has to be a way to stop this happening, the politicians are useless, it's going to be up to us."*
> *"[Name of FB user] Bullets."*
> *"[Name of FB user] You have to fight the battle the same way they do. Sneaky brutal cruel inhuman. If you try to fight by our rules you can't win. You have to fight dirty."*

> *"War."*
> *"WE were better off when we could have guns imho."*
> *"Time for war against this shite."*
> *"And they are breeding like rats so soon those nogozones will triple."*
> *"Burn them to the ground."*
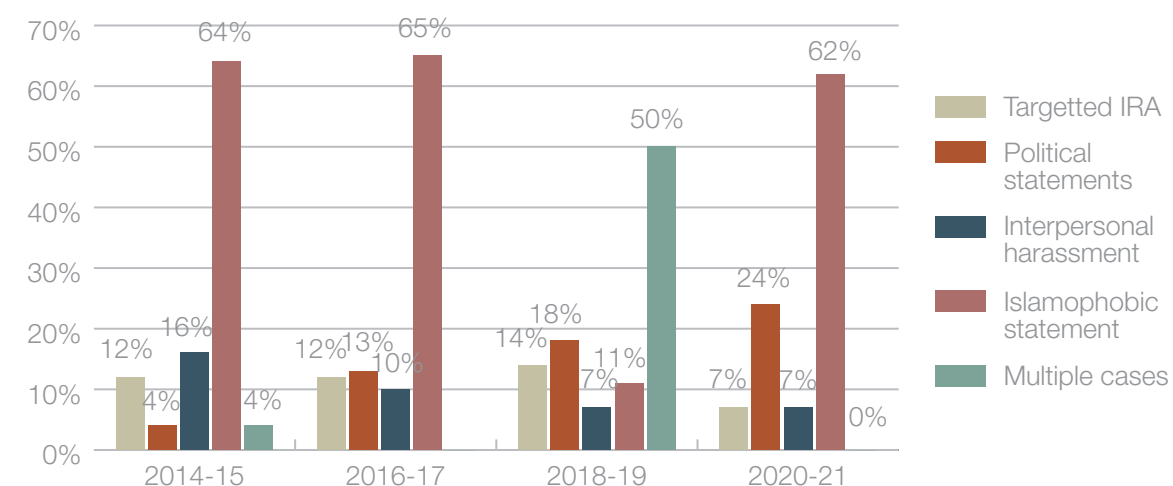
2.2. Incident Content Types

Content type was coded in the data to identify online harassment tactics. Islamophobic statements were the most common (51%, n=156) online incident content followed by political statements expressed mostly by far-right leaders (14%, n=42), multiple cases (13%, n=39), targeting the Register (12%, n=35) for raising awareness and collecting Islamophobia data. Personal harassment (10%, n=31) was the least common incident type.

While Islamophobic statements were the dominant content across the years, there were significantly more political statements and multiple cases in 2018-19.

Apart from renowned far-right politicians, some comments from other politicians were readily available for public view and they upset some members of the Muslim community. For instance, the Facebook post by the Mayor of a local government area who seemed to have interpreted a mosque application rejection as a "fantastic win" upset the reporter, who stated "the Mayor of [Local Government Area] made us feel excluded and hurt us by his statement" (Case 31-21). Furthermore, an online petition was started to protest this Mayor for his other purportedly negative comments and reached 11,471 signatures (Case 32-21).

Of the 154 cases, only 16% reported to police.

Online incident content type by year

Legend: Targetted IRA, Political statements, Interpersonal harassment, Islamophobic statement, Multiple cases

2.3. Reporting to Police

Of the 154 cases, 84% (n=130) did not report the incident to police with the remainder reporting the incident (16%, n=40). A decrease in reporting to the police occurred between 2016-2017 (19%, n=10) and 2018-19 (9%, n=4). The gradual drop in reporting to police requires community and police cooperation.
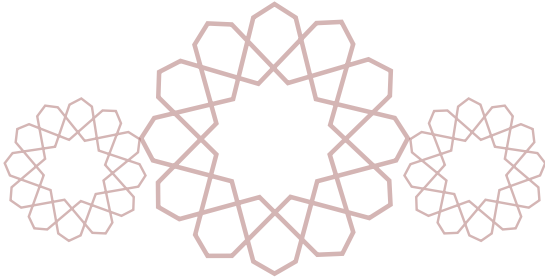
3. CONTENT AND INTENSITY OF INSULTS

3.1. Insult Types

Problematising religion and religious appearance is the most common hate rhetoric, which probably has a lot of connotations in the mind of an Islamophobe. For instance, the visibility of Islam meant the presence of Muslims who are stigmatised as the other, outlandish and a threat by conflating them with terrorism, especially since the War on Terror era (Iner & McManus, 2022). Of the 327 online cases, two-thirds (n=218) referred to religion/religious appearance, 56% (n=182) were xenophobic comments, 44% (n=145) were drawing associations with terrorism, 34% (n=111) used foul language and 30% (n=97) presumed Muslims kill people. Hate rhetoric in mostly generic cases of online incidents was in line with the gendered offline hate rhetoric according to which men are associated with terrorism and women are insulted for their religious appearance (see the Gender Dynamics chapter for details).

In the absence of trigger events like ISIS terrorism and the Christchurch attacks, anti-Muslim hate actors created hate agendas by artificially connecting discussions of the day to Muslims.

In the absence of a trigger event, social media is misused by far-right tropes to mislead people by spreading disproportionate and fake news against Muslims.

The old anti-halal arguments were still in operation to feed Islamophobic sentiments against Australian Muslims. Although anti-halal Facebook pages seem to object to halal certification, problematising Muslims in Australia, the posts and follow-up conversations on them give the message that Muslims are unwanted in Australia.

Seeing the above conversation thread, the reporter was offended by the xenophobic posts on Boycott Halal in Australia Facebook page (Case 37-21), which saddened the Muslim reporter for making her feel that she did not belong to Australia.

> *Sad and angry, realise[d] just how many Australians are truly against Islam, so many people saying 'go back to where you came from' when there are people like me born and raised in Australia. It's also sad to see so many being ignorant and not willing to learn about the truth of Islam, following the media.* (Case 37-21)

In the absence of trigger events like ISIS terrorism and the Christchurch attacks, anti-Muslim hate actors created hate agendas by artificially connecting discussions of the day to Muslims. For instance, when George Floyd was killed by a police officer in the US, which kickstarted massive anti-racism protests in the Western world, a Facebook user made an artificial anti-Muslim agenda claiming there were "no protests when a black Muslim cop murders a white Christian woman" and spreading hate/attacking those that did not agree with him (Case 11-20). Interpreting the case of George Floyd as "one less parasite" telling a user to "go eat some bacon" and insulting her as a "goat sh….er," the perpetrator expressed his hate against any non-white community under the guise of anti-Muslim hatred.

Australian Muslims felt victimised and criminalised during COVID-19 as a source of coronavirus outbreaks in Australia as evidenced in the multitude of views shared publicly in media articles and opinion pieces. One hate mail to the Register argues that

> *planeloads of Muslims arriving back in Australia refusing to quarantine or be tested for Covid-19 have now infected hundreds of innocent people through their arrogant and selfish acts, now keeping the rest of Australia in lockdown inflicting more financial hardship on thousands of businesses and workers.* (Case 14-20)
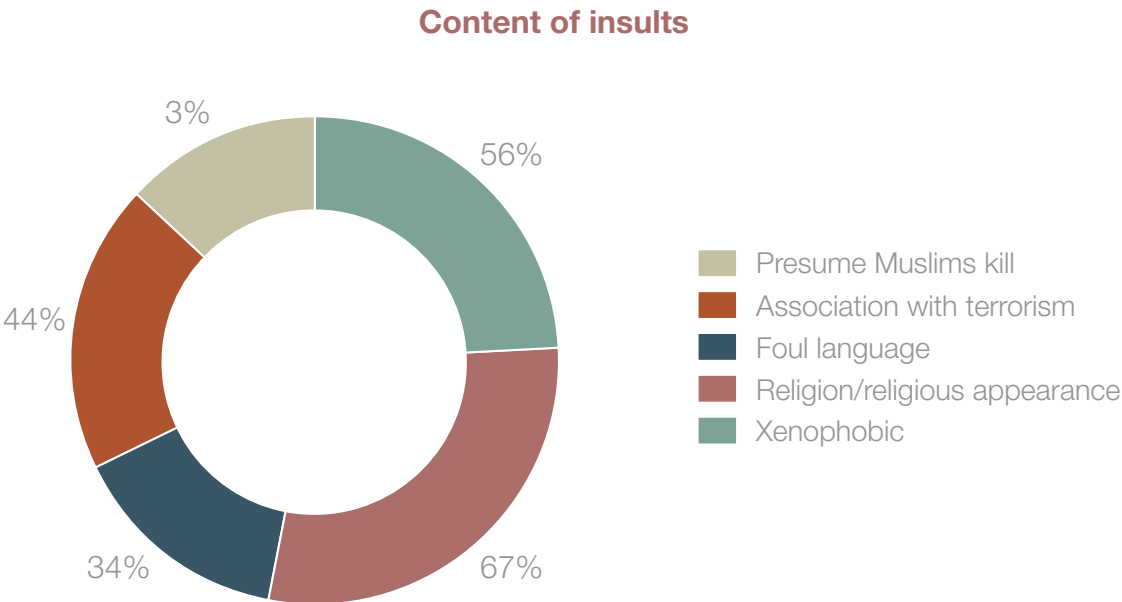
The problematisation of Muslims in relation to the dominant political discourse of the day (e.g. coronavirus outbreak, killing of George Floyd, takeover of Afghanistan by Taliban) proved that no matter the issue, anti-Muslim hate actors will always find an excuse to blame Muslims and fuel anti-Muslim hate in Australia.

Apart from creating an artificial agenda to demonise Muslims, the anti-Muslim hate operators searched for news from around the world to demonise Muslims. For instance, Australian followers of Fraser Anning's Facebook page and a far-right oriented news outlet announced the killing of a Swedish teen by her Muslim boyfriend (Case 10-20). Yet the same outlets did not report on the killing of a hijabi Muslim teenager, who was shot from a car window just 100 metres from her family's home in Blackburn, Lancashire, in England and covered in the European news outlet on the same day. (Dresch, 2020; King, 2020). This selective reporting acted to demonise Muslims from around the world and triggered hateful comments and discussions while feeding and growing anti-Muslim hate sentiments daily.

In the absence of a trigger event, social media is misused by far-right tropes to mislead people by spreading disproportionate and fake news against Muslims. For instance, Fraser Anning's Facebook page posted the "The brutal stabbing murder of a little English girl playing in a park by a Muslim woman" (Case 7-20). In fact, the stabber was a 30-year-old schizophrenic Albanian woman, whose religious affiliation was not known to the public.

Unfortunately, this fabricated news was picked up and circulated by a controversial Muslim influencer and Imam by sharing the child's photo and attributing the killing to a 'Somali immigrant.' Archives confirmed the tweet had at least 20,000 retweets (Case 67-20) and received anti-Muslim comments like "when Muslim do something bad and all liberal media tries to cover it up," "It is always mental health, that's the scapegoat" and "Gift of Islamization to Britain…" (Case 7-20).

Content of insults

- 3% / 56% / 44% / 34% / 67%

Legend:
- Presume Muslims kill
- Association with terrorism
- Foul language
- Religion/religious appearance
- Xenophobic

According to TellMAMA of the UK, anti-Muslim conspiracies about the killing of Emily Jones flourished online and continued for months through the social media outlets of far-right groups in the United States, Britain and Australia and led to blaming Muslim and Somali communities. (TellMAMA, 2020).

Presumption that Muslims kill people increased ten-fold (5% to 50%) between 2014 and 2021, while association with terrorism dropped slightly if 2018-19 is excluded. Apparently, portraying Muslims as a threat to one's life was a consistent form of hate rhetoric. Insulting religious appearance and religion was another dominant theme, which was replaced with the association of Muslims with terrorism in 208-19. Muslims were blamed for terrorism (53%) when over 50 Muslims were massacred in a mosque by a far-right terrorist in the Christchurch mosque attacks. In 2016-17, when the ISIS attacks and recruitment from the homeland were most topical, Muslims' presence and religious appearance was most problematised (86%) rather than and association with terrorism (39%) or the presumption that Muslims kill (38%). During the COVID-19 period, religious appearance (65%) and presuming Muslims kill (58%) were the top two forms of online anti-Muslim hate rhetoric. The consistent increase in insulting religious appearance and presuming Muslims kill (not the association with terrorism) reflects the stigmatisation of Muslims/Islam since the War on Terror era as a threat/danger.
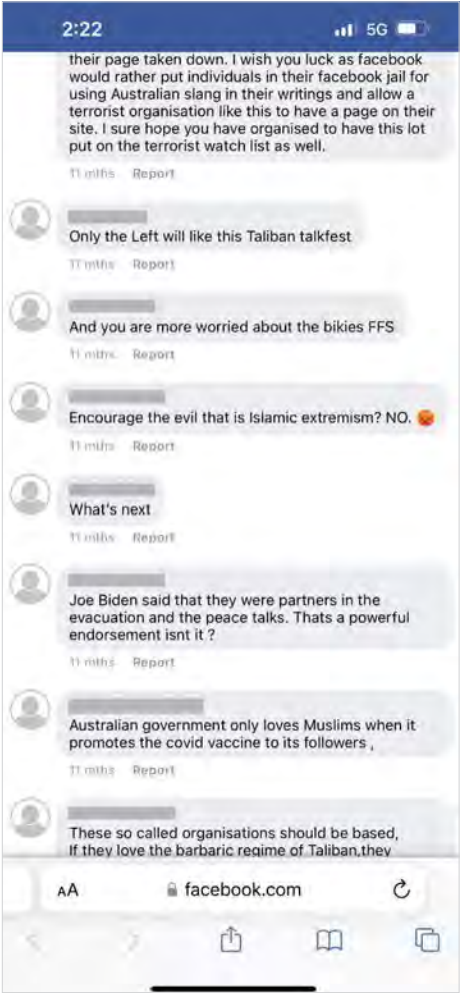
A Senator's Facebook page also witnessed anti-Muslim sentiments associating Australian Muslims with terrorism in the aftermath of the Taliban takeover (Case 77-21), which was moderated and removed after the Senator was notified about the hateful posts. Although Muslims suffered the most from the takeover of the Taliban regime, Muslims were not offered sympathy in these comments, but further hostility. Apparently, unconditional hate was in force.

In the absence of trigger events, sentiments like presuming Muslims kill are related to fake news and artificial agendas. For instance, a user shared on the Australian Gun Rights Facebook page a news report titled "Muslims take over Australian security companies," which triggered angry/unhappy emoji reactions while another user responded, "Here's a problem" and another added "80,000 have arms," presumably referring to Muslims in Australia (Case 9-20).
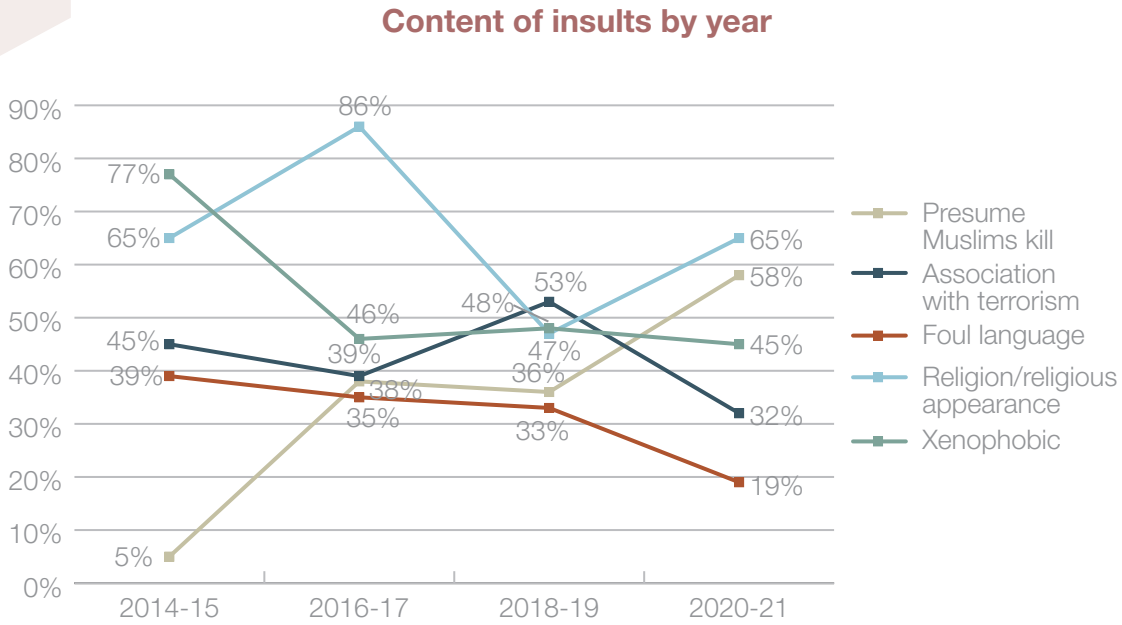

Case 9-20

During the Covid-19 period, religious appearance (65%) and presuming Muslims kill (58%) were the top two forms of online anti-Muslim hate rhetoric.
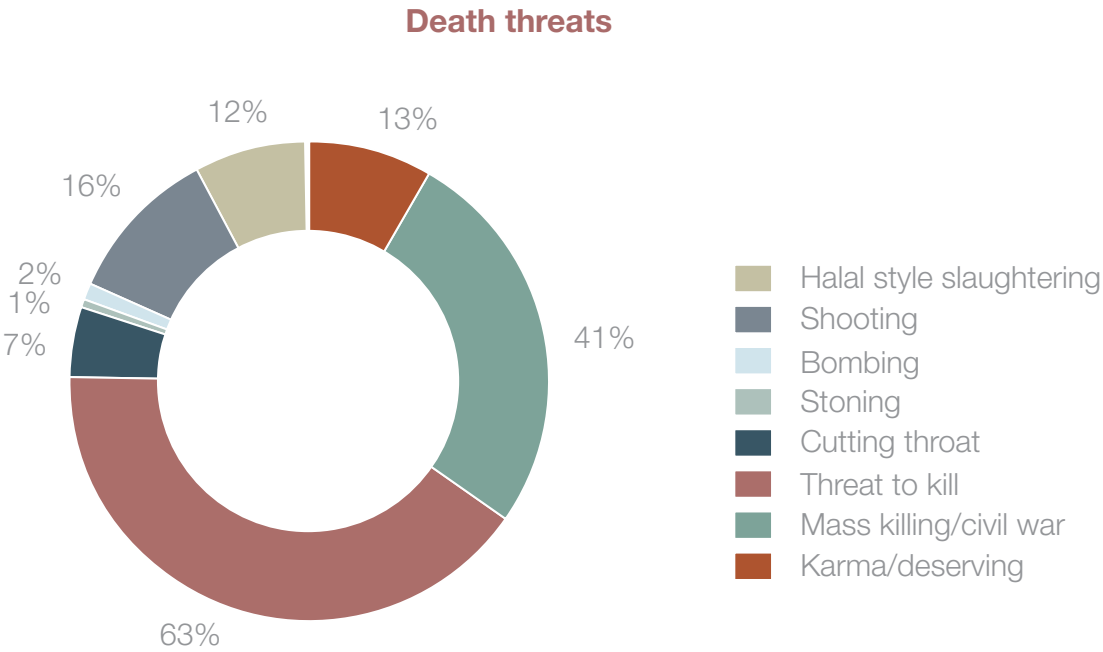

Case 77-21

Content of insults by year

Legend:
- Presume Muslims kill
- Association with terrorism
- Foul language
- Religion/religious appearance
- Xenophobic

Data labels: 90%, 80%, 77%, 70%, 65%, 60%, 45%, 50%, 40%, 39%, 5%, 30%, 20%, 10%, 0% | 86%, 46%, 39%, 38%, 35%, 48%, 53%, 47%, 36%, 33%, 65%, 58%, 45%, 32%, 19%

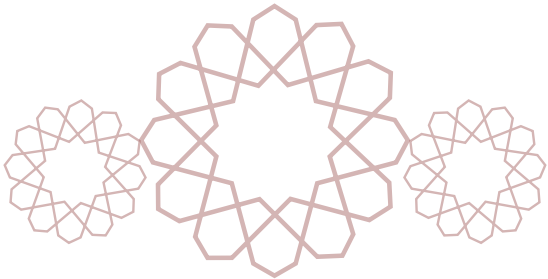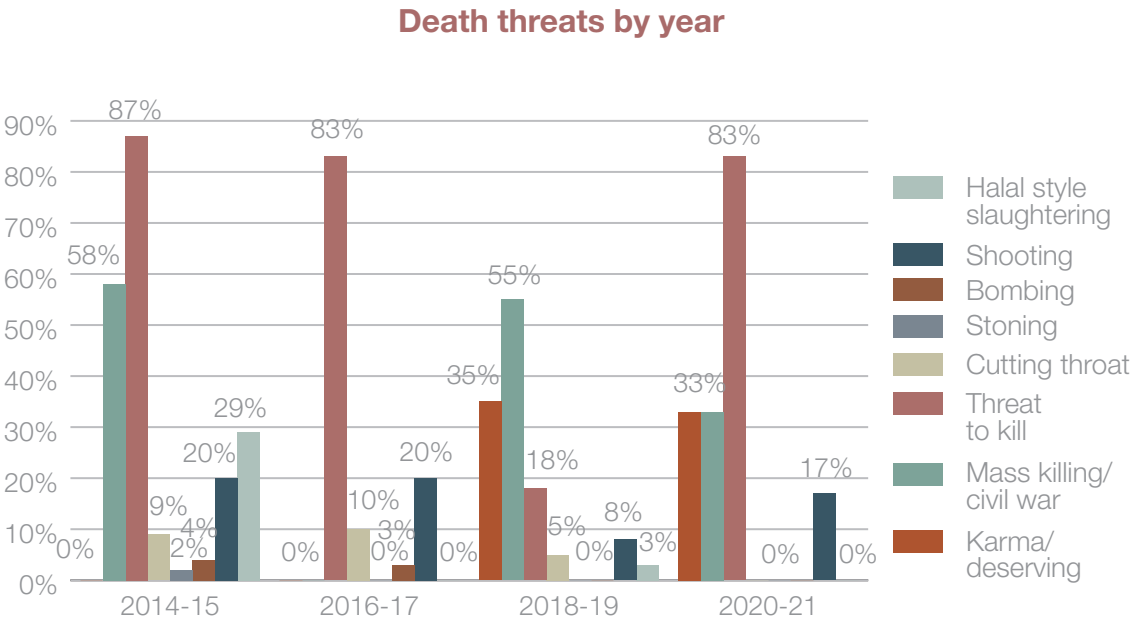X-axis: 2014-15, 2016-17, 2018-19, 2020-21

3.2. Death Threats

The most common online death threat was the threat to kill (63%, n=76), followed by mass killing or civil war (42%, n=50) and threats to shoot (16%, n=19).

Death threats

- Halal style slaughtering
- Shooting
- Bombing
- Stoning
- Cutting throat
- Threat to kill
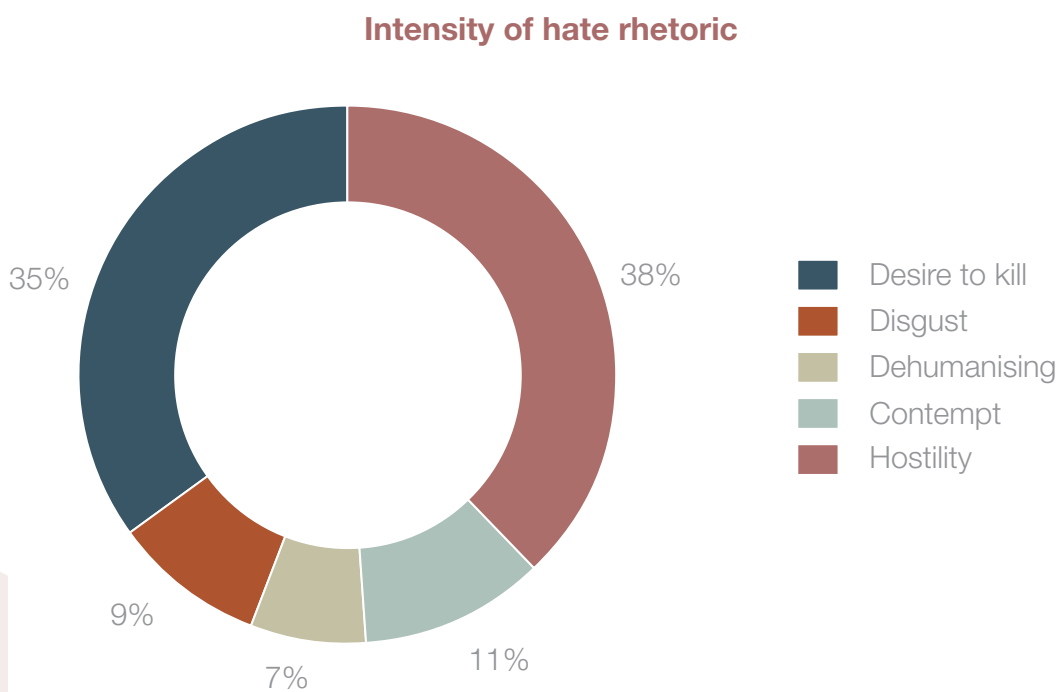- Mass killing/civil war
- Karma/deserving

Karma or deserving to die was only reported in 2018-19, while mass killings or civil war decreased between 2014-15 and 2020-21. A significant decrease in threats to kill occurred during the period, decreasing from 87% (n=39) in 2014-15 to 18% (n=7) in 2018-19 then increasing again in 2020-21 to 83% (n=5). Threats to shoot also decreased between 2014-15 and 2018-19 then increased in 2020-21 but the number was too low to draw any conclusions.

Mass killing/civil war and karma/deserving to be killed in the same way (35%) were the main death threats in 2018-19, especially after the Christchurch attacks. This trend continued during the COVID-19 period (2020-21) with the addition of any type of killing (83%). Halal style killing, cutting the throat and stoning threats were prevalent when there were anti-halal campaigns and ISIS atrocities.

Death threats by year

- Halal style slaughtering
- Shooting
- Bombing
- Stoning
- Cutting throat
- Threat to kill
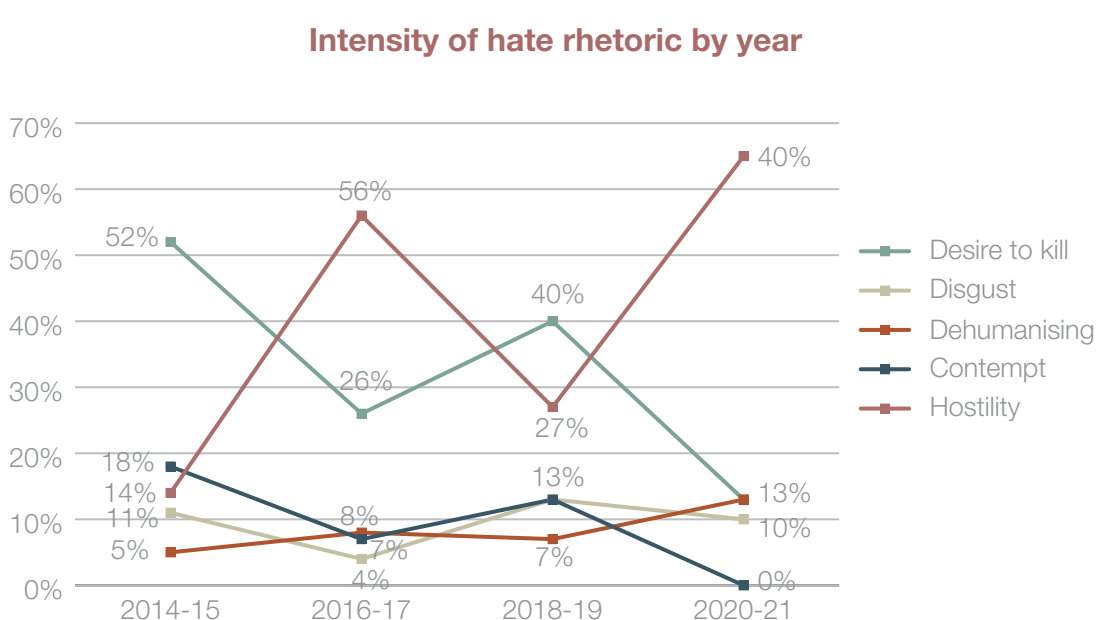- Mass killing/civil war
- Karma/deserving

3.3 Intensity of Hate Rhetoric

Hostility was the most common form of hate rhetoric (38%, n=138), followed by a need to kill (35%, n=129) and contempt (11%, n=39).

Intensity of hate rhetoric

- Desire to kill
- Disgust
- Dehumanising
- Contempt
- Hostility

> There was an inverse relationship between the least and most harmful levels of hate: when fury was the highest, wanting to kill was the lowest.
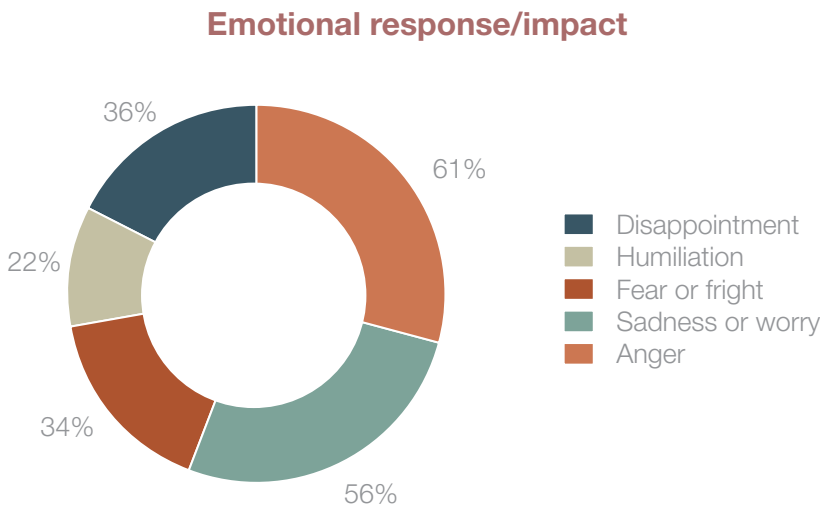
From a yearly perspective, hate speech increased from 14% (n=15) in 2014-15 to 65% (n=26) in 2020-21, while contempt decreased significantly from 18% (n=19) in 2014-15 to zero in 2020-21. Disgust remained constant between 2014-15 (11%, n=12) and 2020-21 (10%, n=4), while a need to kill decreased from 52% (n=56) in 2014-15 to 13% (n=5) in 2020-21.

The violent level of hate – wanting to kill – was the highest (52%) in the Register's starting year when ISIS attacks and anti-Muslim campaigns by far-right groups were gaining momentum. Violent levels of hate were also evident (40%) in 2018-19, especially in the aftermath of the Christchurch attacks. There was an inverse relationship between the least and most harmful levels of hate: when fury was the highest, wanting to kill was the lowest.

Intensity of hate rhetoric by year

- Desire to kill
- Disgust
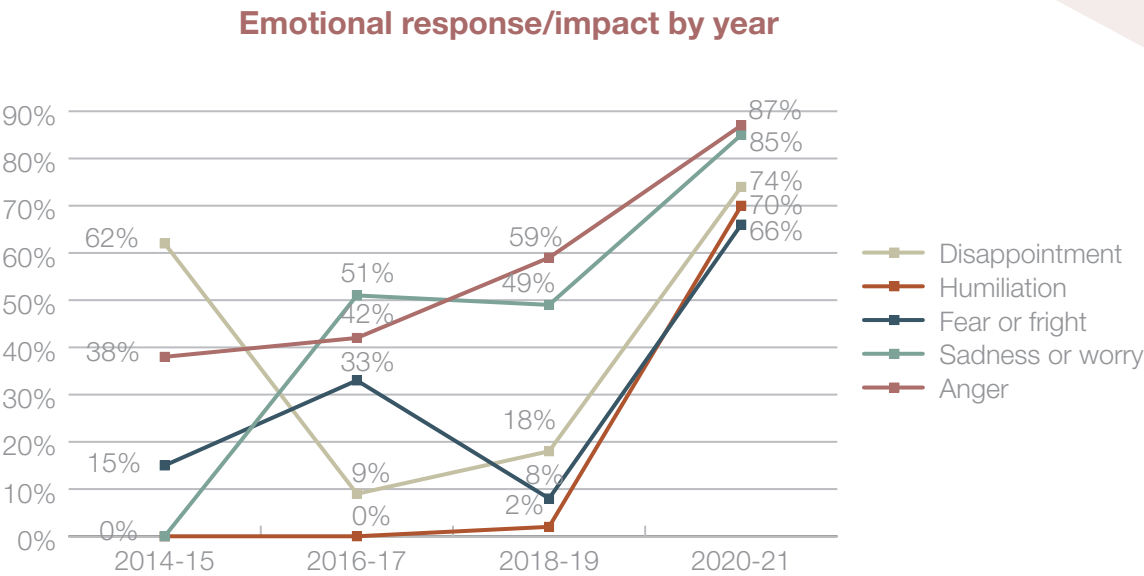- Dehumanising
- Contempt
- Hostility

4. EMOTIONAL RESPONSE/ IMPACT AND REACTION

Of the 154 online responses, 61% (n=94) were related to anger, 56% (n=87) to sadness or worry, 34% (n=52) for fear or fright and an additional 36% (n=52) for disappointment.

Emotional response/impact

- Disappointment
- Humiliation
- Fear or fright
- Sadness or worry
- Anger

From a yearly perspective, there was a significant increase in all emotional response categories. The steady increase was because of adding an optional question to the reporting tool to capture the reporter's emotional state (in contrast to capturing it through words that expressed an emotion in the narrative). All emotional categories peaked during the COVID-19 period. Apparently, anti-Muslim hate contributed to diminished wellbeing during the pandemic and lockdowns in 2020-21.

Emotional response/impact by year

- Disappointment
- Humiliation
- Fear or fright
- Sadness or worry
- Anger

Of the 154 online responses, 61% were related to anger, 56% to sadness or worry, 34% for fear or fright and an additional 36% for disappointment.
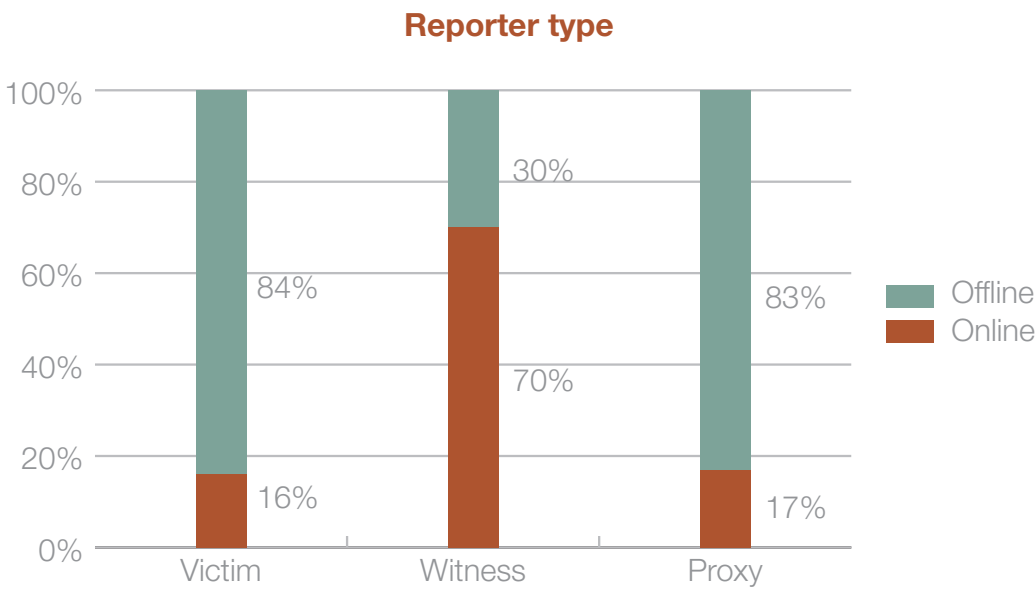
Chapter III

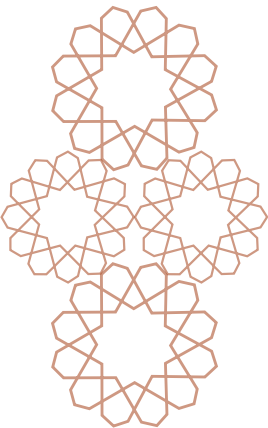# OFFLINE-ONLINE COMPARISON (2014-2021)

1. REPORTERS

There were 415 cases of online reports compared to 515 offline reports. Unsurprisingly, physical cases were mostly reported by victims (52%, n=267) whereas online cases were reported by witnesses (88%, n=363) and physical cases were mostly directed at persons (76%, n=391) while online cases were mostly generic (83%, n=342).
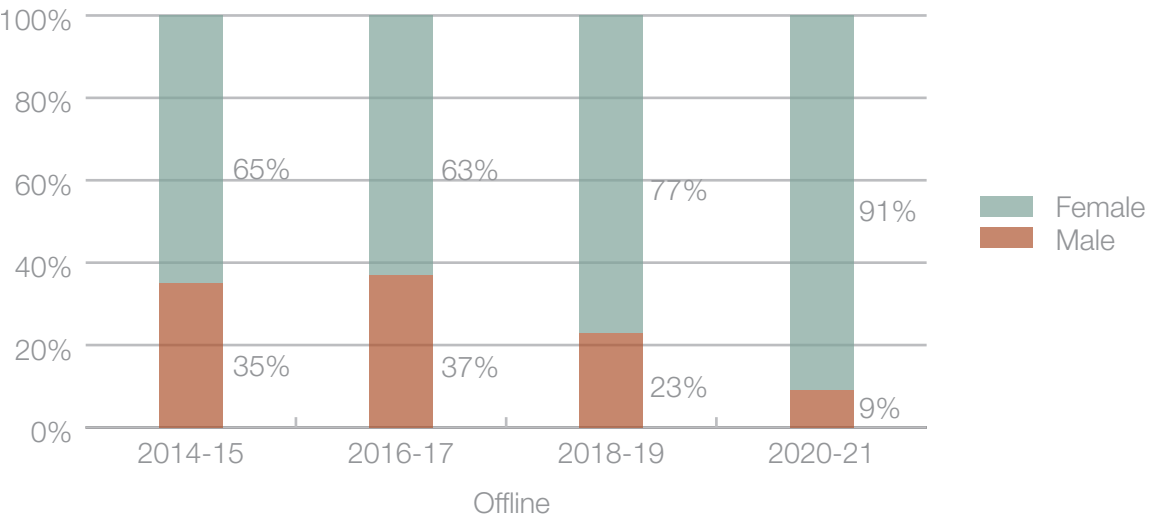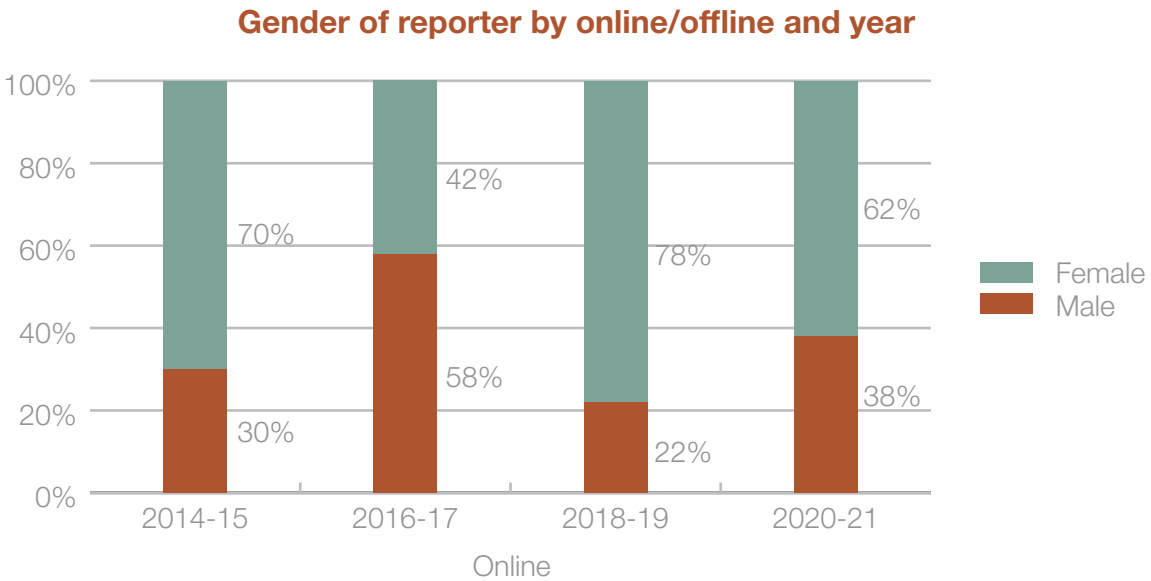
Reporter type

Offline
Online

	Victim	Witness	Proxy
Offline	84%	30%	83%
Online	16%	70%	17%

There were fewer male than female reporters in offline and online circumstances.
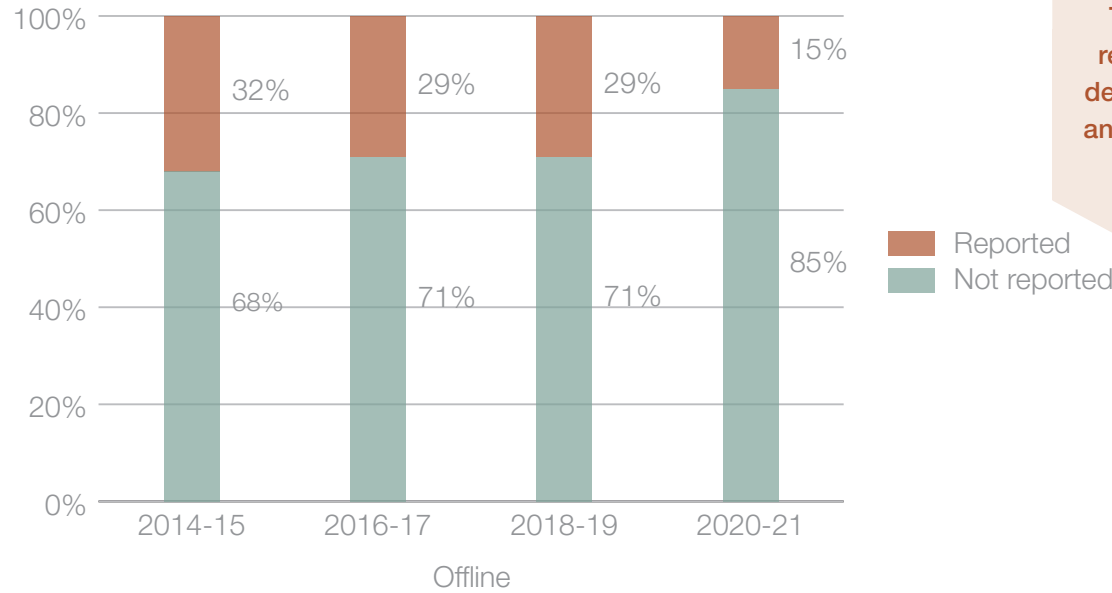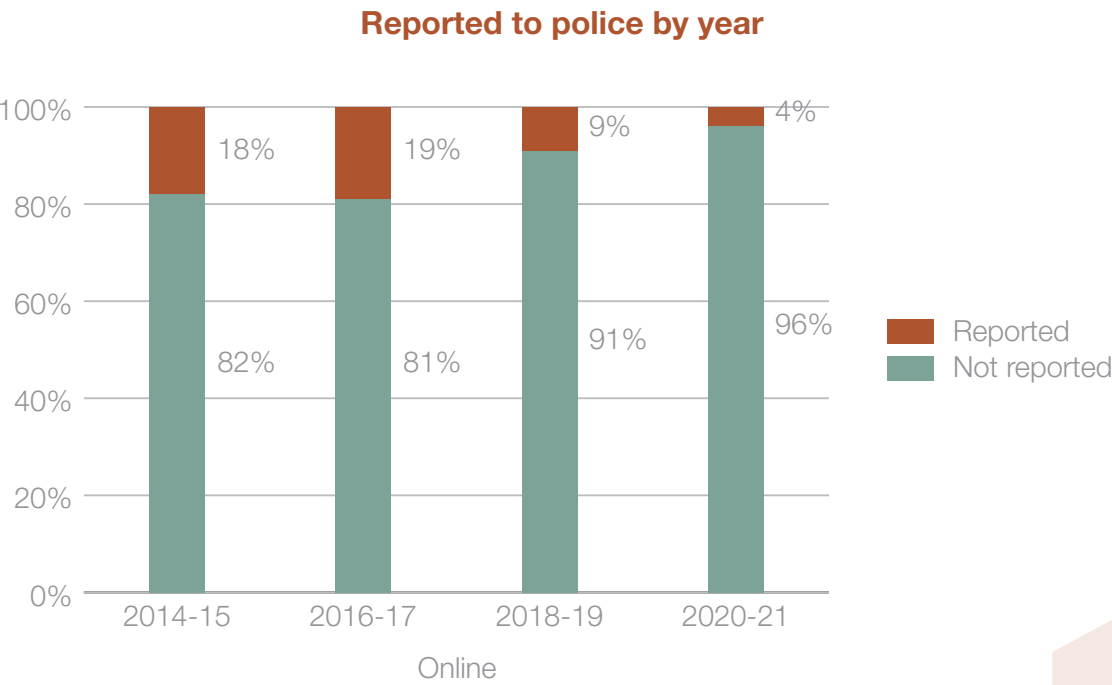
Gender of reporters

Some fluctuation was observed for online male reporters. For females, the proportion remained steady for 2014-15, 2018-19 and 2020-21 but decreased in 2016-17 to 42% (n=62).

There were fewer male than female reporters in offline and online circumstances. Activating male victims and witnesses to report is essential for combating Islamophobia in solidarity and as a whole community and society.

Gender of reporter by online/offline and year

Female
Male

	2014-15	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21
Female	70%	42%	78%	62%
Male	30%	58%	22%	38%

Online

	2014-15	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21
Female	65%	63%	77%	91%
Male	35%	37%	23%	9%

Offline

2. THIRD PARTIES

The incidence of reporting to police decreased for offline and online incidents (from 18% in 2014-15 to 4% in 2020-21 and from 32% in 2014-15 to 15% in 2020-21, respectively).

Reported to police by year

Online

- Reported
- Not reported
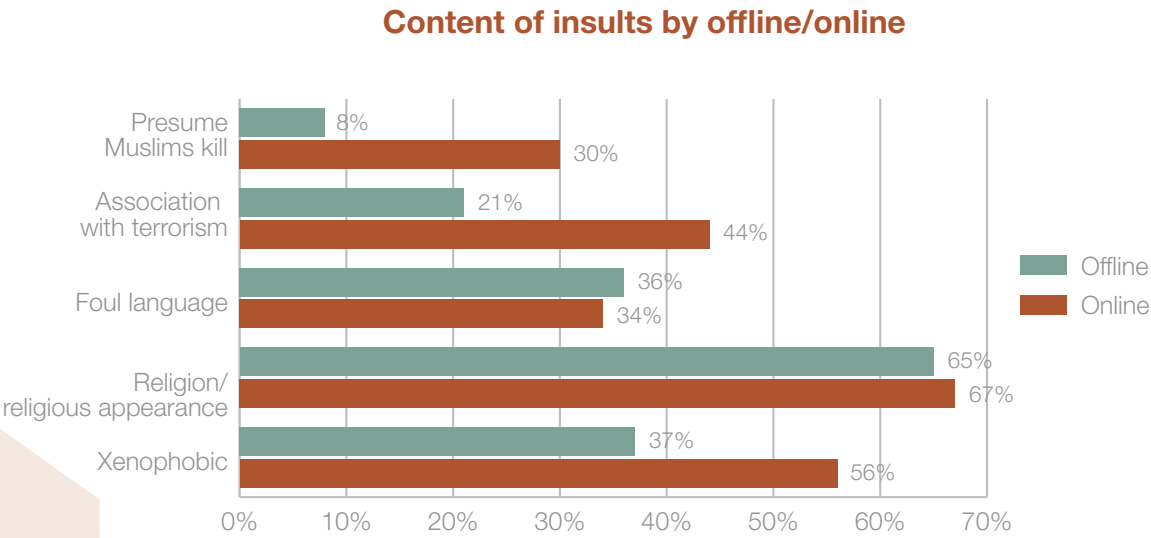

Offline

- Reported
- Not reported

The incidence of reporting to police decreased for offline and online incidents.

The most intense hate rhetoric (wanting to kill) was more common online (35% online compared to 10% offline)
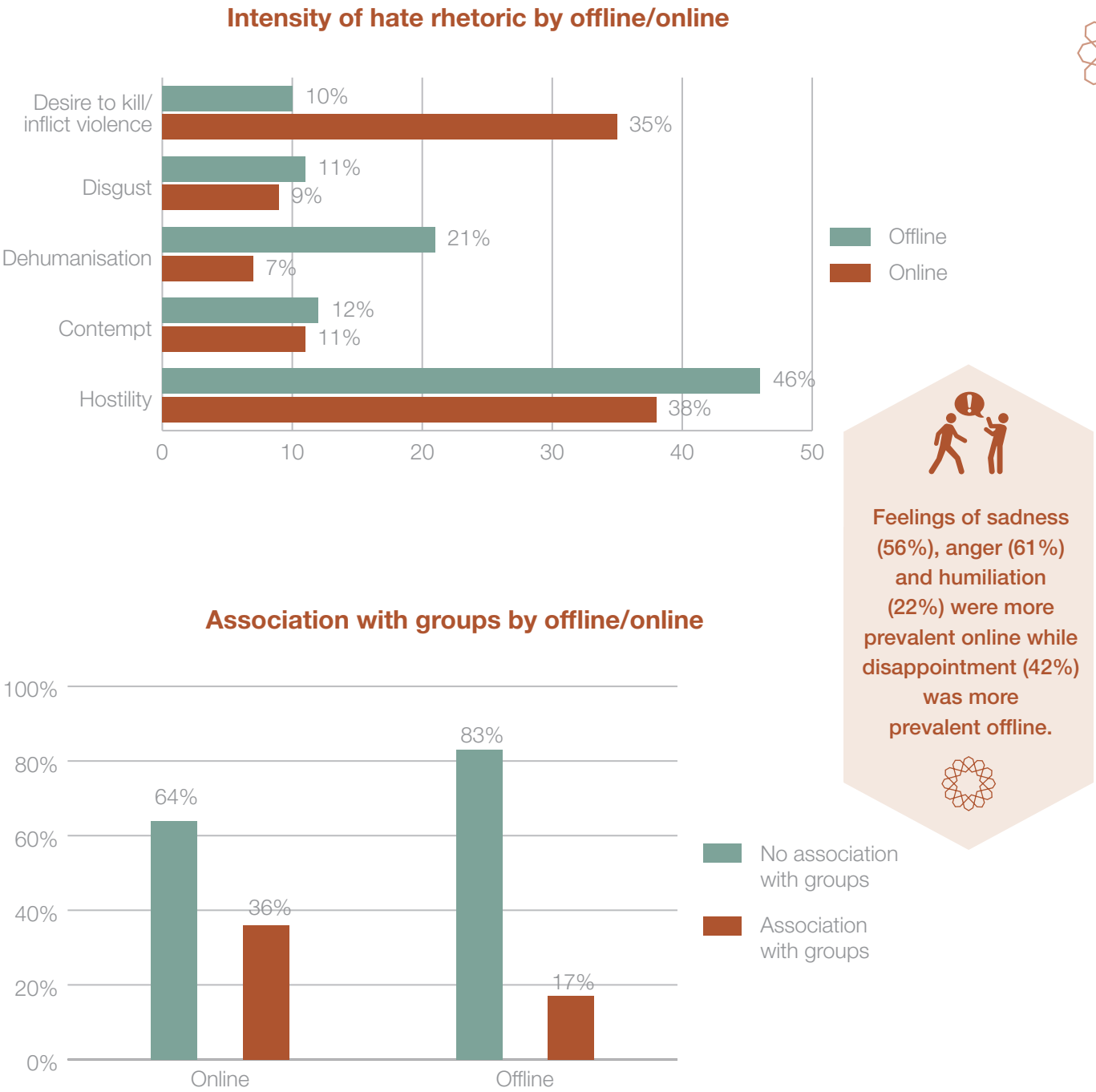
3. CONTENT OF INSULTS

Not much difference can be observed between online and offline platforms in cases of insults targeting religion and religious appearance (67%-65%) and the use of foul language (34%-36%). In contrast, the presumption that Muslims kill was used online four times more than its offline use (30% vs 8%), an association with terrorism was twice as likely online than offline (44% vs 21%) and the proportion of xenophobic insults online was greater than they were offline (56% vs 37%).

Content of insults by offline/online

- Offline
- Online

4. INTENSITY OF HATE RHETORIC AND ASSOCIATION WITH FAR-RIGHT GROUPS
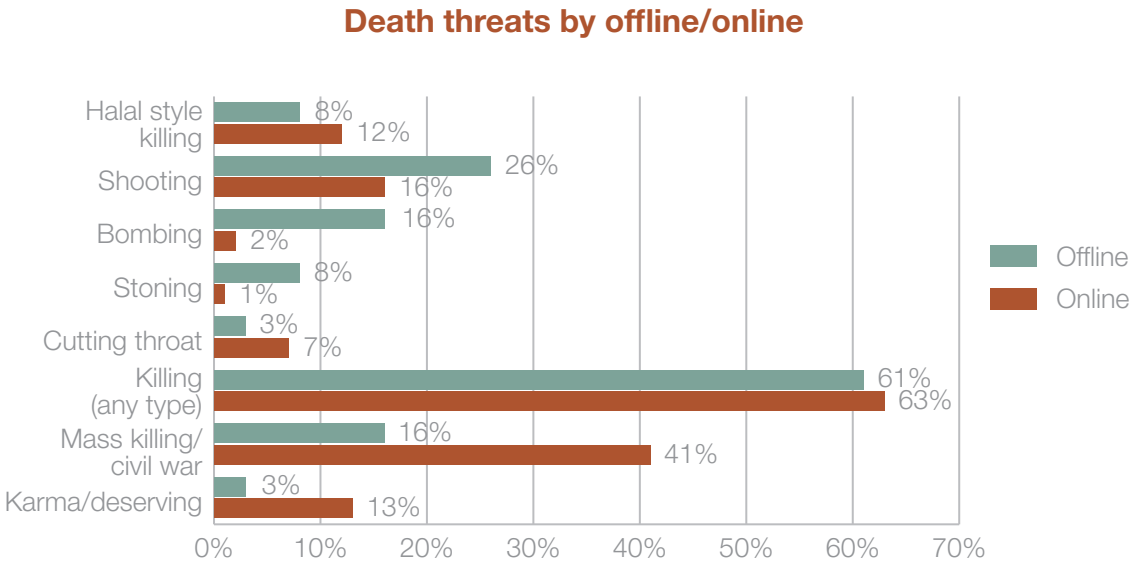
The least intense hate rhetoric (i.e. hostility) was more common in physical circumstances (46% online compared to 38% offline). In contrast, the most intense hate rhetoric (wanting to kill) was more common online (35% online compared to 10% offline). Dehumanising offline was three times higher than online platforms (21% compared to 7%). Contempt and disgust were slightly higher online than they were offline. Except for wanting to kill, all other categories of hate were blatantly displayed in physical settings.

A greater proportion of perpetrators associated with far-right groups were online (36%, n=145) than offline (17%, n=89).
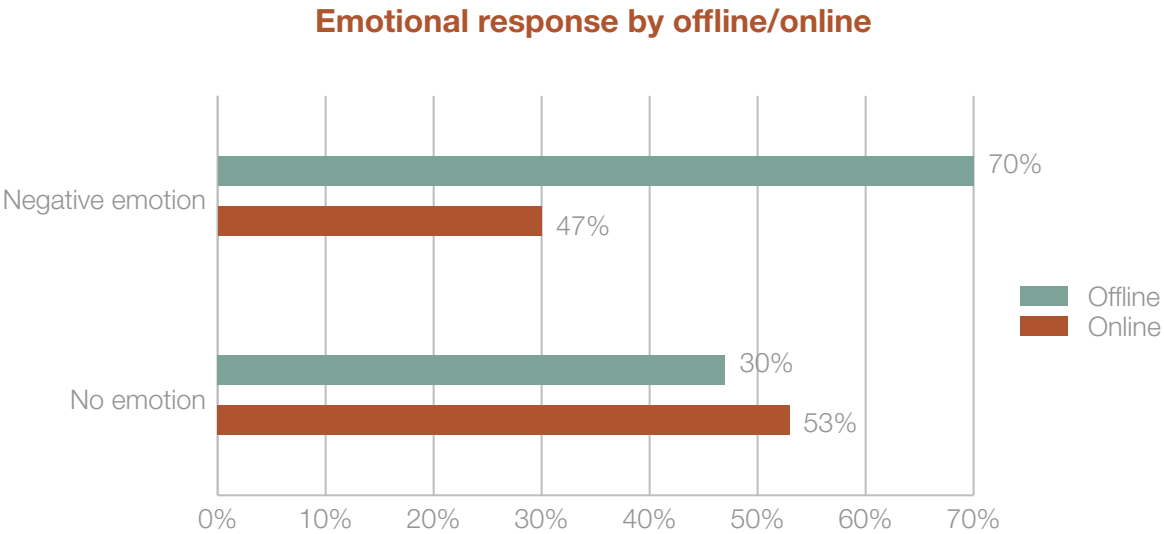
Intensity of hate rhetoric by offline/online

Desire to kill/ inflict violence — Offline 10%, Online 35%
Disgust — Offline 11%, Online 9%
Dehumanisation — Offline 21%, Online 7%
Contempt — Offline 12%, Online 11%
Hostility — Offline 46%, Online 38%

Offline
Online

> Feelings of sadness (56%), anger (61%) and humiliation (22%) were more prevalent online while disappointment (42%) was more prevalent offline.

Association with groups by offline/online

Online — No association with groups 64%, Association with groups 36%
Offline — No association with groups 83%, Association with groups 17%

No association with groups
Association with groups

5. DEATH THREATS

A significantly greater number of mass killing/civil war comments were recorded online (41%, n=50) than offline (16%, n=6).

Death threats by offline/online

Halal style killing — Offline 8%, Online 12%
Shooting — Offline 26%, Online 16%
Bombing — Offline 16%, Online 2%
Stoning — Offline 8%, Online 1%
Cutting throat — Offline 3%, Online 7%
Killing (any type) — Offline 61%, Online 63%
Mass killing/ civil war — Offline 16%, Online 41%
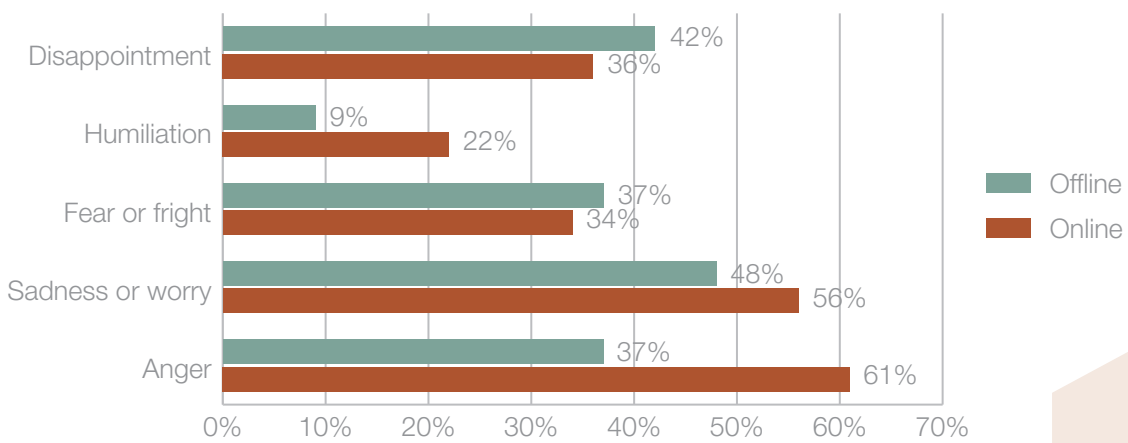Karma/deserving — Offline 3%, Online 13%

Offline
Online

6. EMOTIONAL IMPACT

A significantly greater number of respondents reported a negative emotional response to offline attacks (70%, n=277) than they did with online attacks (47%, n=154).

Emotional response by offline/online

Negative emotion — Offline 70%, Online 47%
No emotion — Offline 30%, Online 53%

Offline
Online

Feelings of anger (61%), sadness/worry (56%) and disappointment (36%) were more prevalent online while sadness/worry (48%) was more prevalent offline. Interestingly, fear/fright in online and offline cases were similar (34% online, 37% offline). **Apparently, online generic cases, which contained intense levels of hate in most cases, were emotionally impactful for Muslim online users.**
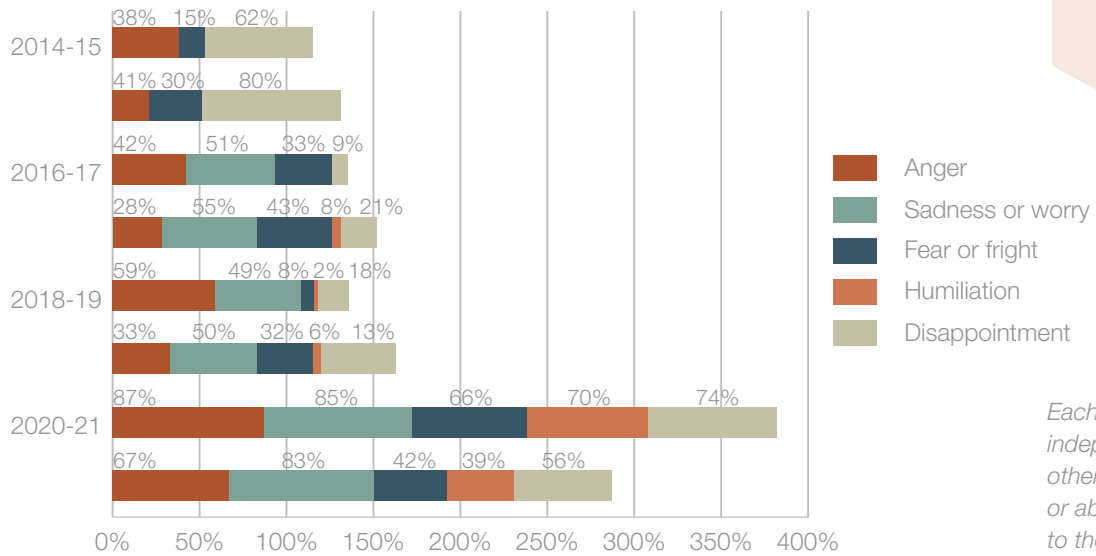
Emotional response to death threats, offline/online

There was a significant jump in all response categories, offline and online, in 2020-21. The highest emotional impact was expressed in 2020. It is possible that anti-Muslim racism was more impactful in times of COVID-19. The optional question in the reporting tool asking the reporter's emotional state in 2018-19 and 2020-21 might have contributed to this increase as well.

Emotional response to death threats, offline/online by year

There was a significant jump in all response categories, offline and online, in 2020-21. The highest emotional impact was expressed in 2020. It is possible that anti-Muslim racism was more impactful in the times of COVID-19.

Each feeling is coded independently from each other whether it was present or absent as a response to the incident. Multiple emotions were expressed in some cases.

Chapter IV

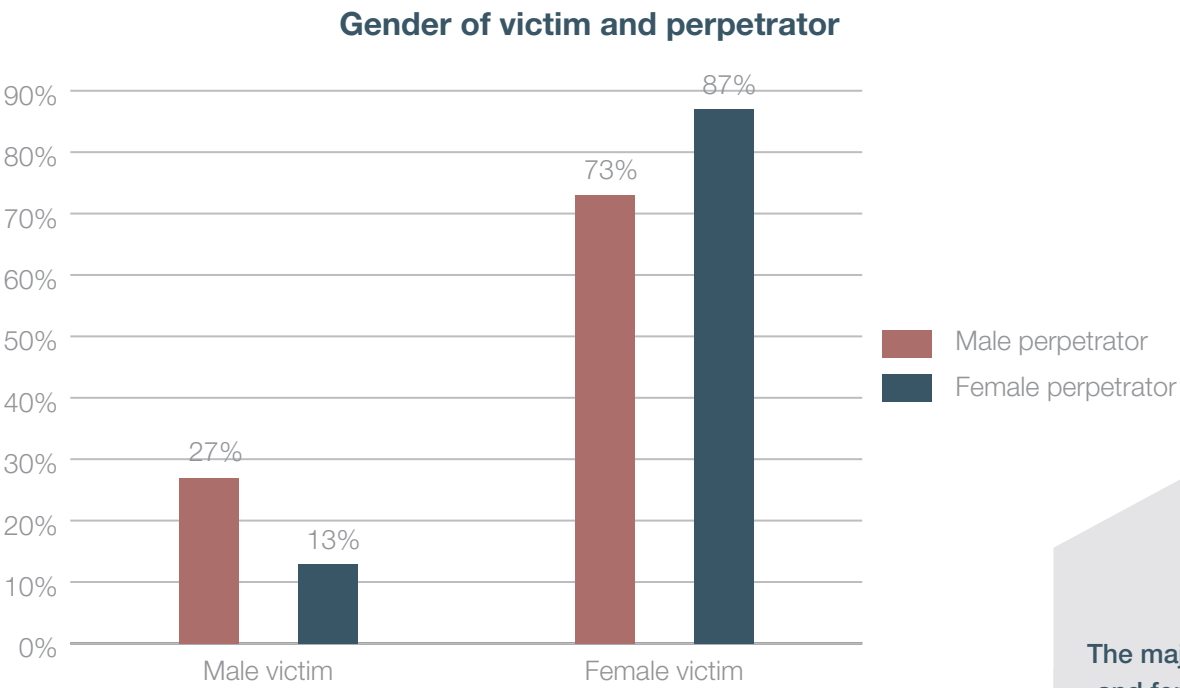# FURTHER ANALYSIS - OFFLINE AND ONLINE (2014-2021)

1.   GENDER DYNAMICS

1.1. Gender Dynamics – Incident Types, Hotspots, Severity of Physical Attacks

The majority of male and female victims were harassed by male perpetrators.

Two out of three Muslim women victims who reported to the Register were harassed by a male perpetrator and one in three by a female perpetrator. Most Muslim men (84%) who reported to the Register were harassed by male perpetrators compared to 16% by female perpetrators. Female perpetrators usually harassed female victims (87%) and rarely male victims (13%).

Gender of victim and perpetrator

Male perpetrator
Female perpetrator

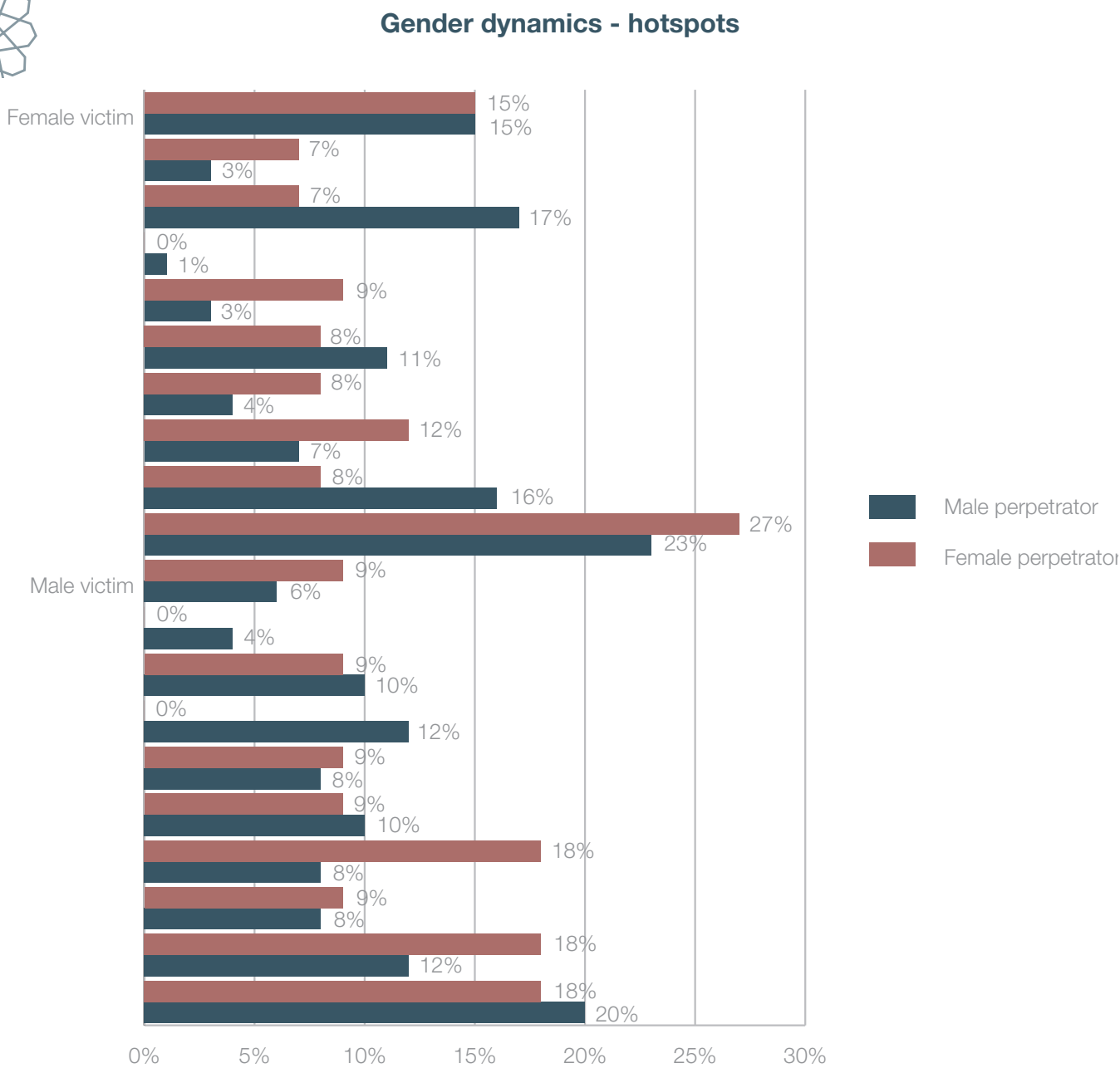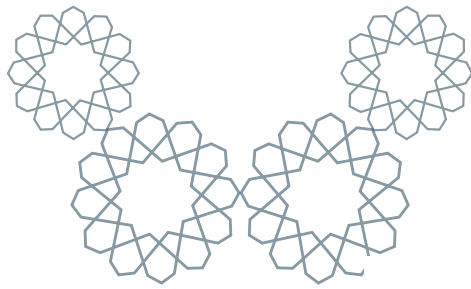Male victim: 27%, 13%
Female victim: 73%, 87%

More female victims faced verbal harassment and more male victims faced discrimination.

Women experienced more verbal intimidation (55%, n=144) than males (45%, n=33), while males experienced greater levels of discrimination (21%, n=15) than females (9%, n=25), while both genders experienced the same level of physical violence (males 8%, n=6 versus females 8%, n=20).

While fluctuations appeared in discrimination for men and women across the years, a steady increase was observed from 2014-15 to 2020-21 for men and women (17% and 33% for men and 7% and 21% for women).

Female victims were abused by male perpetrators at worksites and streets while male victims were abused by female perpetrators in official buildings, workplaces and schools.

A small gender difference emerged according to the types of hotspots. There appeared to be slightly different gender patterns like male perpetrators harassing female victims at worksites and streets, and female perpetrators harassing male victims usually from a position of privilege in official buildings, workplaces and schools. Since the sample size was too small due to the long list of hotspots, no conclusions can be drawn.

> The majority of male and female victims were harassed by male perpetrators.

Gender dynamics - hotspots

Male perpetrator
Female perpetrator

Female victim:
15% / 15%
7% / 3%
7% / 17%
0% / 1%
9% / 3%
8% / 11%
8% / 4%
12% / 7%
8% / 16%
27% / 23%

Male victim:
9% / 6%
0% / 4%
9% / 10%
0% / 12%
9% / 8%
9% / 10%
18% / 8%
9% / 8%
18% / 12%
18% / 20%

Female perpetrators chose the type of abuse considering the victim's gender.

Abuse and violence committed by female perpetrators carried distinctive gender patterns. Not a single man faced any physical harassment by a female perpetrator. In contrast, 16% (n=11) of women were harassed by women. Female perpetrators tended to direct verbal abuse toward men (80%) more than their female counterparts (64%).

For male perpetrators, gender did not matter much. The ratio of verbal abuse of Muslim men (56%) and women (55%) by male perpetrators and non-violent physical harassment for Muslim men (13%) and women (13%) was similar.

1.2. Gender – Content of Insult, Intensity of Hate Rhetoric and Third Party
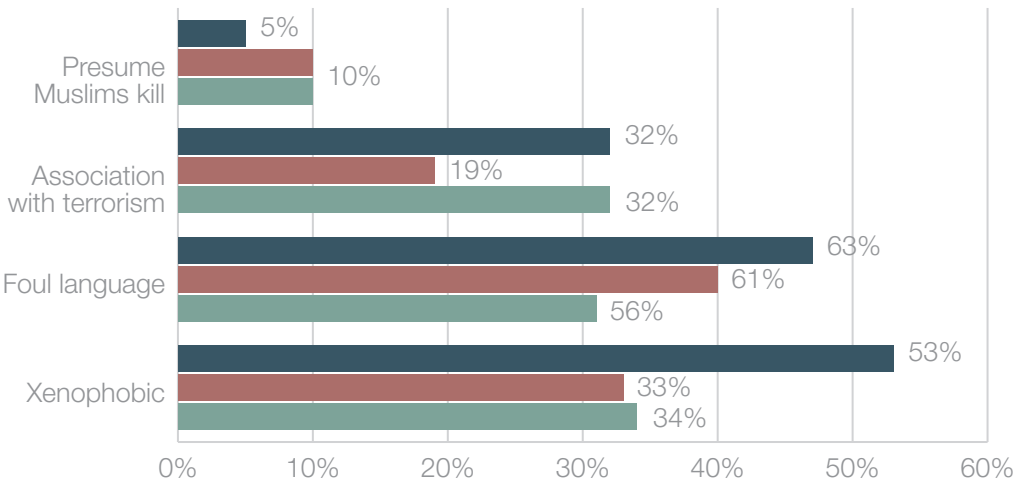
Male perpetrators were dominant in physical and property damage.

A significant relationship was observed for the gender of the perpetrator and type of attack. Male perpetrators were mostly engaged in property damage (96%) rather than verbal (69%) or physical attacks (72%).

The victim's gender played a role in the content of anti-Muslim racial slurs. Violence was associated with Muslim men while religious insults and misogynist foul language were directed at women.

A greater proportion of Muslim men (32%) were associated with terrorism compared to Muslim women (19%). Muslim men experienced slightly higher rates of xenophobia (34% compared to 33% for women) whereas Muslim women experienced slightly more religious insults (61% compared to 56% for men) and foul language (40% for women compared to 31% for men).
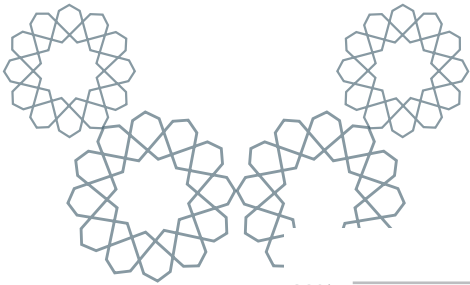
Content of insult by victim gender

On a side note, as with gender, age played a role in the content of insults. Those in younger age groups tended to use less xenophobic insults (from 23% for the 20–29-years age group to 44% for the 50+ age group) while the older age groups tended to presume that Muslims kill (5% for the 20-29 year age group and 23% for the 50+ age group).
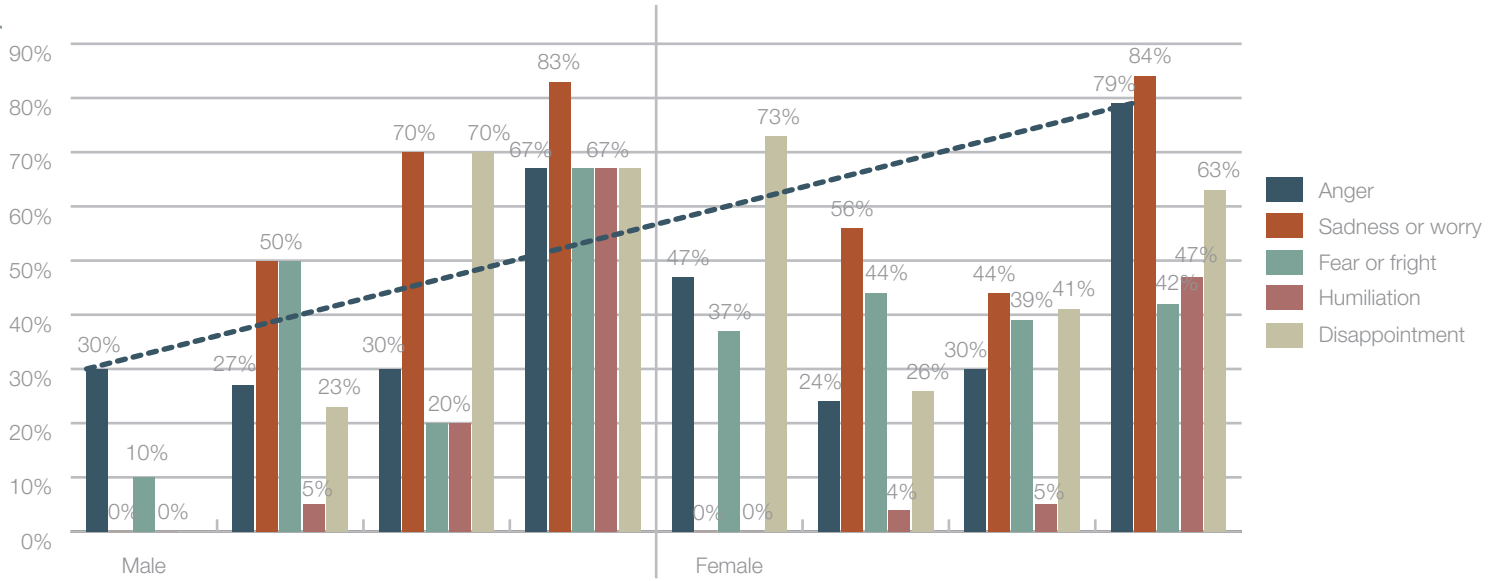
Male perpetrators were a source of violent hate sentiments and death threats.

Significant differences emerged between genders in relation to the intensity of hate rhetoric. Female perpetrators were more likely to be contemptuous (including dehumanising and disgust) of Muslims compared to males, while males were more likely to express a desire to kill than female perpetrators. In other words, male perpetrators were the main source of death threats, while female perpetrators only threatened Muslim women.

Muslim men (12%) and women (10%) received similar rates of death threats. Most of the hate was at the level of fury (approximately 40%), contempt, disgust and dehumanisation (approximately 40%).

Emotional response by gender and year

Vulnerable victims received the severest level of hate rhetoric.

Women alone (47%) or with a child (41%) experienced the highest level of hate (i.e., wanting to kill) compared to women with company (6%).

When the victim was a female, a significantly greater proportion of surrounding people either walked on (38% female compared to 13% male) or stood and watched (22% female compared to 7% male).

Vulnerable victims received the severest level of hate rhetoric.

Neither multiple nor physical attacks mobilised witnesses (third parties) to report incidents.

1.3. Gender Dynamics and Emotional Response

The sense of anger, disappointment and humiliation steadily increased for men and women victims.

Minor differences emerged between genders in relation to their emotional response to the incident.

In comparison to Muslim women, Muslim men expressed a slightly higher proportion of sadness and worry (43% for males compared to 39% for females) and disappointment (52% for males compared to 42% for females). In contrast, Muslim women reported a slightly higher rate of anger (31% for females compared to 29% for males) and fear/fright (40% for females compared to 33% for males).

In the course of 2014-21, a steady increase was observed for both genders in feeling humiliated as a result of islamophobic attacks.

2. INCIDENT TYPES AND PHYSICAL SEVERITY

2.1. Incident Type – Reporter

Neither multiple nor physical attacks mobilised witnesses (third parties) to report incidents.

Hate speech and or threats were always reported by victims (59%, n=156). Instances of discrimination (20%), physical assault (16%) and multiple cases (18%) were reported mostly by proxies. Unsurprisingly, witness reporting was high for incidents of graffiti/vandalism (28%) and written materials (18%). Ideally, bystanders should be activated, especially in cases of physical assault.

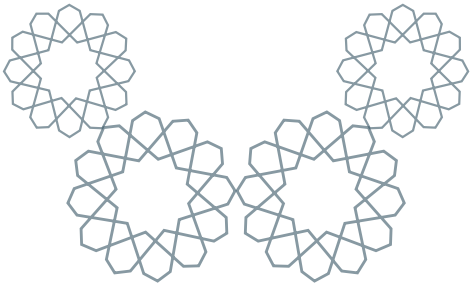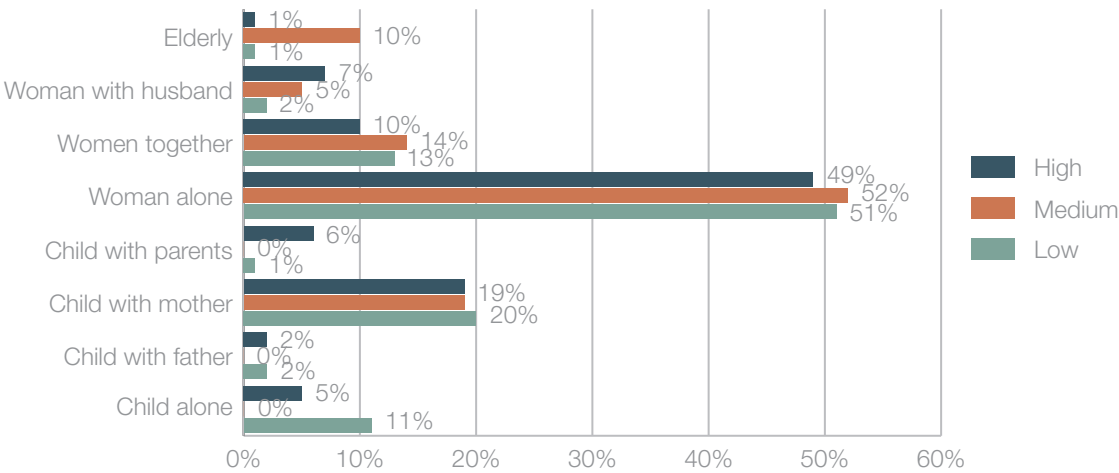## 2.2. Physical Severity Level – Vulnerability Scenarios

The severity of threat variable was created by reducing the original nine categories to three: verbal threat/non-verbal intimidation, property damage and physical assault. Accordingly, 62% of all threats were verbal intimidation/threats, 15% were property damage and 23% were physical attacks.

Vulnerable victims were exposed to more physical attacks.

A significant relationship existed between vulnerability scenarios and attack severity. Over eight out of 10 children alone experienced verbal/non-verbal attacks while 17% indicated a physical attack. This trend appeared to be the case for all vulnerability scenarios. While the majority of attacks were verbal/non-verbal, around three out of 10 in each vulnerable group category (except children) experienced a physical attack. There appeared to be no difference between verbal and physical attacks and whether a woman was alone or in company.

Overall, a woman with her husband experienced fewer attacks (4% n=10) than a woman alone (51%; n=142) or women together (12% n=34), while a child with a father experienced fewer attacks (2%, n=5) than a child with a woman (19% n=54).
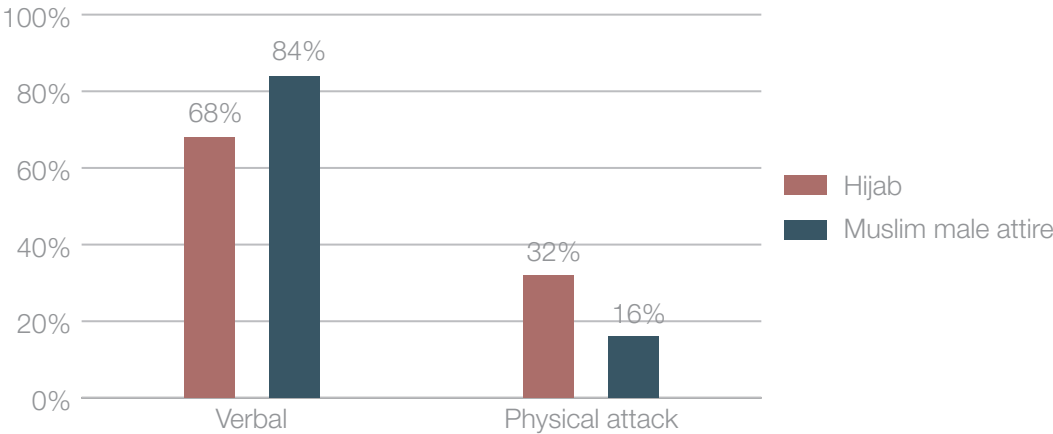
Level of attack and vunerability scenarios

Property damage was always directed at mosques.

Third parties were rarely present and mostly appeared in cases of physical attack.

2.3. Physical Severity Level – Religious Attire

Verbal attacks were the most common form of attack, while females wearing hijab experienced a higher proportion of physical attacks compared to men in religious attire.

Religious attire by level of attack

2.4. Physical Severity Level – Location Types

A greater proportion of property damage occurred in guarded areas and being guarded did not prevent physical attacks.

Differences emerged between guarded and unguarded places and the severity of the attack. A significantly greater proportion of property damage occurred in guarded areas. Bivariate correlations indicated no significant difference for verbal or physical attacks in guarded or unguarded areas. This suggests that being guarded or unguarded has little effect on whether an attack is verbal or physical, except for property damage.

A relationship exists between some hotspots and the level of attack. Physical attacks were less likely at school or university and more likely in leisure places than verbal and non-verbal attacks. Mosques were more likely to experience property damage (28%; n=21) than other hotspots, including construction sites and shopping centres. The incidence of verbal attacks and non-verbal intimidation was similar for all hotspots listed.
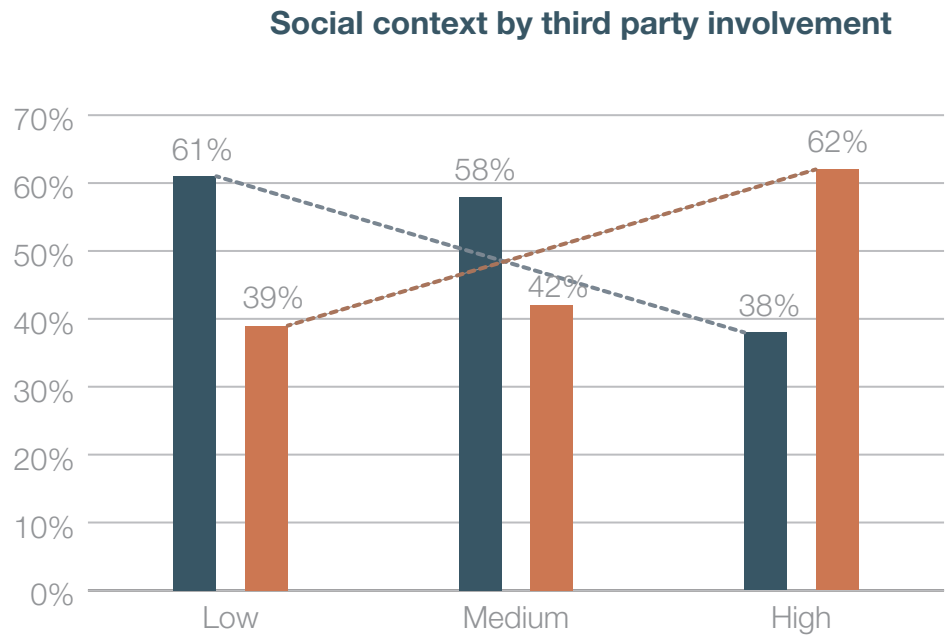
Physical attacks were slightly higher in multicultural areas (27%) compared to less multicultural areas (19%) while no significant differences were observed in relation to verbal attacks and property damage.

2.5. Physical Severity Level – Social Context, Third-party Presence

In most cases, the victim and perpetrator were alone (72% n=228) and this did not impact on whether the attack was verbal or physical.

A third party was more likely to be present in cases of physical attacks and absent in cases of verbal attacks and non-verbal intimidation (p=.002). Bivariate correlations indicated a small to moderate effect suggesting a third party is 19% more likely to be present in cases of physical attack.
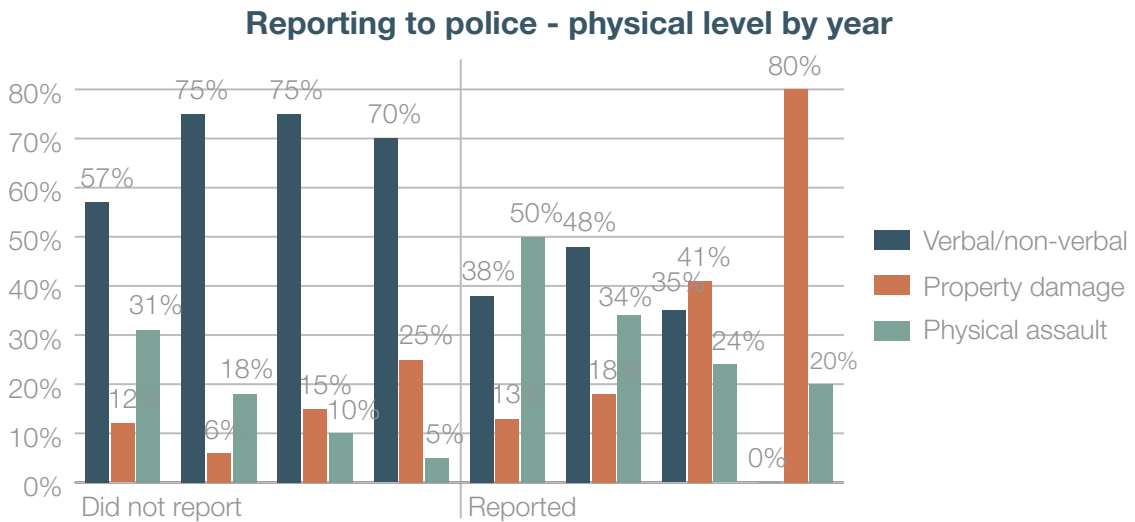
Social context by third party involvement

The reporting of property damage (i.e. predominantly mosque attacks) increased almost four-fold in the year of the Christchurch attacks compared to 2014-15. This was due to the increase in mosque attacks in the aftermath of the Christchurch attacks and heightened community alertness to any level of mosque attacks in this period. The proportion reporting physical attacks decreased gradually (50% in 2014-15, 34% in 2016-17, 24% in 2018-19 and 20% in 2020-21).

Reporting to police - physical level by year

Proxies reported to the police where a woman was alone (40%, n=2), where a woman was with her husband (40%, n=2) and where there were women together (20%, n=1).

In the case of verbal assaults police took a statement 62% of the time, while for cases of property damage and physical assaults police took a statement 80% of the time. In 13% of cases for property damage and 4% of cases involving a physical attack, it was reported to the Register that police did not take a statement. In 38% of cases where the person was verbally attacked the matter was reported to police but the outcome not reported to the Register, with the same outcome occurring in 7% of cases for property damage and 14% of physical attacks.
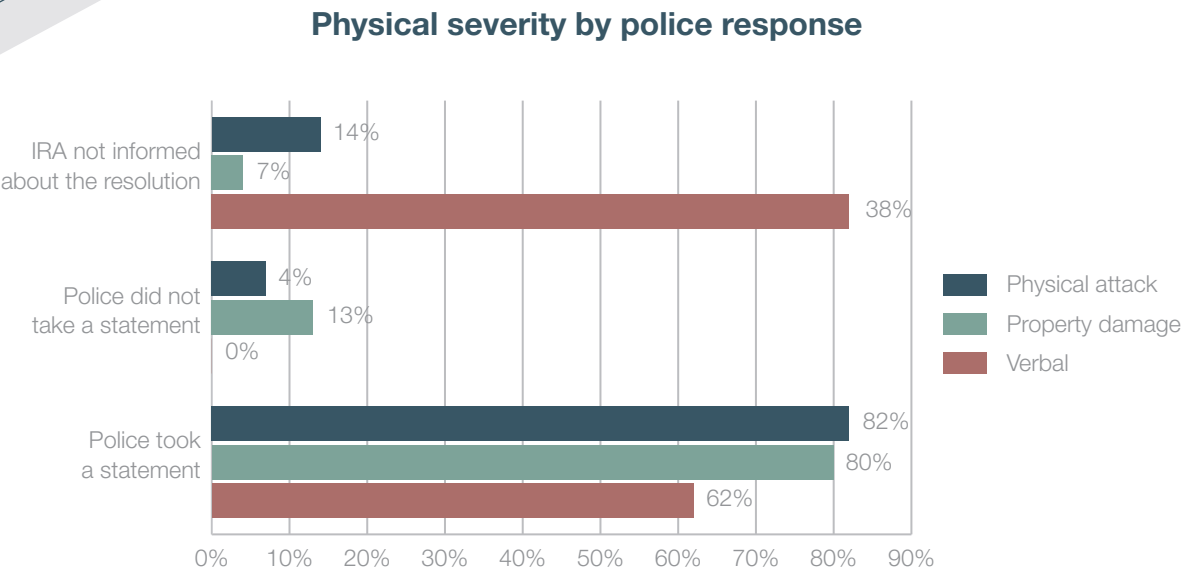
2.6. Physical Severity Level – Bystander Intervention and Police Response

No attention and inaction by bystanders were common behaviours.

Bystanders were more likely to watch physical attacks (25%, n=10) than verbal attacks (13%, n=10). In very few circumstances third parties took no side (11%, n=14). In contrast, police were compelled to respond, and as expected no police walked on or watched; they appeared to be more responsive and swifter in cases of physical attacks.

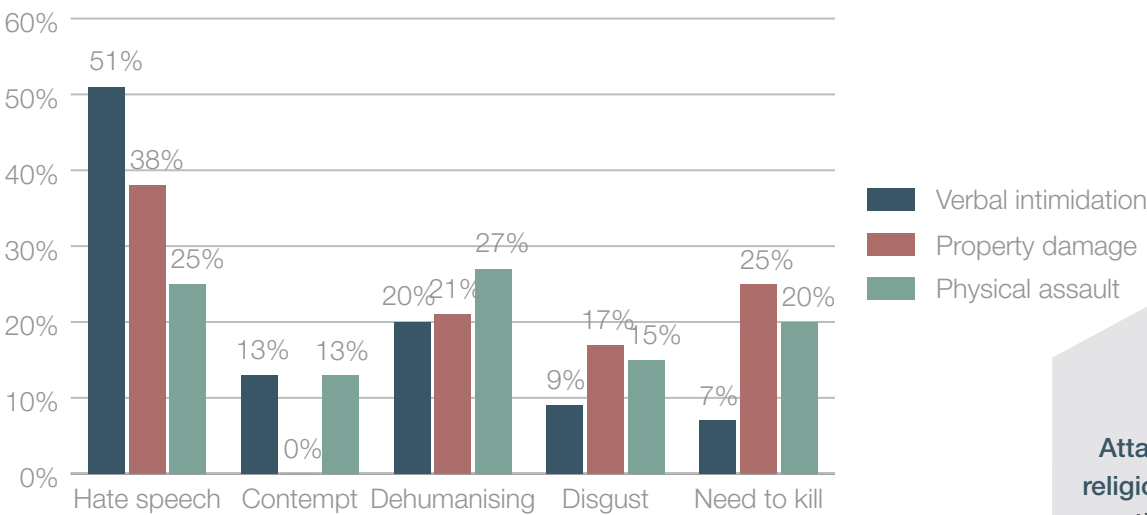## 2.7. Physical Severity Level – Reporting to Police

The severity of an attack was significantly related to whether the police were contacted. Respondents were more likely to report to the police the greater the severity level of the attack. Bivariate correlations indicated that respondents were 25% more likely to contact police if the severity of the attack was high.

The reporting of property damage (i.e. predominantly mosque attacks) increased almost four-fold in the year of the Christchurch attacks compared to 2014-15.

A presumption that Muslims kill doubled in multiculturally more diverse areas.

Physical severity by police response

2.8. Physical Severity Level – Content of Insult, Intensity of Hate Rhetoric, Death Threats

An association with terrorism was significantly related to verbal rather than physical attacks. Bivariate correlations indicated a minor effect suggesting an association with terrorism was 13% more likely to be associated with verbal rather than physical attacks. Accordingly, 22% of all threats that included an association with terrorism were verbal compared to 7% for property damage and 11% of physical attacks.

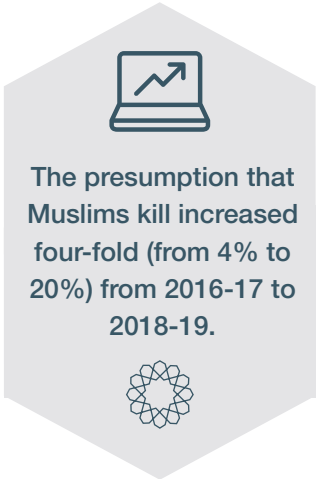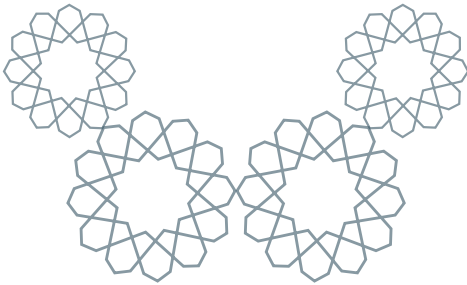### Severity of hate rhetoric and level of attack

Bivariate correlations indicate that threats to shoot Muslims are 12% more likely with high level (physical) attacks than low level (verbal) attacks. Also, a significant relationship was observed for the severity of the attack and hate rhetoric. Fury was more likely to be associated with verbal attacks, while a need to kill was more likely to be expressed in property and physical attacks, which mirrored the above result in relation to threats to kill, which were more closely related to high rather than low level attacks.
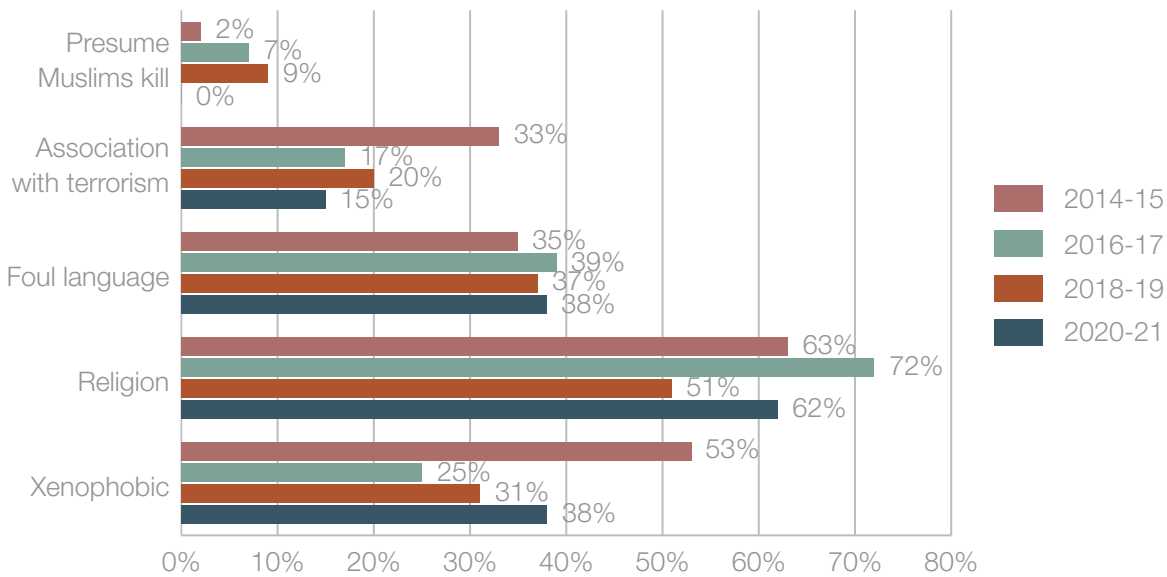
3. CONTENT OF INSULT AND INTENSITY OF HATE RHETORIC

3.1. Content of Insults – Multiculturally More and Less Diverse Areas

During 2014-2021, the hate content in incidents occurring in multiculturally more and less diverse areas were. similar: xenophobia 36% compared to 37%, insulting religion and religious appearance - 59% compared to 65%, foul language - 39% compared to 38%, association with terrorism - 18% compared to 22%. Interestingly, a presumption that Muslims kill doubled in multiculturally more diverse areas (10% compared to 5% respectively).

Attacking religion/ religious appearance was the most popular form of insult (64%).

The presumption that Muslims kill increased four-fold (from 4% to 20%) from 2016-17 to 2018-19.

Content of insult by non-multicultural area by year

In nmulticulturally less diverseareas, xenophobia (53%) in 2014-15 dropped by nearly half (25%) in 2016-17 but increased to 31% in 2018-19 and 38% in 2020-21.

In multiculturally more diverse areas, insulting religion/religious appearance (75%) in 2016-17 dropped by half (37%) in 2018-2019 and decreased further to 30% in 2020-21. In contrast, the presumption that Muslims kill increased four-fold (from 4% to 20%) from 2016-17 to 2018-19.

Content of insult by multicultural area by year

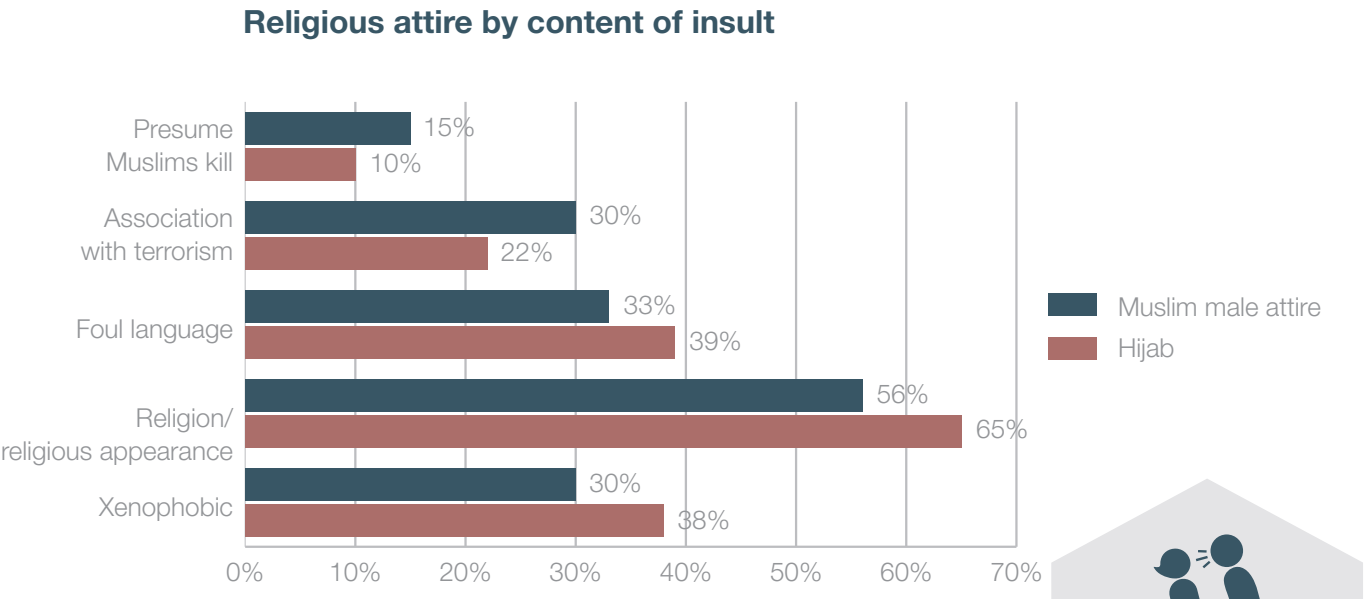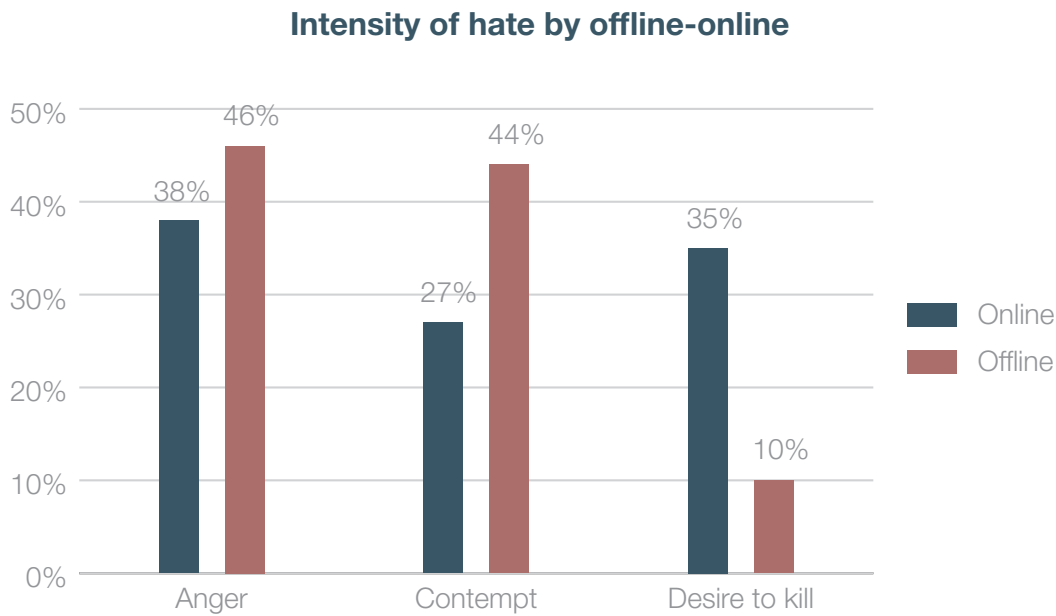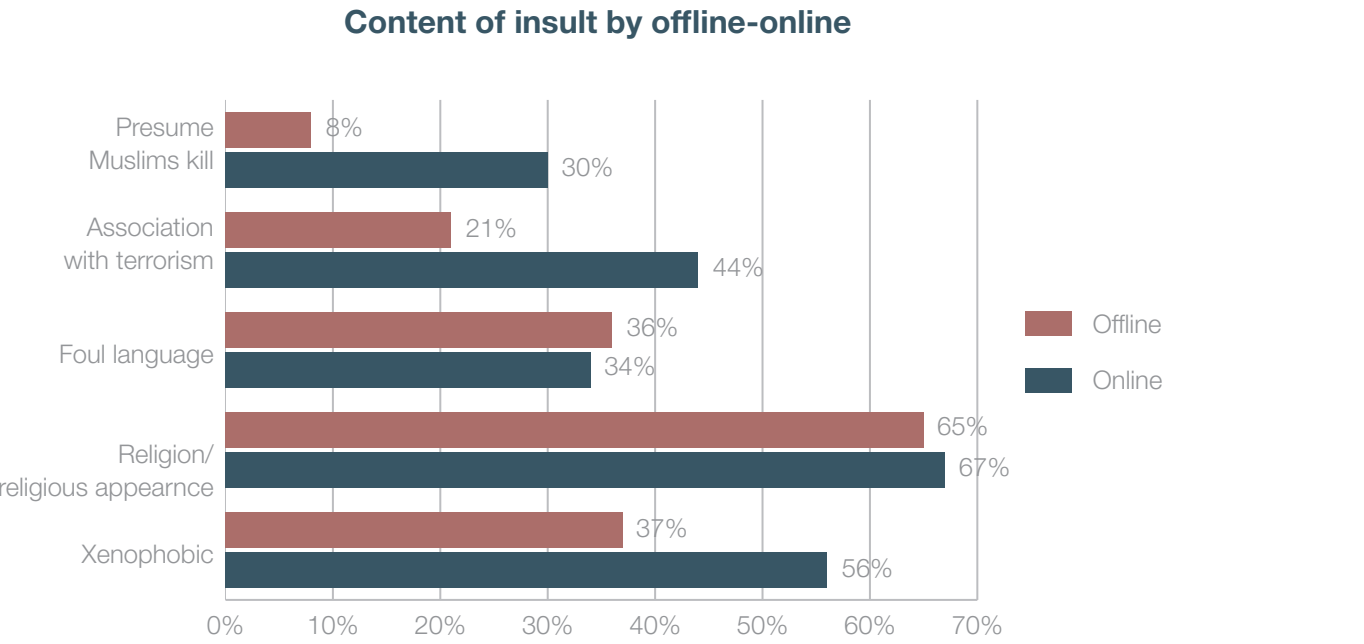## 3.2. Content of Insults – Religious Attire

Attacking religion/religious appearance was the most popular form of insult (64%, n=180), followed by foul language (38%, n=107) and xenophobic comments (37%, n=104). No significant differences emerged over the type of insult experienced between females wearing a hijab and males in religious attire.

Religious attire by content of insult

Intensity of hate by offline-online

3.3. Offline - Online Comparison: Content of Insults

Significant differences were observed in relation to the content of insults and whether the insult was made offline or online. An association with terrorism was more likely online than offline,as were xenophobic insults and the presumption that Muslims kill.

A desire to kill was significantly higher for online than offline incidents while anger (46%; n=149) and contempt (44%; n=145) were significantly higher for offline incidents than they were online (38%; n=138 for anger and 27%; n=98 for contempt).

Foul language was used when the hate was heightened.

The most intense hate (i.e. wanting to kill) was expressed at similar levels in guarded and unguarded places.

3.4. The Intensity of Hate Rhetoric – Content of Insult, Physical Severity, Location

Intensity of the perpetrator's hate rhetoric is grouped as hostility (level 1), contempt-dehumanising-disgust (level 2) and wanting to kill (level 3). Fury is expressed more at verbal attacks while a need to kill is expressed more in property and physical attacks.

Foul language was used when the hate intensity was heightened as in the cases of contempt (54%) and desire to kill (59%) compared to fury (29%). The absence of any more associations suggests the severity of the hate rhetoric has little bearing on content of the insult.

All the listed types of insults occurred in one-third to half of the incidents, irrespective of whether the incident was verbal, property damage or a physical attack.

Content of insult by offline-online

Intensity of hate rhetoric by content of insult

Verbal intimidation was more apparent with anger than it was with a desire to kill, while physical attacks were more closely associated with a desire to kill.

In terms of location, very little difference emerged in relation to the intensity of hate rhetoric and where it occurred. Shopping centres, construction sites and public

In comparison to unguarded places, intense hate (fury) was expressed less in guarded places (55% in guarded areas compared to 65% in unguarded areas), while contempt-dehumanising and disgust were\higher in guarded places (20% in guarded areas compared to 10% in unguarded places). Wanting to kill was expressed at similar levels (25%) in guarded and unguarded places.

Intensity of hate rhetoric by level of attack

transport were the most common places to experience hate rhetoric with little difference observed in relation to the severity. However, the number of incidents was low for several categories, so care should be taken when interpreting results.

Likewise, being guarded was not a deterrent since the amount of high level (i.e. physical) attacks were the same in guarded and unguarded places. Medium level attacks (i.e. property damage) were almost twice as likely in guarded places compared to unguarded places.

No relationship was observed between victim gender and emotional impact.

Intensity of hate rhetoric by level of attack

Guarded and unguarded areas by level of attack

3.5. OFFLINE AND ONLINE COMPARISON
Intensity of rhetoric and type of abuse

While offline cases indicated no effect between intensity of hate rhetoric and the insult's content, a different picture emerged for online cases.
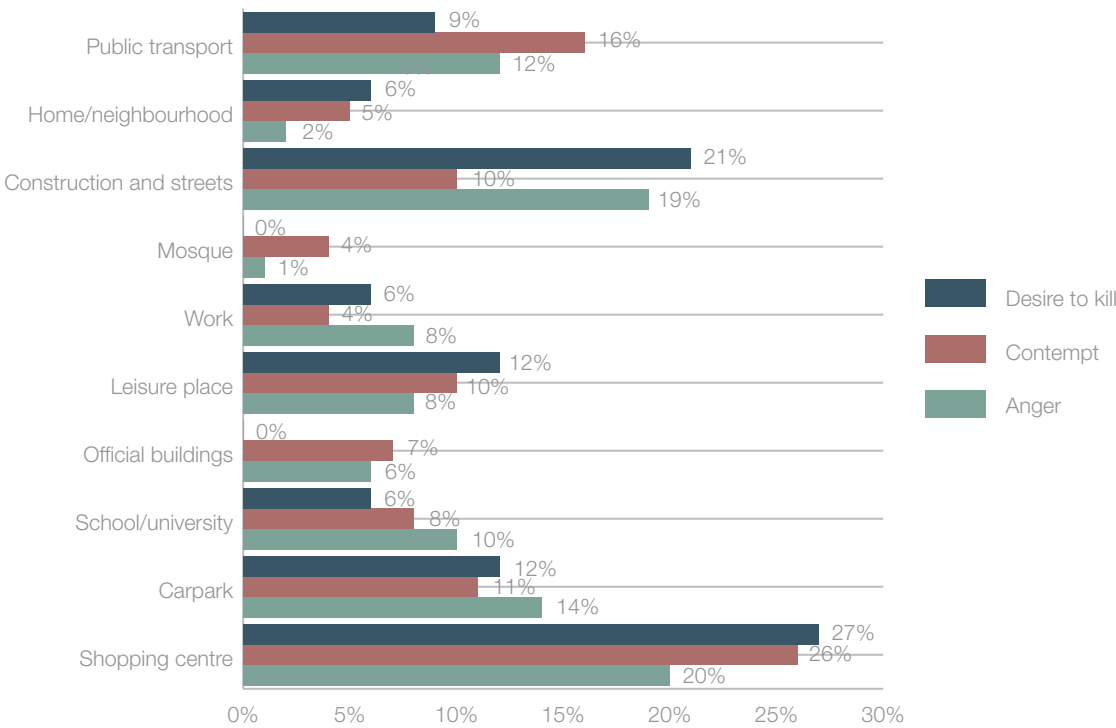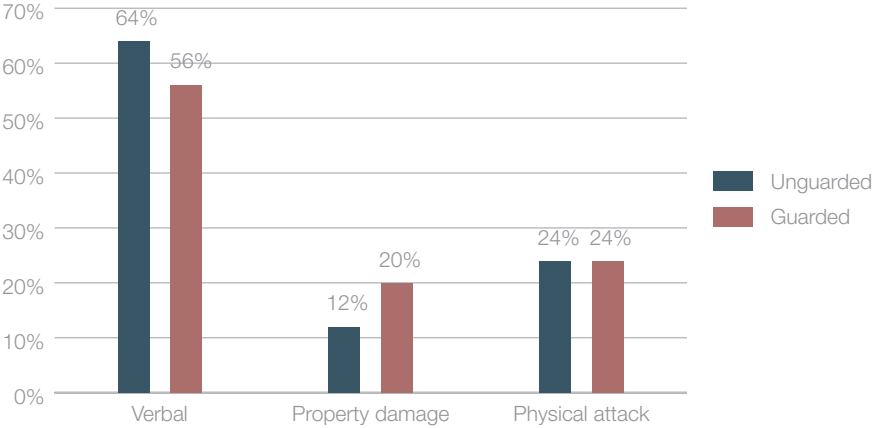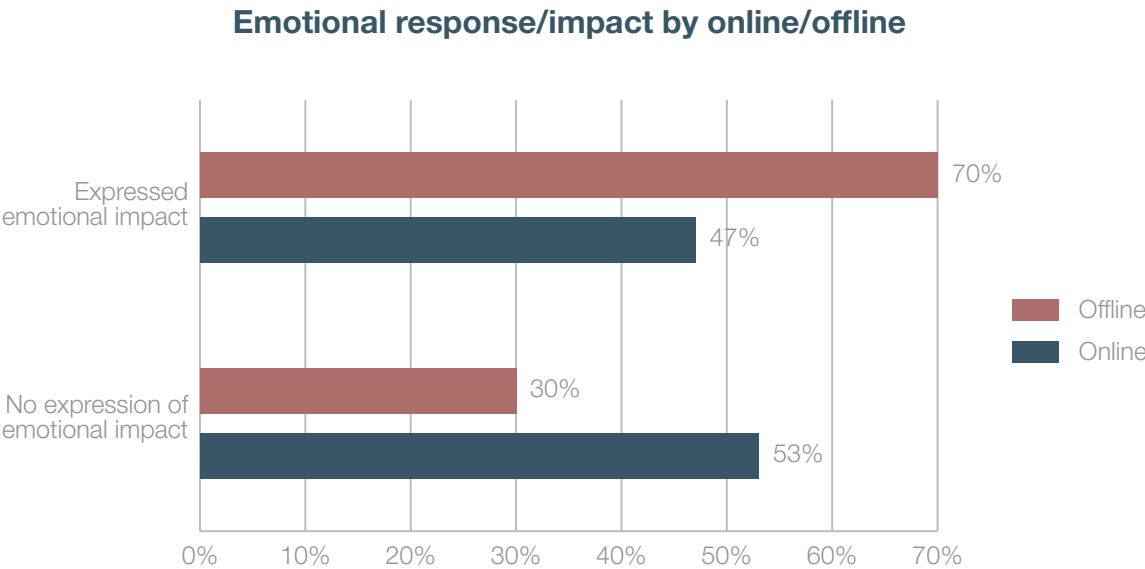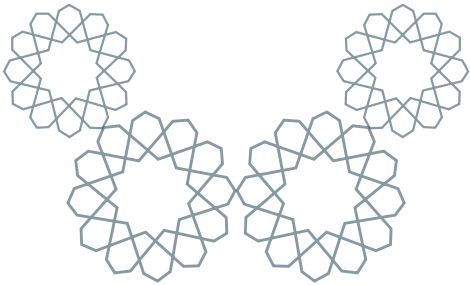
Xenophobic comments were more closely associated with contempt (62%) and a desire to kill (65%); insulting religion and religious appearance were more closely associated with contempt (72%); foul language was more closely related to contempt (41%) and a desire to kill (51%); and an association with terrorism was closely linked to a desire to kill (60%). A presumption that Muslims kill was more likely to be associated with a desire to kill (37%).

While offline cases indicated no effect between intensity of hate rhetoric and the insult's content, a different picture emerged for online cases.
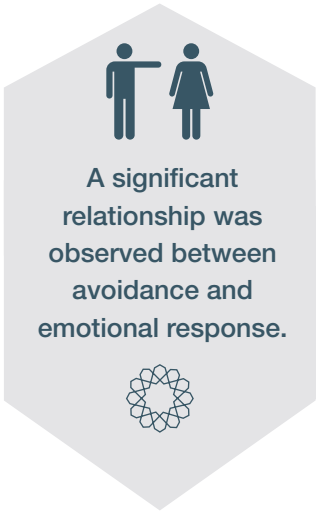
Emotional response/impact by online/offline

	Offline	Online
Expressed emotional impact	70%	47%
No expression of emotional impact	30%	53%

4. EMOTIONAL RESPONSE/ IMPACT

Negative emotion was computed using several variables: anger, sadness/worry, fear/frightened, humiliation and disappointment.

If a respondent answered yes to one or more of the above, they were coded 1 (negative emotion) and if they did not express a negative emotion for one or more of the above they were coded zero (no emotion). In 2014-15 and 2016-17, emotional impact was formulated based on the emotional expressions falling into the above listed categories.

Of the 723 applicable offline and online cases, 40% expressed no emotion and 60% expressed one or more negative emotions. Additionally, a significantly greater proportion of those offline expressed emotion (70%, n=277) than those online (47%, n=154).

Emotional impacts were independent from the presence/absence of a social relationship between victim and perpetrator.

A significant relationship was observed between avoidance and emotional response.

4.1. Emotional Response/Impact – Reporter Type, Gender, Age

No relationship was observed between victim gender and emotional impact. Nevertheless, emotional impact was expressed at a slightly higher rate for women (58%) than men (46%). Likewise, there was no relationship between the type of reporter and whether they displayed an emotional reaction.

Gender did not have an effect on proportions of victims expressing negative emotions.

Older victims and reporters were less likely to express an emotional impact. Bivariate correlations indicated a significant inverse relationship) between age and the expression of emotional impact. Older age groups were 16% less likely to express an emotional impact than younger age groups. Accordingly, 72% of those in the 10-19 year age group and 71% of those in the 20-29 year age group expressed a negative emotion compared to 64% of those in the 40-49 year age group.

Expression of emotional impact   No expression of emotional impact

Emotional response/impact by age

Age	No expression of emotional impact	Expressed emotional impact
10-19	29%	71%
20-29	29%	71%
30-39	37%	63%
40-49	36%	64%
50+	55%	45%

4.2. Emotional Response/Impact – Vulnerability Scenarios

No relationship was found between vulnerability scenarios and the expression of emotional impact. Children's cases were always reported by proxies and witnesses and in such cases, the emotional response of the reporter was disappointment (67%, n=12), followed by sadness or worry (50%, n=9), anger (40%, n=8) and fear or fright (22%, n=4).

For females with a child, sadness and worry (50%), fear or fright (47%) and disappointment (34%) were the most common emotional reactions. Interestingly, only four cases involving a father with a child expressed the most fear or fright compared to other groups but the number is too small to draw any conclusions.

Emotional response/impact by vunerable groups

Legend:
- No expressions of emotional impact
- Expressions of emotional impact

Data:
- Elderly: 1%, 1%
- Woman with husband: 3%, 6%
- Women together: 11%, 14%
- Woman unaccompanied: 48%, 49%
- Child with parents: 2%, 1%
- Child with mother: 21%, 21%
- Child with father: 3%, 0%
- Child unaccompanied: 11%, 7%

The Emotional Response/ Impact for Online Incidents

Those who were targeted individually online were more likely to express emotional impact (53%) compared to those (36%) witnessing online anti-Muslim harassment. Likewise, those who had received emails were more likely to indicate a negative emotion.

Also, expression of emotional impact was not dependent on the presence/absence of threats or insults.

4.3. Emotional Response/Impact – Relationship Status, Attack Type

Emotional impacts were independent from the presence/absence of a social relationship between victim and perpetrator. Likewise, no relationship existed between verbal attacks/property damage/physical attacks and expression of emotional impact.

4.4. Emotional Response/Impact – Content of Insults

Two types of insults were significantly related to the expression of emotional impact: xenophobic comments and an association with terrorism. Emotional impact was expressed in cases of xenophobia (34% compared to 19% with lack of expression). Bivariate correlations indicated that reporters were 15% more likely to have a negative emotion if they were a target of xenophobic comments.

In cases of an association with terrorism, 23% of the reporters expressed an emotional impact compared to 10% lacking expression of an emotional impact. Bivariate correlations indicated that those who were subject to comments associated with terrorism were 15% more likely to express a negative emotion.

Among varying levels of intensity of hate, a significant relationship was observed only between contempt and expression of emotional impact. Thus, 16% of those who experienced contempt also express an emotional impact compared to 6% who did not..

4.5. Emotional Response/Impact – Third Party Absent or Present

A significant relationship exists between the expression of emotional impact and whether a third party was present or absent.

Third party presence alleviated the impact of the incident regardless of severity. Where no third party was present, 63% (n=115) expressed an emotional impact while 38% (n=69) did not.
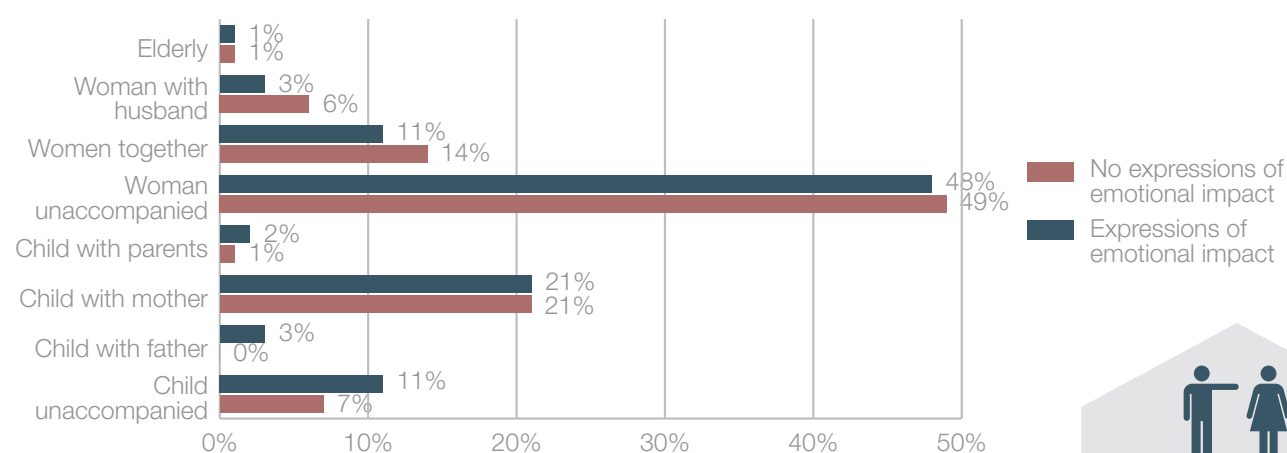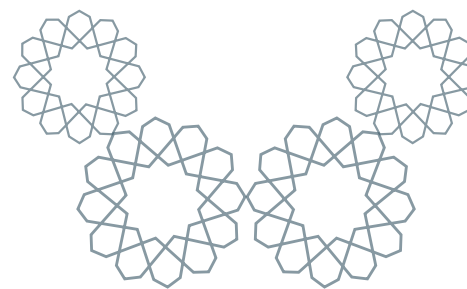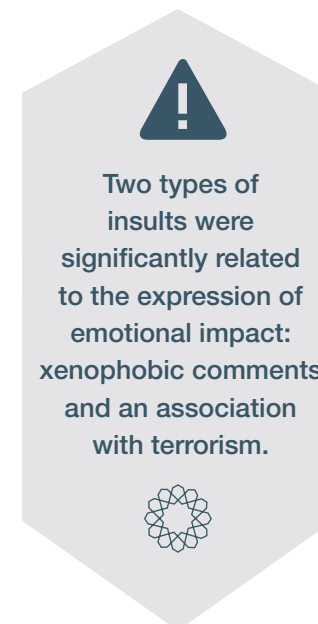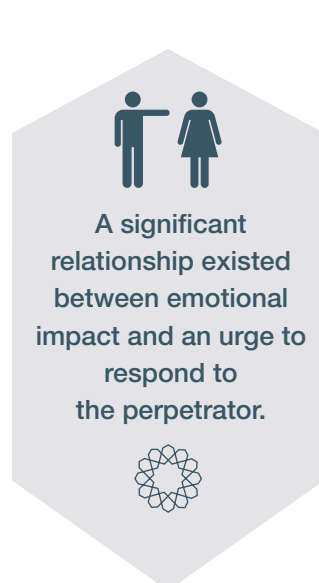
4.6. Emotional Response/Impact – Avoidance

A significant relationship was observed between avoidance and emotional response.

Sixty-five percent of those who felt no emotion did not feel the need to show avoidance behaviour (such as ignoring and walking away). In contrast, those preferring avoidance expressed an emotional impact (81%). Bivariate correlations indicated that those who expressed a negative emotion were 13% more likely to have feelings of avoidance than those who had not expressed an emotional impact. It is equally possible that avoidance behaviour may be a result of emotional impact; or avoidance may later lead to an emotional impact.

Those who experienced fear or fright were more likely to feel avoidance than those who had not. Sixty-nine percent (n=93) of those who adopted avoidance behaviour expressed fear or fright compared to 32% (n=43) of those who did not. Similar trends emerged for humiliation and disappointment, indicating that those who felt humiliated or were disappointed were more likely to engage in avoidance than those who did not.

A significant relationship existed between emotional impact and an urge to respond to the perpetrator.

Two types of insults were significantly related to the expression of emotional impact: xenophobic comments and an association with terrorism.

Avoidance by emotional response

Disappointment: 53% (Feelings of avoidance), 31% (No feeling of avoidance)
Humiliation: 32% (Feelings of avoidance), 17% (No feeling of avoidance)
Fear or fright: 69% (Feelings of avoidance), 32% (No feeling of avoidance)
Sadness or worry: 60% (Feelings of avoidance), 58% (No feeling of avoidance)
Anger: 40% (Feelings of avoidance), 47% (No feeling of avoidance)

Legend:
- No feeling of avoidance
- Feelings of avoidance

4.8. Long-term Impact

Bivariate correlations indicated that those who expressed a negative emotion were 19% more likely to indicate a long-term impact than those who did not express a negative emotion.

Whether the nature of the incident was verbal or physical had no bearing on suffering from long term impacts, with approximately one-quarter of respondents suffering long term impact from verbal (24%) and physical attacks (25%). This indicates the devastating impact of hate speech on victims.
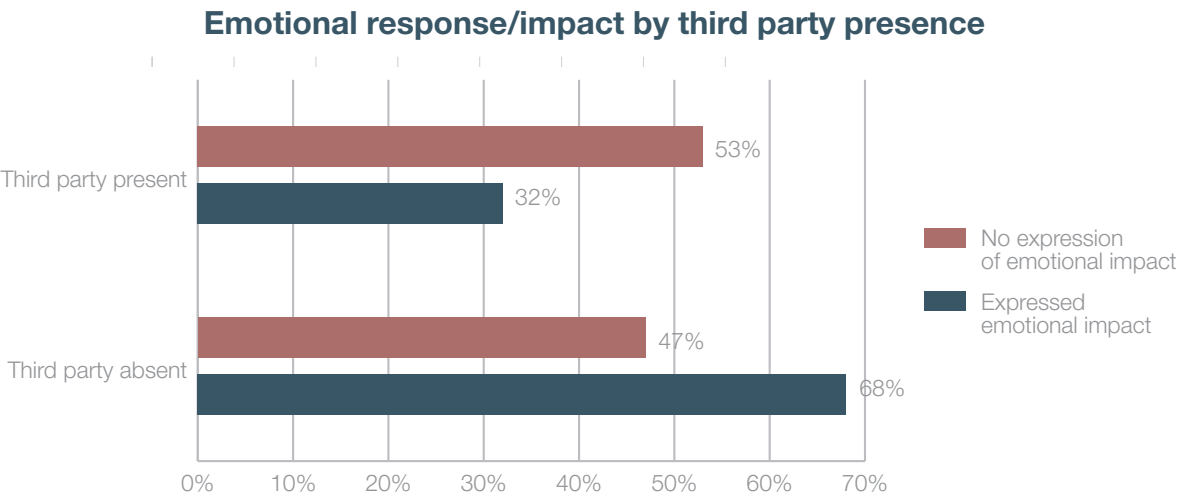
4.7. Emotional Response/Impact – Urge to Respond

A significant relationship existed between emotional impact and an urge to respond to the perpetrator. Ninety-eight percent of those who did not express any emotional impact did not feel an urge to respond compared to 82% of those who expressed an emotional impact. Bivariate correlations indicated that those who expressed a negative emotion were 24% more likely to feel a need to respond than those who did not express a negative emotion.

The urge to respond is greater for physical attacks than verbal attacks. Neither the age nor gender of the victim has any impact on an urge to respond.

We highlighted in the previous section that the more severe the incident the greater the likelihood that bystanders would be present. Thus, where a physical attack occurred 62% (n=63) of respondents indicated that a third party was present compared to 39% for verbal abuse (n=104). Likewise, the greater the level of severity the more likely it is that people will take the side of the victim. Respondents were more likely to express the emotional impact in such severe cases (which included third parties). Accordingly, 80% (n=132) expressed an emotional impact when a third party was present compared to 20% (n=32) who did not express any emotional impact when a third party was present.

Emotional response/impact by third party presence

Third party present: 53% (No expression of emotional impact), 32% (Expressed emotional impact)
Third party absent: 47% (No expression of emotional impact), 68% (Expressed emotional impact)

Legend:
- No expression of emotional impact
- Expressed emotional impact

APPENDIX

Data Registration Protocol

The registration protocol ensured the authenticity and accuracy of the data. Measures include:

- Reports were accorded with the definitions of Islamophobia and other terms listed in the glossary section.

- Incidents were counted if reported by targets, proxies or witnesses.

- Although the Register is a frequent target of Islamophobic attacks, self-reporting was avoided and cases attacking the Register were discarded in the statistical analysis to avoid inflating the numbers.

- The authenticity of the data was examined (procedure is explained below).

- Where possible, essential data missing from the report was retrieved by contacting the reporter.

- After verifying and cleaning the data, coding was undertaken, following inductive and deductive methods.

- When the reporter mentioned another Islamophobic incident, it was counted as a separate case in the data analysis.

- Duplicated reports of the same case were considered under the same case number.

Confirmation and Verification Process

To ensure data reliability, every case was meticulously scrutinised to discard instances with insufficient information for verification and rule out any likelihood of fabrication.

Confirmation processes

- Sending emails for affirmation by the reporters. If a response was not received, a second email or call was made to the reporter. Invalid emails ('bouncing') or incorrect phone numbers (false or answered by a different person) led to the report being discarded.

- If confirmation details were missing, extra measures were applied and scrutinised. Where photographs, news articles, videos and other evidence clearly showed the Islamophobic incident, it was counted as authentic.

- Reports with genuine URLs were deemed authentic.

Other excluded cases

- Cases not evidently Islamophobic or where crucial details were missing. For example, one report stated merely that the victim was 'offered pork'.

- Cases that occurred earlier than the incident years of analysis.

- Cases that occurred abroad.

- Hate cases directed at the Register and not reported by third parties.

- Cases identified as fake or that failed to pass the confirmation process. Fake reports were mostly self-evident due to false or exaggerated email addresses like 'ihatemuslims@hotmail.com' and phone numbers like '(666) 666-6666'. The narrative in fake reports also tended to include extreme exaggeration, erroneous details and/or foul language.

REFERENCES

Introduction

Alimahomed-Wilson, S. (2017). Invisible violence: Gender, Islamophobia, and the hidden assault on US Muslim women. *Women, Gender, and Families of Color,* 5(1), 73-97.

Amin, M. (2021, June 10). Why Sydney's COVID-19 response could be a tale of two cities. *ABC News.* https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-07-10/nsw-covid-19-response-is-a-tale-of-two-cities/100281710

Arashiro, Z. (2020). *Racism during the COVID-19 pandemic*. The Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria. https://eccv.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/ECCV-Issues-Brief_Racism-during-COVID19.pdf

Asian Australian Alliance. (2021). *COVID-19 racism incident report survey comprehensive report 2021.* https://asianaustralianalliance.net/

Atta, I., Randall, R., Charalambou, G., & Rose, S. (2018). *Beyond the incident: Outcomes for victims of anti-Muslim prejudice.* Faith Matters. https://tellmamauk.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/EXECUTIVE-SUMMARY.pdf

Awan, I., & Carter, P. (2021). *Covid-19: What are the drivers of the Islamophobic infodemic communications on social media, 2020-2021.* Birmingham City University. https://www.open-access.bcu.ac.uk/12536/1/csu2021314-muslim-covid-report-a4-landscape-v7-interactive-09-12-21-132838625775560900.pdf

Awan, I., Carter, P., Sutch, H., & Lally, H. (2022). Online extremism and Islamophobic language and sentiment when discussing the COVID-19 pandemic and misinformation on Twitter. *Ethnic and Racial Studies.* Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2022.2146449

Bayrakli, E., & Hafez, F. (Eds.). (2021). *European Islamophobia report 2020.* Leopold Weiss Institute. https://w.islamophobiareport.com/EIR_2020.pdf

Bayrakli, E., & Hafez, F. (Eds.). (2022). *European Islamophobia report 2021.* Leopold Weiss Institute. https://islamophobiareport.com/islamophobiareport-2021.pdf

Briggs, C. (2021, July 7). Sydney's coronavirus outbreak is moving from east to west and starting to look like Melbourne's second wave. *ABC News.* https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-07-08/coronavirus-sydney-cases-move-from-east-to- west/100275722

Chak, F. M. (2022). India, Islamophobia, and the Hindutva playbook. In N. Bakali & F. Hafez (Eds.), *The rise of global Islamophobia in the War on Terror* (pp. 187-204). Manchester University Press. https://doi.org/10.7765/9781526161765.00021

Clements, L. (2021, March 9). Covid in Wales: Racist incidents 'take your breath away'. *BBC News.* https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-56323775

Dreyfus, M. (2022, March 22). Report shows we must tackle Islamophobia in Australia [Media release]. https://www.markdreyfus.com/media/media-releases/report-shows-we-must-tackle-islamophobia-in-australia-mark-dreyfus-qc-mp/

Elias, A., Ben, J., Mansouri, F., & Paradies, Y. (2021). Racism and nationalism during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 44(5), 783-793.

Faruqi, M. [@MehreenFaruqi]. (2022, March 15). Everyone who cares about human rights and social justice in this country should read the 'Islamophobia in Australia III' report [Tweet]. Twitter. https://twitter.com/mehreenfaruqi/status/1503584469240156164?s=12

Glass, D. (2020, December 17). *Report summary - investigation into the detention and treatment of public housing residents arising from a COVID-19 'hard lockdown' in July 2020.* Victorian Ombudsman. https://assets.ombudsman.vic.gov.au/assets/Reports/Parliamentary-Reports/Public-housing-tower-lockdown/English-Summary-of-investigation-into-public-housing-tower-lockdown.pdf

Haynes, S. (2021, March 18). 'This isn't just a problem for North America.' The Atlanta shooting highlights the painful reality of rising anti-Asian violence around the world. *TIME.* https://time.com/5947862/anti-asian-attacks-rising-worldwide/

Iner, D., Asquith, N., Ip, R. H. L., Islam, Z., Mason, G., Vergani, M., & Zayied, I. (2019). *Islamophobia in Australia II (2016-2017).* Charles Sturt University.

Iner, D., Zayied, I., & Vergani, M. (2017). Analysis of Islamophobia Register Australia data (2014-2015). In D. Iner (Ed.), *Islamophobia in Australia 2014-2016* (pp. 41-86). Charles Sturt University and ISRA.

Larsson, G., & Stjernholm, S. (2016). Islamophobia in Sweden: Muslim advocacy and hate-crime statistics. In D. Pratt & R. Woodlock (Eds.), *Fear of Muslims? International perspectives on Islamophobia* (pp. 153-166). Springer International Publishing.

Mao, F. (2020, July 3). Coronavirus: Why has Melbourne's outbreak worsened? *BBC News.* https://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-53259356

Perry, B., & Poynting, S. (2006, December 4-7). Inspiring Islamophobia: Media and state targeting of Muslims in Canada since 9/11 [Conference presentation]. TASA Conference, University of Western Australia and Murdoch University.

Regalado, J., Timmer, A., & Jawaid, A. (2022). Crime and deviance during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Sociology Compass, 16*(4), e12974. https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12974

Rose, H. (2021). *Pandemic hate: COVID-related antisemitism and Islamophobia, and the role of social media.* Institute for Freedom of Faith and Security in Europe. https://www.iffse.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/IFFSE-report-Entwurf-Doppelseiten-12_13-10-21.pdf

Tazamal, M. (2020). *Islamophobia in 2020: COVID-19 and conspiracy theories.* The Bridge Initiative, Georgetown University. https://bridge.georgetown.edu/research/islamophobia-in-2020-covid-19-and-conspiracy-theories/

Weedon, A. (2020, July 8). Melbourne's public housing coronavirus lockdown tells a story of two cities. *ABC News.* https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-07-09/flemington-north-melbourne-public-housing-lockdown-two-cities/12431898

Chapter I

Boseley, M. (2020, October 22). Muslim community leaders fear hate attacks after student at Islamic school tests positive. *The Guardian.* https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/oct/22/melbournes-northern-suburbs-brace-for-covid-outbreak-after-an-infectious-student-failed-to-self-isolate-east-preston-islamic-college-school

Broekhuis, M. C. (2016). The emotional route towards (non) normative behaviour: Individual and group factors that influence anger and contempt in becoming radicalized. [Master's thesis, University of Twente].

Gregoire, P. (2021). *Heavy-handed COVID policing: The discriminatory sweep of southwestern Sydney.* Sydney Criminal Lawyers. https://www.sydneycriminallawyers.com.au/blog/heavy-handed-COVID-policing-the-discriminatory-sweep-of-southwestern-sydney/

Koomen, W., & van der Pligt, J. (2016). *The psychology of radicalization and terrorism.* Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Kwan, B. (2021, August 2). Concerns about over-policing in locked-down western Sydney as military begins to arrive. *SBS News.* https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/concerns-about-over-policing-in-locked-down-western-sydney-as-military-begins-to-arrive/hosev9l8o

Matsumoto, D., Hwang, H. S., & Frank, M. G. (2012, January 1). The role of emotion in predicting violence. *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*. https://leb.fbi.gov/2012/january/the-role-of-emotion-in-predicting-violence

Murphy, M. (2021, July 8). Covid crackdown in Sydney's southwest amid major police operation. *news.com.au.* https://www.news.com.au/national/nsw-act/covid-crackdown-in-sydneys-southwest-labelled-racist-amid-major-police-operation/news-story/89abbb2a64b13d43f4d838e16d632bd4

Over60. (2021). Dramatic arrest of Rashays co-founder after mask dispute. *OverSixty.* https://www.oversixty.com.au/finance/legal/dramatic-arrest-of-rashays-co-founder-after-mask-dispute;%20=

Public Safety Canada. (n.d). Currently listed entities. https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/ntnl-scrt/cntr-trrrsm/lstd-ntts/crrnt-lstd-ntts-en.aspx

Visontay, E. (2021, September 23). Residents of Sydney's Covid hotspots call out 'double standard' of recreation rules. *The Guardian.* https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/sep/13/residents-of-sydneys-covid-hotspots-call-out-double-standard-of-recreation-rules

Yoldas, G.E. (2020). Media bias: Al Taqwa College, Islamophobia and COVID-19. *Australian Muslim Times (AMUST).* https://www.amust.com.au/2020/08/media-bias-al-taqwa-college-islamophobia-and-COVID-19/

Chapter II

Butler, U. (2022). *Islamophobia in the digital age: A study of anti-Muslim tweets.* Islamic Council of Victoria.

All Together Now. (2020). *Social commentary, racism and Covid-19.* https://alltogethernow.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/ATN-Media-Report-2020_online.pdf

Chak, F. M. (2022). India, Islamophobia, and the Hindutva playbook. In N. Bakali & F. Hafez (Eds.), *The rise of global Islamophobia in the War on Terror* (pp. 187-204). Manchester University Press. https://doi.org/10.7765/9781526161765.00021

Chitnis, P., & Srinivasan, C. (2022). '101 arrests, no Muslim': Maharashtra minister on Sadhus' mob killing. *NDTV.* https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/palghar-mob-killing-101-arrests-no-muslim-maharashtra-minister-on-sadhus-mob-killing-2216042

Correll, D. (2022). Social media statistics Australia. *SocialMediaNews.* https://www.socialmedianews.com.au/social-media-statistics/

Dresch, M. (2020, May 18). Aya Hachem: Teen fatally shot near Blackburn Lidl 'was innocent passerby'. *Mirror.* https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/breaking-blackburn-shooting-teen-killed-22046351

Iner, D. & McManus, P. (2022). Islamophobia in Australia: Racialising the Muslim subject through War on Terror tropes in public, media and political discourse. In N. Bakali & F. Hafez (Eds.), *The rise of global Islamophobia in the War on Terror* (pp. 36-56). Manchester University Press. https://doi.org/10.7765/9781526161765.00010

Kemp, S. (2021). *Digital 2021: Australia.* Datareportal. https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-australia

King, L. (2020, May 18). Girl, 17, 'beheaded by ex-boyfriend who wrapped her head in aluminium foil'. *Mirror.* https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/teenage-girl-beheaded-ex-boyfriend-22047241

Laub, Z. (2019). *Hate speech on social media: Global comparisons.* Council on Foreign Relations. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/hate-speech-social-media-global-comparisons

Mitchell, S. (2022, May 25). Social media statistics for Australia [2021 & 2022]. Meltwater. https://www.meltwater.com/en/blog/social-media-statistics-australia

Nouri, L., & Lorenzo-Dus, N. (2019). Investigating reclaim Australia and Britain first's use of social media: Developing a new model of imagined political communities online. *Journal for Deradicalization,* 18. https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/183
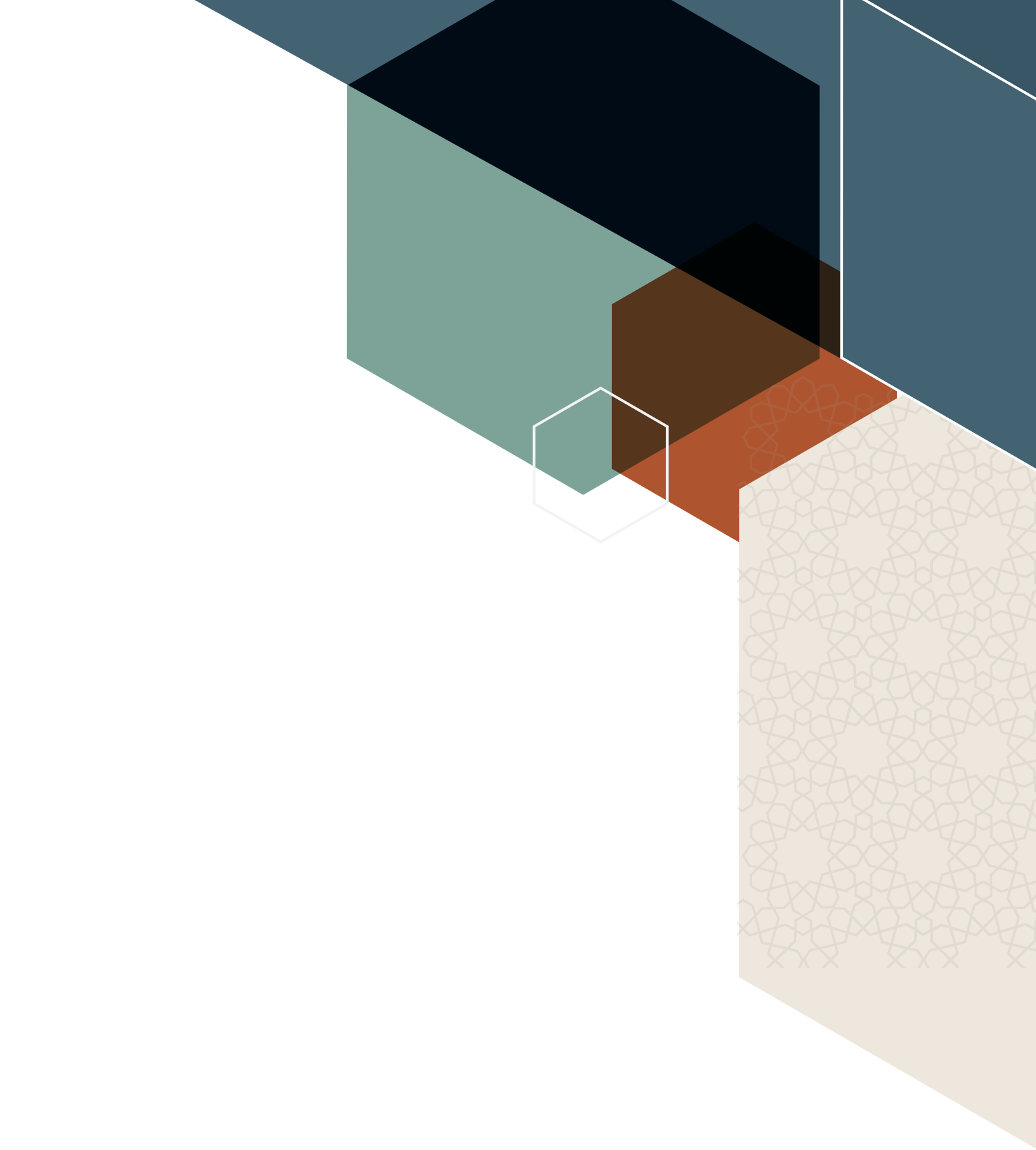
Park, S., Fisher, C., McGuinness, K., Lee, J. Y., & McCallum, K. (2021). *Digital new report: Australia 2021.* New and Media Research Centre. https://doi.org/10.25916/kygy-s066

Peucker, M. (2022, August 24). 'How far-right online spaces use mainstream media to spread their ideology'. *The Conversation.* https://theconversation.com/how-far-right-online-spaces-use-mainstream-media-to-spread-their-ideology-189066
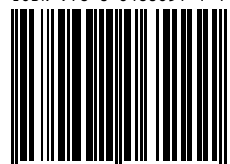
SMPerth. (2022). *Social media statistics.* Social Media Perth. https://www.smperth.com/resources/social-media-statistics/

Tamer, R. (2022, April 30). Social media giants criticised for failing to remove nearly 90 per cent of Islamophobic content. *SBS News.* https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/social-media-giants-criticised-for-failing-to-remove-nearly-90-per-cent-of-islamophobic-content/tejawiuln

TellMAMA. (2020). *How anti-Muslim conspiracies about the killing of Emily Jones flourished online.* https://tellmamauk.org/how-anti-muslim-conspiracies-about-the-killing-of-emily-jones-flourished-online/