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Project: *Exploring the experiences and mental health needs of Muslim immigrant women in Southern Alberta: a community engaged study*



**Background**

An exploratory descriptive qualitative study plans to: 1) explore the experiences of Muslim women and the various intersecting factors that affect their mental health; and 2) uncover mental health providers' perspectives on Muslim women's mental health.

Collaborative partnerships will be sought with the Lethbridge Multi-cultural Centre, Lethbridge Immigrant Partnership, Immigrant Services Lethbridge, and Lethbridge Islamic Center. An advisory

group of 4-5 Muslim women will be formed to assist in identifying the key areas to explore in Muslim women's lives relevant to their mental health. Furthermore, the advisory group will assist in the development of the research questions, the interview question guide, finalizing the research methodology, and developing a recruitment plan.

Purposive and snowball sampling will be employed to recruit a sample of 10 mental health workers and 20 Muslim immigrant women for individual interviews and two focus groups of 5 female Muslim participants. Inclusion criteria include: being a Muslim immigrant woman or a mental health provider; being at least 18 years of age; and being able to communicate effectively in either English or Farsi. Recruitment may occur through posters in partnering immigrant organizations and through immigrant association's social media accounts with their permission.

Individual semi-structured interviews will explore individual experiences in depth while providing a confidential environment. Focus groups may obtain a range of views on the research topic through a dynamic supportive group conversation, potentially uncovering new insights or hidden issues or seeking clarity on emerging findings. Interview transcripts will be subjected to thematic analysis.

Transcripts and initial findings will be returned to the participants for member checking, so participants may reflect on their experiences; validate the findings; and be engaged in identifying the research outcomes. Final research findings will be returned to the advisory group to obtain their feedback before collaboratively developing practice recommendations arising from the research.