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BEYOND THE HEADLINES: DECONSTRUCTING EUROPEAN MEDIA'S ISLAMOPHOBIC DISCOURSE

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Abstract

This study investigates Islamophobia as prevalent in Europe. In this connection, it deconstructs the portrayal of Islam and the Muslims by the British, French and German media through their discourse strategies. It also examines the counter-narrative by the Middle Eastern and Pakistani media. This qualitative research applies a triangulation of framing theory and critical discourse analysis to highlight the media's subtle use of discourse strategies to advance their agenda. The analysis of the study reflects how the European Media reflects a negative role of Islam and Muslims by using discourse tactics. They exploit lexical selection and other tactics, such as visuals, headings, captions, and sub-captions, in ways that influence the cognition of the general public, who feel cognitively compelled to believe what European Media wants to promote. The study also finds how the Media of the Muslim countries, such as Al Jazeera and Dawn, continue to counter the European narrative on Islam and the Muslims to challenge the European agenda. This study is significant because it deconstructs the manipulative strategies used by the European media for the promotion of Islamophobia. It adopts a critical discourse analysis perspective, which helps break the power structure based on discourse.

Keywords: *Islamophobia, European media, Prejudice, Critical Discourse Analysis, Pakistan*

Introduction

Media have always played their role in constituting identities and ideologies through their portrayal and manipulation of reality, and they constantly provoke stereotypes about various ethnic and racial groups and minorities, which play an important role in their development and dissemination. As a result, learning more about the media's portrayal of Muslims and Islam in order to better understand the causes of public hostility is a necessary first step (Cervi et al., 2021).

Online newspapers, in particular, are part of the media which play an important part in distributing reports to the globe as the promised global village comes to a realisation. However, such methods of news dissemination can spread many ideologies following the



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ruling authority. This, along with the increase of so-called Islamic terrorist groups, has created a serious situation which has focused attention on Islam and Muslims. Using a Critical Discourse Analysis technique, this research will seek to give insight into how Islam is represented in Western countries (Rezafl et al., 2019).

Islamophobia manifests itself in today's Europe through individual beliefs and actions, as well as through the media, and in the structures and practices of organizations. Lately, open tensions over migration and the integration of Muslim minorities into larger parts of European communities have fueled Islamophobia. As a result of the financial crisis of 2007 and the rise of libertarian patriot lawmakers, these forces have grown even stronger. They have also been troubled by high-profile, fear-based terror attacks performed by Muslim fundamentalists. However, the psychological oppressor attacks of 9/11 transformed the public's perception of Muslims. Psychological oppressor actions, such as the attacks by violent Islamists in London, Paris, Brussels, and Barcelona, have heightened fear and anxiety since then. Many Europeans perceive Islam as a threat and Muslims as the enemy as a result of extremists' use of Islam to justify their psychologically aggressive protests. Starting about 2001, a few European media outlets have succumbed to reporting based on broad generalizations and have used the activities of Islamists to stereotype Muslim populations (OSF, 2019).

This study aims to investigate Islamophobia in Europe explicitly the UK, France, and Germany with the help of media portrayal of Muslim religion in Western Europe. In a strong prosecution, Thomas Hammarberg, the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights, posted a blog piece on how European Muslims are dragged through the mud by egalitarian discourse (October 2010). European nations seem to confront one more emergency past spending plan shortages –

the breaking down of human worth. One manifestation is the expanding articulation of prejudice towards Muslims. Assessments of public sentiment in a few European nations reflect dread, doubt, and unflattering assessments of Muslims and Islamic religion (Bari, 2012).

As indicated by Amnesty International (2019) the recipient of voting booth Islamophobia however is Donald Trump with his mission guarantee of an “absolute and complete closure of Muslims entering the United States”. He said that this boycott would remain set up until the nation's agents “can sort out what the heck is continuing”. Regardless of all his knowledge, he's as yet not got a grip of it. Trump showed up on the rear of an age of Islamophobia which went inseparably with the disputable conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, which let us not neglect, brought about the still scarcely recognized passing's of countless Muslims.” In the ceaseless 'Battle on Terror', Muslims keep on suffering ethnic profiling and are excessively exposed to observation, limits on their developments, capture, and extradition” (Mohyidin, 2021)

Acquittal International and Open Society Foundations have distributed an aide claiming Muslims are humiliated, accused of racism, and susceptible to European inspection anti-illegal intimidation tries. According to the creator, it is terrible that European legislators are focusing on Muslims with justified warfare estimates, which is effectively fostering the



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bigoted view of Islam as a “threat,” along with effectively establishing a climate in which disrespectful discourse against Muslims is viewed as perfectly natural. According to Seyhan (2017), the goal of a prejudiced counter-illegal intimidation tactic will cause unnecessary harm to Muslims' minds by instilling fear, hurt, and stress. The European Union's unjust approach to state-run administrations has the potential to have a significant and long-lasting impact, including anxiety, mental health issues, depression, and reduced self-esteem (Observer, 2021).

In the last several years, Islamophobia has risen at an alarming level in the United Kingdom. Sayeeda Warsi, a former Conservative Party administrator and one of the country's most influential Muslim MPs, sparked alarm in 2011 when she said that the adversary of Muslim discrimination had “finished the supper table assessment.” Regrettably for herself and the larger British Muslim community, things have become even worse (Zaheer, 2021).

In 2020, Imran Khan, the former Prime Minister of Pakistan, criticised the weekly distribution of a French comical image of the Prophet Mohammed, while also applauding UN efforts to combat what he calls increasing Islamophobia. In a prepared statement to the UN General Assembly, Khan argued that increasing global patriotism had “accentuated Islamophobia” and also that Muslims “keep on being designated without risk of punishment in numerous countries. Incidents in Europe, including the republication of profane portrayals by Charlie Hebdo, are ongoing models,” Khan stated in his opinion. “We emphasise that determined incitements and encouraging loathing and savagery should be forbidden everywhere” (France24, 2020).

Islamophobia has expanded in Germany; however, legislators have not invested sufficient energy into fighting it, according to the head of the Berlin-based Islam Council. Burhan Kesici informed Anadolu Agency on July 1 that it goes back to 2009, when Marwa El-Sherbini was brutally attacked by a man she accused of being an opponent of Muslim contemptuous violation at a preliminary hearing in Dresden. Kesici said, “After the Marwa al-Sherbini slaughter, Islamophobia and its portion have been increasing” (Erbil, 2021).

Muslim communities all over the world are taking advantage of the internet, not only to share their faith and culture with the rest of the world but also to fight back against the many efforts being made to stigmatise, profile, and marginalise Muslims. Post-9/11, they began using digital media as an outlet for those with no voice to share their thoughts in a way that could be heard around the world. This was especially important in the West. To combat unfavourable misrepresentations of their faith and rituals, Muslims have turned to web campaigns to raise awareness about their diverse identities and lived realities as a result of the alarming rise in incidents of hatred and Islamophobia around the world. Muslims around the world are working tirelessly online to achieve all of these goals, and this post provides some examples (Khamis, 2021).

This study aims to examine how far Islamophobic exists in the European media. It selects leading media outlets from Germany, France, and UK, and also compares and contrasts this European discourse with the rhetoric provided by the media of the Muslim countries, such as Al Jazeera and Dawn. It applies critical discourse analysis which asserts that there is always agenda, power or power abuse behind language. More specifically, it applies van Dijk's



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model of discourse and manipulation.

A Critical Discourse Analysis of German Media

DW media outlet

This study shows how DW and Deutschland media outlets represent Muslims. Nowadays, in a society dominated by media, the public's perception of reality can be skewed in ways that distort the truth. As a result, people need to be more aware of how information is processed so that any visual representation may be seen from a sufficient distance.

Muslims make up a significant portion of the German media. Terrorism, fanaticism, forced marriage, honor killings, the headscarf, and the plight of Muslim women under oppression are just a few of the many subjects Islam is related to on a daily basis. A number of scientific studies have been conducted on the media portrayal of Islam.

As the examples in the paragraphs above show, Muslims are frequently portrayed as violent people. Terrorism by extremists, fanaticism, forced marriage, honor killings, the wearing of the hijab, and the plight of marginalized Muslim women are all on the rise.

Headlines in the DW media outlet

Headlines1: 'Islam shouldn't culturally shape Germany'

This headline is showing that Islam “has no cultural roots in Germany.”

Headlines2: “Abu Dujana: The Salafi preacher”

This headline clearly indicates that Muslims are the terrorists. Radical Muslims in Germany found a home in the group “The True Religion,” some of whom later joined ISIS. In Abu Dujana, one of the most notable Salafi preachers, Naomi Conrad was introduced.

Headlines3: “Germans support democracy, but are concerned about Islam”

The latest “Religion Monitor” from the Bertelsmann Foundation (2019) was published every two years. Bertelsmann Foundation research indicated that 89 per cent of respondents across all faiths believe democracy is a good form of government. Only half of those polled were uneasy about Islam. More than half of Americans view Islam as a threat, according to a new survey.

In the study, however, it was discovered that dogmatic, rigid beliefs and intolerance of other religions could be harmful to democracy in the long term. They voiced concern that half of the people surveyed thought Islam was dangerous. There were more anti-Islamic sentiments in Germany's eastern regions, where there are few Muslims. 30 per cent of those polled in the east indicated they did not want Muslim neighbours, compared with 16 per cent in western German states, according to the Bertelsmann survey.

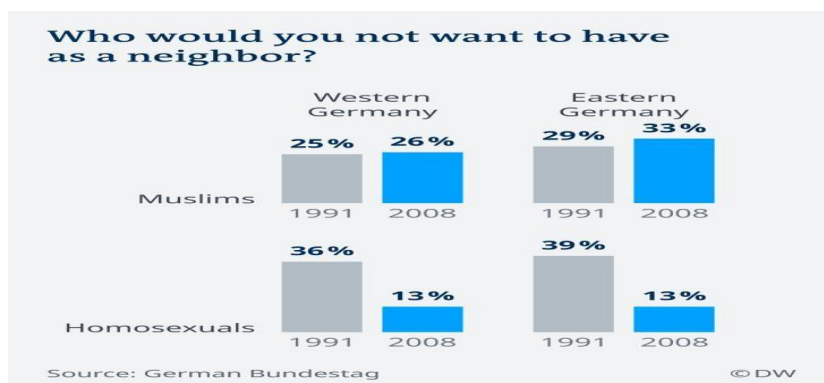
Headlines4: “Germans tolerant of LGBT neighbours, but not Muslim ones”

Germans are strongly hostile to mosques, the hijab, and refugees' resettlement centres in a new Playboy poll (2020). In Germany, homophobia has declined dramatically in recent years, but Islamophobia has stagnated.

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Figure 1: Playboy poll (2020)



Headlines5: “No Arabs please’ job rejection controversy”

Individual and structural discrimination against those who practice Islam is a problem for Muslims, and women who wear headscarves are particularly vulnerable to it, according to this headline.

Headlines6: “Islamist terrorism: Germany is home to more than 600 agitators”

Although the headline implies that Islamist terrorism has been a frequent target in Germany, the country's security authorities monitor hundreds of suspected terrorists.

Visual Representation of Muslims in DW media outlet



In this section, various codes are presented to justify the picture representation. Some groups and people were targeted more frequently than others because of the “visual markers” of Islam and Muslims. There were visible markers such as Muslim women wearing the hijab or turbans, Islamic buildings and property, and even those who simply “appeared” Muslim.

Deutschland News Paper

Hostility toward Muslims is on the rise in Germany, a development that might have disastrous ramifications for the country's Muslim population. Public perception of Islam as a “foreign” religion has been a long-term goal for Muslims and their mosque communities to change for many years. Common sense suggests that a well-run neighbourhood is the strongest defence against attacks on mosques. According to numerous studies, the majority

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of German Muslims are happy and content in their lives.

Indeed, a large number of Germans link Islam to violence and risk. It is easy to justify the increasing violence against minorities in general, but also Muslims and their institutions in particular, with the words “Islamic” and “terrorism,” which have become commonplace since the September 11, 2001, attacks and are still used today by political parties and the media alike.

Headlines of the Deutschland media outlet

Headlines1: “Innovative ideas for combating radicalization”

This headline shows that terrorism, radicalism, and extremism are adjectives that were commonly used in Germany just a few years ago in connection with right- or left-wing organizations. The phrases are now also connected with extremist Islamism.

Heading 2: “Consequences in the fight against terrorism”

After the terrorist assault in Berlin, Germans began discussing how to prevent similar incidents in the future. Foreigners who are required to leave the nation if public safety is in jeopardy will face stricter monitoring circumstances. The Muslim community was targeted with electronic ankle bracelets in these types of cases.

Headlines3: “Shoulder to shoulder with France”

On November 13, 2015, Germans were likewise startled by the terrorist atrocities in Paris. A total of 130 people were killed in the six assaults that took place in Paris. Terrorist attacks in the name of Islam began during a friendly international football match between Germany and France (Deutschland, 2015).

Visual Representation of Muslims Deutschland media outlet



Muslims in general and Islam in particular were demonized as a geopolitical force and/or a source of terrorism in the second row, where the term "Islamophobia" was commonly heard. Islamic extremism, Islamist extremism, or radical Islam refer to extremist views and behaviours associated with Islam. Once more, radical Islam is linked to acts of terrorism and political violence when viewed through the prism of radicalization. A group of suicide bombers claims that martyrs who die in jihad are entitled to eternal life and that they are descended from Muslims.



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A Critical Discourse Analysis of the French Media France24 Media Outlet

This research shows how France24 and Reuters media outlets represent Muslims in France. Muslims in France are alarmed by the increase in Islamophobia in the country. Muslims around the world are dealing with fresh waves of Islamophobic behaviours, both institutional and societal, as a result of rising populism and an upset worldwide society.

The dynamics bring to mind the way Muslims have been portrayed in French media, which has led some academics to argue that the media is a major contributor to the rise of anti-Muslim bigotry and prejudice. Studies on Islam reveal negative portrayals of Muslims in French media. "There is an 'imaginary conception of an essentialized Islam,' according to political analysts like Thomas Deltombe, which leads to a variety of views on Islamic principles. A fictitious theory aims to uncover the religious underpinnings of various social, political, cultural, and psychological phenomena.

Systemic sociological and anthropological investigations into France's Islamophobia have yet to be conducted. In spite of this, daily incidents show that anti-Muslim sentiment is increasing. The release of a "Sports Hijab" by the Decathlon brand in February 2019 sparked criticism, which led to its withdrawal from the market.

Islam's compatibility with French ideals is a hot topic in the country's national news media, which is constantly debating issues such as civil freedoms, racism, and Islamic beliefs. Concerned by recent incidents of vandalism against Muslims, including attacks on mosques and their visitors, Muslims in France are worried about further division.

It is important to keep in mind that the political leanings of the media sources under consideration can influence how Muslims and Islam are portrayed. Terrorist attacks tend to inflame tensions, but otherwise, Muslims in France enjoy relative tranquility. Only a small number of Muslim extremists are to blame for most of these conflicts. Their actions are used as a generalisation for the entire Muslim population. There have also been discussions over upholding the secular nature of French public space in accordance with French laws and culture. As a result, Muslims in France are sometimes held responsible for crowding France's public spaces with their prayers. They don't limit themselves to praying only in mosques that are specifically designated for this. Muslims have also attempted to impose their Islamic rituals upon French banlieues, as if they were responsible for the country's social order.

Women in burqas have become a symbol of oppression and backwardness in popular culture. "Islam," "fundamentalism," "women's oppression," or even 'foreigner/other' are all connotations that come to mind when thinking about the headscarf. There is almost always a picture of a veiled Muslim woman in any article or report on the religion.

Unemployment, marginalisation, and a lack of basic services all contribute to the radicalization of Muslim immigrants in France. This is due to their perceptions of "society's injustices and inequalities." There are many factors that can contribute to radicalization, including a lack of social and economic integration for Muslim immigrants.



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Headlines of the France24 media outlet

Headline1: “What if your daughter married a Muslim?”

The headline makes it apparent that the controversial line of enquiry has gotten the most attention around the world because of how much media has crushed Muslims. People were outraged when they were asked if they had ever been "personally encountered problems" such as being insulted or attacked by a variety of religious and ethnic groups; this question elicited the most negative responses.

Even though his attire is customary in France, the woman in the video assaults him, saying that she feels embarrassed by what he is wearing, even though it is not uncommon for men to wear such attire. In an attempt to argue with her, the man maintains his cool. In response to the terrorist strikes, he declares, “I am innocent!” (Malterre, 2018).

Many French media sites have been compiling lists of Islamophobic incidents that have occurred. Muslim houses of worship have been defaced with anti-Muslim graffiti, and anti-Muslim protests have taken place in Marseille. Dozens have been reported, but it is impossible to say for sure how many there are.

Visual Representation of Muslim representation France24 newspapers

Women in burqas have become a symbol of oppression and backwardness in popular culture. “Islam,” “fundamentalism,” “women's subjugation,” or even 'foreigner/other' are all connotations that come to mind when thinking about the headscarf. There is almost always a picture of a veiled Muslim woman in any article or story on the religion.

Islamophobia is shown to be prevalent in this visual, which shows France24's assistance to Muslims through visual depiction. This time is critical for Muslims because they are at risk. Racism is often downplayed by claiming that anyone can be a victim of it. White people, on the other hand, won't have to expose themselves in public or be followed in a store. Because of the Vigipirate plan, every time I enter a store, my bag is inspected just like everyone else's.

Reuters media outlet

The overall consensus was that Reuter was moderate, despite the persistence of Islamophobic preconceptions. Stereotypes and pejorative terminology, even in small amounts, have been found to exacerbate racial discrimination already present in the country.

Headline1: “French Muslims pay heavy price in COVID pandemic”

The headlines reveal that Muslims paid a high price for Covid since they were a minority group. Another country has documented COVID-19's disparate impact on ethnic minorities for the same or similar causes.

French Muslims and non-Muslims are already at odds due to socioeconomic disparities, which have been exacerbated by the pandemic, and which are expected to be a major issue in next year's presidential election. Among Muslims, “there is a bitter taste, of injustice.” “Why me?” and “Why always us?” are common questions.

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French lawyer Sarah Asmeta wears a hijab at work, but this means her local Bar Council bars her from representing clients in court. She has been fighting to overturn that rule.

Religious symbols and clothing are banned for public servants due to France's principle of "laïcité" (secularism) - the separation of religion and state - this does not extend to independent professionals like lawyers.

Source: Reuters

A Critical Discourse Analysis of the UK Media BBC Media Outlet

This chapter discussed how Muslims are depicted in a negative light by the BBC. Right-wing extremists are frequently allowed to appear on news and political programmes, often without being questioned about their Islamophobia, by broadcasters who are aware of the prevalence of Islamophobia in the media. Sadly, gaining popularity at any cost appears to be more essential than ensuring a fair discussion. Words like "Islamophobia" and "Muslims" were used by the BBC to describe the topic of Islamophobia.

Right-wing extremists are frequently invited to appear on news and political programs, often without being questioned about their Islamophobia, as can anyone who pays attention to the news. Ratings are more essential than finding a fair and reasonable way to debate an issue. However, this skewed, unfavourable coverage does not merely emerge on the news or on politically oriented shows. Instead, recall the wildly famous TV show *Bodyguard* from last year, which dealt with Islamic terrorism. All the Muslim stereotypes were catered to in this film, including the niqab-wearing oppressed woman and the terrorist suicide bomber. Do British media stories about Muslims tend to focus on the negative aspects of the Muslim community?

Visual representations of Muslims in the BBC media outlet

The depiction of Muslims with beards and caps are mostly terrorists.



The Attack: Terror in the United Kingdom

presents the narrative of a terrorist organisation inspired by the Islamic State, which is organising a firearms attack, and follows the ongoing police investigation. It centres on Joseph, a young man who, while serving time for drug and firearms offences, is recruited, converted, and radicalised by Islamic extremists, underscoring the worry that ties are being created between jihadists and street gangs with access to automatic weapons. Source: BBC News

Headline of the BBC media outlet

Headlines1: “The Attack: Terror in the UK”

What are the most likely scenarios for Britain's next major terror attack? Dramatizes what terrorism experts believe is the most likely scenario in this documentary.

“The Attack: Terror in the UK” examines the ongoing police investigation into a terrorist attack inspired by the Islamic State and planned by a UK terrorist group. It tells the story of Joseph, a young man who, while serving time for drug and firearms offences, is taken in by Islamic extremists, converted, and radicalized. This raises the alarming possibility that jihadists and street gangs with automatic weapons are becoming inseparable.

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Muslim Media

Islamophobia and the Counter-Narrative by the Middle Eastern media outlet Al Jazeera Media outlet

This section examines how Al Jazeera and Dawn addressed the anti-Muslim narrative. A rise in anti-Muslim sentiment known as Islamophobia is not only merging with but also an integral element of the restricted racial framing of Muslim identity that is ingrained in the Western imagination and continues to be potent. Islamophobia in the United States is in large part the product of the master discourse that fostered European supremacy and is currently fuelled by public attitudes and official action intended at protecting its domestic spawn, white supremacy, in the country.

More than \$200 million was spent between 2008 and 2013 by various organisations in the United States to spread "fear and hatred" of Muslims, according to a recent analysis conducted by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and University of California, Berkeley (Raffia, 2016).

In France, the issue of Islam has long been a thorn in its side. In the run-up to French elections,



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far-right views on the Muslim population, immigration, and security have entered mainstream public discourse. French Muslims are at the centre of a debate that denigrates and demonises them in politics, the media, and on social media networks for their faith and its symbols.

A sustained and rigorous discourse analysis of Islamophobia, the anti-Muslim prejudice that is irrational and categorical, was necessary before we understand its pathological origins and discredit its chief ideologues worldwide. This is the case with anti-Semitism, racism against African Americans, misogyny against women and homophobia against the LGBT community.

Anti-Muslim bigotry must be exposed, and the perpetrators must be identified.

The names of the Christchurch terrorist and those who inspired anti-Muslim violence should be made public. Suppressing the memory of Adolf Hitler will not return six million Jews to Europe. Ignoring the crimes committed by Leopold II of Belgium in the Congo would not repair the millions of lives lost. We need to know and call out the names of the mass killers when Jews, Africans, Native Americans, Asians, Latinos, and now Muslims are slain. It is a nice thing to do for the future. In North America, Europe, New Zealand, Australia, and, of course, Israel, white colonialists might learn humility from this experience. This epidemic of white supremacist racism has already caused damage around the world. (Dabashi, 2019).

Headlines of the Al Jazeera media outlet countering Islamophobia

Headline1: “When it comes to Islamophobia, we need to name names”

Anti-Muslim extremists' identities should be made public, including the identity of the terrorist who attacked in Christchurch. When Jews, African-Americans, Native Americans, Asian-Americans, Latinos, and now Muslims are being slaughtered, we need to know who is responsible and call them out on it. It is a good deed for the long term. White colonialists in North America, Europe, New Zealand, Australia, and Israel, among other places, should benefit from this lesson in humility. Racism and white supremacy have left their mark on the world. Suppressing the memory of Adolf Hitler will not return six million Jews to Europe. Ignoring the crimes committed by Leopold II of Belgium in the Congo would not repair the millions of lives lost.

Headline2: “No justice for post-9/11 discrimination”

The courts are still hostile to Muslim victims of bigotry, 21 years after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The so-called “war on terror” and public anti-Muslim prejudice in the United States are well-known to the general population. Despite this, few people are aware of the difficulties Muslims have had in obtaining justice in American courts. After 9/11, Muslim plaintiffs confront a near-impossible challenge to have their cases heard by a jury of their peers in post-9/11 America.

Headline3: “The liberal roots of Islamophobia”

Islamophobes on the left are using smiles, jokes, false arguments, forced laughing, and manufactured consent to spread their anti-Muslim sentiments, all while receiving the full support of normally respectable media sources. Protesters have flooded the streets, demonstrating against Trump's allies in the White House's bigoted clique. Maher and Harris are anti-Semitic snake oil salespeople on national television.

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Email: researchsyndicate.vv@gmail.com Website: <http://ibll.com.pk/index.php/ibll/index>**Visual Representation of Muslims in Al Jazeera media outlet**

The narrow racial framing of Muslim identity, deeply embedded in the American imagination and still potent today, not only converges with the rising tide of anti-Muslim animus we now understand and know as Islamophobia, but is indeed an integral part of it. Islamophobia in the United States is, in great part, a racial project, spawned by a master discourse that drove European supremacy and today is powered by popular views and state policy seeking to safeguard its domestic progeny, white supremacy.

American Flag with words of Islamophobia. It is not just that the rise of anti-Muslim animus known as Islamophobia converges with this narrow, racial interpretation of Muslim identity, but that it is an important component of it, according to an Al Jazeera media site.



The narrow racial framing of Muslim identity, deeply embedded in the American imagination and still potent today, not only converges with the rising tide of anti-Muslim animus we now understand and know as Islamophobia – but indeed, an integral part of it. Islamophobia in the United States is, in significant part, a racial project, spawned master discourse that drove

European supremacy is today powered by popular views and state policy seeking to safeguard its domestic progeny, white supremacy.

Girl with Hijab: Al Jazeera “Why is a Black lady on the book cover? “American Islamophobia: Understanding the Roots and Rise of Fear” (Liu, 2021). It's showing a discrepancy in the way non-Muslims and even other Muslim groups perceive Muslims.

Dawn media outlet**Islamophobia and the Counter-Narrative by Pakistani Media**

Islamophobia can take a variety of forms, including subtle attempts to prevent Muslims from accessing services such as employment, housing, and education. State-sanctioned attacks and pogroms against the Muslim community can also occur.

Especially in light of global hate crimes and state-sanctioned racism towards Muslims, the UN's decision to proclaim March 15 as International Day to Combat Islamophobia is to be applauded. After Pakistan introduced a resolution, the UN General Assembly accepted the decision.

Despite the reduction in distance and the convergence of cultures that has occurred as a result of globalisation, virulent ideologies nevertheless exist. Despite the fact that we live in an apparently modern world, ancient tribal prejudices continue to pervade our society. Many people have been affected by Islamophobia, when Muslims are stigmatised and alienated

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because of their beliefs or because of the violent activities of a few misguided groups and individuals who claim to be Muslims. Racist and fascist ideas that threaten minorities necessitate a worldwide response. Foreigners and people who are labelled as “others” are frequently used as scapegoats for society's troubles, with the fault being placed squarely on their shoulders.

Headlines of the Dawn media outlet

Headline1: “Malaysia’s Mahathir says Muslims have ‘right to kill millions of French people’ if eye-for-eye logic is applied”

Even though Islam is described as a peaceful faith, the title implies that Muslims have the right to kill non-Muslims who have murdered because of their religion, “if eye-for-eye reasoning is employed.”

Headline2: “Muslims targeted”

There has been a rise in far-right movements around the world, which blame ethnic and religious “others” for the ills of society. In certain countries, groups once labelled extremists are now wielding authority, making it difficult for minorities to exist. Islamophobia, the hatred of Muslims as a group, is one of the most pervasive forms of xenophobia today.

Visual Representation of Dawn Media outlet

According to the Dawn newspaper, anti-Islamic graffiti was written on the walls of a building near



London's North Brixton Islamic Cultural Centre, thus, Muslims' places of worship are not safe in Europe. Mosque Painted: Dawn

Conclusion

News platforms often exacerbate this issue by sensationalizing isolated incidents in Muslim societies, selectively reporting events, and conflating extremism with mainstream Islamic teachings. Islam is frequently framed as a violent political ideology, with Sharia law misrepresented as inherently punitive and oppressive. Such portrayals ignore the religion’s core principles of peace and justice. Muslim women, in particular, are often depicted as oppressed and voiceless, stripped of agency and dignity. Muslims as a whole are cast as a monolithic “other,” distinct and threatening, fostering an artificial divide between “us” and “them.” This narrative reinforces stereotypes and fuels perceptions of Muslims as security risks, especially amid heightened national security discourse. A critical examination reveals that Western media often distorts the image of Islam and Muslims, emphasizing negative stereotypes while overlooking the faith’s diversity and complexity. With over 1.2 billion



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adherents worldwide, Muslims encompass a vast range of cultures, traditions, and interpretations—far from the homogeneous, menacing group often portrayed. To counter biased media narratives, audiences must cultivate media literacy, approach coverage with scepticism, and recognise the role of racist rhetoric in shaping perceptions. Understanding how stereotypes are propagated is essential to fostering a more nuanced and fair representation of Islam and its followers.

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