Becoming Allies: Introducing a Framework for Intersectional Allyship to Muslim Survivors of Gender-Based Violence

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Abstract

Multiple social movements (e.g., Black Lives Matter, The Combahee River Collective, Musawah, and #MeToo) have highlighted the systems of oppression (e.g., racism, sexism, Islamophobia, and classism) in this country and globally that have targeted different marginalized groups. The traumatic experiences of gender-based violence (GBV) are compounded by the trauma of a long history of structural violence and the unique experiences of different social identities, including race, religion, and gender. One example in the Muslim American context is how Oyewuwo (2019) analyzes the unique experiences of Black Muslim women seeking help for GBV. Her work illustrates the ways in which these women, growing up in a system of oppression and injustice, shaped their response to GBV by creating patterns in which they endure violence and pain. As a South-Asian-American and an Arab-American researching GBV and working within the field, we ask: how do we, members of the Muslim community, become allies for Muslims experiencing GBV within the context of systematic oppression (in ways that prevent privileged groups from reproducing and maintaining patterns of inequality)?

In this paper, we aim to envision possibilities for our role as allies by looking into the intersection of Islamophobia, racism, sexism, and domestic violence within Muslim communities. We present a theoretical background to some of the existing literature on intersectionality and allyship and provide a framework to combine them. The resulting framework will build off existing social movements and apply these learnings to the context of GBV within the Muslim context. Finally, this framework gives community allies, including faith leaders, activists, and community members, a guideline on the role they play in this critical social issue.

Keywords: Gender-based violence, GBV, intersectionality, allyship

Introduction

When Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin suffocated African American George Floyd to death on May 25, 2020, Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests

against police racism and violence erupted in the United States and globally. At the time, both authors worked at the Peaceful Families Project (PFP), a nonprofit organization seeking to prevent domestic violence in the American Muslim community. PFP issued a solidarity statement with BLM, and our staff and board came together in a virtual discussion to talk about our role as Muslims in speaking up against structural and everyday racism against Black people in America, specifically in the Muslim American community. As the conversation unfolded, we noticed how the coverage of the uproar over Breonna Taylor's violent and sudden death on March 13, 2020, at the hands of Louisville police officers did not equal that of Floyd and others. This phenomenon is not unique, for the deaths of Black women like Rekia Boyd, Michelle Cusseaux, Tanisha Anderson, Shelly Frey, Yvette Smith, Eleanor Bumpurs, and many others due to police violence also received little public attention (Crenshaw et al., 2015; Ritchie, 2017). Chatelain and Asoka (2015) speak up about the unique experiences of Black women with police violence:

> Often, women are targeted in exactly the same ways as men – shootings, police stops, racial profiling. They also experience police violence in distinctly gendered ways, such as sexual harassment and sexual assault. Yet such cases have failed to mold our analysis of the broader picture of police violence; nor have they drawn equal public attention or outrage. (Chatelain & Asoka, 2015, p. 54)

To center and to better understand the lived experiences of Black Muslim American women, PFP invited Assistant Professor Dr. Olubunmi Oyewuwo-Gassikia of Northeastern Illinois University to speak in June 2020 (Oyewuwo-Gassikia, 2020). Her pioneering research addresses a gap in the literature that erases the experiences of Black Muslim women. She highlights how intersecting systems of oppression, racism, Islamophobia, and injustice shape their response to gender-based violence (GBV) by creating patterns in which they endure violence and pain. It highlights how these women's identity influences their response to domestic violence and seeking help.

> "…growing up in racism, part of slavery, pain was very real for us – being hit, being hurt, being tortured…you can't fall apart because of that…we can't direct it necessarily at the people that are doing it to us," said one of the participants. (Oyewuwo-Gassikia, 2020)

When addressing domestic violence intervention efforts, Oyewuwo-Gassikia (2020) critiqued the overreliance on the criminal justice system because there could be lethal consequences for Black people. She identified policing as a deterrent, as opposed to a solution, to GBV or a suitable way for healing. The fact that policing is used as a primary response to domestic violence requires critical evaluation. During the webinar's question-and-answer session, an attendee asked:

"How does one overcome the hurdle of trusting authority to speak up? I'm personally Black and living in a racist community and have received racial bias from teachers, the police, adolescent care workers, and people within my own Muslim community," said one of the participants. (Oyewuwo-Gassikia, 2020)

In other words: how do we Muslim advocates become better allies in confronting the multiple forms of oppression that impinge on the lives and experiences of diverse Muslim victims and survivors as they deal with and try to heal from violence? We can no longer focus on sexism or patriarchy without thinking about the multiple forms of structural violence. Borrowing Mari Matsuda's (1990) practice of "asking the other question" to reveal the interconnectedness of all forms of subordination:

When I see something that looks racist, I ask, "Where is the patriarchy in this?" When I see something that looks sexist, I ask, "Where is the heterosexism in this?" When I see something that looks homophobic, I ask, "Where are the class interests in this?" Working in coalition forces us to look for both the obvious and non-obvious relationships of domination, helping us to realize that no form of subordination ever stands alone. (Matsuda, 1990, p. 1189)

As a South-Asian American and an Arab-American researching GBV and working within the field, thinking critically of our obligation as allies toward all Muslim individuals experiencing GBV is compounded by structural violence. We reflected on our positionalities and privileges of being light-skinned, middle-class, able-bodied, and highly educated Muslim women. We asked: how do we become allies for Muslims experiencing GBV within the context of systematic oppression in ways that prevent privileged groups from reproducing and maintaining patterns of inequality? In this paper, we aim to envision possibilities for our role as allies by looking into the intersection of Islamophobia, racism, sexism, and domestic violence within Muslim communities. We present a theoretical background to some of the existing literature on intersectionality and allyship and provide a framework to combine them. This intersectional allyship framework will build off existing social movements and apply these learnings to the context of GBV within the Muslim context. Finally, this framework gives community allies, including faith leaders, activists, advocates, service providers, and community members, a guideline on the role they play in this critical social issue.

Intersectionality: A Framework to Address Systems of Oppression
One of the PFP's objectives is to disrupt systems of oppressions that create and perpetuate GBV in the American Muslim community. However, individuals in our community are not impacted simply by one layer of structural violence, but are facing the oppression of multiple interlocking systems, including racism,

ethnocentrism, sexism, Islamophobia, ableism, homophobia, ageism, spiritual abuse, state violence, and many others. Our work cannot simply address one facet of our community's complex experiences. We must incorporate and address how these existing sociopolitical systems, which involve multiple forms of oppression and privilege, shape the experiences of the people served. Muslim survivors of intimate partner violence not only have to battle sexism, but also racism, Islamophobia, immigration discrimination, and countless other systems already in place. To be an effective ally, advocates and organizations must take an intersectional approach while learning from and uplifting ongoing social movements. For example, Bowleg (2012) views intersectionality within the context of public health as inclusive of multiple axes of identities beyond just women of color:

> …my view of intersectionality includes and transcends women of color to include all people whose microlevel and macrolevel experiences intersect at the nexus of multiple social inequalities and is broad enough to include populations who inhabit dimensions of social privilege and oppression simultaneously (e.g., Black heterosexual men; White low-income women). (Bowleg, 2012, p. 7)

Given the increased usage of "intersectionality" as a buzzword, Moradi and Grzanka (2017) emphasize the importance of using it responsibly. They offer a series of guidelines that promote a fuller and more nuanced understanding of and engagement with this concept. This paper will aim to use these guidelines to enhance our understanding and to apply it to our context of the American Muslim community responsibly.

First, in our general understanding, it is critical to "understand and credit the roots of intersectionality in Black Feminist activism and scholarship and its contemporary advancements in Feminist/Women's Studies" (Moradi & Grzanka, 2017). This perspective was developed as a critique of sociopolitical movements, which did not address how multiple forms of oppression and privilege impacted the experiences of individuals (Moradi, 2017). Intersectionality draws its roots from these two sources in response to the single identity politics evident in social movements, such as feminist movement's focus on gender and civil rights movement's focus on race. Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) introduced the term to emphasize how this narrow focus in social movements and the separate treatment of race and sex discrimination in U.S. law often rendered Black women and their unique experiences invisible:

> Black women sometimes experience discrimination in ways similar to white women's experiences: sometimes they share very similar experiences with Black men. Yet often they experience double-discrimination—the combined effects of practices which discriminate on the basis of race, and on the basis of sex. And sometimes, they experience

discrimination as Black women—not the sum of race and sex discrimination, but as Black women… Yet the continued insistence that Black women's demands and needs be filtered through categorical analyses that completely obscure their experiences guarantees that their needs will seldom be addressed. (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 149)

The literature's frequent discussions about the additive and multiplicative effects of systems of oppression carries an assumption: these systems are independent from one another. However, in this passage, Crenshaw (1989) draws attention to those experiences of oppression that are unique to Black women, not as a sum of sexism and racism, but as a unique integration of these interlocking systems. Some scholars have defined this reality as "gendered racism." However, Patricia Hill Collins' (2000) description of intersectionality as a "structural matrix of domination" truly encapsulates the way power is organized in our society and how systems of oppression come together to maintain these power structures. In the context of GBV, a Black female survivor may be reluctant to call the police for help due to her fear and mistrust, which stems from the history of oppression and trauma inflicted on the Black community by the police and other government institutions. This survivor's experience is not simply a sum of racism and sexism in her experience of trauma, but rather a complex reality that is unique to Black women. Black women survivors of GBV are forced to deal with the disadvantages of racism and carceral feminism, which views incarceration as the only solution to GBV, while simultaneously attempting to cope and heal from trauma.

Intersectionality is a framework to understand and critique the existing power structures and the intersecting systems of oppression that keep them in place (e.g., racism, ethnocentrism, nativism, and sexism). However, instead of critiquing institutions and power structures, the burden of change is often placed on marginalized individuals and communities. In a review by Moradi (2017) asking "What are the things considered to be intersecting," intersectionality scholarship tends to focus on the intersecting identities rather than the systems. Similarly, researchers, advocates, and community organizations seeking to help survivors often focus on the individual-level questions rather than system change. For instance, their focus on increasing help-seeking among Black survivors discounts any consideration of the systems of racism and sexism that impact these survivors' experiences and choices. Instead of focusing on socially constructed individual categorization and their experience of oppression and disadvantage, the framework of intersectionality emphasizes focusing on the existing systems of power and their use of social inequality to maintain these power dynamics. In practice, this may look like shifting the focus to combatting carceral feminism, which fosters an overreliance on police and prisons as the solution to GBV, while simultaneously reinforcing state violence on marginalized, particularly Black, communities.

Intersectionality is a useful tool for understanding how the multiple forms of privilege and oppression shape the experiences of our community members; however, it is ultimately rooted in a commitment to social transformation. Moradi and Grzanka's (2017) final guideline is "to draw upon intersectionality's rich history … to enact new ways of doing research, teaching, and practice that embody intersectionality's central commitment to social transformation." Chavez-Duenas et al. (2019) enact this guideline by demonstrating how such a framework can be implemented to bring change to minoritized communities. The authors introduce the HEART (Healing Ethno and Racial Trauma) framework, guided by intersectionality, liberation psychology, and trauma-informed care, to the goal of healing ethno-racial trauma in Latinx immigrant communities. This framework acts as an exemplar to activists, advocates, and communities to avoid falling into the trap of focusing on their immediate and singular goals by prioritizing the need for societal transformation to truly spark change for marginalized individuals and communities. As an organization, PFP works to prevent GBV in Muslim communities; however, we must do so with the commitment to creating societal-level change on the structures that impact the diverse community it serves.

Allyship and Solidarity: Conceptual Roots and Implications
What does it mean to be an ally, and when did the term originate? According to Carlson et al. (2020), the term "ally" first appeared to describe the role men play in advocating against GBV and for gender equality and equity. In the late 18th century, allyship was conceptualized as men's anti-sexism and pro-feminism. The term is also used to refer to solidarity efforts to support the struggle for racial justice (Leonard & Misumi, 2016; Patel, 2011), Indigenous rights (Kluttz et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2016), LGBTQI rights (Pickett & Tucker, 2020), and disabilities rights (Carlson et al., 2020). Scholars and activists have questioned the pros and cons of the term "allyship" and how it can be performative rather than transformative (Kalina, 2020).

Carlson et al. (2020) problematize the terms "ally," "allies," and "allyship," as they have been critiqued by activists and advocates who have called for "an evolution of our collective thinking about what is needed from people privileged by or benefiting from inequalities" (p. 890). This demand to rethink what allyship means is the result of researchers' showing that activists who benefit from discrimination often sustain injustice, intentionally or unintentionally, through their behavior or thinking. For example, Carlson et al. (2020) attest that scholarship examining the movement of men's allyship work has revealed "pedestal effects," or how male allies receive excessive praise and attention for their work, which can reproduce the inequalities they claim to be dismantling. Radke et al. (2020) critique how privileged members of a political movement make themselves the center of attention, thereby ignoring the violence

that occurs against disadvantaged groups. Radke (2020) identifies four distinct categories of factors that drive allyship:

> We propose four primary categories of motivations: (a) *outgroup-focused motivations*, which reflect a genuine interest in improving the status of the disadvantaged group; (b) *ingroup-focused motivations*, which involve support for the disadvantaged group that is conditional upon maintaining the status of their own advantaged group; (c) *personal motivations*, which reflects a desire to benefit oneself and meet personal needs by engaging in action for the disadvantaged group; and (d) *morality motivations*, where action is primarily driven by moral beliefs and a resulting moral imperative to respond. (Radke et al., 2020, p. 292)

Sumerau et al. (2021) also warn against any type of allyship that reproduces patterns of social inequality that blame minorities for their oppression and offers band aid solutions, rather than address the roots of structural and systematic oppression. Often, such allyship is concerned with maintaining, rather than disrupting, the status quo. Looking at tokenistic solidarity in the wake of the Christchurch terrorist attacks in New Zealand in 2019, Mirnajafi and Barlow (2019) describe symbolic solidarity as manifesting itself in ways that anger and shock people confronted by violence, but never translates the same rage into concrete actions to change the course of violence. Although part of the bigger picture, symbolic solidarity is not enough. Mirnajarfi and Barlow (2019) identify the problems with it as, "1) for Muslim people, the distress is ongoing, and 2) these attacks did not occur in a vacuum, and the societal factors that give rise to Western Islamophobia, White nationalism, and intergroup violence have not been eliminated" (p. 47). The authors emphasize the type of solidarity needed to support Muslims, which must encompass ongoing action, regardless of how complicated, hard, or imperfect the work of solidarity might be.

> …tokenistic ally, the words offer comfort and safety, but the actions allow an environment of threat to flourish…The message, for the ally (or the cheating partner, for that matter), is to follow through on promises with action. Hands-on allyship and solidarity, however, is hard. A practical look at how to move beyond tokenistic solidarity must acknowledge this, and deal with the problem head on. (Mirnajafi & Barlow, 2019, p. 49)

A big gap in allyship and solidarity work, as noted in the literature, is the lack of models or praxis of how to implement an intersectional analysis and framework in this type of work (Carlson et al., 2020). Allies have a duty to develop the awareness and create the strategies to address classism, sexism, anti-Blackness, capitalism, and other intersecting forms of oppression, or else they might run the risk of reducing people's experiences with structural and systematic violence to identity politics or problems. "For example, in the context of allyship, statements such as "all women are marginalized/oppressed" whitewash/erase the

imperative of white women's allyship/solidarity with women of color...framing oppressions as interconnected can make multi-movements alliances possible" (Carlson et al., 2020, p. 892).

Offering recommendations to become better allies, Carlson et al. (2020) advise that "ally" must not be a self-adhesive label. Privileged advocates who refer to themselves as such do not always meet the criterion of allyship. In reality, there must be a recognition and reckoning with power within solidarity movements among a movement's advantaged members. As no one is perfect, minoritized individuals are not expecting perfect allyship. However, there must be constant engagement, self-reflection, and implementation. The authors also warn against allies, as opposed to members of the oppressed groups, reclaiming leadership positions within social justice movements, as doing so risks perpetuating power and hierarchical imbalances and inequities.

Intersectional Allyship in the Muslim Community
The need for intersectional allyship is clear in the literature. However, based on our experience in community-based work with GBV, we must take this one step further and develop an intersectional Muslim community-specific allyship framework. When GBV survivors share their story, how do we, as allies, provide them with the support, allyship, and solidarity they need, a response that considers the multiple systems of oppression impacting their experience? To answer this question and provide a guide for individuals, families, and community organizations, we introduce a new framework of intersectional allyship, one that uses the allyship themes operationalized by Carlson et al. (2020) and incorporates strategies of healing from the HEART framework (Chavez-Dueñas et al., 2019). Based on these frameworks, our multi-level engagement approach emphasizes the need for support at the individual, family, and community levels of society.

1.   **Constant Action of the "Everyday Ally"**

Individual
Carlson et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of proving and demonstrating allyship via constant action and engagement. Specifically, allyship with GBV survivors may look like support and assistance with basic needs (e.g., economic relief, housing, childcare, and physical and mental health resources). It is particularly important for an ally to consider the different systems of oppression that may be at play. For example, a survivor who has recently immigrated to the country may need additional support navigating unfamiliar governmental systems. Similarly, GBV survivors may benefit from the allies' constant efforts to normalize, address, and challenge their self-blaming statements and help them develop self-care and safety plans. Muslim survivors may have internalized

negative beliefs, such as being punished by God for resisting. Therefore, allies must be able to provide corrective education on Islam's stance on victims of abuse and oppression. Allies can have a major impact by connecting with Muslim survivors based on Muslim values, such as communicating respect, compassion, and care. Furthermore, emphasizing the connection of one *ummah* and feeling each other's pain can foster empathy, understanding, connectedness, and belonging for those who may be feeling isolated due to abuse tactics.

Family
Allyship at this level can be impactful for GBV survivors who may feel disconnected, isolated, and ostracized by their families. First, allies must strengthen, maintain, and repair any attachment disruptions caused by GBV by believing the survivors and validating their emotional experience. Families can benefit from dedicating time to express emotions and communicate with each other openly. Family allies should provide stability for survivors in the family unit and allow and encourage them to maintain healthy boundaries, as needed. Finally, allies may benefit from building networks with other families for support and connection across experiences.

Community
At this level, that of mosques or other large-scale gatherings, allyship can look like awareness, education, and community work. In terms of awareness, Muslim communities must acknowledge both the experience and impact of violence within themselves. Community allies must highlight the systems of oppression and other dynamics at play, among them sexism, racism, classism, and gendered Islamophobia. One concrete way of doing so is to emphasize that violence happens in every community, regardless of social identity. This allows us to avoid reinforcing stereotypes about any particular community. Furthermore, allies must constantly combat these stereotypes to break down prejudiced narratives such as gendered Islamophobia, which states that Muslim women are oppressed and Muslim men are inherently violent. Finally, community organizations and spaces can demonstrate their allyship by creating safe spaces in which community members can share their experiences without judgment and receive support from the community. For example, create a mission statement about not tolerating any form of violence and state clearly how you will combat it. Or, pass the mic to underrepresented members. For example, Kayla Renée Wheeler (2020) writes that Black Muslim women are often the last to be called upon to take formal leadership roles. "When Black Muslim women do take centerstage, they often face vitriol, with little public support from anyone except other Black Muslim women" (Wheeler, 2020).

2.   Prioritize a Structural Analysis of Oppression and Privilege

Individual
According to Edwards (2006, p. 51), ideal allies "see the interconnectedness of forms of oppression and recognize how limiting it can be to see strategies addressing one form of oppression in isolation." As the different systems of oppression at play are inseparable, allies who analyze them in isolation from each other develop blind spots to the reality of oppression. Thus, allies on the individual level need to educate themselves about historical injustices and the root causes of oppression, and then develop and implement a critical consciousness. Self-reflection and education are not the end goal, but rather means to fuel action and transformative change that disrupt systems of oppression and structural violence. Some strategies to do this include speaking up and taking action when you see oppression, injustice, and abuse. This is the embodiment of Islamic values, as Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, "Whosoever of you sees an evil action, let them change it with their hand; and if they are not able to do so, then with their tongue; and if they are not able to do so, then with their heart—and that is the weakest of faith" (*Sahih Muslim*). The Muslim faith compels us to uphold justice and not remain silent, which is the foundation of allyship. Taking action requires that we acknowledge and utilize our privilege in certain systems. For instance, there may be spaces in the Muslim community in which men have the voice and power that women do not. As an ally, Muslim men have to acknowledge this privilege and utilize it to amplify the voices, experiences, and needs of Muslim women.

Family
Families may have multiple overlapping axes of systemic oppression; however, each family member may also have unique experiences. At this level, allyship can assume the form of connecting across axes of oppression as well as respecting, acknowledging, and highlighting the different systems of oppression that a family member may be facing. Families may connect over the shared experience of immigrant stress and intergenerational trauma from state surveillance, while also acknowledging that brothers and sisters navigate the community and systems differently due to sexism, or a parent and child's experience of the world due to ableism. As allies, we can amplify the voices and struggles of those around us and direct the family's energy and resources to the unique needs of family members suffering from these forces. The family unit can help process the effects of GBV, its impact on the family unit, and its members' relationships in a culturally and religious relevant manner.

Community

Faith leaders, activists, and community organizations can implement allyship on this level by educating their respective audiences on the structural analysis of privilege and oppression and prioritizing these conversations in the community agenda. Community allies can create educational programs to teach the history of oppressed groups in creative ways (e.g., workshops, presentations, panels, art exhibits, and movie screenings) to disseminate information about White supremacy, oppression, and its impact on communities of color, thereby facilitating community engagement and attendance. Allies must also amplify the voices of those suffering, rather than speaking for them. South Asian and Arab American communities, which have traditionally excluded and discriminated against Black and African American Muslims, must address this deep-rooted racism and oppression and its impact on survivors. This problem will not be addressed by holding events on Hazrat Bilal during Black History Month. Instead, the Muslim community must acknowledge and address the deep-rooted anti-Blackness in many Arab and Asian communities and learn the history and function of anti-Blackness in our communities. Beyond reflection and introspection, the Muslim community must address this gap and fill these spaces with Black voices and representation. This ongoing exclusion makes it impossible for Black and other marginalized group survivors to access resources, support, and assistance when experiencing GBV. Finally, community allies can provide concrete information to help community members become aware of, process, and cope with GBV-related symptoms, such as factsheets, culturally relevant toolkits (e.g., fotonovelas and infographics), describing trauma-related symptoms, and how to seek additional resources (e.g., psychotherapy).

3.   Welcome Criticism and Accountable Self-Reflection

Individual

This guideline combines two themes from Carlson et al. (2020): "Non-self-Absorbed and Accountable Self-Reflection" and "Welcome Criticism and be Accountable." It emphasizes the spirit of allyship as a constant learning process. No one is born the perfect ally, and thus becoming an effective ally means that one must be open to growth and change. On an individual level, allies should welcome criticism and reflect upon their beliefs, thoughts, words, and actions. Educate yourself so that your knowledge and understanding is constantly evolving and improving. Be non-defensive so that you can both accept and seek criticism and constructive feedback, particularly from victims and marginalized communities. If you are called out for victim blaming, racism, or any other manifestation of internalized oppression, do not excuse or justify your behavior. Rather, engage with your blind spots and implicit biases and fill in the gaps in

your knowledge. However, one must go beyond self-reflection and be held accountable for their mistakes. Apologize for them and take action to heal and provide support and resources for any deliberate or inadvertent harm you may have caused. Finally, Carlson et al. (2020) highlight the negative impacts of guilt and shame. Allies must "resist giving into guilt because it is paralyzing," "self-indulgent," and centers the ally while removing one's attention from the victims and their needs (Carlson et al., 2020, p. 893).

Family
At this level, welcoming criticism and accountable self-reflection can look like acknowledging different opinions and understanding that your way is not the only right way. In fact, as an ally, you can reflect on your opinions and whether they are rooted in privilege. For example, a family member may be pushing a survivor to stay in an abusive relationship for various reasons, including not personally experiencing such a relationship's physical and psychological impact, the normalization of abuse, the fear of negative consequences based on cultural expectations, and shame. However, if the abuse escalates and the negative consequences become clear, as an ally a family member must self-reflect on one's privileges, how they impact your decisions, and seek to alleviate any harm caused by your actions and ensure the survivor's safety and wellbeing. Family members must understand that their words and actions carry weight and may impact the survivor negatively. For instance, asking "What did you do to make your partner angry?" and similar questions can place the blame on the victim and further damage their emotional wellbeing and disempower them. Many Muslim families prioritize their reputation and honor. As an act of allyship, families must prioritize justice and the survivor's wellbeing. In fact, silencing the survivor's experience can have a detrimental impact on the family by making its members unable to access community resources and support. In such a case, its members will be left alone to cope with and heal from the trauma of GBV.

Community
Institutions, mosques, and organizations must have clear guidelines on which behaviors will and will not be tolerated. They can remain true to these values by holding all violators, regardless of their position or status, accountable. How should the mosque deal with a board member accused of perpetrating violence at home, or an imam or sheikh who abuse their position to control and use those who trust them? Having such guidelines in place will let people know what to do when such situations arise. This sets a precedent of holding each other accountable and calling out the abusive actions and behaviors that you witness. Furthermore, making such policies clear to the community in advance demonstrates solidarity and support to survivors, who may then feel more empowered to speak up. The

community should take responsibility for the survivors' safety and follow steps to recognize the harm done and ways to heal from that harm. These steps can follow the process of transformative justice, which involves the community, the perpetrator, and the victim repairing the harm done, hold the perpetrator accountable, and prevent harm from happening in the future. This process is built on the foundational idea of the criminal legal system's injustice and the harm it has done to the Black, immigrant, and Muslim communities with state-sanctioned violence, surveillance, and oppression.

4.   **Listen+Shut Up and Amplify Marginalized Voices**

Individual
This guideline also combines two themes from Carlson et al. (2020): "Listen+Shut Up+Read" and "Amplify Marginalized Voices." Given that the allies' main responsibility is to de-center their voice and experience of privilege in order to center those of the marginalized, they must "avoid the spotlight" by being quiet and listening to those who are suffering (Carlson et al. 2020, p. 893). De-centering yourself means to fulfill and uplift the needs of those you are allying yourself to, as opposed to boosting your own ego and feeding a savior complex. Specific actions in this regard include reminding yourself that you are a) "not speaking for," b) "not speaking over," and c) "not speaking first" (Carlson et al. 2020, p. 893). In short, do not speak over or for a GBV survivor's experiences. If survivors share their distrust of the police, it is not your place to defend the legal system. If they discuss their experience with an abusive partner, it is not your place to share your experience with this person. Finally, in the Muslim community, it can be beneficial to engage with Islamic frameworks when dealing with gender equity, racial justice, and immigrant rights. Connect with other allies and organizations, such as MuslimARC (Anti-Racism Collaborative), doing this work through an Islamic lens and uplift it.

Family
At this level, this guideline may look like uplifting the voices and choices of those who may not have as much power and privilege as you do in the family dynamics. Do not tamp down on the family members' voices, experiences, and choices. As an ally and as a Muslim, we must understand the Islamic rights of each member (including children) and not enforce our own beliefs and choices onto them.

Community
At this level, we can enact allyship by amplifying the marginalized groups' voices in multiple tangible ways. Firstly, mosques and organizations should seek diversity across multiple identities (e.g., race, gender, and nationality) and

experiences (e.g., GBV survivors) in their board membership and leadership. Doing so will ensure inclusive decision-making processes and center the voices of those affected by the decision. For instance, survivors' voices would be crucial on a board that is considering appointing a known abuser. While it is important to ensure accurate representation of the diverse Muslim community in positions of power, it is simultaneously important to avoid tokenizing the marginalized. Do not have one female board member to represent all of the community's women, or one Black person to represent the entire Black Muslim community. Tokenistic representation places undue burdens on the member to represent their whole group, which is impossible. Another avenue to amplify and center these marginalized voices is to host community-wide events to learn about its GBV survivors' experiences. Further, it is crucial for community organizations, institutions, and mosques to tangibly support these marginalized communities' contributions. As allies, communities must create funding opportunities to support the work, activism, and advocacy of those marginalized people.

Conclusion

When the Black Lives Matter protests peaked in 2020, half a million people showed up in nearly 550 places across America (Buchanan et al., 2020). Hundreds of institutions issued statements in solidarity with the protests condemning state violence against Black people. Various Muslim organizations wrote about and publicized their anger and resentment of how Black people are targeted, dehumanized, and murdered. But after the uproar calmed down, many went back to business as usual without thinking very deeply about how to implement the words expressed in these solidarity statements. Within networks of Muslim American advocates against GBV, members of different organizations engaged in conversations about how to address the urgent need to confront and fight structural racism and classism within the Muslim American community.

But conversations alone are not enough. This paper aims to provide a framework for the Muslim community to take action. We introduce a model of intersectional allyship that addresses the question: how do we, as Muslim advocates, become better allies in confronting the multiple forms of oppression that impinge on the lives and experiences of diverse Muslim victims and survivors as they deal with and try to heal from violence? This framework is built on the extant literature on intersectionality and allyship and applied to our community's unique needs and experiences. Recommendations are provided for the individual, family, and community levels to encourage engagement with intersectional allyship to incite both top-down and bottom-up change.

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