Minority Labeling of "Desi" And "Muslim" As Seen in Samira Ahmed's *Internment*

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Abstract

This article aims to expose the labeling of "Desi" and "Muslims" as minority groups in a country where the majority of the population is from external groups. In the novel entitled Internment, it is found that the appearance of labels in the Internment affects the position of all characters. This study focuses on the causes that influence the emergence of the labels "Desi" and "Muslim" and how these labels are used for all characters in the novel Internment by Samira Ahmed. The data were collected through the documentation method or the observation method. The theory of language and Identity by Joanna Thornborrow is used as the main theory, while the theory of situation context by Bronislaw Malinowski is used as a supporting theory. These two theories are used to identify the types of labels and analyze the causes of labels appearing in the novel. This analysis indicates that negative labeling on utterances containing the labels "Desi" and "Muslim" becomes the most dominant label and often appears in every utterance. Also, utterances containing negative labels come from the internal group. It shows that sometimes the group is not confident in their identity when they are in a minority group in a country where the majority of the population comes from an external group.

Introduction

In language use, labeling becomes one of the social aspects of showing a person's identity. Weerd stated that self-labeling is used to negotiate and construct other types of identity in society, such as gender or class.[1] Often, someone is self-identified or self-labeling themselves to create the identity. According to Cambridge Dictionary, a label is a piece of paper or other material that gives information about an object (as cited in Cambridge Dictionary). Respectively, it is not only a piece of paper because we usually label activities, places, or people based on their roots in the speech community. In particular, we may use labels to define ourselves, define others, categorize who we trust and distrust, and describe who we deem right or wrong. Labeling research has shifted from focusing on linguistics problems to considering extra-linguistic aspects. Weerd used public discourse and research to identify ethnic labeling. It is found that pupils who labeled themselves Marokkaan 'Moroccan,' Turk 'Turk,' and/or buitenlander 'foreigner', used these labels to engage in local, interpersonal, and intra-national categorization.[2] Shortly, they categorized themselves and others according to their migration backgrounds, but in daily use, the categories had several locally contingent associations.

Thus, this research investigates the labeling of "Muslim"

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[1] P.V. Weerd, "Those Foreigners Ruin Everything Here: Interactional Functions of Ethnic Labeling among Pupils in the Netherlands", *Journal of Sociolinguistics of Wiley*. Vol. 23, (2019), p. 246.

[2] *Ibid.,* p.261

and "Desi" contained in the novel entitled Internment by Samira Ahmed. The novel's plot portrays how minority group gets unfair treatment and prejudice by society and the government of the United States. Set in a terrifying near-future United States, the book tells about Layla Amin, who wants to resist. This seventeen-year-old girl is forced into an internment camp (Mobius camp in Mazarnar) for American Muslim citizens with her family because of their religion.[3] According to Nair, "Desi" refers to people of Indian descent living in the United States.[4] Kvetko added that " Desi " derives from the Hindi adjective deshi. It means "Indian" or "local" as opposed to videshi, which means "foreign".[5] Thus, the term "Muslim" refers to the person who submits to Islam as their religion.[6] Desi refers to people of Indian descent living in the United States.[7] In other words, labeling "Desi" is categorized as an ethnic label. Phinney (1992) described ethnic self-identification as an individual's "understanding and knowledge" of an individual's ethnic group membership.[8] According to Jacobsen and Kumar, "Desi" implies people from the "homeland" or "desh".[9] This label exists as a reflection of South Asians, precisely Indians born in the United States, because of their confused souls that decide to choose whether they belong to India (homeland) or America after "post-

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[3] S Ahmed, S, *Internment* (Boston, New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2019), p. 27.

[4] A Nair, A, *Desi Rap South Asian Americans in Hip Hop* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2008), p. 9.

[5] P Kvetko, "When The East is in The House: The Emergence of Dance Club Culture among India-American Youth." *Dissertation and Thesis* (Texas: University of Texas, 2002), p. 8.

[6] Martin, et al., *Encyclopedia of Islam the Muslim World* (USA: Macmillan Reference, 2004), p. 359.

[7] Nair, *Desi,* p. 9.

[8] L Kiang, "Ethnic Self-labeling in Young United States Adults from Chinese Backgrounds", *Journal of Youth Adolescence*, vol. 37, no.1 (2008), p. 1.

[9] Knut A Jacobsen and Kumar, *South Asians in the Diaspora (Studies in the History of Religions* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2004), p. 418.

1965 immigrants" happened. As we know, India has many traditions, cultures, and religions. Many people are married based on caste and religion, but after they come to the United States as immigrants, they are confused about the cultures.[10] Shankar stated that "Desi" does not imply particular ethnolinguistics, religion, caste, or national group. The word "Desi" that appears in a simple translation is "countryman" in Urdu or Hindi. With cognates in several South Asian languages, it arranges "the inception of a diasporic, racially marked, generationally influenced consciousness at the beginning of the millennium" and an "emergent cultural form".[11]

Muslim Americans are increasingly stigmatized and may be experiencing a backlash in the American news media and by the public. However, in portraying Islam, especially after the September 11 attacks, a number of researchers found that International media tend to negatively depict Islam by associating it with terrorism. Many immigrants came to the United States many years ago, including the arrival of Muslims in America in the late fifteenth century.[12] Pew explained that 25 percent of Muslims in the United States (Muslim Americans) have been victims of anti-Muslim discrimination.[13] According to Martin et al., the word "Islam" is categorized as a verbal noun (from Arabic masdar) that means "to accept and submit to God." Hence, in Arabic, it is for submission or total commitment. He added that the term Islam also

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[10] *Ibid.*

[11] K Ananda, "In S. Shankar, Book Review Desi Land: Teen Culture, Class, and Success in Silicon Valley", *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology.* Vol. 21, no.1 (2011), p. 146.

[12] K Ghanea Bassiri, *A History of Islam in America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 1.

[13] Yasemin Akbaba and J. Fox, "Religious Discrimination Against Muslim Minorities in Christian Majority Countries: A Unique Case." *Journal Politics, Religion & Ideology,* vol. 12, no.4, (2011). P. 452.

refers to one God and that the prophet Muhammad was God's messenger.

On the other hand, the person who submits to Islam is called a "Muslim".[14] Martin et al. explained that there is a distinction between Muslim used as an adjective and "Islamic" in the context of the Islamic resurgence by the late twentieth century. He goes on. The term "Islam" is used as the term perceived as the whole body of "the faith tradition and the peoples" and "regions where Islam is practiced." Along these lines, the word "Muslim" is categorized with the emergence of "community and the practices of people self-identified as Muslim".[15]

As Moncrieffe and Eybend stated, labels enforce boundaries and define categories in our social interaction.[16] Rozich also added that labels are a significant indicator of how individuals consider others in their world.[17] Interestingly, the terms "Desi" and "Muslim" are created to build their "Indian–American" and "Muslim" identities. Moreover, the researcher discovers some exciting things about labeling. In the novel, the label contains positive and negative labeling. Concerning the interest of the issue, the paper will explore the labeling of "Desi" and "Muslim" in Samira Ahmed's Internment novel and the factors that make labeling "Desi" and "Muslim" appear in the novel. Thus, the label in Internment by Samira Ahmed contains positive and negative labeling. Positive labeling is used to praise, compliment, honor, promote, or even express their identity. Negative labeling makes a

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[14] Martin, *Encyclopedia,* p. 359.

[15] *Ibid.,*p. 360.

[16] Joy Moncrieffe and Eybend R, *The Power of Labelling: How People Are Categorized and Why it Matters* (London, USA: Earthscan, 2007), p. 9.

[17] Rozich, B. C., "Labeling of Religious Non-believers: The Effect of the "Atheist" Title on Moral Judgments About Non-theists." *Dissertation and Thesis* (United States: University of Northern Iowa, 2016), p. 13.

person feel inferior, degrading, or downgrading something such as ethnicity, religion, race, etc. Initially, the research aimed not to study ethnic categorization but to understand the role of labels in society and how they influence their actions in the novel. First, the previous research and theoretical framework will be outlined. After that, the results from a small-scale qualitative study will be presented. A discussion will follow on the relationship between the theoretical framework and the findings.

There are several previous types of research with labeling as the topic of investigation. On the other hand, no relevant previous researchers have investigated Samira Ahmed's "*Internment*" novel before. So, the researcher takes the most used approach of the five types of research as references in undertaking this research.

The first research was conducted by Pomme van de Weerd (2019) *on interactional functions of ethnic labeling among pupils in the Netherlands.*" The objectives of the study found by Weerd are to identify and analyze a deeper understanding of ethnic labeling practices by examining their interactional functions among secondary school pupils in Venlo, the Netherlands. Based on the study research, it is found that the study pupils with migration backgrounds often label themselves and others "*Moroccan*," "*Turk*," or "*foreigner*" and label others "*Dutch*." Moreover, Weerd's research uses MCA or Membership Categorization Analysis and CA or Conversation Analysis by Sacks to analyze his data collection.

The second research was by Maykel Verkuyten and Jochem T Thijs (2010) on e*thnic minority labeling, multiculturalism, and the attitude of majority group members.* The study examines the influence of single ethnic minority labels such as "*Turks*" and dual ethnic minority labels on the attitude of

(*Dutch*) majority group members. The researcher finds that minority groups described with double labels get positive attitudes or treatments. In contrast, the single labels with the dual identity version of the standard ingroup identity model do not. Further, Verkuyten and Thijs show the interethnic relations that influence the social group's position.

The third research is a journal by Lisa Kiang (2008) entitled "*Ethnic Self-labeling in Young American Adults from Chinese Backgrounds.*" Kiang aims to find how Chinese background can construct labeling, especially ethnic self-labeling, and influence social relationships. Based on the study research, it is found that young adults from Chinese backgrounds prefer to choose a label related to a specific national heritage. This distinctive national heritage relates to the United States affiliation and their Asian identity.

The last literature review used by the researcher is a dissertation and thesis by Brock C. Rozich (2016). This dissertation and thesis title is "*Labeling of Religious Non-believers: The Effect of the "Atheist" Title on Moral Judgments About Non-theists.*" The study's objective is to analyze the effect of religious labels "atheist" and label "no religious beliefs" that influence people's understanding and judgment toward non-believers. The result of the study shows that there are significant positive attitudes from the majority group (who have belief in God and religion) toward the religious label "atheist" and "no religious beliefs ."However, there are also negative comments toward them.

On the other hand, there are some different points between this research and the studies that the researcher uses in the literature review. This paper analyzes labeling "Desi" and "Muslim" in *Internment*, a novel by Samira Ahmed. This research uses Language and Identity by Joanna Thornborrow and The

Context of Situation by Bronislaw Malinowski.

The theories include (1) The Establishment of Personal Identities and Language (consisting of The Practice of Naming and Name and System of address), (2) The Establishment of Group Identities and Language (consisting of Representation Identity and Ingroups Outgroups), (3) Linguistic variation and the construction of identity (consist of The Choice of Language and The Variation of Stylistic and The Imperialism of Linguistic and Its Power). This theory explains the relationship between language and identity. Thornborrow stated that language could build a social identity as people or groups, establish their boundaries, and be a powerful means of exercising social control.[18] The researcher chose the theory because it can explain how all the characters are insecure and inferior by using the six aspects of the approach. Moreover, the researcher can explore and analyze the characters' group position after being labeled through Outgroup and Ingroup. The researcher focuses more on the phenomenon of "labeling" that constructs the identities in *Internment*.

Further, this study uses The Context of Situation by Bronislaw Malinowski, developed by Hasan and Halliday (1989), as the supporting theory to analyze the data. According to Halliday and Hasan, Malinowski's theory only introduced two elements: the context of the situation and culture. The original theory by Malinowski only explains how text can connect the situation and culture without giving more detail. Then, Hasan and Halliday developed the theory into three parts.[19] Halliday and Hasan said that the methods are (1) Relation between the speaker, (2) The

[18] Linda Thomas and Wareing S, *Language, Society, and Power: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2003), hlm. 158.
[19] M. A. K Halliday., and R Hasan, *Language Context and Text Aspects of Language in a Social-Semiotic Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 10.

utterance between the speaker, and (3) The following events happen between the speaker.[20] The researcher chose the approach because it can explain and describe the factors of labeling in the *Internment*. Moreover, the researcher chooses the approach developed by Halliday and Hasan (1989) because the three aspects of the theory can identify the type of label (positive or destructive label) and explain why the label can be positive or destructive. Both approaches can reach the answer to the problems stated.

Desi refers to Indian descent living in the United States.[21] In other words, labeling "Desi" is categorized as an ethnic label. Phinney (1992) described that ethnic self-identification is an individual's "understanding and knowledge" of an individual's ethnic group membership.[22] According to Jacobsen and Kumar, "Desi" implies people from the "homeland" or "*desh*". This label exists as a reflection of South Asians, precisely Indians born in the United States, because of their confused souls that decide to choose whether they belong to India (homeland) or America after "post-1965 immigrants" happened. As we know, India has a lot of traditions, cultures, and religions. Many people are married based on caste and religion, but after they come to the United States as immigrants, they are confused about the cultures.[23]

Shankar (2008), as cited in Ananda, stated that "Desi" does not imply particular ethnolinguistics, religion, caste, or national group. The word "Desi" that appears in a simple translation is "countryman" in Urdu or Hindi. With cognates in several South Asian languages, it arranges "the inception of a diasporic, racially marked, generationally influenced consciousness at the beginning of the millennium" and an

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[20] *Ibid.* p. 11
[21] Nair, *Desi,* p. 9.
[22] Kiang, "Ethnic..", p. 1.
[23] Jacobsen, *South,* p. 418.

"emergent cultural form".[24]

One of the minority religions that exist in the United States is Islam. Many immigrants came to the United States many years ago and including the arrival of Muslims in America in the late fifteenth century.[25] Pew explained that 25 percent of Muslims in the United States (Muslim Americans) have been victims of anti-Muslim discrimination.[26]

According to Martin et al., the word "Islam" is categorized as a verbal noun (from Arabic *masdar*) that means "to acceptance of and submission to the God." Hence, in Arabic, it is for the action of submission or total commitment. He added that the term Islam also refers to one God and that the prophet Muhammad was God's messenger. On the other hand, the person who submits to Islam is called a "Muslim".[27]

Martin et al. explained that there is a distinction between Muslim used as an adjective and "Islamic" in the context of the Islamic resurgence by the late twentieth century. He goes on. The term "Islam" is used as the term perceived as the whole body of "the faith tradition and the peoples" and "regions where Islam is practiced ." Along these lines, the word "Muslim" is categorized with the emergence of "community and the practices of people self-identified as Muslim".[28]

Method

This research employs a descriptive qualitative method that uses language as a formal object. All the data that are found in

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[24] Ananda, "In S. Shankar..", p. 146.
[25] Bassiri, *A History,* p. 1.
[26] Akbaba, "Religious…", p. 452.
[27] Martin, *Encyclopedia,* p. 359.
[28] *Ibid.,* p. 360.

Internment. The data will be grouped into four sets: positive labeling, negative labeling, ingroup labeling, and outgroup labeling. Moreover, the data also looks at the characters in the *Internment* to determine the group position and the labels (positive or negative labeling). The primary data are the utterances from entire characters in the novel, which contain the labeling "Desi" and "Muslim." The equivalent method that focuses on the referential (identity) method is used in analyzing the data. Sudaryanto described the equivalent method as a determining method of a "particular lingua".[29] This study only uses the referential (Identity) method as the advanced method to collect the data.[30] This study is focused on descriptive technique procedures that interpret the utterances of the whole characters that contain labeling.[31] The detailed description refers to what the authors describe as what they see. This detail is served within the place or event, the context of the setting, the character, and the plot.

Result and Discussion

Result

After reading and examining the *Internment* novel, it found 13 utterances that contain the label "Desi" and 43 phrases of the label "Muslim" in different contexts in the *Internment*. There are a total of 56 data found in this study. The main characters in the novel are Layla Amin (the central character), Ayesha (Layla's new friend in the internment camp), Soheil (Layla's new friend in

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[29] D Edi Subroto, *Pengantar Metodologi Penelitian Linguistik Struktural* (Surakarta: UNS Press, 2002), p. 59.

[30] Sudaryanto, *Metode dan Aneka Teknik Analisis Bahasa (Pengantar Penelitian Wahana Kebudayaan Secara Linguistik),* (Yogykarta: Duta Wacana University, 1993), p. 14.

[31] J.W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approach (3rd Edition)* (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2012), p. 184.

the internment camp), David (Layla's boyfriend), Ali Amin (Layla's dad), Sophia Amin (Layla's mom) and The Director of Mobius.

The data are divided into four categories: positive self-labeling, negative self-labeling, personal labeling, and group labeling. The researcher categorizes the data by distinguishing the context of the situation in the utterances. Most data are collected from the main character, Layla Amin. Below is the form of labeling "Desi" and "Muslim" in various types. It can be seen from the table below that contains many forms of labeling existing in *Internment*.

The labels "Desi" that appear are in different forms, such as "Desi," "Desis," "Desi dish," "other Desis," "another Desis," and "Desi Muslim girl." Afterward, the labels Muslim have appeared in various forms such as Muslim "Muslims," "Muslimistan," "Muslim students," "stalwart of Muslim," etc. The formulation can be seen in the table below.

Table 1. The Forms of Labeling "Desi" and "Muslim"

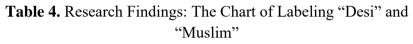| No.	Labeling	The Forms of Labeling
1	Desi	"Desi," "Desis," "Desi + noun."
2	Muslim	Muslim, "Muslims," "Muslimistan," "Muslim + noun," "Muslim + adjective."

Table 2. Degrees of Labeling "Desi" and "Muslim"

Degrees	Type of Labeling		Total
	Muslim	**Desi**	
Positive	13	4	17
Negative	30	9	39
	43	13	56

Table 3. Research Findings: Group Position of Labeling "Desi" and "Muslim"

Group Position	Type of Labeling		Total
	Muslim	**Desi**	
Outgroup	3	0	3
Ingroup	40	13	53
	43	13	56

Table 4. Research Findings: The Chart of Labeling "Desi" and "Muslim"

The chart above shows the percentage of positive labeling, negative labeling, outgroup labeling, and ingroup labeling of "Desi" and "Muslim" that are found in *the Internment*. The value of the chart above is served in decimal. Each number from 0 to 0,5 is an integer multiple of 5.

Discussion

This section explains labeling "Desi" and labeling "Muslim." First of all, the study groups the data into positive labeling, negative labeling, ingroup labeling, and outgroup labeling. All the groups were labeled "Desi" and "Muslim." In this chapter, the researcher puts the data representing each group

above. The analysis started from labeling "Desi" to "Muslim," in which the utterances contain positive and negative labeling. Along these lines, it continued by analyzing labeling "Desi" and labeling "Muslim," in which the words come from ingroup or outgroup.

Labeling "Desi"

Labeling "Desi" contains positive labeling and negative labeling. Every utterance that has the labeling of "Desi" comes from ingroup and outgroup positions. Each is presented below.

Positive Labeling "Desi"

According to the context and situation of the utterance, the label "Desi" below contains positive labeling. The label means to show their pride as a part of Desi.

1) **The conversation between Layla and Ayesha's Parents (Datum 7, Page 38)**

Ayesha approaches us. She's holding hands with a younger boy and walking next to a middle-aged man and woman; I assume they're her family. "Auntie, Uncle." Ayesha addresses my parents with the automatic honorific accorded all Desis of parental age. Some of us may have lost our "mother tongue," as my nanni used to call it, but the custom of tameez—respect—for elders stays strong, despite decades of assimilation.[32]

The utterance: Layla speaks to Ayesha's family. She says, *"Auntie, Uncle." Ayesha addresses my parents with the automatic honorific accorded all Desis of parental age"*. **The relationship between the speaker:** family's friend. That Auntie and Uncle are Ayesha's mother and father. They are from the same

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[32] Ahmed, *Internment,* p. 38.

ethnicity as Layla and live in America as Muslims. **The following events happen:** Ayesha invites Layla to her district in Mobius, and she introduces her parents to Layla. From the context and situation above, it can be concluded that the conversation is inclined toward positive labeling.

The label "Desi" in the utterance above is attached to the noun "*parental age*" and purposely constructs their group identity. Ayesha and Layla are also part of Desi, and Layla uses honorifics to address Ayesha's family. It proves that she wants to show her identity as a Desi ingroup. She has used the term which is only understood by Desi to construct their group identity and their identity. Layla has used a system of address to build her personal identity by saying, "*Auntie, Uncle.*" Hence, the utterance above inclines toward positive self-labeling, which is proven by the honorific that Layla speaks. She also uses formal language to show her respect in front of Ayesha's family. Moreover, Layla is using a linguistic variation to establish her identity. Layla uses different word choices, such as "*nanni*" and "the custom of *tameez.*"

2) The Conversation between Ayesha and Layla (Datum 9, Page 39)

> *I grin. "My mom had this girlhood crush on Luke Skywalker," I say. And it's true. "She talks about waiting in line to see Star Wars when she was a kid, and I swear to God there's this reverence in her voice, like it was a religious experience. She joined Twitter to follow Mark Hamill." Ayesha laughs. "I totally like your mom. But, hello, Riz Ahmed is in Rogue One. A Desi in Star Wars. I still haven't recovered".[33]*

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[33] *Ibid.,* p. 39.

The utterance: spoken by Ayesha and Layla. Ayesha says, *"But, hello, Riz Ahmed is in Rogue One. A Desi in Star Wars"*. **The relationship between the speaker:** close friend. **The following events happen:** Layla tells about her mom, who likes Luke Skywalker. Luke Skywalker is a fictional character in Star Wars.

The label "Desi" in the utterance above is to construct group identity. There is a character named Luke Skywalker that Layla's mother likes. Then Ayesha says that Riz Ahmed is one of the representations of Desi that appears in Star Wars. She feels proud of Riz Ahmed, who became one of Desi actors in Star Wars. Hence, according to the context and situation, the label in the utterance above contains positive ethnic labeling.

Regarding the label "Desi dish," Layla's position is part of the ingroup member in examining group position. Moreover, Layla is using a linguistic variation to show her identity. Layla uses different word choices and informal language to Ayesha to show that they are a close friend.

Negative Labeling "Desi"
The label "Desi" below contains negative meaning according to its context of situations. The label is purposed to downgrade someone's identity as part of Desi.

1) **The Conversation between Ayesha and Layla (Datum 12, Page 44)**

"A Desi Muslim girl from an immigrant family and a brown Jewish son of a refugee—you're like a dream team for Model UN." I grin. "David knows his dad has white privilege, but he's seen his mom get hit with anti-Semitism and racism, so he kind of gets it, you know? We try to be

*open to learning about each other's faiths—ask questions,
talk things out".*[34]

The utterance: spoken by Ayesha. She says, *"A Desi
Muslim girl from an immigrant family and a brown Jewish son of
a refugee—you're like a dream team for Model UN."* **The
relationship between the speaker**: close friend. **The following
events happen:** Layla meets her boyfriend in Mobius, and she
meets her friend Ayesha. Ayesha asks about Layla's relationship
with David.

The label "Desi" in the utterance above is to construct
group identity. According to the statement above, "Model UN" is
an abbreviation of Model United Nations or MUN. It is an extra-
curricular activity where students typically roleplay as delegates
and committees in a conference. The utterance above means that
Ayesha says that Layla is not good enough to have David as her
boyfriend. Subsequently, Layla is a girl from an immigrant family
who does not have the privilege of being a Muslim in America.
David's identity as a "brown Jewish son" and Layla's Identity as a
"Desi Muslim girl" in the utterance above are inclined toward
negative ethnic labeling. Ayesha says that Layla and David are like
a team for Model UN, different from a couple in general. Hence,
according to the context and situation, the label in the utterance
above contains negative self-labeling.

2) **Conversation between Ayesha and Layla (Datum 2,
Page 27)**

*"If you're Indian, we have two things in common. Not so
much that dragon thing, though." "It's Game of Thrones.
You never read it? Watched it?." I shake my head no.*

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[34] *Ibid.,* p. 44.

"Your loss. And I'm Pakistani, but, you know, a Desi is a Desi".[35]

The utterance: spoken by Ayesha. She says, *"Your loss. And I'm Pakistani, but, you know, a Desi is a Desi"*. Ayesha converses with her new friend in the internment camp, Layla. **The following events:** Layla and other families get in line to go to the internment camp by bus. Then Ayesha meets Layla, and they have a conversation. It is the first time they meet and become acquainted. Ayesha talks about her favorite series, Game of Thrones, and introduces herself as a Pakistani and Desi. **The relationship between the speaker**: a new friend. Layla and Ayesha meet in the queue before taking the bus to the internment camp. In the context above, the word "loss" means Ayesha tries to answer the previous questions about Game of Thrones.

Other factors that caused Ayesha to say Desi and Pakistani are because Ayesha tries to construct a personal identity. She introduces herself as a Pakistani, which means an ethnic label that describes people from Pakistan. According to Mani, Desi is used by second generations of Indians born in America who claim to be American.[36] The ethnicity of Indians in America experiences cultural assimilation and adaptation. That is why Ayesha says, *"A Desi is a Desi,"* because Desi claims to be American even though their ancestors are Indian. They can not be referred to as whole American or whole Indian. Hence, from the context and situation, the label in the utterance above contains negative self-labeling.

Ingroup Position Labeling *"Desi"*

Ayesha and Layla speak the utterance that contains the

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[35] *Ibid.,* p. 27.
[36] B Mani, *Aspiring to Home: South Asians in America* (Standford: Stanford University Press, 2012), p. 3.

labeling "Desi" below according to the context of the situation. Both of them are part of Desi.

1) The Conversation between Ayesha and Layla (Datum 11, Page 44)

Ayesha looks at me with wide eyes. "Wait. So David is brown and Jewish?" I nod. "Honestly, when we first met in grade school, I thought he was Desi. I think I just wanted to not be the only one, you know?"[37]

The utterance: spoken by Layla. She is talking with her friend Ayesha. Layla says, *"Honestly, when we first met in grade school, I thought he was Desi. I think I just wanted to not be the only one, you know?".* **The relationship between the speakers** is a close friend. **The following events happen:** Layla meets her boyfriend, David. Then she meets Ayesha on her way back home. Ayesha asks about how Layla knew David and became Layla's boyfriend.

Desi is one of the ethnic minorities in the United States. The label "Desi" in the utterance above is to construct group identity. The word above indicates that Layla feels different from others because she is the only one Desi in her school. She wishes David was also Desi like her, but he is not. In this case, Layla tries to label David as a Desi, and on the other hand, Ayesha is labeling David as a "brown Jewish son." Layla feels inferior because she is the only Desi Muslim American in her school. Further, according to the context and situation, labeling "Desi" in the utterance above is inclined to negative self-labeling. Moreover, regarding the label "Desi," Layla's position is part of the ingroup member examining group position.

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[37] Ahmed, *Internment,* p. 44.

Labeling "Muslim"

Labeling "Muslim" contains positive labeling and negative labeling. Every utterance labeled "Desi" comes from ingroup and outgroup positions. Each is presented below.

Positive Labeling "Muslim"

The label "Muslim" below contains positive labeling according to context and situation. The label aims to boost Layla's confidence as a Muslim.

1) Monolog spoken by Layla (Datum 24, Page 20)

"I may not be the most stalwart of Muslims, and my practice may waver, but this dua— maybe because of how I remember Nanni reciting it as she would blow the prayer over me— this one always gives me a sense of calm, but something more, too".[38]

The utterance: Layla speaks the statement above as a monolog. She says, "*I may not be the most stalwart of Muslims ...*". **The following events happen:** some guys from the government come to Layla's house to relocate her and her family. They are going to the relocation place near Manzanar. The guy in a suit asks Layla and her parents to prepare in ten minutes. Layla and her family get to the relocation due to their Muslim faith. The government considers their existence to harm America. So, their relocation is the best way to save the government.

The label "stalwart of Muslim" constructs Layla's Identity and is part of the construction of her identity. In examining group position, regarding the label "Muslim," Layla's position is part of the ingroup member. Layla is saying "*Nanni,"* which in the Urdu

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[38] *Ibid.,* p. 20.

language means grandmother (Urdu Dictionary). It is to construct her identity as an Indian-born American. Further, according to the context and situation, labeling "Muslim" in the utterance above is inclined to positive self-labeling because Layla is trying to boost her confidence.

Negative Labeling "Muslim"

According to its context of situations, the label "Muslim" below contains negative labeling. The purpose of the label is to downgrade someone's position. The character in *Internment* feels terrified for being the minority in a majority country.

1) Conversation between Layla and her parents

"Well, maybe we should've lied on that stupid census. Maybe it's dumb to hold on to principles when your beliefs can get you in trouble," I tell them. "Other people lied. Sara and Aidan? They're in London now, avoiding this whole mess because they checked 'no religion' instead of 'Muslim.' Easy".[39]

The utterance: Layla speaks the statement above to her dad and her mom. She says, *"Other people lied. Sara and Aidan? They're in London now, avoiding this whole mess because they checked 'no religion' instead of 'Muslim.' Easy"*. **The relationship between the speaker** is a family. Ali Amin is Layla's dad, and Sophia Amin is Layla's mom. **The following event happens:** Layla's dad advises Layla to see David, her boyfriend. Layla broke the curfew, and her parents were worried about her safety.

The label "Muslim" is to construct a group identity. Layla

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[39] *Ibid,* p. 14.

feels inferior because she is Muslim and feels unconfident about being a Muslim. She wants to be free and does not need 'religion' on her ID card. Further, according to the context and situation, labeling "Muslim" in the utterance above is inclined to negative self-labeling.

In examining group position regarding the label "Muslim," Layla's position is part of the ingroup member. To show her identity as a daughter, she uses informal language and different word choices such as "stupid census," "it's dumb," and "easy." The stylistic variation is part of identity construction in linguistics variation.[40]

2) Conversation between Layla and her mom (Datum 19, Page 14)

*"My parents look at each other. My mom puts her hand on mine. "I know we argued about it before, but your father and I believe this now more than ever. We do not deny who we are. We won't lie about being **Muslim**. **Muslims** have been in America since the first slaves were brought here. Can you even imagine what they went through to hold on to Islam? What they endured?" Tears come to my mom's eye".*[41]

The utterance: spoken by Layla's mother, Sophia Amin. She says, *"We won't lie about being Muslim. Muslims have been in America since the first slaves were brought here.".* **The relationship between the speaker** is mother and daughter. It is the conversation between Layla Amin and her mother, Sophia Amin. They are talking about the dangers of breaking the rules and

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[40] Thomas, *Language,* p. 168.
[41] Ahmed, *Internment,* p. 27.

curfew. **The following events happened:** Layla breaks the law and curfew to see her boyfriend, David, and she gets scolded by her parents. Her mother and father are worried about her safety because they do not like Muslims in America and try to destroy them.

The label "Muslim" in the utterance above is to construct a group identity. As a part of the family, Layla's mother wants to remind her of their Identity as American Muslims. They feel inferior for being the minority in a majority country. In the utterance above, Sophia Amin wants Layla to be careful when she goes out. Further, according to the context and situation, labeling "Muslim" in the utterance above is inclined to negative self-labeling because Sophia Amin feels inferior as a Muslim. In examining group position regarding the label "Muslim," Layla's and Sophia's position is part of the ingroup member.

Ingroup Position Labeling "Muslim"

According to situations, Ayesha and Layla's utterance below contains the labeling "Muslim". Both of them are part of Muslim.

1) The statement told by Ayesha (Datum 26, Page 27)

"... Ayesha. First of My Name, Protector of Stories, Mother of Dragons, and Soon-to-Be Interned Muslim." "If you're Indian, that's two things we have in common. Not so much that dragon thing, Though".[42]

The utterance: spoken by Ayesha. She says, "*... and Soon-to-Be Interned Muslim." "If you're Indian, that's two things we have in common. Not so much that dragon thing...".* **The following events:** Ayesha meets Layla for the first time at Mobius,

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[42] *Ibid.*

the internment camp. Layla has a conversation with her dad and mom. They are talking about being prisoners in the internment camp. Then Ayesha suddenly joins their conversation. **The relationship between the speaker** is strange, and then they become friends. Both of them do not know each other. They meet in the queue, and Ayesha introduces herself to Layla.

The label in the extract above is to construct personal identity. The label "Interned Muslim" is self-labeling that points out the speaker, Ayesha. She tries to define herself as an "Interned Muslim." In examining the label "Muslim," Ayesha's and Layla's position is part of the ingroup member.

Regarding Ayesha's word choice, she tries to expose her identity as a Muslim by using a stylistic variation. Afterward, in the following sentence, she labels herself as Indian. Consequently, according to the context and situation, the label in the utterance above contains positive self-labeling because Ayesha is trying to gain her confidence.

2) The conversation between Ayesha and Layla

*"… But the whole thing is, we are in this together, regardless of how religious we are. I mean, we are **all Muslim** enough to be in here, right? We need to do something soon. Like tomorrow. The media isn't going to stay camped outside forever…"*.[43]

The utterance: spoken by Layla. It is the conversation between Ayesha and Layla. She says, "... *I mean, we are all Muslim enough to be in here, right? We need to do something soon. Like tomorrow …"*—**the relationship between the speaker:** close friend. **The following events happen:** Ayesha meets Layla to

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[43] *Ibid.,* p. 58.

discuss something after the Director arrested and tortured Layla. Ayesha says other Muslims in the internment camp want to join Layla to go against the Director.

Regarding the label "Muslim" above, Ayesha tries to encourage Layla to do something against the Director with other Muslims. In the utterance above, Layla and Ayesha are part of the ingroup members in examining their identity as part of Muslims. Hence, the label in the report above contains positive self-labeling. Subsequently, in the context above, Layla says, "... *Me either. Which is pretty stupid of me, considering how ballsy someone had to be to wear hijab outside the house...*" which is informal language. Layla uses stylistic variation by saying "ballsy" and "pretty stupid," It can be concluded that Layla is very close to Ayesha.

Outgroup Position Labeling "Muslim"

The Director and David's utterance below contains labeling "Desi" according to the context of the situation. Both of them are not part of Muslim. They want to try to insult Muslims.

1) The conversation between Layla and David (Layla's boyfriend) (Datum 39, Page 58)

*"Layla, listen, they're not closing this place down. Another camp is opening in a few weeks. They've expanded the Muslim ban. Total immigration lockdown, and for tourists, too. Even if you're **not Muslim** but are from **a Muslim-majority** country. But I have an idea." The news guts me. "An idea? For what?" "What? You want my parents to help the assholes who put us in here? What the fuck, David? Did your dad put you up to this?." No. He has no idea.*

> *... You want us to inform **other Muslims** to save ourselves? They would never do that, and neither would I." I scoot away from him, then stand".*[44]

The utterance: conversation between David and Layla. David says, "*...Even if you're not Muslim but are from a Muslim-majority country. But I have an idea.*" Then Layla says, *"... You want us to inform other Muslims to save ourselves? They would never do that, and neither would I." I scoot away from him, then stand".* **The relationship between the speaker:** a couple and a high school friend. Both of them enter the same school, and they have a special relationship. Layla is David's girlfriend and vice-versa. **The following events happen:** Layla meets David secretly. She is asking for help from the guard named Jake to meet David near the garden. Then David tells what is happening outside the internment camp.

The label "Muslim" in the extract above constructs Layla's identity and is part of the construction of group identity. She represents all Muslims in the internment camp and wants to lead a protest against the Director. On the other hand, David wants Layla to be selfish by escaping from Mobius. He tries to persuade that Layla's Identity as a Muslim is too weak in a majority country like the United States.

In examining group position, regarding the label "Muslim," David's position is part of outgroup members while Layla is part of the group. Further, according to the context and situation, labeling "Muslim" in the utterance above is inclined to negative self-labeling.

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[44] *Ibid.*

2) The conversation between the Director of Mobius and Layla (Datum 45, Page 70)

*"..... I gave him an opening. And I have no doubt he'll use it as ammunition if he needs to. "A boyfriend? How nice. He's not in here with you? So I don't suppose he's **a Muslim**, now, is he?" Shit. Why did I open my mouth? And why did the truth have to come out of it? "No, sir," I whisper.*[45]

The utterance: spoken by The Director of Mobius. He is also the owner of the internment camp. He says, "*... A boyfriend? How nice. He's not in here with you? So I don't suppose he's a Muslim, now, is he?*". **The relationship between the speaker:** stranger. Both of them know each other in Mobius. The Director is a person working for the government and tries to go against the Muslims in the United States. **The following events happen:** David was trying to visit Layla in the internment camp secretly. Jake, the guard of Mobius, tried to help them, but the Director knew what Layla had done. Along these lines, the Director tries to intimidate Layla because she met David, her boyfriend.

The label in the utterance above spoken by the Director is trying to insult Layla. The Director tries to expose Layla's boyfriend and humiliate Layla. In the conversation above, the Director is a part of the outgroup, while Layla is part of the ingroup. All people in the internment camp are Muslim while David is not there, so the Director assumes that David is not Muslim. Hence, according to the context and situation, labeling "Muslim" in the utterance above is inclined to positive self-labeling.

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[45] *Ibid.,* p. 70.

Conclusion

This study can draw some points after analyzing the findings and discussions of labeling "Desi" and "Muslim."

First, the finding above shows that negative labeling is higher than positive and appears mainly in the ingroup position. It means that they feel uncomfortable being the minority in a majority country. Respectively, they also feel insecure and inferior about their identity as "Desi" and "Muslim."

Second, the researcher finds some factors that influence labeling "Desi" and "Muslim." Three main factors affect the utterance of labeling "Desi" and labeling "Muslim." Such as the relationship, the utterances, and the following events toward the speaker. Therefore, the research shows that these factors influence the emergence of labeling "Desi" and "Muslim."

To conclude this section, the researcher draws some essential outlines. In this study, the label plays a significant role in constructing identity. The identity of the figures labeled "Desi" or people from the Indian American community triggers xenophobia in society. The role of labels is significant in determining the group's position in society.

The number of negative labels is higher than positive because the rest of the main characters feel insecure and inferior about their identity as "Desi" and "Muslim." So, they judge themselves. Then, the number of labels "Muslim" is higher than the label "Desi" because racism toward religion is higher than among ethnic minorities.

Further, the identity as a minority group, formed through labels, becomes a weakness for the characters in the novel. The

character's position in the novel mostly becomes insecure, often not treated fairly, and threatened by society because of the label. The researcher concludes that the label can affect the group position and identity formation in the community.

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