

**The Voice of Young Somali Canadians:  
Identity, Threat, and the Appeal of ANSAs**

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## **Abstract**

This Contract Report presents the findings of a comprehensive field survey designed to shed light on the attraction of young people to Armed Non-state Actors (ANSAs). The Contractors surveyed 80 young Somali Canadians who come from a failed state (Somalia) and where terrorist organizations (specifically, the militant jihadist group al-Shabaab) play an important role in the current and future outcomes for that state. The survey focused on variables of importance to young Somali Canadians: *perceived group threat*, *strength of group identity*, and *Social Dominance Orientation* (an individual's tendency to value group status and hierarchy while devaluing egalitarianism). The research explored these three variables in terms of their relationship with support for engaging in terrorism. Our formal analyses of the survey instrument completed by young Somalis living in Canada pointed to important links between group identity and group threat on the one hand and support for ANSA behaviour and acculturation to Canada on the other. Moreover, these important links have implications for the quality of life experienced by young Somalis who are wrestling with a number of adjustment issues that are not of their own making.

## Résumé

Le présent rapport d'entrepreneur présente les résultats d'une enquête de terrain exhaustive visant à élucider l'attraction des jeunes pour les acteurs armés non étatiques (AANE). Les entrepreneurs ont sondé 80 jeunes Canado-Somaliens originaires d'un État défaillant (la Somalie) dans lequel des organisations terroristes (en particulier le groupe militant jihadiste al-Shabaab) ont une influence importante sur la situation actuelle et future de l'État. L'enquête s'est concentrée sur des variables importantes pour les jeunes Canado-Somaliens : la *perception de menace collective*, la *force de l'identité collective* et l'*orientation de dominance sociale* (l'inclination d'une personne à valoriser davantage le statut du groupe et la hiérarchie par opposition à l'égalitarisme). Dans la recherche, ces trois variables ont été abordées dans le contexte de leur lien avec le soutien aux activités terroristes. Les analyses formelles des instruments d'enquête auxquels ont répondu les jeunes Somaliens vivant au Canada révèlent des liens importants entre, d'une part, l'identité collective et la perception de menace collective et, d'autre part, le soutien aux actions des AANE et l'acculturation au Canada. En outre, ces liens importants ont des répercussions sur la qualité de vie des jeunes Somaliens qui sont aux prises avec un certain nombre de problèmes d'adaptation dont ils ne sont pas responsables.

## Executive Summary

We were determined to conduct empirical research, not from secondary sources, but from young people who might shed light on the attraction of ANSAs. We chose, therefore, to focus on young people living in Canada who come from a failed state (Somalia) and where terrorist organizations (al-Shabaab) play an important role in the current and future outcomes for that state.

We were successful in forming a close relationship with the Somali community and recruited 80 young Somali Canadians to complete our comprehensive survey instrument. The survey focused on variables of importance to young Somali Canadians: *perceived group threat*, *strength of group identity*, and *Social Dominance Orientation* (an individual's tendency to value group status and hierarchy while devaluing egalitarianism). The research explored these three variables in terms of their relationship with support for engaging in terrorism. The results allowed us to address five important questions:

**1. What is the identity profile of young Somalis?** For our respondents, it is their Muslim identity, not their Somali identity, that is strongest. Thus, it would seem that any focus on the attraction of terrorist groups on the one hand or promoting Canadian identity on the other will need to reconcile issues related to our respondents' Muslim rather than Somali identity.

**2. Do young Somalis perceive group-based threat?** Young Somalis are especially attached to their Muslim identity, and it is this identity that they feel is under most threat. That is, they are concerned about the future of Islam—the very group that they identify with the most.

**3. Is Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) related to support for terrorism?** The answer is that SDO plays an important role. Among young Somalis with a strong group identity and feelings of group threat, it is those few who are particularly high in SDO that might be attracted to the extremes of terrorism.

**4. Do young Somalis show any support for a terrorist agenda in general?** The short answer to this question is no. Indeed, ratings for endorsement of al-Shabaab are decidedly low as are the ratings for violence in general. However, a *politicized collective identity* coupled with perceived group threat appears to heighten support for al-Shabaab. Equally important are factors that turn young Somalis away from al-Shabaab, and here the role played by *hope for the future* is important. The more young Somalis identified with “Canada,” the more they had hope for the future. This hope for the future, in turn, lessened support for violence. Indeed, it is hope that allows young Somalis to see that there is an alternative to using armed struggle to achieve a brighter, more prosperous tomorrow.

**5. How do young Somalis judge the quality of their lives?** Young Somalis judge that, from the past to the present, *quality of life* has improved for their families as well as for the Somali community, despite the turmoil associated with this latter identity. The only quality of life that young Somalis believe has not improved is that of Muslims, which happens to be their most important identity.

## **Conclusions**

Our formal analyses of the survey instrument completed by young Somalis living in Canada pointed to important links between group identity and group threat on the one hand and support for ANSA behaviour and acculturation to Canada on

the other. Moreover, these important links have implications for the quality of life experienced by young Somalis who are wrestling with a number of adjustment issues that are not of their own making.

We view the present report not as a definitive statement about the motivations, attitudes, and support of young Somalis towards ANSAs. Rather, we have initiated a dialogue that hopefully gives a voice to the Somali community. Our focus on ANSAs needs to be balanced with the needs of the Somali community and its questions and agenda.

## Sommaire

Nous étions décidés à effectuer des recherches empiriques à partir non pas de sources secondaires, mais directement des jeunes qui pourraient nous éclairer sur l'attrait des AANE. Par conséquent, nous avons choisi de nous concentrer sur les jeunes vivant au Canada originaires d'un État défaillant (la Somalie) dans lequel des organisations terroristes (al-Shabaab) ont une influence importante sur la situation actuelle et future de l'État.

Nous avons réussi à établir des relations étroites avec la communauté somalienne et recruté 80 jeunes Canado-Somaliens prêts à répondre à notre instrument d'enquête global. L'enquête s'est concentrée sur des variables importantes pour les jeunes Canado-Somaliens : la *perception de menace collective*, la *force de l'identité collective* et l'*orientation de dominance sociale* (l'inclination d'une personne à valoriser davantage le statut du groupe et la hiérarchie par opposition à l'égalitarisme). Dans la recherche, ces trois variables ont été abordées dans le contexte de leur lien avec le soutien aux activités terroristes. Les résultats nous ont permis de répondre à cinq questions cruciales :

**1. Quel est le profil identitaire des jeunes Somaliens?** Pour nos répondants, c'est l'identité musulmane, et non l'identité somalienne, qui vient au premier rang. Ainsi, il semble que tout effort visant à contrer l'attrait des groupes terroristes ou à promouvoir l'identité canadienne devra aborder les questions propres à l'identité musulmane de nos répondants plutôt qu'à leur identité somalienne.

**2. Les jeunes Somaliens se sentent-ils collectivement menacés?** Les jeunes Somaliens sont particulièrement attachés à leur identité musulmane, et c'est cette

identité qu'ils perçoivent comme la plus menacée. En clair, ils s'inquiètent de l'avenir de l'Islam, qui est leur principale source d'identité collective.

**3. L'orientation de dominance sociale (ODS) est-elle liée au soutien au terrorisme?** L'ODS a une influence substantielle. Parmi les jeunes Somaliens qui s'identifient fortement au groupe et qui ont une forte impression de menace collective, ce sont les quelques-uns dont l'ODS est particulièrement élevée qui pourraient être attirés par l'extrémité du terrorisme.

**4. En général, les jeunes Somaliens affichent-ils un quelconque soutien aux visées terroristes?** La réponse courte à cette question est « non ». De fait, les scores d'évaluation du soutien à al-Shabaab sont résolument bas, tout comme les scores de soutien à la violence en général. Par contre, une *identité collective politisée* combinée à la perception d'une menace collective semble favoriser le soutien à al-Shabaab. Les facteurs qui font se détourner les jeunes Somaliens d'al-Shabaab sont tout aussi importants, et l'*espoir d'un avenir meilleur* a une grande influence à cet égard. Plus les jeunes Somaliens s'identifient au Canada, plus ils ont espoir en un avenir meilleur. Cet espoir, à son tour, a une influence à la baisse sur le soutien à la violence. De fait, c'est l'espoir qui permet aux jeunes Somaliens de se rendre compte qu'il existe d'autres solutions que le conflit armé pour mener à un avenir meilleur et à la prospérité.

**5. Comment les jeunes Somaliens évaluent-ils leur qualité de vie?** Les jeunes Somaliens jugent que la *qualité de vie* de leur famille et de leur communauté s'est améliorée au fil du temps, malgré les bouleversements liés à cette identité collective. Le seul groupe dont la qualité de vie n'a pas augmenté selon les jeunes Somaliens est



celui des musulmans, qui se trouve être celui auquel ils s'identifient le plus fortement.

### **Conclusions**

Les analyses formelles des instruments d'enquête auxquels ont répondu les jeunes Somaliens vivant au Canada révèlent des liens importants entre, d'une part, l'identité collective et la perception de menace collective et, d'autre part, le soutien aux actions des AANE et l'acculturation au Canada. En outre, ces liens importants ont des répercussions sur la qualité de vie des jeunes Somaliens qui sont aux prises avec un certain nombre de problèmes d'adaptation dont ils ne sont pas responsables.

Nous ne voyons pas le présent rapport comme un énoncé définitif des motivations, de l'attitude et de la position des jeunes Somaliens en ce qui concerne les AANE. Nous avons plutôt entamé un dialogue qui, on peut l'espérer, permettra à la collectivité somalienne de s'exprimer. Nos préoccupations envers les AANE doivent être équilibrées avec les besoins, les enjeux et les aspirations de la collectivité somalienne.

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## Introduction

In its most traditional conceptualization, intergroup conflict involves competing armies with distinguishable uniforms meeting on the battlefield. With ever-advancing technology, combatants have been able to separate themselves physically yet inflict inordinate damage on the enemy from these greater distances. But neither traditional conflict nor technological warfare prepared the West—and, indeed, the entire world—for the current reality: terrorism. While not a new concept by any stretch, it has become a normative style of intergroup conflict that strikes terror and confusion for the military and ordinary citizens alike.

Terrorism has two features that make it uniquely challenging to understand and regulate. First, terrorism usually involves a small number of armed non-state actors (ANSAs) targeting not only military enemies but also enemy symbols (e.g., the World Trade Center in New York City) and enemy civilians. Second, the attacks are often outrageous; their symbolic and civilian targets lead to widespread terror among the entire enemy population; and terrorist attacks often require the perpetrators to lose their own lives in the process.

Understanding ANSAs is the focus of a major research initiative under the direction of James Moore at the Socio-Cognitive Systems Section, Defense Research and Development Canada – Toronto. The present research report is but one component of that larger initiative. This report represents the second phase of a two-stage process. The first stage involved conducting an in-depth literature review entitled *The Psychology of Violent Conflict in Failing States: A Review of the Psychological Literature* (Taylor, Wohl, & King,

2011). The challenges of reviewing the literature on ANSAs and the roots of violent conflict in failing states were numerous. First and foremost, the literature is fragmented across disciplines and sub-disciplines. Perhaps more importantly, within disciplines that do purportedly focus on conflict, research with ANSAs is rare, and violence in the context of failing states is not commonly examined. The Stage I literature review concluded that, while theories and hypotheses abound, there is a desperate need for empirical research to begin disentangling myth from reality. Simply put, we need to know who from failed states might chose to engage in terrorism as well as their reasons for doing so. The present empirical study of young Somali Canadians is designed as a first step to address this challenge.

### **What the Stage I Literature Review Revealed**

Normally, a literature review would involve a careful scrutiny of the entire spectrum of published material on a topic with the aim of underscoring recurrent themes and obvious gaps in knowledge. In terms of understanding the motives of ANSAs, this information was simply not available.

ANSAs pose inordinate security challenges for nation-states, and it is extremely difficult to obtain first-hand information about those relatively few who organize and conduct terrorist operations. Moreover, terrorism strikes fear and uncertainty in the minds of any and all ordinary citizens precisely because the behaviour of terrorists is so anti-normative. Modern terrorism is so far beyond the lived experience of most people that there is no simple or meaningful way to categorize terrorist behaviour. Precisely because terrorist behaviour is so difficult to comprehend, there are no existing theoretical models

or templates to guide any serious scientific study of the basic questions associated with terrorists. Who becomes a terrorist? How do they understand and explain their own actions? How does one interact and negotiate with people who engage in such incomprehensible behaviour?

Our review of the literature, therefore, was limited to a thorough review of current major theories of intergroup relations, with some attempt to extrapolate in terms of their implications for understanding ANSAs. The few theories designed to focus directly on ANSAs simply borrowed from these broader theories of intergroup relations and speculated about the psychology of ANSAs.

The lack of theoretical guidance is problem enough, but it is exacerbated by methodological challenges. Serious social science requires either a laboratory environment where key variables can be controlled, manipulated, and carefully measured or a genuine field context where the lack of control is counterbalanced by access to the people of interest, in our case actual and potential supporters of ANSAs. Both of these research strategies are extremely difficult to conduct in the context of terrorism. No researcher will convince a terrorist to agree to visit a laboratory, let alone ever successfully obtain approval from a research ethics board to study the extremely anti-normative behaviours that are associated with terrorism. Genuine field research is possible. But, the confluence of time, skill, and opportunity needed to study terrorists *in vivo* is challenging to arrange, to say the least. Even when possible, it requires inordinate skill to disentangle the reality, posturing, and secretiveness of those engaged in terrorism, precisely because of the extremely anti-normative range of behaviours they are engaged in or contemplating.



### **A Focus on Young Somalis in Canada**

We were determined to conduct empirical research not from secondary sources but from young people who might shed light on the attraction of ANSAs. Specifically, we firmly believe that, in order to understand ANSAs, it is essential to gain a greater appreciation for the factors that lead young people to support anti-normative behaviours and the terrorist organizations that perpetrate them. With sufficient time and opportunity, we would have chosen to conduct research with young people who are currently living in a failed or failing state and where joining a terrorist organization is a realistic possibility. We have experience with such research operations, but time and opportunity limitations made this unrealistic for this second stage of the research.

We chose, therefore, to focus on young people living in Canada who come from a failed state and where terrorist organizations play an important role in the current and future outcomes for that state. Diaspora communities in general and young adults in those communities in particular are increasingly recognized as influential actors in the conflicts that rage in their homelands (see, e.g., Davis & Moore, 1997) and are an important source for recruitment to ANSAs. To this end, we turned our attention to the Somali Diaspora community in Canada. We chose to examine this community because its homeland, Somalia, is in political and economic chaos exacerbated by recent famines, and is a place where the terrorist group al-Shabaab, with its links to al-Qaeda, plays an important role.

Indeed, the group referred to as al-Shabaab—formally known as *Harakat al-Shabaab al Mujahedin*—is now part of the global jihadi movement. In 2012, it formally joined the al-Qaeda organization. It has an active international recruitment drive and has established links with other jihadi organizations, most notably al-Qaeda in the Arabian

Peninsula (AQAP). Like similar jihadi groups, however, al-Shabaab is also the product of other organizations that pursued different, more local objectives. Indeed, before acquiring a global dimension, Islamic extremism in Somalia could best be described as successive revivalist movements driven by local circumstances.

### **Somalis in the Diaspora**

Somalis have come to Canada and faced enormous challenges. They have come from a failed state in chaos, and some mainstream Canadians are wary of their presence. Therefore, Canadian integration on the one hand and support and concern for Somalia on the other are very much on the minds of Somalis in Canada.

It might seem that research focusing on young Somalis living in Canada is a poor substitute for research with young people living in Somalia. A focus on the Diaspora, however, can offer important insights. First, the Diaspora has an enormous impact on the economic, political, social, and military agenda of Somalia through its remittances. That is, the largest contribution to the Somali economy comes from monies sent home by Somalis living abroad. As such, the Diaspora has a significant voice in determining the country's direction. As well, the emergence of "home grown" terrorism in the West has placed a new emphasis on the Diaspora from failing states.

Given that groups such as al-Shabaab have oriented themselves toward a jihad against the West, young Somalis in Canada find themselves in a difficult situation. They may face the guilt of having escaped—or in their minds, perhaps, abandoning—a failed state, yet their remittances and financial obligations point to strong ties to their homeland. All the while, they are living in a country, Canada, that is a target for the terrorist organization that

is arguably the strongest political authority in Somalia. Much might be learned about what does and does not attract young Somalis in Canada to al-Shabaab and its mission through the use of terrorist tactics.

### **A Focus on Group Identity, Group Threat, and Social Dominance**

Our Stage I review of the literature revealed that theories were quickly articulated and just as quickly challenged due to a paucity of available empirical data. The earliest psychological explanations treated terrorism as acts conducted by insane individuals: the abnormal behaviors were attributed to abnormalities of the mind. The accumulated evidence has led to the rejection of the psychopathology model of terrorism by experts in disciplines as varied as political science (Pape, 2003), sociology (Tilly, 2003), clinical psychology (Ruby, 2002), and psychiatry (Post, 2007).

Once the disordered spectrum of personality characteristics was refuted as a predictor, psychologists took an interest in more “normal” personality traits (e.g., risk-taking, neuroticism, etc.) and their relationship, if any, to terrorism. Although very few studies have included personality assessments of individuals involved in ANSA activity, it is now widely accepted that terrorist behavior cannot be systematically linked to any personality trait. Indeed, many terrorism researchers have concluded that a “terrorist personality” does not exist (Horgan, 2003; Kruglanski & Fishman, 2009).

Once mental illness and personality traits were abandoned as potential predictors, psychologists turned their attention to social factors as potential explanations for terrorism. This shift has generally produced theories with a focus on poverty, where the awareness of one’s relative disadvantage vis-à-vis another group may radicalize a person

and potentially lead to terrorism (Borum, 2003; Moghaddam, 2005). However, empirical studies focusing on poverty and relative deprivation have yielded mixed results, and there is evidence that most people engaged in terrorism are not lacking in terms of economic opportunity (Atran, 2003; Hoffman, 2002). In one study focused on the global jihadi terrorist movement, Sageman (2004) tracked down demographic information for 102 jihadists: three fourths of his sample were from the upper or middle classes.

Our own conceptual analysis based on our Stage I literature review led us to an overarching framework to guide our empirical research. First, we argued that to understand the members of an ANSA it was essential to adopt a group-based perspective. That is, members are embedded within a group to which they identify. The psychological implications are that part of the ANSA members' sense of self is derived from their membership in the group that engages in anti-normative behaviour (see Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Indeed, terrorists are *groups*, whatever their organizational structure, and they engage in extremely anti-normative behaviours. Moreover, events real or imagined that impact the group (e.g., actions by others that impede or undermine the goals of their group) can determine the attitudes and beliefs of its members that drive their anti-normative behavior (see Smith, 1999). Thus, any attempt to understand the members of an ANSA needs to take into account basic, group-based, social psychological processes.

Therefore, we concluded that there was a need to focus on fundamental *group* processes in any analysis of terrorism. That is, in a situation of group conflict, real or imagined, the vast majority of group members will choose not to join a terrorist organization to promote its agenda in the conflict. But, a significant subset *will* choose to

join such a group. We need to know what might motivate a sub-group of the larger group to join a terrorist organization.

If there are 1,000 people that constitute a group, what might attract a portion to join a sub-group with a terrorist agenda? Our Stage I review led us to two prominent group-based processes: *group identity* and *group threat*. Group identity represents the cognitive dimension of belonging to a group, and group threat represents the emotional or evaluative dimension of group belonging. Members of any group are motivated to belong to a group that is distinctive (cognitive) and positively valued (emotional). Thus, group members will react if they feel their group's distinctiveness is compromised. For example, when attempts are made by a powerful outgroup to assimilate members of a less powerful ingroup, the ingroup's distinctiveness is at stake. Similarly, attacks on the evaluative status of a group will motivate protective action. Group identity and group threat, then, formed the basis of our research with young Somali Canadians, and our focus was on the relationship of identity and threat with support for terrorist behaviour generally and the terrorist group al-Shabaab in particular.

But as we underlined earlier, understanding ANSA behaviour is particularly challenging because it is so violent and anti-normative in its attacks on civilians. Thus, understanding the group processes that might attract a portion of our 1,000 group members is incomplete. We then have to understand who among that smaller portion will be motivated to engage in extremely anti-normative behaviour, including perhaps purposely taking their own life in order to harm and terrorize members of a targeted other group. That is an individual question, not a group question. Specifically, if only a small portion of people from the larger group joins a militant faction (i.e., a terrorist group) and

only a small portion of this faction chooses to engage in terrorist acts directly, some individual characteristics should set these few apart—not only from the original larger group but from those that splinter off to join the terrorist sub-group. Thus, although scholars in the field of terrorism have tended to reject the notion that terrorists exhibit a particular personality profile, we are forced to reconsider that conclusion to explain fully those who ultimately engage in the extremely anti-normative behaviours associated with terrorism.

### **SDO and Support for Anti-normative Behaviours**

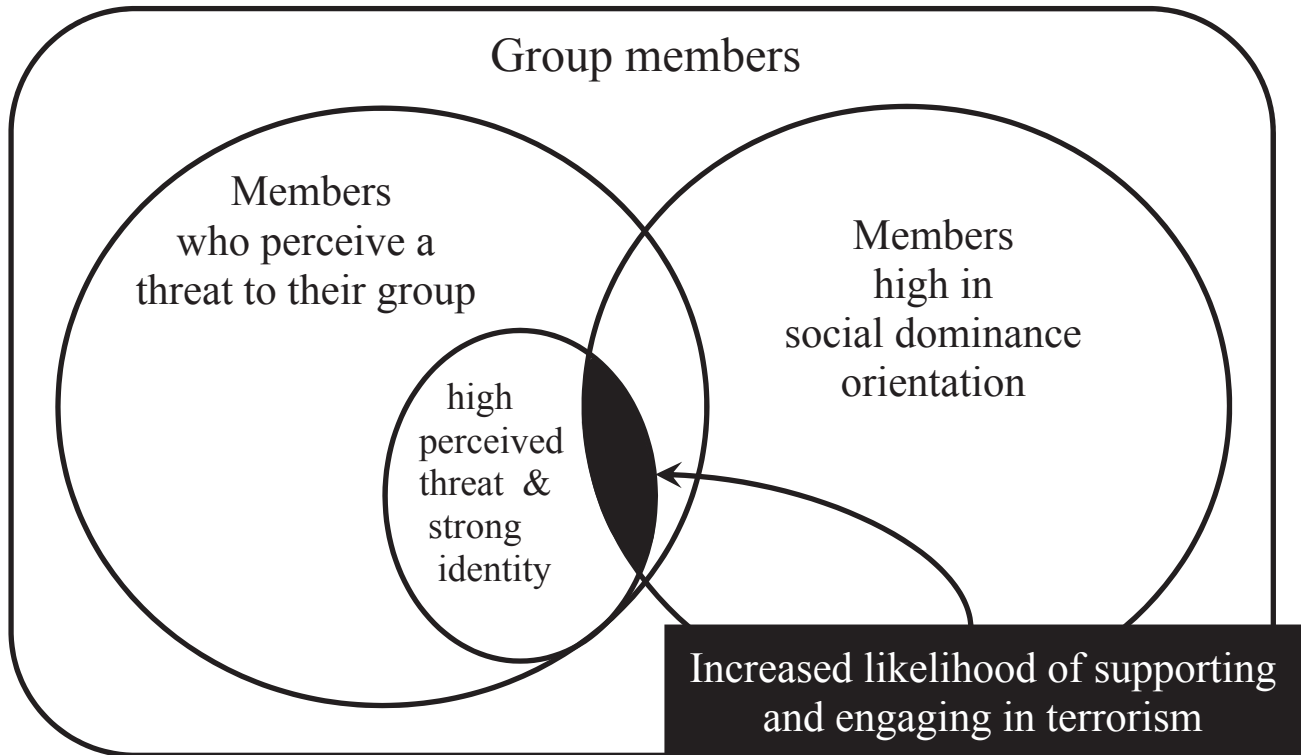
Social psychological research has generated a number of general theories designed to explain the dynamics of intergroup conflict (Taylor & Moghaddam, 1994). Yet only one of these theories features a personality characteristic at its core: *Social Dominance Theory* (SDT). SDT, therefore, might be well positioned to inform a possible link between personality and terrorism.

To be clear, SDT was originally conceived to explain the absence of conflict, or, more precisely, how hierarchical relations between groups remain stable even though these relations are not in the best interests of low-status group members (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). According to SDT, intergroup stability can be traced to a fundamental human predisposition that has been labeled *Social Dominance Orientation* (SDO). Construed as a measurable personality characteristic, SDO denotes an individual's tendency to value group status and hierarchy while devaluing egalitarianism (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Individuals high on SDO would believe, for example, that “some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups” (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994).

Since the initial theoretical development of SDT, a great deal of research has confirmed that people who are *high* on SDO generally support the social hierarchy they live in, regardless of whether they are members of a high-status or low-status group (Levin, Federico, Sidanius, & Rabinowitz, 2002; Pratto, Sidanius, & Levin, 2006). Thus, when challenges to the status quo—such as protests, revolutions, and even terrorism—emerge, those involved are theoretically expected to be individuals members of the low-status group who are *low* on SDO. This relationship between low SDO and social defiance has been documented across several studies (Overbeck, Jost, Mosso, & Flizik, 2004). This evidence suggests that low SDO can be considered a predisposing personality characteristic for supporting and engaging in terrorism.

What makes this link particularly interesting is that research in our own laboratory has found quite the opposite. Repeatedly, we have found that it is those individuals who are *high* on SDO who are particularly attracted to terrorist activity. Moreover, our research indicates that no other commonly measured personality trait is linked to gravitating to terrorist activities (see Figure 1). Consistent with our previous findings, we would hypothesize that Social Dominance Orientation is a personality characteristic that might be implicated in support for anti-normative behaviour among young members of the Somali diaspora community.

**Figure 1. Identity, group-based threat, and SDO and their association with support for and engagement in terrorism**



As illustrated in Figure 1, not all people who are high in SDO are attracted to terrorist activity. What is needed, then, is a catalyst that drives such people toward anti-normative action. We suggest that a central catalyst is perceived threats to the group. These perceived threats might stem from external forces (i.e., groups) that are believed to be undermining existing government customs and policies, or indeed any external or internal force that might pose a threat to the group's future vitality. Evidence shows that when a threat to the group is perceived, members (particularly those who feel a sense of connection or identify with the group) will act in ways that defend and further reinforce their group's credibility in that system.



## **Overview of the Present Research**

The present research focused on variables of particular importance to young Somali Canadians: *perceived group threat*, *strength of group identity*, and *Social Dominance Orientation* in terms of the relationship of these variables with *support for engaging in terrorism*. In order to address our fundamental framework, we posed a number of questions designed to offer insight into key factors we propose may be associated with support for terrorism. Specifically, we addressed five questions:

- 1. What is the identity profile of young Somalis?**
- 2. Do young Somalis perceive group-based threat?**
- 3. Is Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) related to support for terrorism?**
- 4. Do young Somalis show any support for a terrorist agenda in general?**
- 5. How do young Somalis judge the quality of their lives?**

## **Method**

Conducting a survey in the Somali community requires a sensitivity that extends far beyond the nature of the questions to be addressed in the survey. The community is understandably suspicious of mainstream researchers who wish to ask politically sensitive questions. Thus, long before launching the survey, it was necessary for the researchers to establish credibility and trust in the community. Fortunately, we had established relationships with people in a variety of cultural communities, and considerable time was spent in dialogue with the community to ensure that the survey process would be of some benefit to the community. Once launched, everyone would become aware of the survey,

and, thus, long past the termination of the present contract, the researchers will be sharing the results of the survey with the community. What is important to underscore is that the present brief description of our methodology does not capture the important trust-building phase and the knowledge sharing which will be ongoing.

Having established rapport with the community, Somali Canadian participants were recruited through local Somali community associations, events, and online groups. Researchers visited Somali community associations and events. They also visited community events where it would be known that many Somalis would be present, such as the Islam Awareness Week at the University of Ottawa. Many participants were also approached in public venues, including university campuses and local shopping centers. Administrators of online community groups for Somali Canadians (e.g., Facebook groups) were contacted. They were asked to include a link on their websites for the survey instrument and reference information for potential participants. The online questionnaire was hosted by PsychData. Though participants were provided with the option of filling out the survey online, many more completed hardcopy versions of the survey. On these occasions, the researchers remained in close proximity to the participants so that participants could make inquiries as they filled out the survey.

In order to participate, individuals had to identify themselves as Somali Canadian. This eligibility requirement was necessary to assess levels of collective identity, collective emotions, and collective narratives as they specifically relate to Somali Canadians. Because of the topic of interest, items in the questionnaire were worded to reflect how participants feel as a result of being a Somali Canadian (e.g., "I keep Somali and Canadian cultures separate").

Participants received \$10 in return for their participation. Full remuneration was granted to participants regardless of how many items of the survey they completed.

Prior to commencing the survey instrument, participants filled out Informed Consent forms. The Informed Consent form ascertained that participants were over 18 years of age and that they understood the nature of the research and procedure. They were also informed that their results would be kept anonymous and confidential.

The survey instrument asked respondents to answer a few demographic questions and to rate statements based on a Likert scale. Some optional short-answer questions were also presented at the end of the questionnaire. The survey instrument took participants approximately 20–30 minutes to complete (see the Appendix for the survey instrument).

Upon completion of the survey instrument, a debriefing was provided to all participants. All participants were also provided with contact information for research personnel, the Chair of the Ethics Committee for Psychological Research at Carleton University, and the Chair of the Psychology Department, also at Carleton.

### **Survey Instrument**

The first section of the survey instrument focused on demographic information, where respondents indicated their age, gender, their cultural background, citizenship status, and their socio-economic situation.

The second set of questions explored *strength of identity*. Since multiple identities were possible, questions were asked about the respondents' identity as Canadian, Somali, and Muslim. Follow-up questions explored issues of integration by asking about how respondents' Canadian identity supported or conflicted with their Somali identity.

The next set of questions focused on feelings of threat both to Somali culture and the culture of Islam. The questions posed involved not merely *perceptions of group threat* but, more seriously, *group survival* or what Wohl, Branscombe, and Reysen (2010) have labeled *collective angst*. This involved assessing respondents' perceptions of concern, anxiety, and threat to both Somali culture and Islamic culture in general in terms of their very survival.

A set of political and religious questions followed which asked respondents about the role that the Transitional Federal Government (TFG)—the internationally-recognized, interim government of Somalia until 20 August 2012—and al-Shabaab play in terms of the betterment or destruction of Somalia and the need to defend Islam.

Next came a series of questions to assess the *quality of life* experienced by our respondents personally and the different groups they belong to. Specifically, respondents were asked to judge the quality of their lives (a) at the time of their arrival in Canada, (b) now (the present), and (c) in the future. In addition to responding for themselves personally, they made the same judgments for “Mainstream Canadians” (the baseline comparison), Somalis in Canada, Somalis in Somalia, and the global Muslim community or *Ummah*.

Finally, there were a series of questions designed to assess the extent to which respondents felt hopeful or despondent about their future.

### **Survey Instrument Format**

Each of the concepts in the survey was measured not with one item or question but with a number of items to add stability and validity to the responses. Moreover, care was

taken to have some items worded in a positive manner and others in a negative manner to counteract any tendency to respond only in a positive manner.

For the vast majority of items or questions, respondents answered using a seven-point numerical Likert scale with labels such as “strongly disagree” (1) anchoring one end of the scale and “strongly agree” (7) anchoring the other. This responding format allowed respondents to give nuanced answers and allowed us to use sophisticated inferential statistical analyses when analyzing the results.

## **Results**

We were successful in having 80 Somali Canadians complete our survey instrument. The median age of respondents was 22 years, which indicates that we targeted the correct group. These are respondents who are just forging their role in life and their important identities, and directional choices are very likely to be highly salient for them.

We were also able to have a gender-balanced sample: 40 young men and 40 young women. Since participating in a terrorist group is, for the most part, apparently more attractive for young men, we compared the young men and women in our sample. In terms of group identity, there were no significant statistical differences. Thus, at least in terms of attitudes, the young men do not distinguish themselves, and thus we can combine the men and women in our sample for the purposes of statistical analyses.

It is also the case that virtually all of our respondents are Canadian citizens or landed immigrants, with approximately half being born in Canada and the other half in Somalia.

Before examining the more substantive analyses, a point of caution is necessary.

Despite being able to foster a trusting relationship with the community and to solicit the cooperation of 80 young Somalis, we should recognize an inherent bias in our sample. Our topic is a highly sensitive one, and we were soliciting cooperation from a rightfully cautious and suspicious community. Thus, we would expect that those young people in the community who are perhaps more politically radicalized would be reticent in participating. We have no doubt, then, that our sample might be less inclined to espouse radical ideologies than some segments that might be found in the population. This in no way invalidates the relationships we found, but it does caution us not to assume we have captured the full spectrum of attitudes among young people in the Somali community.

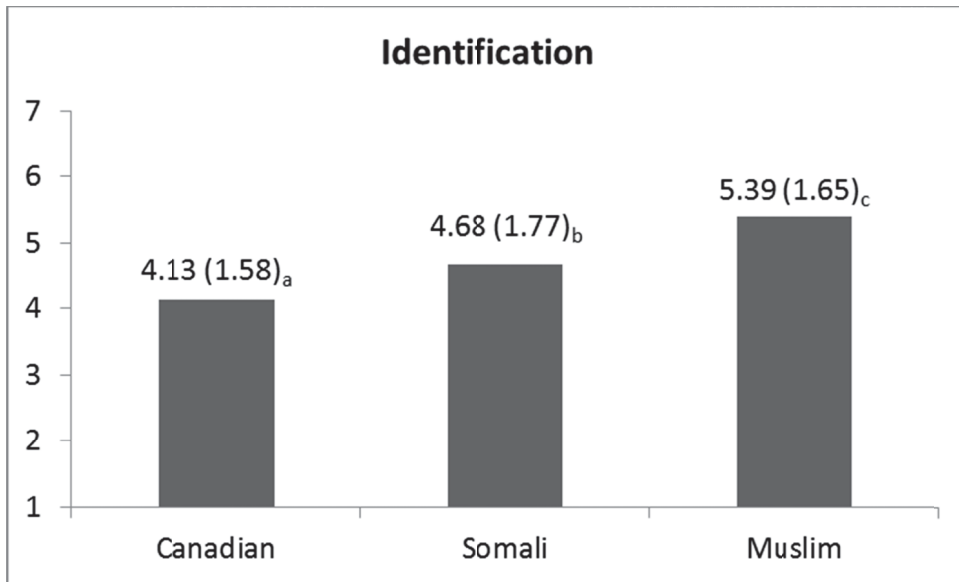
### **What is the Identity Profile of Young Somalis?**

Our sample of 80 young Somalis do identify themselves, moderately, as “Canadian.” However, they identify even more with “Somalia,” and their “Muslim” identity is the strongest of all. Moreover, our sample does not perceive any serious degree of conflict between their “Canadian” and their “Somali” identity. That is, these are two potentially compatible identities. However, the pattern of correlations indicates that the conflict in identity comes between their “Canadian” identity and their “Muslim” identity. Given that they rate their Muslim identity highest, this is a potentially important and serious source of identity conflict (see Figure 2).

In summary, for our respondents, it is their Muslim identity, not their Somali identity, that was strongest. Thus, it would seem that any focus on the attraction of terrorist groups on the one hand or promoting Canadian identity on the other will need to

reconcile issues related to our respondents' Muslim rather than their Somali identity. This finding points to a need for Canada to recognize that the major issue is one that Somalis share with a variety of other cultural groups in Canada (i.e., all those that are Muslim).

**Figure 2. Level of identification as Canadian, Somali, and Muslim**



*Note.* Comparisons with different subscripts are significant slopes at  $p < .05$ .

Mean and standard deviation appear above each bar.

Interestingly, while identity with “Canadian” is modest compared to identity with “Somali” and especially “Muslim,” those who do identify strongly with “Canadian” show a unique pattern. In terms of correlations, the more a respondent does identify with “Canadian,” the more hope they have and the least interested they are in violence or association with al-Shabaab (see Table 1).

**Table 1. Correlations between Canadian identity, hope, and violence, and support for al-Shabaab (means and standard deviations on the diagonal)**

	Canadian Identity	Personal Hope	Support for Violence	Support for al-Shabaab
Canadian Identity	4.13 (1.58)			
Personal Hope	.39**	5.87 (1.02)		
Support for violence	-.24*	-.35**	2.75 (1.55)	
Support for al-Shabaab	-.02	-.32**	.30*	2.36 (1.26)

*Note.* \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Table 2. Correlations between Somali identity, hope, and violence, and support for al-Shabaab (means and standard deviations on the diagonal)**

	Somali Identity	Personal Hope	Support for Violence	Support for al-Shabaab
Somali Identity	4.68 (1.77)			
Personal Hope	.11	5.87 (1.02)		
Support for violence	-.16	-.35**	2.75 (1.55)	
Support for al-Shabaab	-.26*	-.32**	.30*	2.36 (1.26)

*Note.* \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Nevertheless, the results point to Muslim identity as being a potentially critical factor in the motivation and life experience of young Somalis in Canada (see Table 3). The



stronger their “Muslim” identity—which we have seen is the strongest of the three identities among young Somalis—the less personal hope they have and the more disposed they are to support violence.

**Table 3. Correlations between Muslim identity, hope, and violence, and support for al-Shabaab (means and standard deviations on the diagonal)**

	Muslim Identity	Personal Hope	Support for Violence	Support for al-Shabaab
Muslim Identity	5.39 (1.65)			
Personal Hope	-.03	5.87 (1.02)		
Support for violence	.16	-.35**	2.75 (1.55)	
Support for al-Shabaab	-.14	-.32**	.30*	2.36 (1.26)

*Note.* \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### **Do Young Somalis Perceive Group-Based Threat?**

This is a relatively complex question since we need to understand which group matters most to our respondents. Earlier, we noted that Muslim identity is the strongest for our respondents, followed by Somali identity. However, respondents with the strongest Muslim identity are not necessarily the ones who feel Muslims as a group are under the biggest threat. Similarly, those who identify the most with Somalia do not necessarily feel that Somalis as a group are under inordinate threat. Thus, a strong identification with a group does not mean there is a perception that the group is under threat.

Muslim identity is the strongest but is not related to perceiving group threat.

However, *religious zeal* is related. So, it would seem that identifying with Islam alone is not sufficient to be associated with perceived threats to the group's future. Instead, that identification must take on a religious fervor (i.e., zeal) in order to believe that Muslims as a group are under threat (see Table 4). And as we noted earlier, threat here means a threat to the very survival of the group.

**Table 4. Correlations between Muslim identity, religious zeal, and collective angst  
 (means and standard deviations on the diagonal)**

	Canadian Identity	Somali Identity	Muslim Identity	Religious Zeal	Collective Angst
Canadian Identity	4.14 (1.61)				
Somali Identity	.21	4.68 (1.77)			
Muslim Identity	-.23*	.38**	5.39 (1.65)		
Religious Zeal	-.11	-.21	.04	4.65 (2.00)	
Collective Angst	-.19	-.11	.07	.28*	3.56 (1.29)

*Note.* \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Thus, Muslim identity is especially important to young Somalis in Canada, they are not particularly optimistic about their group's future, and they feel their Muslim identity is very much under threat.

We might have expected that Somali identity, and, by extension, perceptions of threat and support for violence would be central. But young Somalis are especially attached to their Muslim identity, and it is this identity that they feel is under threat. That is, they are concerned about the future of Islam—the very group that they identify with the most.

### **Is Social Dominance Orientation Related to Support for Terrorism?**

Social Dominance Orientation (SDO)—the belief that it is only natural that some groups have power and status over other groups—was the one personality characteristic that we examined in the survey instrument. Strikingly, for our participants, SDO is highly correlated with support for al-Shabaab. SDO also correlated with other factors that we associated with support for terrorism, such as perceived group threat or angst, the politicization of identity, and a strong identity with Islam. It would seem, then, that among those with a strong group identity and feelings of group angst, it is those few who are particularly high in SDO that might be attracted to the extremes of terrorism.

SDO is a personality trait that has had some initial links with intergroup conflict. The finding is that low-status minority group members who are low in SDO tend to be attracted to violent solutions, presumably because moving from a low status to equality between groups would be a victory (see Overbeck et al., 2004). More recently, however, we have found consistent evidence for the opposite: it is those who are high in SDO who are attracted to ANSA activity. Our interpretation is that motivated ANSAs want more than equality: they want their group to dominate. The results for our Somali young people support this latter interpretation. Our respondents who were high in SDO were the ones attracted to violence and al-Shabaab (see Table 5).

**Table 5. Correlations between Muslim identity, hope, and violence, and support for al-Shabaab (means and standard deviations on the diagonal)**

	SDO	Collective Angst	Support for al-Shabaab
SDO	2.50 (1.51)		
Collective Angst	.35*	3.56 (1.29)	
Support for al-Shabaab	.41**	.15	2.36 (1.26)

Note. \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### Do Young Somalis Show Any Support for a Terrorist Agenda?

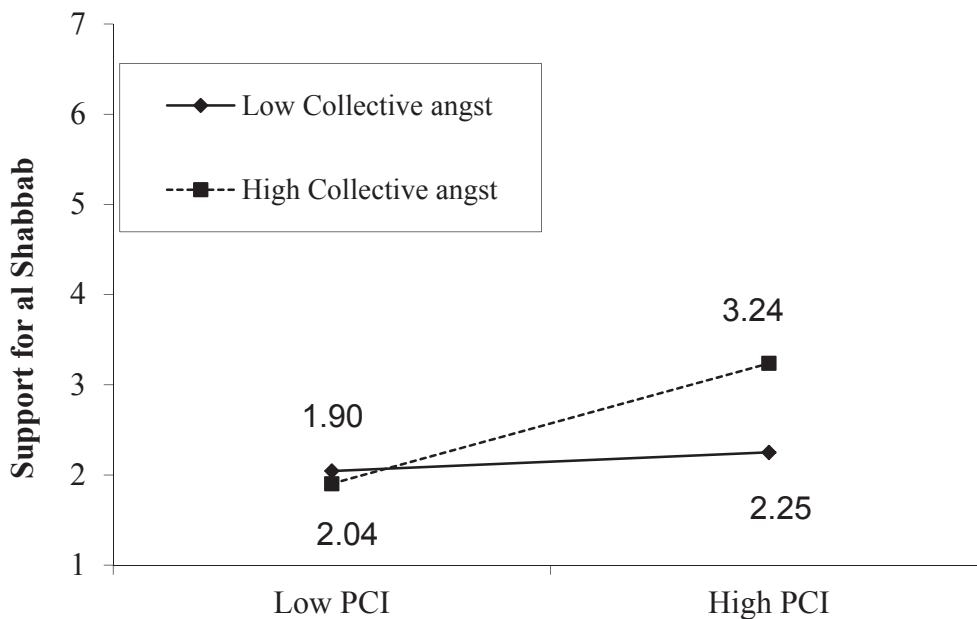
The short answer to this question is no. Indeed, ratings for endorsement of al-Shabaab are decidedly low as are the ratings for violence in general. Only marginally higher are ratings for the TFG. These ratings are to be expected, given the potential bias of our sample, although ratings for the supposedly legitimate TFG are not at all high.

The low ratings for violence and support for al-Shabaab does not mean that there was agreement among all our participants. Although generally low, the ratings for a potential terrorist agenda did vary, allowing us to address questions about the characteristics of those who tend to be more supportive of a terrorist agenda. What our findings reveal is that a *Politicized Collective Identity* (PCI) and perceived threat take center stage when trying to understand when al-Shabaab will be supported.

According to Simon and Klanderman (2001), collective identities become politicized when members accord priority to their group in their political thinking and behavior. That is, for some group members, the sociopolitical landscape is seen through a collective

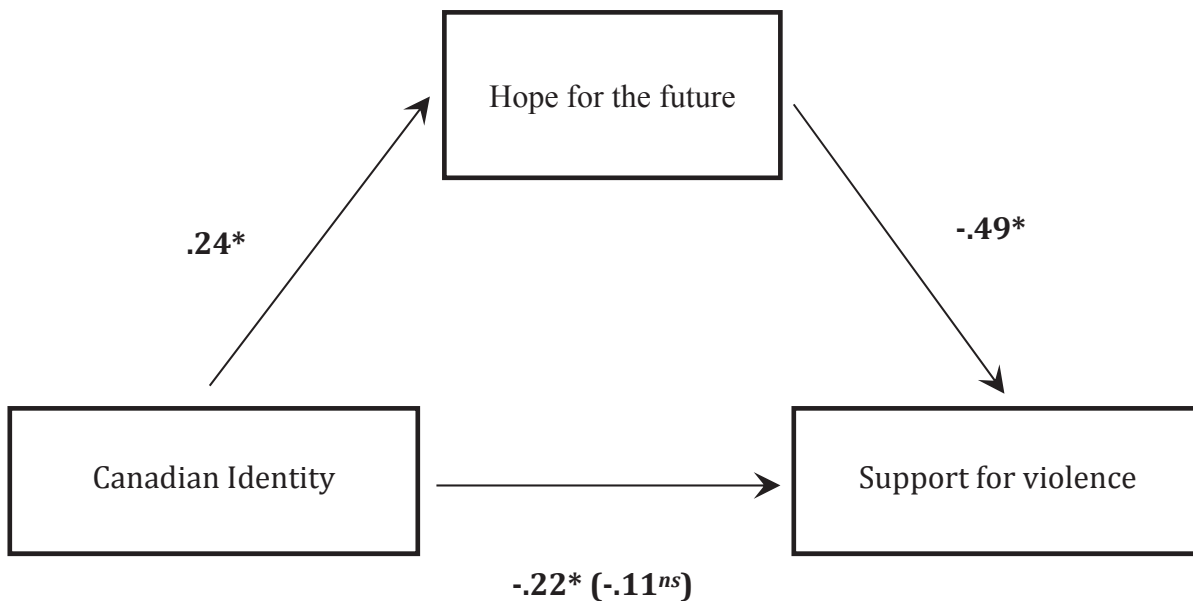
identity lens (see Lapid, 1987). Collective identities tend to take on this politicized perspective when people become mindful of and focused on a struggle for power. The outcome is a desire to engage in political collective action in an effort to empower the ingroup. Importantly, a PCI has traditionally been understood as being an unlikely path to radicalization and support of anti-normative collective action (e.g., violence or acts of terrorism; Simon & Ruhs, 2008). Empirical evidence suggests that PCI is associated with engagement in normative means to advance group interests (Duncan & Stewart, 2007; Simon & Grabow, 2010; Simon & Ruhs, 2008). However, for young Somalis, support for normative means was replaced with support for al-Shabaab when the group's future was under threat (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Estimated means for support for al-Shabaab at 1 Standard Deviation above and below the mean of Politicized Collective Identity (PCI).**



While a PCI coupled with threat appears to heighten support for al-Shabaab, equally important are factors that turn young Somalis away from al-Shabaab. Herein lies the role played by *hope for the future*. As indicated previously, the more young Somalis identified with Canada, the more they had hope for the future. This hope for the future, in turn, lessened support for violence (see Figure 4). Indeed, it is hope that allows people to imagine a brighter, more prosperous future. That is, hope allows people to see that there is an alternative to using armed struggle to achieve a brighter, more prosperous tomorrow.

**Figure 4. Mediation model with “Canadian Identity” as the independent variable, “Hope for the Future” as the mediator, and “Support for Violence” as the dependent variable.**



*Note.* The direct effect coefficient shown in parentheses reflects the inclusion of the mediator in the equation.

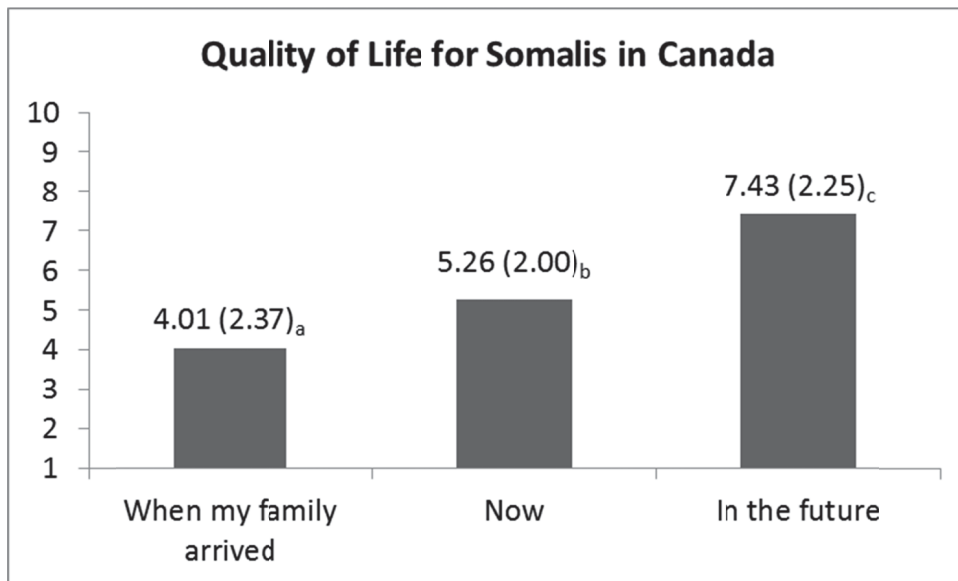
Coefficients with an asterisk indicate significant beta weights,  $p < .05$ .

### How Do Young Somalis Judge the Quality of their Lives?

This question is revealing because it describes the trajectory of our participants in terms of their perceptions of life from the time they arrived in Canada to the present and then projecting into the future. They began by making ratings for “Mainstream Canadians.” As we would expect, at the time of the respondents’ arrival (whenever that was), they judged the quality of life for most Canadians to be good, that it continues to be good, and is likely to get even a bit better in the future.

The profile for “Somalis in Canada” (see Figure 5) and “Your Family” (Figure 6) show the same optimistic trajectory. In both cases, upon arrival, life was not satisfactory, but it has improved to the present and will become even better in the future.

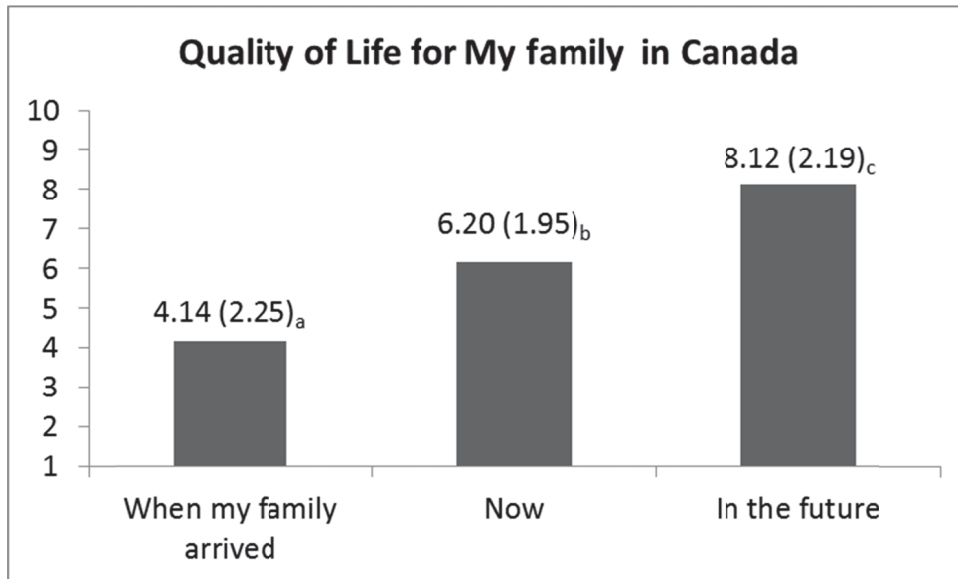
**Figure 5. Perceived quality of life for Somalis in Canada**



*Note.* Comparisons with different subscripts are significant slopes at  $p < .05$ .

Mean and standard deviation appear above each bar.

**Figure 6. Perceived quality of life for my family in Canada**



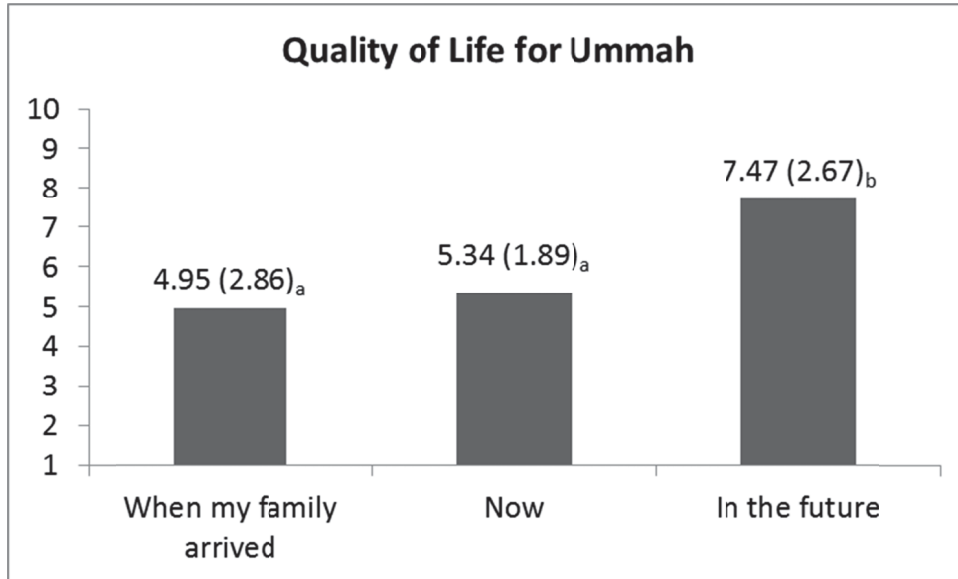
**Note.** Comparisons with different subscripts are significant slopes at  $p < .05$ .

Mean and standard deviation appear above each bar.

The only group to show stagnation is Muslims the world over (i.e., the Ummah) (see Figure 7).



**Figure 7. Perceived quality of life for Ummah**



*Note.* Comparisons with different subscripts are significant slopes at  $p < .05$ .

Mean and standard deviation appear above each bar.

This latter profile is disquieting since we have already documented the importance of Muslim identity for our respondents. And here we learn that young Somalis judge that, from the past to the present, the quality of life has improved for their family as well as the Somali community despite the turmoil associated with this latter identity. The only quality of life that young Somalis believe has not improved is that of Muslims, which happens to be their most important identity.

## **Issues of Group-Based Identity and Threat: Towards a Deeper Understanding of Young Somali Canadians**

Our formal analyses of the survey instrument by a sample of 80 young Somalis living in Canada pointed to important links between group identity and group threat on the one hand and support for ANSA behaviour and acculturation to Canada on the other. Moreover, these important links have implications for the quality of life experienced by young Somalis who are wrestling with a number of adjustment issues that are not of their own making.

Our results thus far, while statistically stable, are but the beginning in terms of truly understanding the attitudes and motivations of young Somalis. Indeed, time constraints made it impossible to elaborate on the group-based identity and threat issues raised in the present report. Fortunately, our sample size of 80 respondents allows us over the next few months to elaborate on several themes, especially those that were raised at a formal presentation of our results at the conference on “Understanding al-Shabaab and its effects on Canadian national security” held in Kingston, Ontario, March 26–27, 2012.

Examples of key questions that can be addressed with the data already in hand include:

### **1. Do young Somali men and women differ in their motivation and attitude profiles?**

We performed a cursory statistical analysis to explore identity differences between the young men and women in our sample. No differences emerged; however, this is not to say that other differences might not surface through a careful analysis of all the key concepts and the links among them. Such differences might be expected given that ANSA

support is often viewed as especially relevant for young men. Here we have the opportunity to map any profile differences.

## **2. Do young Somalis born in Canada differ from those born in Somalia?**

Our results indicated a sizeable number of respondents fell into each group, thus allowing us to explore profile differences with our existing data. It might be expected that those born in Somalia have motivations and attitudes that are more impacted by the conflict in that region, whereas those born in Canada may well be more oriented toward Canadian reality. However, given the strength of the Muslim identity for all our respondents, we may find no differences. These issues need to be addressed.

## **3. What insights can we gain about maximizing the quality of life for young Somalis in Canada?**

The focus of the present report has been on factors related to potential support for ANSA activity. However, it was young Somalis in Canada, with support from community leaders, who gave generously of their time. ANSAs were our focus, not theirs, and, thus, we will be conducting a series of analyses that we hope will be of benefit to the community. Specifically, this will require attempting to identify the profile of identity and perceptions of group-based threat that are most associated with optimism, integration, hope, and a desirable quality of life. When that is completed, we will hold a series of feedback sessions with various community groups.

Thus far, we have pointed to performing a series of more in-depth analyses from data already collected from our 80 participants. There remain, however, equally important questions that will require us to collect more data generally, and, specifically, to broaden our sample. The issues that fall into this category include:

#### **4. Is there a clearly defined generational difference among young and adult Somalis living in Canada?**

We cannot answer this crucial question since the present report focused on young Somalis in Canada. But, we might imagine that older Somalis, those who left Somalia at the height of the chaos, may have a very unique perspective. They might, for example, imagine that they will only stay in Canada until order is restored in Somalia, at which time they will return home. Since order in Somalia has been a long time coming, with little hope for the immediate future, older Somalis may feel alienated in Canada with a sense of frustration about ever returning home. Young Somalis may be less focused on the details of Somalian geo-politics, and indeed may have little real comprehension of what the older generation experiences. This might lead younger Somalis to be more oriented toward Canada. If this were true, both older and younger Somalis would feel alienated, but for very different reasons.

Further empirical research is desperately needed to address these issues. While there is a superficial logic to the hypothesized differences between older and younger Somalis, it is equally possible that the real conflicts are intergenerational, having little to do with Somalia per se, and everything to do with the younger generation of virtually every cultural group in Canada.

#### **5. What are the key components between Muslim and Somali group identity?**

Our present results point to the primacy of Muslim identity for our young Somalis. Knowing this will allow us in follow-up research to focus on the factors related to the strength of this identity and its relationship with other identities.

## **Conclusion**

We view the present report not as a definitive statement about the motivations, attitudes and support of young Somalis towards ANSAs. Rather, we have initiated a dialogue that hopefully gives a voice to the Somali community. Our focus on ANSAs needs to be balanced with the needs of the Somali community and its questions and its agenda.

More importantly, the dialogue must not end here. All our participants were happy for the opportunity to lend their voice and share their views. Given the sensitive nature of the questions, this speaks to the importance of not initiating the dialogue and then terminating it unceremoniously. Finally, as the dialogue continues, we need to understand what role Canadian policy and Canadian attitudes play in promoting an environment that fosters hope or alienation among members of the Somali community in Canada.

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## **Appendix**

# **Your voice: Somalia according to Somalis**



**Ottawa, Ontario**

**©2011**

## Informed Consent

The purpose of an informed consent is to ensure that you understand the purpose of the study and the nature of your involvement. The informed consent must provide sufficient information so that you have the opportunity to determine whether you wish to participate in the study.

**Study Title:** Your voice: Somalia according to Somalis

**Research Personnel:** Dr. Michael Wohl (Principal Investigator, (613) 520-2600, ext. 2908)  
Dr. Donald Taylor (Co-Investigator, donald.taylor@mcgill.ca)  
Michael King (Co-Investigator, michael.king@mail.mcgill.ca)  
Kashi Kawatra (Research Assistant, kawatra.k@gmail.com)

**Faculty Sponsor:** Dr. Michael Wohl, (613) 520-2600, ext. 2908.

**This study has been approved by the Carleton University Ethics Committee for Psychological Research (Ethics Clearance #11-109). Please use this number if you need to contact the Chair of the Department or Chair of the Ethics Committee concerning this study.**

**If you have any ethical concerns about how this study was conducted, you are encouraged to contact:**

Dr. Monique Sénéchal, Chair of the Carleton University Ethics Committee for Psychological Research, (613) 520-2600, ext. 1155

**If you have any other concerns about how this study may have been conducted, contact:**

Dr. Anne Bowker, Chair, Department of Psychology, Carleton University, (613) 5520-2600, ext. 8218

**Purpose and Task Requirements:** In light of recent and continuing circumstances in Somalia, we are interested in your thoughts and feelings regarding the state of affairs for Somalis and Somali Canadians. By participating in this study, you are greatly assisting us to obtain a better understanding of issues facing the Somali Canadian community. Be assured that your name will not be associated in any way with the research findings. Participation in this study entails completing a questionnaire, which should not take more than 30 minutes of your time. The questions will ask you about your feelings related to issues affecting Somalis and Somali Canadians. There are no right or wrong answers. You are also free to withdraw at any point. We are seeking to understand your perspective. You will receive \$10 in return for your participation. If you fill out a hardcopy survey you will receive the \$10 on the spot. If you mail in the survey, we will send you a cheque for \$10 or a \$10 gift certificate to your choice of Walmart, The Bay, or Chapters/Indigo. You can choose which option you like. In order to do this, we will need your address. If you select a \$10 cheque to be mailed to you, we also ask that you provide a name in which the cheque will be written out. Know that this information will be destroyed after the study has reached its conclusion.

**Potential Risk/Discomfort:** We do not anticipate any physical discomfort to you as a result of your participation in this study. You may, however, experience some stress when thinking about various issues affecting the Somali people. Your participation will be helpful, but it is completely voluntary. At the end of the session, you will be provided with information about the aims of our study. The information collected in this study will only be used by the investigators. Questions about this study should be directed to any of the researchers listed above.

**Anonymity/Confidentiality:** The data collected in this experiment are confidential. All data are coded such that your name will not be associated with the data provided. The coded data are made available only to the researchers associated with this project. All personal information will be destroyed immediately after the study has reached its conclusion (we anticipate data collection will conclude by June 2012).

**Right to withdraw:** Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. At any point during the study, you have the right to withdraw or refrain from answering any question. Should you decide to do so, no penalty will be incurred.

Some participants may feel sadness or distress as a result of the study. If any distress you experience is more than temporary, or if you would like to speak with someone about this distress, then you may want to contact your family physician. Your family physician will usually be able to help you or be able to refer you to someone who can. If you do not have a family physician, then you can contact any of the following:

Distress Centre for Ottawa and Region  
Tel: (613) 238-3311  
Web Site: [www.dcottawa.on.ca](http://www.dcottawa.on.ca)

Ontario Mental Health Help Line  
Tel: 1-866-531-2600  
Web Site: [www.mentalhealthhelpline.ca](http://www.mentalhealthhelpline.ca)

***I have read the above description of the study entitled “Your voice: Somalia according to Somalis.” The data collected may be used for reports, research publications, or teaching purposes. By signing below, I am indicating that I am at least 18 years of age, that I agree to participate in the study, and that this in no way constitutes a waiver of my rights.***

Participant Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Linkage of Coded and Personal Data**

This form is to allow researchers to link personally identifiable data (name, address, etc.) with the unique code that will be listed on all collected data. Information on this form will be treated as confidential and kept in a locked filing cabinet in the office of the principal investigators. Data will also be entered on a computer and stored in a password-protected document, with access restricted to the principal investigators.

Data code: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant name: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

## If you are mailing the survey in...

Please choose one of the following items that you would like mailed to you:

- \$10 cheque
- \$10 gift certificate for Walmart
- \$10 gift certificate for The Bay
- \$10 gift certificate for Indigo/Chapters

Please provide an address where the item can be mailed to you. (If you selected a cheque to be mailed to you, please write a name in which the cheque can be made out.)

Name (for cheque): \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

## Background

1-What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

2- What is your gender?

Male

Female

3- What region of Somalia are you from? \_\_\_\_\_

4- Where were your parents born? \_\_\_\_\_

5- Where were you born? \_\_\_\_\_

6- What is your citizenship status (Please check one)?

Canadian citizen

If born outside Canada, since what year? \_\_\_\_\_

Landed immigrant

Since what year? \_\_\_\_\_

Temporary visa

Since what year? \_\_\_\_\_

7- Do you have family in Somalia?

Yes

No

8- I would say my family is:

Upper Class (wealthy)

Middle Class (comfortable)

Working Class (just getting by)

Lower Class (struggling)

## Impact of the Famine

We understand that many Somali Canadians and their families have been affected by the famine. Please give us a better idea of what is happening.

1-Do you have relatives who are being affected by the famine?

\_\_\_\_ Yes                      \_\_\_\_ No

2- We would like to know what kind of effect you think the following groups are having on the famine in Somalia. Using the scale below, please answer each question by marking a  in the appropriate box.

**Made it worse**                      **Had no effect**                      **Made it better**  
 1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TFG							
Al-Shabaab							
Tribal leaders							
Warlords							
African Union							
Other African countries							
Non-African countries/ International organizations							
(Other group) Please specify: _____							

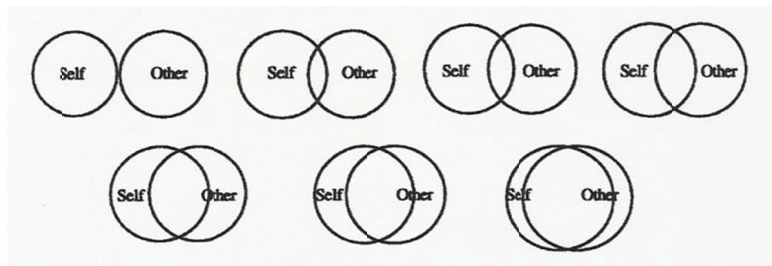
3- How would you rate the international community's response to the famine? Using the scale below, please circle one number between "1" and "7".

Made it worse                      Had no effect                      Made it better  
 1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

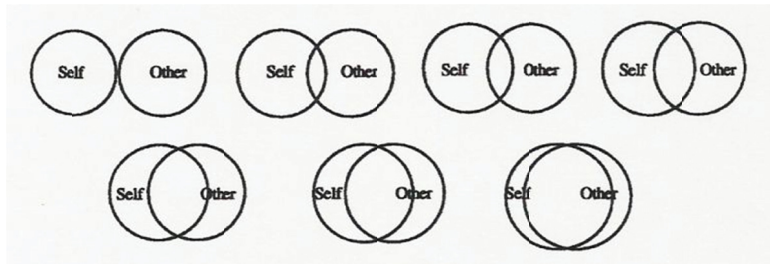
## Identity

**We are interested to learn about your cultural identity. Some people identify strongly with one cultural group, while others may identify with more than one cultural group. Please reflect on what *you* consider your cultural identity to be.**

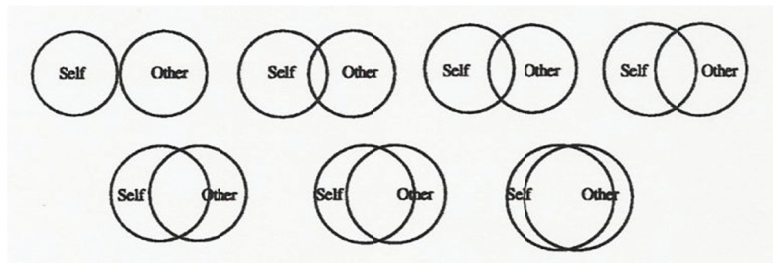
1-Please circle the picture below that best describes your relationship with the community of other **Canadians**. In the diagrams below, the “self” represents *you* and the “other” represents the community of other **Canadians**. The more the circles overlap, the more you identify with the community of other Canadians.



2-Please circle the picture below that best describes your relationship with the **Somali community**. The “self” represents *you* and the “other” represents the **Somali community**. The more the circles overlap, the more you identify with the Somali community.



3-Please circle the picture below that best describes your relationship with the **Muslim community**. The “self” represents *you* and the “other” represents the **Muslim community**. The more the circles overlap, the more you identify with the Muslim community.











## Religious Zeal

**Religious belief influences different people at varying levels. We would like to know how much your religion influences your life.**

1-Below is a series of statements with which you may either agree or disagree. Using the scale below, indicate how much each statement describes your current feelings by marking a  in the appropriate box.

**Strongly disagree**  
 1            2

3

4

5

6

7

**Strongly agree**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If Islam was being publicly criticized, Muslims should defend it.							
Muslims who sacrifice themselves to defend Islam should be celebrated.							
Muslims should do whatever is necessary to defend Islam.							
Sharia law should be adopted by all Somalis.							

## Social Dominance Orientation

Opinions vary with respect to how much status should be granted to individuals and groups. Let us know what you think.

1-Below is a series of statements with which you may either agree or disagree. Using the scale below, indicate how much each statement describes your current feelings by marking a  in the appropriate box.

**Strongly disagree**  
1

2

3

4

5

6

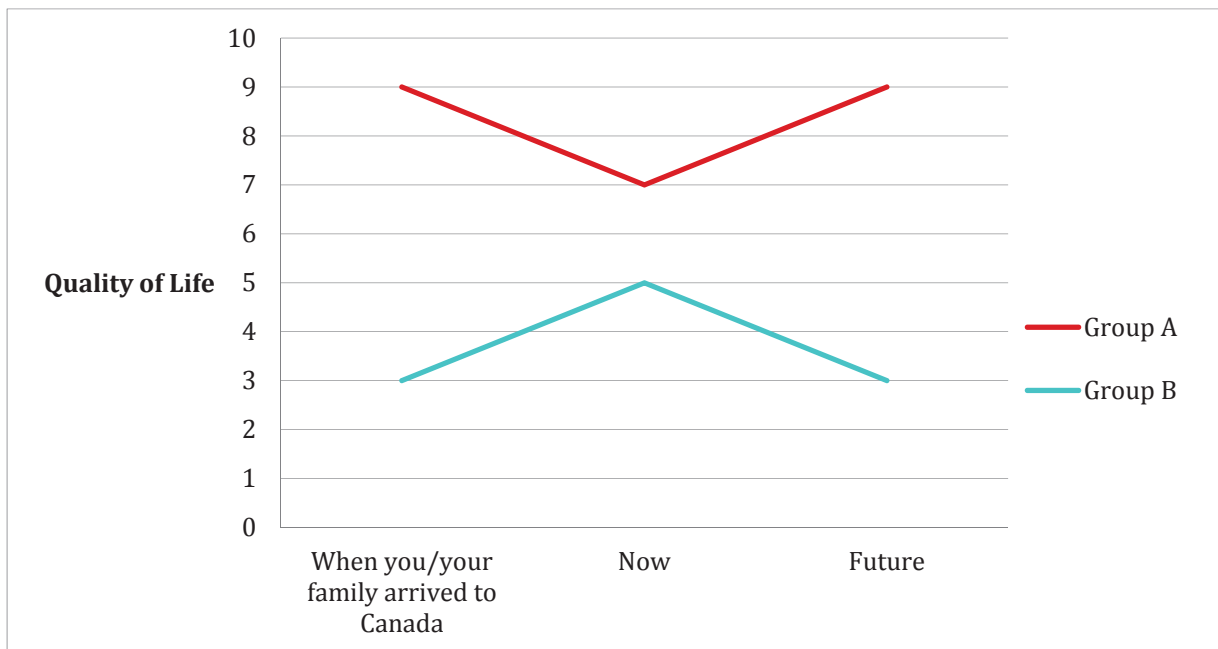
**Strongly agree**  
7

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups.							
All groups should be given an equal chance in life.							
It is probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom.							

## Quality of Life

**In this section, we would like to learn about how you see the quality of life of different groups.**

Below is an example of how “quality of life” can change across time. In the vertical scale on the left, “10” represents the best quality of life possible and “0” represents the worst quality of life possible. Two groups are shown. Group A’s quality of life was high when they arrived in Canada, is a little lower now, but their future is brighter. Group B’s quality of life was low upon arrival, is higher now, but their future does not look bright. You can also see that Group A’s quality of life is always higher than Group B’s.

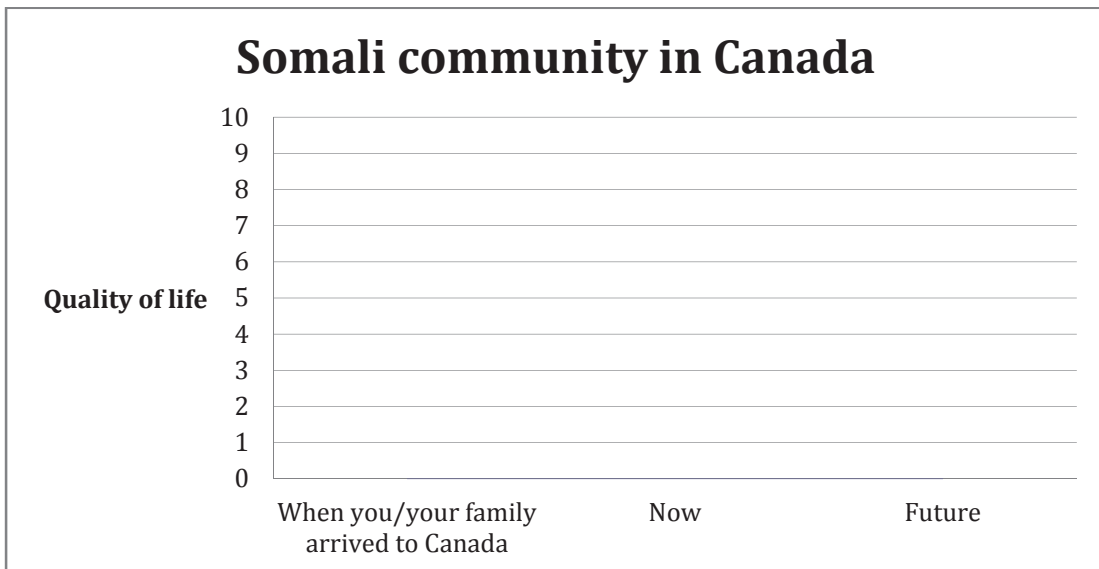
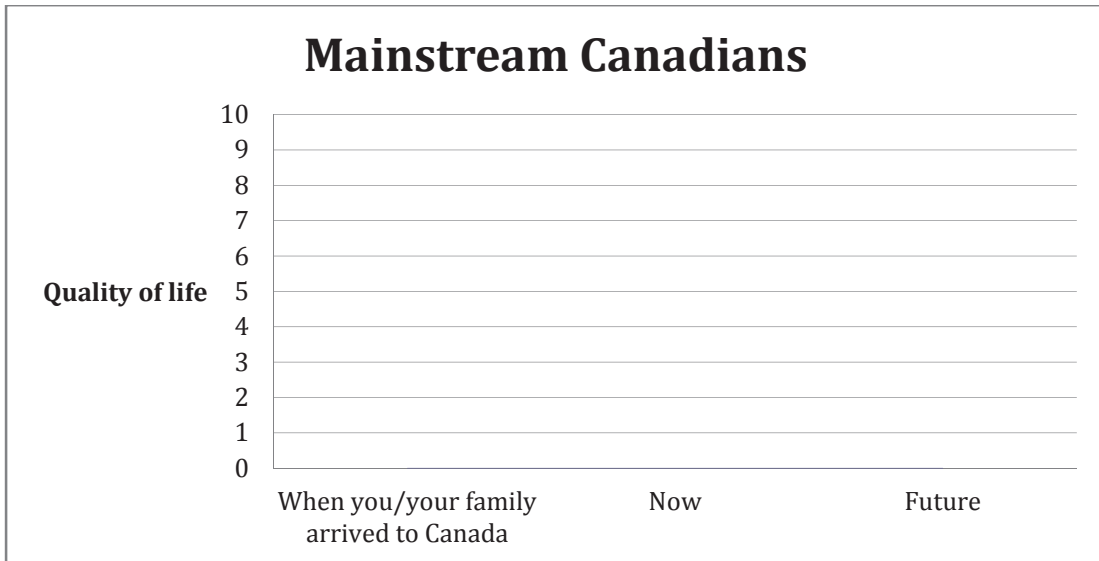


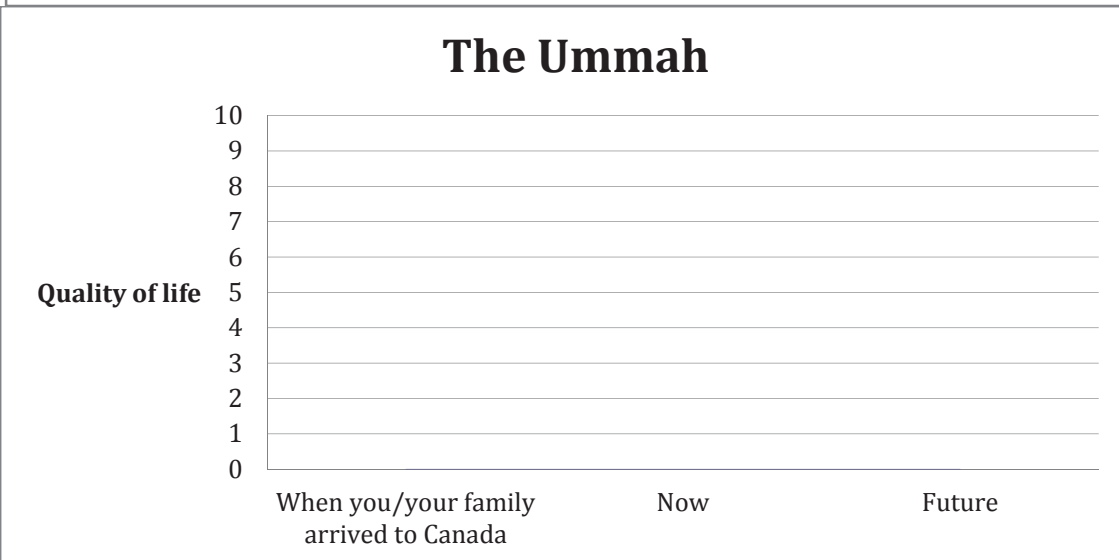
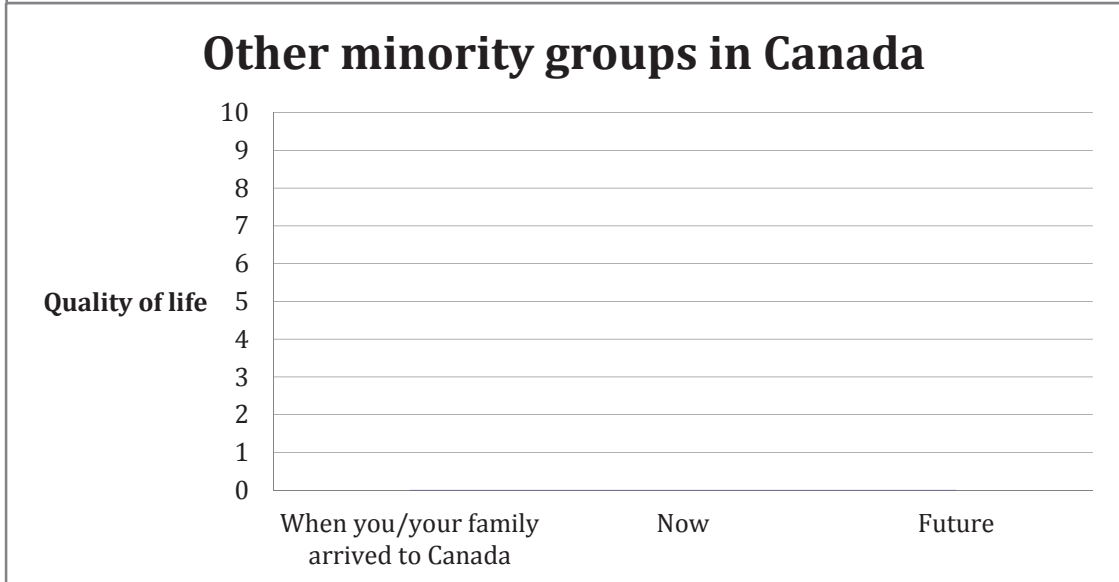
Six graphs are provided over the next few pages. Each graph corresponds to how you see the quality of life for different groups, e.g., *mainstream Canadians* or *the Somali community in Canada*.

For each group, start by thinking about what their quality of life was when you or your family first came to Canada. Rate it between 0 and 10. This should be done by placing a dot on a line above where it is written “when you/your family arrived in Canada.”

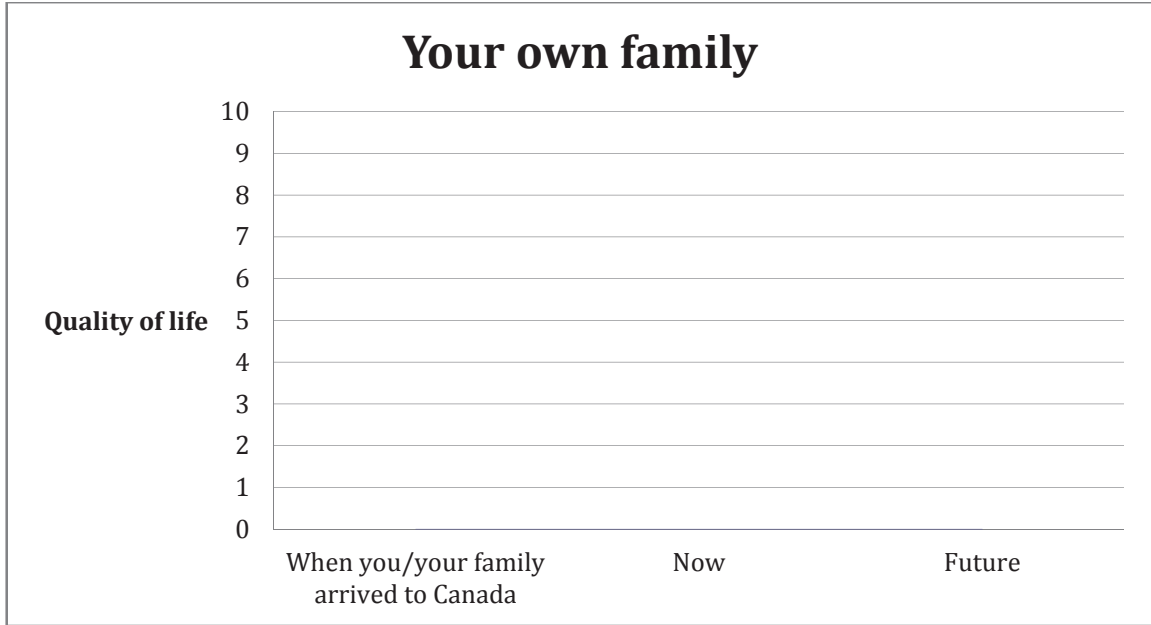
Next, think about how that group’s quality of life is now. Rate it between 0 and 10 and place a dot above where it is written “Now.”

Finally, think about what you think the quality of life of that group will be in the future. Rate that quality of life between 0 and 10 and place a dot above where it is written “Future.” After you draw the dots on the graph, please connect them with a line (as seen above).











## **Comments about the Survey**

Please feel free to write your comments about this survey. We welcome all comments including: what you think about the wording of the survey, questions that you think are irrelevant, questions that you think should be changed, and how the questions made you feel. We greatly appreciate your input.

## **Debriefing**

### **Thank you very much for your participation.**

This post-survey information is provided to inform you of the exact nature of the research you have just participated in.

### **Purpose of our research and review of research issues**

Somalia has been faced with civil unrest and political turmoil for decades. Somalis also face unique challenges when settling in Canada. Our research is geared towards understanding what your feelings are with respect to these challenges. More specifically, our research aims to understand which groups you identify with, what your feelings are about your group's status, and what you think can be done for the future of your group.

Psychology researchers use the term collective angst to refer to the feeling experienced by a group, when they feel a profound sense of uncertainty regarding the future of their group's culture and identity. This feeling is also believed to partly motivate collective behaviours to both protect a group and confront other groups that pose a threat to it. Furthermore, it is believed that when a group of people feel themselves to be in a disadvantaged social position and can identify another group as the cause, they may act on behalf of their group to restore its standing.

Given the political instability in Somalia and the many new challenges Somalis may face while living in Canada, we believe that Somali Canadians may be experiencing a profound sense of uncertainty regarding the future of Somali culture and identity. Our study has aimed to assess this level of uncertainty and ensuing behaviours Somalis may endorse when considering the future existence of their group.

### **Hypothesis and implications of this study**

We expect that, like many other Canadians, Somali Canadians are maneuvering between identities. We predict that Somalis choose to act on behalf of their group according to the level that they identify with their group, as well as the collective emotions and narratives of that group. In particular, we predict that individuals who feel more closely connected to their ethnic group, show a stronger reaction when they perceive a threat to the future existence of their group. Moreover, these people may be more likely to act to protect their group in response to such a threat.

You have made a significant contribution by completing the questionnaire. This research will contribute to psychologists' knowledge and understanding of intergroup relations. Specifically, findings from this study may shed light on how individuals react when they perceive that their social group is threatened. The data collected may be used for reports, research publications, or teaching purposes.

If you have any further questions about this project or concerns about how it was conducted, please contact Dr. Michael Wohl (Department of Psychology, Carleton University, email: michael\_wohl@carleton.ca, (613) 520-2600, ext. 2908).

This study has been approved by the Carleton University Ethics Committee for Psychological Research (Ethics Clearance #11-109). Please use this number if you need to contact the Chair of the Department or Chair of the Ethics Committee concerning this study.

If you have any ethical concerns about how this study was conducted, you are encouraged to contact Dr. Monique Sénéchal, Chair of the Carleton University Ethics Committee for Psychological Research, (613) 520-2600, ext. 1155.

If you have any other concerns about how this study was conducted, contact Dr. Anne Bowker, Chair, Department of Psychology, Carleton University, (613) 5520-2600, ext. 8218.

Some participants may feel sadness or distress as a result of this study. If any distress you experience is more than temporary, or if you would like to speak to someone about this distress, then you may want to contact your family physician. Your family physician will usually be able to help you, or refer you to someone who can. If you do not have a family physician, then contact the following:

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Tel: 1-866-531-2600  
Web Site: [www.mentalhealthhelpline.ca](http://www.mentalhealthhelpline.ca)

If you are interested in work that has been done by our research team, please visit the links below for examples of some reports on our findings:

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.773/pdf>

[http://psihologija.ffzg.unizg.hr/uploads/Rt/AU/RtAUdmN9CYrdkrrQAo01gg/Forgiveness-and-Collective-Guilt\\_Wohl--Branscombe.pdf](http://psihologija.ffzg.unizg.hr/uploads/Rt/AU/RtAUdmN9CYrdkrrQAo01gg/Forgiveness-and-Collective-Guilt_Wohl--Branscombe.pdf)

**Once again, thank you for your participation.**

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<p>1. <b>ORIGINATOR</b> (The name and address of the organization preparing the document, Organizations for whom the document was prepared, e.g. Centre sponsoring a contractor's document, or tasking agency, are entered in section 8.)</p> <p>Publishing: DRDC Toronto</p> <p>Performing: Donald M. Taylor, McGill University, Department of Psychology, 1205 Dr. Penfield Ave., Montreal, Quebec</p> <p>Monitoring:</p> <p>Contracting: DRDC Toronto</p>	<p>2. <b>SECURITY CLASSIFICATION</b> (Overall security classification of the document including special warning terms if applicable.)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>UNCLASSIFIED</b> (NON-CONTROLLED GOODS) DMC A</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Review: GCEC June 2010</p>	
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<p>4. <b>AUTHORS</b> (First name, middle initial and last name. If military, show rank, e.g. Maj. John E. Doe.)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Donald M. Taylor, Michael J. A. Wohl, Michael King, Lindsay Kawatra</b></p>		
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(U) This Contract Report presents the findings of a comprehensive field survey designed to shed light on the attraction of young people to Armed Non-state Actors (ANSAs). The Contractors surveyed 80 young Somali Canadians who come from a failed state (Somalia) and where terrorist organizations (specifically, the militant jihadist group al-Shabaab) play an important role in the current and future outcomes for that state. The survey focused on variables of importance to young Somali Canadians: perceived group threat, strength of group identity, and Social Dominance Orientation (an individual's tendency to value group status and hierarchy while devaluing egalitarianism). The research explored these three variables in terms of their relationship with support for engaging in terrorism.

Our formal analyses of the survey instrument completed by young Somalis living in Canada pointed to important links between group identity and group threat on the one hand and support for ANSA behaviour and acculturation to Canada on the other. Moreover, these important links have implications for the quality of life experienced by young Somalis who are wrestling with a number of adjustment issues that are not of their own making.

(U) Le présent rapport d'entrepreneur présente les résultats d'une enquête de terrain exhaustive visant à élucider l'attraction des jeunes pour les acteurs armés non étatiques (AANE). Les entrepreneurs ont sondé 80 jeunes Canado Somaliens originaires d'un État défaillant (la Somalie) dans lequel des organisations terroristes (en particulier le groupe militant jihadiste al-Shabaab) ont une influence importante sur la situation actuelle et future de l'État. L'enquête s'est concentrée sur des variables importantes pour les jeunes Canado Somaliens : la perception de menace collective, la force de l'identité collective et l'orientation de dominance sociale (l'inclination d'une personne à valoriser davantage le statut du groupe et la hiérarchie par opposition à l'égalitarisme). Dans la recherche, ces trois variables ont été abordées dans le contexte de leur lien avec le soutien aux activités terroristes.

Les analyses formelles des instruments d'enquête auxquels ont répondu les jeunes Somaliens vivant au Canada révèlent des liens importants entre, d'une part, l'identité collective et la perception de menace collective et, d'autre part, le soutien aux actions des AANE et l'acculturation au Canada. En outre, ces liens importants ont des répercussions sur la qualité de vie des jeunes Somaliens qui sont aux prises avec un certain nombre de problèmes d'adaptation dont ils ne sont pas responsables.

14. **KEYWORDS, DESCRIPTORS or IDENTIFIERS** (Technically meaningful terms or short phrases that characterize a document and could be helpful in cataloguing the document. They should be selected so that no security classification is required. Identifiers, such as equipment model designation, trade name, military project code name, geographic location may also be included. If possible keywords should be selected from a published thesaurus, e.g. Thesaurus of Engineering and Scientific Terms (TEST) and that thesaurus identified. If it is not possible to select indexing terms which are Unclassified, the classification of each should be indicated as with the title.)

(U) Armed Non-state Actors (ANSAs); terrorism; al-Shabaab; Somali Canadians; group threat; group identity; Social Dominance Orientation (SDO)

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