# Islamophobia

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Islamophobia means acts of fear or hostility towards followers of Islamic religion. This unjustified fear has contributed immensely to discrimination of Muslims across the globe. It is a base point for seclusion of Muslims in the political arena and affiliate social classes in the society. The phenomenon is characterized by a distinct pre-assumption of crime or guilt through association. Hate crimes are also a common characteristic of this condition. Numerous evils related to Islam phobia are prevalent and even tolerated in different parts of the modern United States. This is in contrary to the perceived progress against human discrimination made by the nation in the past few years. The United States has waged a war against racial discrimination as well as discrimination by faith(Islamophobia and Anti-Americanism Book Excerpts , 2012). Nevertheless, it seems to tow backwards in eradicating the effects of Islamophobia in the nation.

Islamophobia reference to this phenomenon was advanced by the thesis formed by F. Fukyama and S. Huntington (Khan, 2009). Their thesis was in linkage to the pending clashes of civilizations between the west and the Islamic dominants. The tragic occurrence of September 11[th]contributed intensely to the viewing of Islamic religion with suspicion. It fueled a slew of prejudice, suspicions, hate crimes, as well as fear against the Muslims(Diversity Training Series: Educating Chicago's Law Enforcement on the City's Many Religions, 2006). The tragedy of this phenomenon led to differed people perceptions and believes about the Muslims. Some of the unquestioned perceptions by non Muslims were:

- The Islam Religion portrays a monolithic culture and it is relentless to accept emerging realities in the society.
- Islamic religion has completely different values in comparison with other faiths and cultures.
- Islam is considered inferior as perceived by the west. It is deemed to have barbarism traits, archaic, and relatively irrational.
- Islam religion supports various acts of terrorism and general violence in the society.
- Islamic religion is a violent ideology in the political arena.

These pre-assumptions about the Islamic society have made all criticism towards American policies, made by Muslims, be ignored. In many circumstances, Muslims are considered "anti-Semitic" or "reactionary". The Main American associations for Muslims are often looked upon or viewed in suspicion. What's more, various irrational excuses have beenby put forward to avoid engaging with these associations. This is in detriment to eradicating denominational prejudice and discrimination by faith (Islamophobia and Anti-Americanism Book Excerpts , 2012).

The unknown fear by some nations in regard to Islam religion followers continues to be eminent and real.
The terrorist attack on UnitedStates, which took place on September 11, 2001, gave rise to controversial associations and relationships Islam and other religions. The terrorism attack saw to the destruction of Twin Towers Building, which was the world trade center (Greene,). The association of this horrendous act was directed to all Muslim societies both domestically as well as internationally.

The American society has portrayed different and wrongful interpretations of the real meaning of Islam. In turn this event has pointed as a relation to global violence and acts of terrorism. The media in America has not been left behind in magnifying islamophobia to the society (Islamophobia and Anti-Americanism Book Excerpts , 2012). It is common to watch documentaries or media programs which massively link various global violence attacks to Islamic religion.

The media, taking an advantage of its large target audience has drummed home the prevailing unknown fear towards the Muslims in the society. According to the Oxford Dictionary (2010) *Islam* means "the religion of the Muslims, a monotheistic faith regarded as a revealed through Muhammad as the prophet of Allah." The word *Phobia* is defined as an extreme or irrational fearof or aversion to something (The Oxford Dictionary, 2010). The belief also upholds the teachings of Muhammad who is known to be a prophet. The Islamic religion is believed to have been introduced in America by slaves captured from Africa and taken to America (Diouf, 1998). According to the Islamic holy book, Quran, the word Islam denotes peace. This is a contrary to perception of other numerous religions, which associate Islamic religion with violence.

The true meaning of the religion, Islam, and its teachings, can only be best understood when differences and barriers between Islam and other religions is removed. Just like other religions and denominations, the Muslim culture values and cherishes family, peace and the rule of law. Hence it is valid to say that Islam just like other major beliefs upholds and teaches morality. Islam's meaning, peace is a culture, which forms a necessary binding force in a community. The term "Islamophobia" was first used in print in 1991 and was defined in the Runnymede Trust Report (the Runnymede Trust Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia, 1997) as "unfounded hostility towards Islam, and therefore fear or dislike of all or most Muslims."

The word has been coined because there is a new reality which needs naming — anti-Muslim prejudice has grown so considerably and so rapidly in recent years that a new item in the vocabulary is needed so that it can be identified and acted against (Sajid, 2005 Vol. 12, No 2&3). This unfounded fear of Muslims has caused the discrimination in the work force as well. For instance, there is evidence of unequal chances in health services. There has been evidence also of unjustified seclusions in major public office positions, such as politicalposts. This irrational fear unfortunately has become part of daily conversations, media publications, and works of literature (Mustafa, 2005).A comprehensive analysis of Islamophobia references by Stephen Israeli journal

- An attack in its entirety towards the whole Islamic religion in the world.
- Utter condemnation of all Islamic beliefs and practices as being extremists.
- An indirect incitement of war and violence among Islamic followers in general.
- Compelling Muslims to accede to opinions and demands of the other denominations. This is out of sheer ignorance, and indisputable arrogance, from believes of non-Islamic beliefs and traditions. This makes the non-Muslims to ascertain that faults out religious conflicts as an act by the Muslims.
- The majority religion denomination in the world refutes or tends to deny the prevailing existence of Muslim minority in the society.
- Hostility towards the Islamic followers is seen as normality or a natural phenomenon.
- Islamic society is portrayed or perceived as being violent, terrorism supportive, and a catalyst towards conflicts in civilization.

The rationale in defining terrorism is long gone and forgotten by many in the society. Notices and observation on various Internet and visual media postings are misguiding. They are enhanced by non-Muslim journalists and reporters who use the terms terrorism and Islam interchangeably. This is irrational in the sense that not all followers of Islamic religion are terrorists. The vice-versa also applies. In American past history, Timothy McVeighcaused multiple deaths when he blew up a government federal building with a truck. It was on April 19th 1995 .A net total of 167 people were killed and 509 citizens were also injured (Linder, 2006).

The occurrence to date is considered to be among the worst inbred terrorism activities that American society has ever seen. However, publication and broadcasting of the story by media houses did not portray McVeighas a terrorist in its entirety. Is it because he did not have an Islamic name? This occurrence is an excellent example of inequality in relation to the term terrorism. Islamophobia is further inflamed by linking Muslims with terrorism.

The definition of the word ignorantly linked to Islamic society, which has consequently borne the wrath of this misperception. The American society has been unfair in branding numerous Islamic dominated nations as central points of violence and terrorism.It is ironical that Arabic and Islamic nations in the world do not refer the actions of United States towards invasion of Iraq as acts of terrorism. Since the wars in Iraq started, more than 100, 000 people of Islamic denominations have fallen (Lehren, A.&Tavernise, S, 2010).

Nevertheless, the majority of the world population, whom, are non-Muslims turns a blind eye towards such archaic practices.In the recent American history, United States, among other European nations, invaded Libya under the premises that they were protecting the civilians. Truthfully, over 2000 non-combatant residents of the nation have met a bitter demise following United States NATO air strikes in the country. It is irrefutable that Arabic nations are in opposition to the actions of United States towards the Middle East countries. Nevertheless, after the aftermath of the NATO airstrikes on civilians in Libya, Arabic nations did not refer to United States Christians as terrorists.

It is even amazing that a word to coin such acts "Americanophobia" has not been developed. If we consider the role of Arabic and American media play in this issue, we can clearly see that the American media has the ability to thwart those facts to make them appear good for certain audiences and the opposite applies if it wills to do so, as was in the case ofthe Iraqwar. Anti-American campaigns held by the Arabs and Muslims are prevalent due to their aversion of the American policies about the war with Iraq (Kohut, 2005).

It will consume a great chunk of effort to understand the trend in hegemony when it comes to the expansive American society. Over the years, numerous groupings in American society have experienced the wrath of phobic effect perpetrated by the majority in the society. Some of these groupings included the Native Americans, the Jews, and communists among others (Takaki, 2008). In order to justify the prejudice perpetrated towards these minorities, demonization strategies mostly by the media have been performed. The strategies entailed defamation and giving wrongful information regarding the minority population. As a result, this phenomenon caused marginalization of the inferior societies. The inferiority complex often develops into phobia, which instigates racisms and prejudice just like the prevailing one affecting the Islamic population.

The Media agencies have very strong influence on the society at large (Rayuso). America is one of the nations, whichare influenced enormously by the media (Saeed, 2007). It takes this advantage since it has massive number of recipients of all ages. Both the old and the younghave access to media systems and devices. Young people, who lack adequate skills and qualifications, heavily rely on preconceptions in an attempt to understand the globe (Revell, 2010). This makes their reliance on the media facilities understandable. This makes the target audience of any type of information enormous and heterogeneous.

Social studies and references have often been misused by the agencies and in turn used as tools to enhance negative traits on Islamic cultures. The inaccuracy of these depictions of the Muslims is what makes it difficult for the American society to come to terms with their contribution to Islamophobia. How can the society understand if is relentless to create awareness of the stigmatization effect they create towards the Muslim religion? Their sources of information are normally biased and imprecise. It is so wrongful for the media agencies to take up crusades, which defames and tarnishes Islamic religion by associating it with terrorism, a social evil in the society (Khan, 2009).Several high profile political personalities in the world have questioned the relevance and effectiveness of laws protecting the abuse of any religion. Islamic rule of law is normally represented by Muslim courts a symbol of their protection and recognition by the constitutions of nations. However, despite their recognition, the rules have been balmy in eradicating the general phobic effect towards the Muslims. Laws protecting the Islamic cultures are often disregarded by the non-Muslims in the society. In many occasion non-Muslims take no consideration when participating defamation and discriminative agendas against the believers of Islam. Media houses exploit the right to speech in enhancing negative and many times impreciseinformation, which rubs off the real benefits of Islamic religion.

The disheartening effects of irrational phobia towards the Muslims is felt both individually and collectively. Islamic religion and cultures comes with a strict code of standards and norms. In some nations, Muslims dress code has become a distinguishing factor from the non-Muslims (Hodge,D.R, 2005). For example, Muslim women wear 'Hijab', which is a norm according to Muslim customs. However, wearing these distinct clothes seems to enhance the prejudist positions by the non-Muslims. With this attire Muslims in some societies are easily identified and marginalized. It's not advisable for Muslims to wear their customary dresses while searching for economic opportunities since they may be unequally interviewed and selected (Mustafa, 2005).Racism and prejudice towards a certain group of people is economically detrimental in the sense that the net economic and social growth rate of the affected regions is hampered. Furthermore, the target population is shut out from numerous development opportunities and chances.

Whether, Islamic or Non- Islamic, are people are faced with the same problem which needs rapid control or eradication. Islamophobia does not benefit a society. It does not yield any fruits in the advancement of American Muslim rights. The rate of complaints filed by Muslims against prejudice by non-Muslim society is on the rise. This portrays that more and more Islamic believers are shedding off their fears and attempting to seek justice in the discriminative society. In year 2008, 2728 civic rights complaints were put forward (The Status of Muslim Civil Rights in the United States 2009, 2012). A focus to the real problem should be on terrorism and general ignorance that instigates phobia among people because of Islamic population. This provides further evidence that the fight against prejudice and discriminations towards the Islamic society by Muslims is prevalent.

In conclusion, irrational fear towards the Islamic society is eminent and a thriving wound in human moral integrity. Measures and policies to contain the scourge seem to be ineffective. As a result, the Islamic society has been unjustly branded to be the source of terrorism activities and practices. The Muslims being the minority population in comparison with other denominations, the rate of wrath and racism, prejudice, and inequality theyhave endured and have been unforgiving. Many Muslims have been denied chances to take key positions in the society in fear that they may use their attained status to perpetrate vandalism. United States of America is a developed nation. Both the Arabs as well as the Muslims hold an integral position in it. United States of America popularity of its rule of law as well as its constitution is unchallengeable. Thus, the nation should light the first torch in waging a war against religion prejudice and discrimination.

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