Representation of Islam through Western Media and Its Impact on Contemporary World

Dr. Muhammad Tahir Mustafa[1], Dr. Ihsan ur Rehman Ghauri[2], Saima Mushtaq[3]

Abstract

World has seen the power full effects of media in the world. Today media is touching every aspect of our life. Today western media is considered as fulfilling the agendas of the "western world". West, with little understanding of Islamic history, values social system and core of social system has identified a new enemy, "radical Islam", a stereotype common to Western thought, portraying Muslims as fundamentalists and terrorists. The relationship of Islam and violence is a common false impression that the western community has developed about Islam. Western community gets their information from media, so media is presenting a dark side of Muslims around the world.

Keywords: Islam, violence, western community, fundamentalists, terrorists

[1] Chairman ITC Department, UMT Lahore, Pakistan
[2] Institute of Islamic Studies, The University of Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan
[3] Assistant Professor H. Ayesha Degree College, Lahore and Ph.D. Scholar UMT, Lahore, Pakistan

Introduction

The Western media's deplorable presentations of Islam is due to Western enmity with Islam. There is an absence of developed news agencies in Muslim countries and biased reporting by the Western reporters. Now Islam is considered as an Issue in the world not a religion of Peace and harmony.

Objective:

1-To expose the prejudice of western media against Muslims

2-To find out the western media war against Islamic and the Muslims.

3-To highlight how media is presenting Muslims in the world.

Statement of the problem:

Islam is a religion of peace and prosperity. After 9/11 Muslims around the world are facing the challenge of media trial. Social media as well, electronic and printed media is under the spell of s prejudice media developers are trying to present Islam as a religion of terrorist and extremist. Current study tries to investigate the influences of media in contemporary world. How the media is trying to brainwash western people about Islam and trying to present the dark side of Islam in 21th century. Western media is trying to highlight prominent features of Islamic society such as Vail(**Hejab)**, Polygamy, Physical outlook and language. Western Media is trying to present these Islamic values as negative aspect of a Muslim society. So these values and rules are presented as symbol of terrorist, and extremism in videos, Newspapers and on social media.

Literature review

Alghamdi(2015)investigated in his study that Electronic media certainly have a deep influence on people's reaction about world events. Media is being used as double face at all levels. Media is influencing lives, culture, social and personal life of everyone in the world. Western media is developing a negative picture of Islam in western countries. The use of CDA(Critical Discourse Analyses)of mass media is also creating problems for Muslims at all levels. Ridouani (2011) investigated in his work that roots of Muslim and west are not new,their clashes are from the life of Muhammad. So western media is not presenting Islam clearly .Western media is presenting Islam's negative picture to the world. Basic elements of Islam like Jahad (Holy War),Dressing of ladies (veiling) is a real cause of conflict among Arab and the western world. Ameli(2007)finds out in his study the Condition of Muslims in London in 2005 .BBC and other media agencies started to present Muslims as terrorist. Akbarzadeh(2005)showed the results of his study about Islam as phobia which is increasing in the UK.The term Islam phobia has gained growing attractiveness in the United Kingdom, where Islam is the fastest growing religion.

(Poole 2002) presented in his study that People are taking more interest in Islam. There will be a positive development, but if the knowledge that is fashioned only reinforce an Orientals

perception then this will be a chance to lost. Shuriye(2013) has recently made study that the usage of internet worldwide has led to the attractiveness of social network sites. Facebook, Twitters and YouTube are the common websites that have shaped helpful relationships among human. The increasing interest in this means of communication technology has vital impacts on the social, economic and political system of world affairs. Today Islam and Western worldviews are being challenged by these means of information technology.

Methodology:

The current study shows the Media Presentation of muslims in videos,Newspapers,Magzines, and in Sosial Media. Data is collected with the help of newspapers, Books, Research Articles T.V , Internet, social media (Twitter,Facebook,Whatsup,) and investigated that western media is using all media channels printed, and social media to prove that Islam and its followers are involve in terrorist activities.

Said (1996) investigated the images and discourses relating to Islam and Muslims in typical Western media trends in a negative way.

(Ahmed, 1992) discovered in his research that the western media largely seen by Muslims as a pessimistic influence spreading at all levels. This view is perhaps is very clear at all levels. The traditional stereotypes of Muslims as political anarchists and tyrants at home subjugating their women have been dispersed in the media as cartoon strips and stereotypes. Very often the news that is shown about Muslims centers around harmful events and situations.

Nahdi (2003) discuss in his study about the Western news agenda dominated by hostile, careless coverage of Islam that descries reality and destroys trust amongst the Muslim readership and masses.

Image of Islam and Islamic World by United States Mass Media

The confrontation between Islam and the West is not a new phenomenon. The history bears witness to the fact that the conflicts and military confrontation between west and Islam dates back to the time of Prophet Muhammad in the seventh century and run through the Byzantine empire, the crusades, the Spanish re-conquered, the fall of Constantinople, the eras of colonial and national independence, cold war era, post-cold war era and above all, after the incident of 9/11 (Greg, 2000).

After 9/11 the terms "Muslim" and "Terrorist" became identical in many western countries. The elite media in the United States including the newspapers: New York Times and Washington Post; the magazines: like Time and Newsweek, electronic media including: ABC, CBS, NBC & CNN have been emphasizing Islamic world in negative and disapproving manner. America mainstream elite media like New York Times, Washington Post, Newsweek, Time Magazine, CNN, CBS and NBC have been distorting the image of Islamic world Such words and phrases have been applied or associated with Islamic world. For example "Islamic militant from Pakistan", "Pakistan backed Muslim rebels", "Islamic terrorist training camp", "Islamic fundamentalist theme", rogue state "Taliban are the pawn of Pakistan Intelligence Agencies", "Pakistan maintained links with terrorists in the region", "Libya supports

terrorists", "Iranian or Palestinian terrorist groups", "Pan Arab fanaticism", "Libya's terrorism", "Militant Muslims" have been used for American enemies Islamic countries. Similarly positive and favorable words and phrases have also used for US friendly countries like Jordan, Turkey, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Videos: Hollywood's anti-Arab and anti-Muslim misinformation

Most of these videos shows Muslims as terrorist, uncivilized and a threat for the whole world .The Wind and the Lion" (1975); "Under Siege" (1986); "Wanted: dead or alive" (1987); "True Lies" (1994); "Homeland" (2011-2013); "World War Z" (2013); "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" (2014); and "American Sniper" (2014), are all examples of films and TV programmes which contribute, directly or indirectly, to the constant vilification of Arabs and Muslims in the mainstream media. (**Noura Mansour**)

 Hejab: An essential Part in Islam

First let's take a look at what Islam states as the dress that the Muslim woman should wear. In Islam a woman must wear a dress which satisfies certain conditions the most important of which   are:
1.   It   should   cover   the   whole   body   except   the   face   and   hands.
2. It should not be tight to show people looking at her the details of her body.
3. It should not be transparent.

Allah Almighty says: "O Prophet! Tell thy wives and thy daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks close round them (when they go abroad). That will be better, so that they may be recognized and not annoyed. Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful." (Al-Ahzab: 59)

A common misconception is that Muslim women are the only ones who cover their hair. It may be true that Islam is the only religion in which most women follow its directives to cover the hair, but it is **not** the only religion to have such directives.

It is particularly interesting to look at the case of Christianity, since Christianity is the chief religion in the West, and it is Westerners, including observant Christians, who are often the first to criticize Islam because of the hijab (modest dress, including headcovering).

First Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 11. (verses 3-10.)

Praying with an uncovered head is a disgrace. Having a shaved head is the same as praying with an uncovered head. Therefore, having a shaved head is a disgrace.

Blasphemy in Islam and in Christianity

While browsing major websites, forums, blasphemy literature and discussion threads online, we realize that not only Non-Muslims but some Muslims too are indulging themselves in a very serious sin or act of blasphemy or hate words against any religion whose repercussions don't stop at an individual or an organization but go onto whole humanity. Looking at this subject's importance we should explore it further and find the answers that pacify our questioning souls.

The punishment for blasphemy in most of the major religions is death. It is stated in the Old Testament of the Bible, which is the authority for both the Jews and the Christians:

"And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: (Book of Leviticus 24:16)

In the religious book of Manusmriti, the Law book of the Hindus, it written:

"If a man born of a lower class intentionally bothers a priest, the king should punish him physically with various forms of corporal and capital punishment that make men shudder." (Manusmriti9:248)

Regarding the punishment for blasphemy in Islam, it is mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an:

"The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger, and strive with might for mischief through the land is: execution, or crucifixion, or the cutting off of hands and feet from opposite sides, or exile from the land: that is their disgrace in this world, and a heavy punishment is theirs in the Hereafter." (Surah Al-Maidah 5:33).

Hence, it is only Islam that gives 3 different options for blasphemy punishment in addition to death.

Strategies for the Improvement of the Image of Islam and Muslim

In spite of all the negative propaganda against Islam, ironically Islam still happens to be the fastest growing religion, not just in the west but also across the world.

Replies via the Media

The first way is to reply via the media i.e. using the same tool, which is often used against us. Replies can be in the form of letters, articles, pamphlets and books, which can be sent to newspapers and magazines and posted on the Internet. Appearances on satellite TV channels

and giving public lectures in order to present the correct picture of Islam are also another possible way. Common non-Muslims throughout the world have become victims of a section of the media and its propaganda.

Diplomatic Complaints

There can be peaceful demonstrations or protests in the form of a congregation. A large number of Muslims can march to parliament house and protest against what has happened. Muslims can also give a letter to the embassy of that particular country and request the Prime Minister to take action against the offender.

Particle a Legitimate Suit

We can even take legal action against the defamer in his country or file a case in the International Court of Law if the nation where the act has taken place is condoning the act. We can sue the offenders by pulling them to court, which is one of the good ways of preventing such things from occurring in the future.

Financial Stoppage

The fourth strategy is to put an economic stoppage, a very effective weapon aimed at weakening the economy of any country. Muslim countries can get together and apply economic or business pressure against that country if it continues to publish defamatory things. It is advisable to boycott certain goods if we know that boycotting products of that country can create a huge effect on the country's economy. During the gulf war, a few countries in the Middle East boycotted American products and caused a big loss to the U.S. If a section of the western media has "freedom of expression" then we Muslims too have the freedom to use or abstain from using a product. Say for example if the western countries wish not to procure oil from the Muslim world, it is their choice for which we cannot compel them. Similarly, if the Muslims do not want to buy products from a particular country, it is illogical for anyone to have any objections to their decision.

Political Pressure

This takes place on a higher level between political authorities of countries. The leaders of different Muslim nations can apply pressure on a political level. The Muslim governments can withdraw their representatives from that country and close its embassies as part of a political boycott, if they refuse to give a public confession and do not stop insulting the Prophet (PBUH).

Reasonable Strength

The sixth strategy is to carry out protests using a limited amount of potency. As far as the first five strategies are concerned, no Muslim or non-Muslim can have any objections. If there is freedom of speech then we Muslims also have the liberty to reply in the media, to participate in peaceful demonstrations, or take legal action seeking punishment or compensation. We can even refuse things or apply political pressure since it's a matter of special choice.

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