

The March 15 Project

Preliminary Findings

Introduction

We are currently analysing the huge amount of information from the March 15 Project and are keen to share our preliminary findings. Here you will find some infographics summarising these and we will update the website when we have further information.

At this stage everything is in English, but we plan to upload translations in other languages as soon as they are available.

One key aspect of this work has been the ongoing partnership between our team and the Christchurch Muslim community since the project was first proposed; that participatory approach has been critical to the success of the project. We would especially like to acknowledge the involvement of our Community Reference Group. Their engagement has been greatly appreciated and their insights have been invaluable helping to guide the research process and analysis. Similarly, we would like to thank our Muslim Research Assistant team for all their work on this project over the past two and a half years.

Most importantly, we would also like to thank everyone who participated or supported the March 15 project.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact us at march15study@otago.ac.nz.

Preliminary Findings

1 Demographics

The March 15 Project interviewed a total of 189 people from the Christchurch Muslim community between February 2020 and December 2021.

As shown in this infographic, the self-identified ethnic background composition of participants was diverse, with 34 different responses that covered African, Europe, Asia, Australia and North American continents.

The sample included both genders and participants ranged in age from 18 to 74 years.

2 Education and spoken English

Most participants self-assessed their spoken and written English as being from average to very good. Although the March 15 Project provided all questionnaires in different languages, most assessments were conducted in English, with a quarter done in other languages.

Most participants had at least a tertiary qualification as their highest level of education, with 30% having a post-graduate degree.

3 Categories of Exposure

The sample included people who were directly and indirectly exposed to the attacks. 61% of the participants were directly affected themselves or had family members who were directly affected, while 39% were from the wider community. As shown in the infographic, some participants were in multiple exposure categories.

4 Concerns of Participants

Participants were asked about their current concerns from a list of potential issues and could identify as many as were relevant. Financial issues, a family members mental health and concerns about children were the most commonly reported concerns. Additional concerns were raised by 30% of the participants.

Report of multiple concerns was common among participants, with almost half (46%) of the participants reporting three or more concerns and 12% indicating six or more concerns.

5 Mental health conditions

Of the 189 participants, 61% had had at least one mental health condition since the attacks, while 39% had none over the same period.

43% had Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) in the period since the March 15th attacks, 32% Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and 31% an Anxiety Disorder. Many participants had more than one mental health condition; 24% had one, 29% had two, and 8% were diagnosed with all three conditions.

6 Events, activities and services used

Participants were asked about which activities and services they had attended from a list, and if they had found them helpful. They could identify as many as were relevant. Some of these were ongoing or frequent activities or services, while others were time limited. Access to events, activities and services also differed, with some being open to all, and some being limited to specific categories of people.

A variety of events were attended, with the most frequently attended being Muslim social events, Islamic scholar events and sports activities. If participants did go to these events, they generally found them helpful (53-87%).

Participants were also asked about which services they had accessed, and if they had found them helpful. The most frequently accessed services were primary care (GP), MSD case managers and Victim Support services. If participants accessed these services, they generally found them helpful (62-85%).

Participants were not asked to indicate how these events and services were helpful, and it is recognised that different activities may have been helpful for participants in different ways.