

# Reimagining Queer Muslim Youth: Is Representation Enough?

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## ABSTRACT

Using an anti-colonial, critical lens, I analyze two young adult novels and one film all presenting the lives of queer Muslim teenagers in various countries around the world. Locating themes of white savourism, forced marriage, and the overall negative experience of being a queer Muslim, I ask myself and the readers, is representation enough?

Queer children and youth rarely get to see positive examples of themselves, and for queer Muslims, literature and media can be the only source they see their inner desires mirrored back at themselves. This representation must go beyond the phenomenon of their existence, but also shed light on the happiness and fulfilment that can be experienced.

Moreover, I urge non-Muslim LGBTQ+ members to move away from the colonial story line of queerness and understand that "coming out" is not the end goal for every queer person, but rather that queerness is an abstract theory that does not encapsulate every experience.

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## Research Question

How do queer Muslim youth navigate their identities, and does media portray this currently?

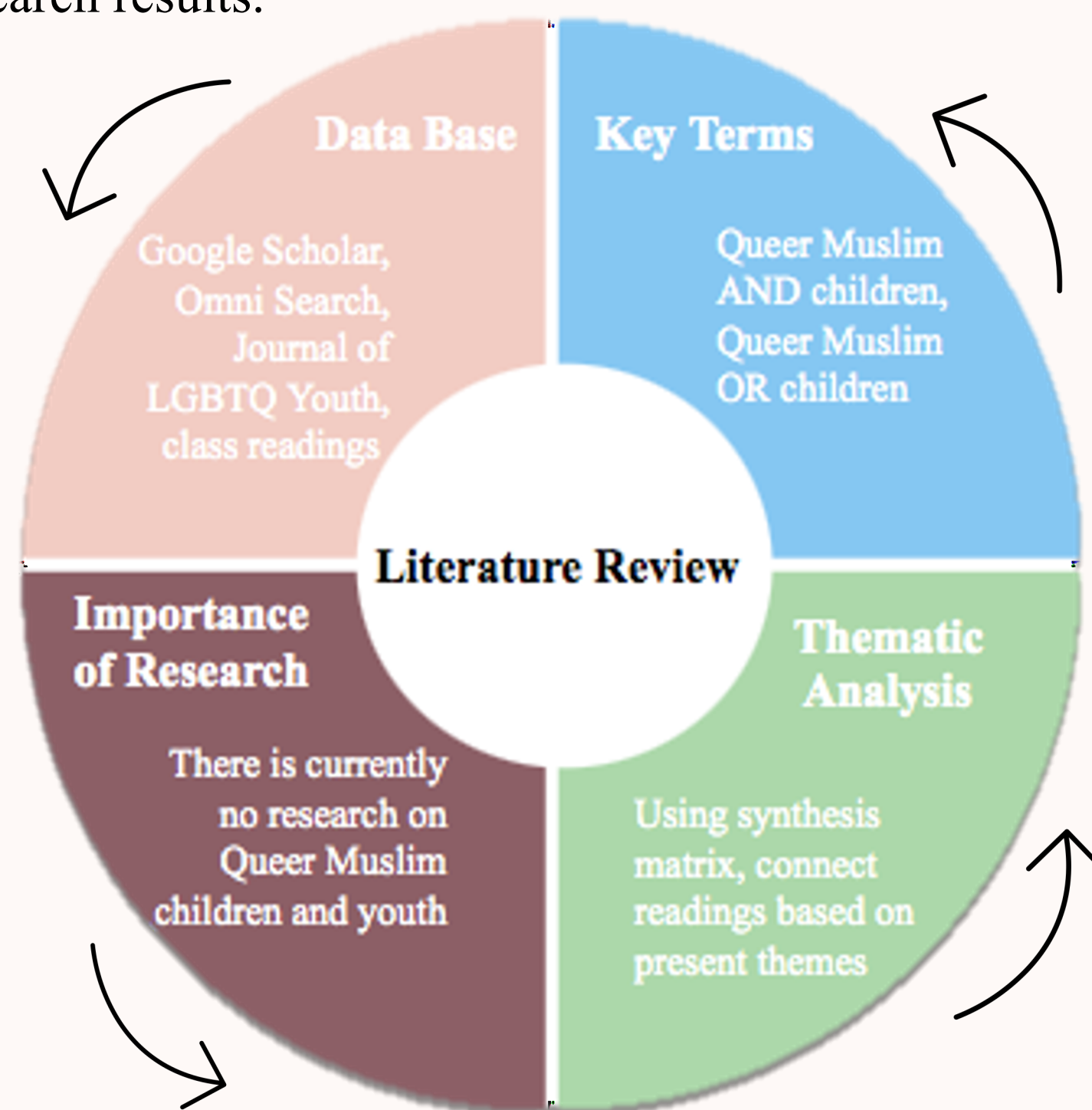


Image by: Alisdare Hickson

## Methods

I gathered peer reviewed papers on the general topic of Muslim children to create my literature review in order to back up my arguments soundly.

During this part of the research, I utilized the York University Library resources by enhancing my Omni searches through filtering by subject, such as "children and society", as well as using key words to optimize my search results.



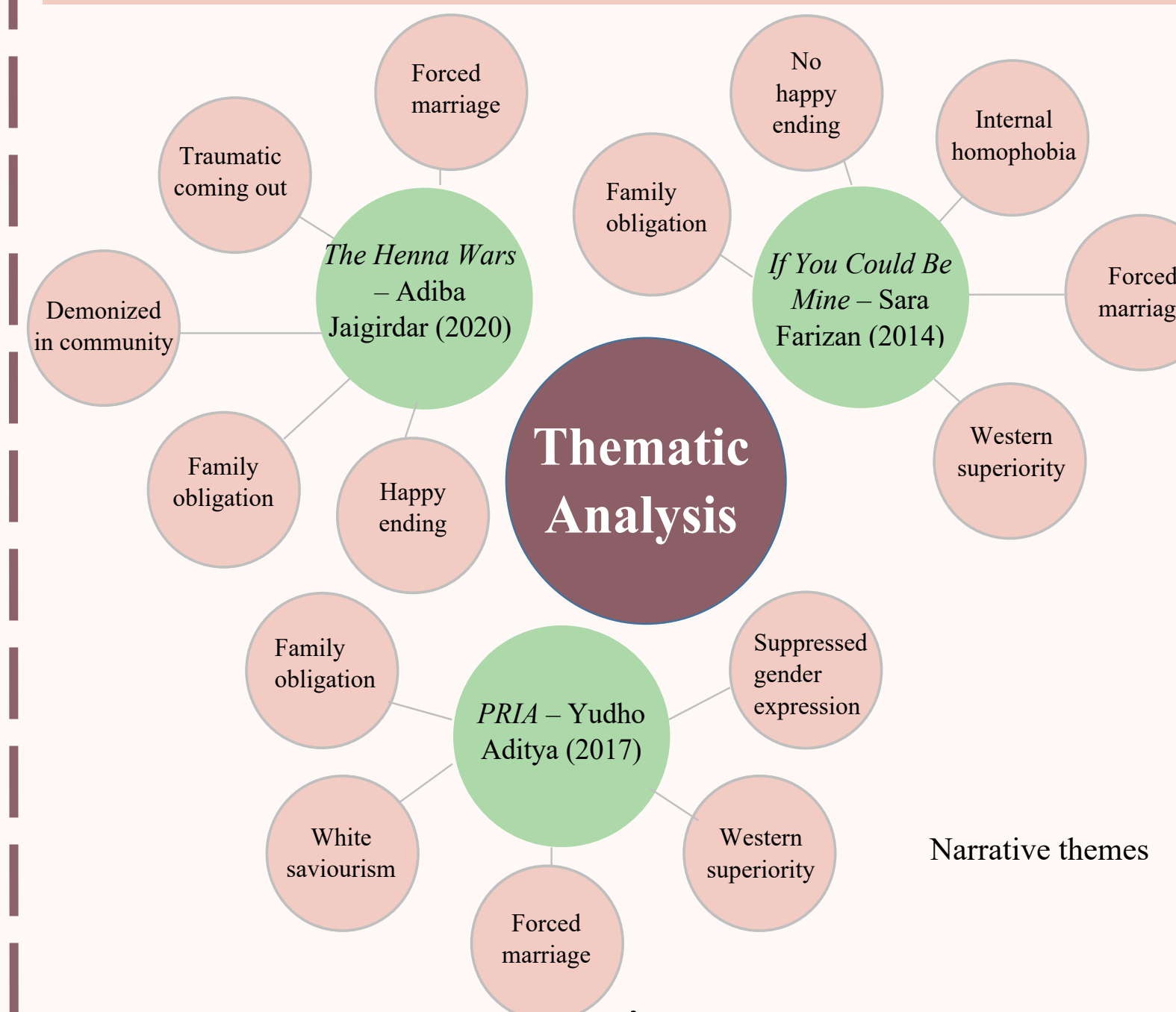
Literature review process

## Discussion

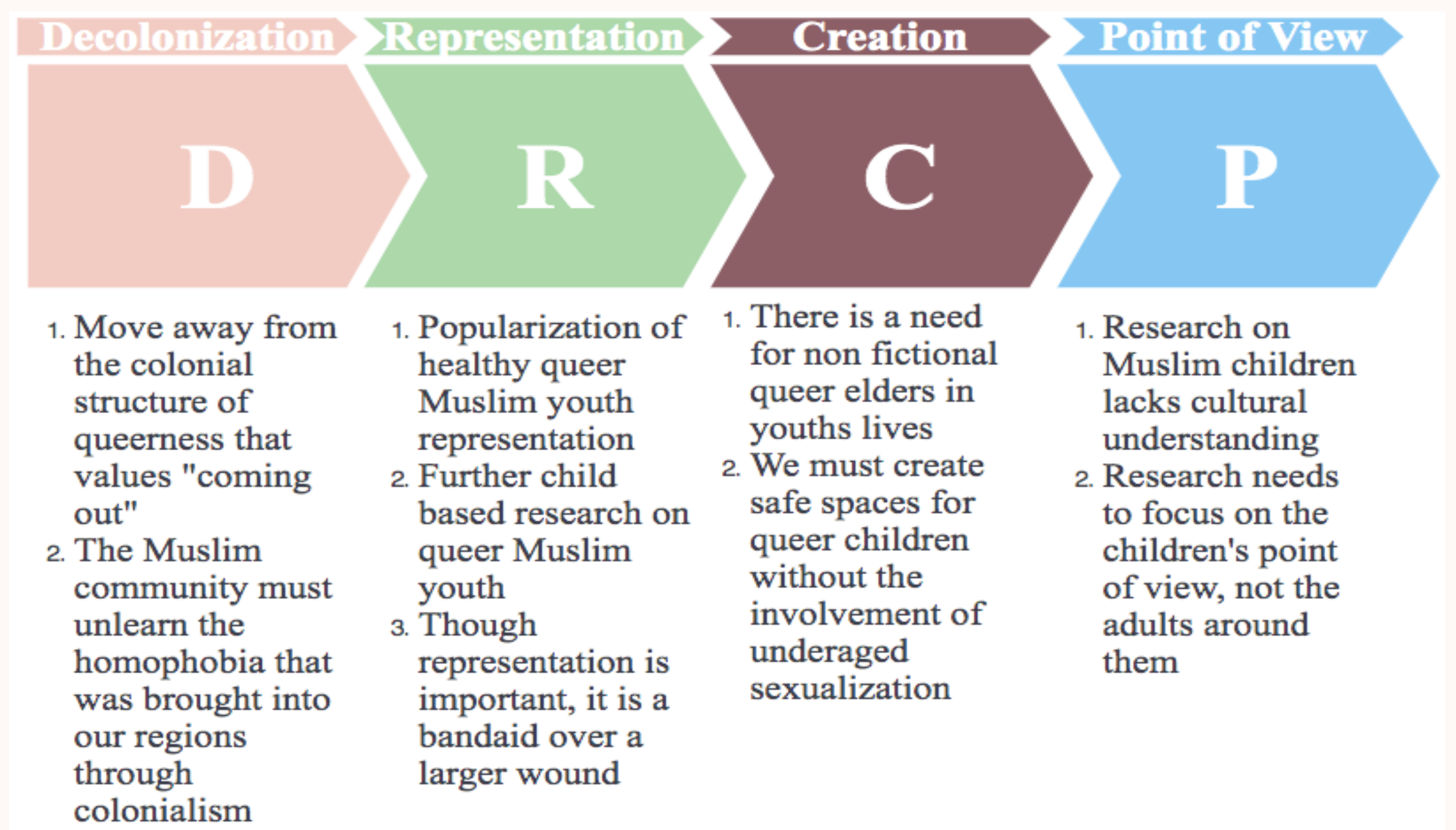
While the world calls for more representation within media and literature, we must ask ourselves if representation is truly enough?

Through these examples of queer Muslim representation in young adult media, they have echoed the worst fears of the children themselves; happy endings do not exist for queer Muslims.

## Themes



## Recommendations



## Conclusion

Throughout this project, I realized how little non-Muslim researchers know about the cultural nuances of our lifestyle. Additionally, to truly understand the Muslim child, you must have an understanding of the unique structure of the Muslim family.

From this conclusion, I was inspired to focus my honours thesis project on the Muslim family, and I will be researching Muslim children's perspectives on their roles within their home environments in the next school year. I look forward to investigating the family obligation within various Muslim cultures and finding out the youth's own perspective on it.

## QR Code



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