

## PORTRAYAL OF ISLAM IN WESTERN MEDIA AFTER THE ADVENT OF ISIS ANALYZING THE EDITORIALS OF MAINSTREAM US PRESS

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### ABSTRACT

*Islam and the West has become the theme of various academic conferences and research symposiums all over the world due to increasing wave of conflicts and clashes between east and the west and between orient and the oxidant. The conflict and clashes between Islam and the west is not new phenomena but it has centuries old history of attacks and counter attacks, conquests and re-conquests, jihads and crusades. But after cold war and more precisely after 9/11 these conflicts are changed into a new information and propaganda warfare. Islam has deliberately been associated with terrorism, radicalism and extremism and Muslims are intentionally portrayed as fundamentalists, extremists and ultimately terrorists under the ghost of Taliban and ISIS linking it with Caliphate concept of Islam. This research aims to investigate as how the western mass media generally and US print media especially portrays Islam and Muslims.*

**Key Words:** *Islam, West, Muslims, Terrorism, ISIS, 9/11, Jihad*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### Islam and the West

Years before 9/11 The New York Times articulated in an editorial “seeing green, the red menace is gone but here's Islam appeared on 21 January 1996 that the end of the cold war sparked a kind of intellectual challenge to fabricate the biggest and most credible new enemy. There was unfair trade, global warming, computer terrorism, drugs and weapons of mass destruction but none of these fabricated enemies caught fire and capture Americans ' hearts and minds. Today Islamic world and Muslim's nations are again under attack of strong media propaganda and violent military aggression. The present onslaught on Islamic values and Muslim culture by the Western media is to safeguard the interests of capitalistic elite is a repetition of the mistakes committed in the past by declaring Communism as a red menace and potential threat. Toeing the same lines, now Islam is being presented as a green menace and a potential danger to the West. The media plays an important role in the society with the ability to influence people's attitude and behavior. Akbarzadeh and Smith (2005) argue that “journalists too are shaped by various social pressures which contribute to their understanding of Islam and the Muslims. Western media is presenting a fabricated image of Islam and Muslims under the global frame of terrorism which is threat to the modern world.

Terrorism is presented in global context which is propping up in religious seminaries in the Muslim countries especially in the Middle East rather than portraying it as regional conflicts and clashes between different nations.

### **Islam in the Western Media**

Therefore, western reports about Islam are subject to many factors that create the misconception about Islam among the western public”. Most western media groups are using terrorist attacks to boost their political and economic interests due to which these media outlets portray Islam as violent and extremist religion and represent Muslims as fundamentalists and terrorists posing a threat to the western world security. The decades long negative portrayal of Islam by mainstream media has led to the emergence of Islamophobia i.e., fear and hatred of Islam in the western society. Muslims in American news as well as the entertainment media, have become synonymous to anti-democratic, anti-freedom, mobilizing violence, extremism, fundamentalism, and terrorism. Western media coverage of conflicts and clashes in the Muslim countries plays a policy role in formulating public opinion against Islamic world to keep permanent military presence in the oil rich regions. Western media content producers and content designers generally incorporate stereotypes and myths about Islam and Muslims such as the wealthy Arabs are buying up America, Muslims are uncivilized, women slavers and sex-crazy. Muslims are extremists and terrorists and above all Islam is the enemy of western modernity, democratic freedom and popular culture. In post 9/11 environment, Muslim is the minority group that has met most discrimination, confrontation, and demands from the American society for creating positive image of Muslims. Most of the time when Muslims are presented in the media it is almost exclusively in negative context.

### **Linking Islam with Terrorism**

Fred Halliday has criticized “the portrayal of Muslims as a homogeneous unit and argues against the stereotypes of Muslims and Arabs, by pointing out their contradiction. The Muslim/Arab „other“ is stereotyped as militant and passive all at the same time. He further states the West fails to make any distinction between concepts like Arab, Muslim, or Islamic fundamentalist. Halliday claims fundamentalism has emerged as a symptom of the Otherness of the Islamic world rather than as a problem within it. He disagrees with placing Islam as a threatening monolithic force against the West and claims the term Muslim has become synonymous with fundamentalism and terrorism in newspapers, films, documentaries and other media outlets”.

### **Islamic Peace Doctrine**

Muslims who live their life according to teaching of Islam and have beard as per Sunnah of Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are represented as fundamentalists and extremists. Although fundamentalism is not an Arabic word but an American word which was used for Protestants who take the doctrine of the Bible exactly as it was but journalists in the western media outlets portrays Muslims as fundamentalists rather than Christians. The term fundamentalist is a term that is mostly misinterpreted by the mainstream media. In fact, a fundamentalist only represents a normal Muslim who follows his or her religion original doctrine. Fundamentalism “is an attitude, an effort, or a movement that an ideology or religion tries to promote in its fundamental beliefs. The fundamental belief of a Muslim is to believe in only one God and the Prophet Mohammed is His messenger (PBUH), pray five times a day, fast the month of Ramadan, give alms to the poor and make a pilgrimage to Makkah and Madina”. This means that all Muslims are fundamentalists if they believe in their own religion’s fundamentals or five pillars of Islam.

## Islamophobia

Edward W. Said, Former professor at Colombia University, stated in his famous book *Orientalism* that “America needed a new global enemy after the Cold War. At this time cultural, political, and educational and media outlets were ready to put the enemy focus on Arabs and Muslims. In the 1970s and 1980s, Muslims and Arabs faced increased hardship in US due to the negative media coverage of the Six-Day War, which depicted Arabs and Muslims as evil”. Later in 1991, “the first Gulf War provoked an ugly wave of anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiments in America. Later in 1991, the first Gulf War provoked an ugly wave of anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiments in America. In 1995, The New York Times described the rise of militant Islam as a threat to world peace and security, similar to what had been warned about Nazism and Fascism in the 1930’s and Communism in the 1950’s. As various Islamic movements like the Muslim Brotherhood gained support across the entire Islamic world stretch from North Africa to South East Asia, the region’s established governments and America became more aware of the Islamic threat”. John Esposito, “Professor of International Affairs and Islamic Studies at Georgetown University, claims in his article that “the fear of Islamic fundamentalism and the growing Muslim population resembles the former fear of Communism and the domino effect. He argues that Muslims continue to surface as the threatening cultural others and the fear of the green menace (i.e., green being the color of Islam) may well replace that of the red menace of world communism”.

## Rationale of Study

Various types of media outlets like television, radio, and cinema would be interesting as primary sources of research, but researcher chose newspapers due to significance of the research, data accessibility and resources availability. It is important to remember that major newspapers these days are somewhat moderate in tone as a result of market competition, the pressure to increase profits and to reach more readers. Therefore, one liberal, The New York Times and one conservative, The Washington Post newspaper are selected to give a more balanced view of the research study. The New York Times was founded on 18 September 1851, by a journalist and politician Henry Jarvis Raymond and a former banker George Jones as the New-York Daily Times. The paper changed its name to The New York Times in 1857. The Washington Post is one of the elite newspapers of the United States. It is often written as The Post. It was founded on December 6, 1877 and is the most widely circulated newspaper published in Washington. The Washington Post being a conservative policy has a liberal bias in reporting but they are typically well sourced to credible information. The time period selected for this study spans from 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2012 to 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2017 due to the reason that in mid-2012 intelligence agencies reported that an al-Qaida off shoot Daesh in Iraq is going to emerge with the mission to establish an Islamic State or Caliphate run by a Calipha as per Sharia Laws. In June-2017 British newspaper The Independent reported that ISIS leader and self-claimed Islamic Calipha Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi has been killed in Russian air strike in Raqqa which was confirmed by the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. So the period selected for this study may considered as significant years in the context of rise and fall of the ISIS.

## Statement of the Problem

History bears witness of the fact that American public has been continuously exposed to a negative portrayal of Islam but more precisely after the Gulf War and World Trade Center attack of 1993 and 9/11, we have seen many more Muslims in newspapers and on television, framed in the context of Islamic militancy and Jihadism due to which religious discrimination and Islamophobia seems increasing in the western societies. A significant amount of research

work has been conducted on this prejudicial portrayal of Islam in western media.

### **Research Questions**

- i. How the Western media generally portray Islam?
- ii. What is the extent of editorial coverage of US press about Islam and Muslims?
- iii. What are the dominant themes integrated in mainstream US media about Islam?
- iv. What are the prominent frames used by the US Press while covering Islam?
- v. Whether the western media portrayal of Islam is causing Islamophobia in the West?
- vi. What is the tendency of both the leading newspapers while portraying Islam and Muslims?
- vii. Do The New York Times and The Washington Post differ in their editorial treatment about Islam?

### **Hypothesis**

- H.1 Western media generally portray Islam as a religion of violence and extremism.
- H.2 Mainstream media treatment of Islam is a big reason for increasing Islamophobia in the West.
- H.3 The tendency of US press while portraying Islam is predominantly negative.
- H.4 The Washington Post remains more negative than The New York Times towards Islam

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Definition of terrorism is beyond the limits of this research and far from the space available for this study but in order to understand the nexus between media, Islam and terrorism a firm grip on the term and its historical back ground is necessary for its application on this research study. Since 9/11, Terror and horror is the dominating frame which was implanted to create consensus and to justify American-led war in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and anywhere else on this globe under the pretext of Global War against Terrorism. It is still a dominant and central policy nexus around which US design its foreign policy as well as homeland security. Terrorism is being used as master frame associated and interlinked with meta-frames or sub frames for obtaining desired impact on the public opinion. Daesh has its roots in a so-called militant group Jamaat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad that was raised up in 2000 by a Jordanian criminal-turned-Islamist named Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Zarqawi claimed that he was influenced by Abdullah Azzam, the Palestinian Islamic scholar who motivated Muslims to fight with the Afghan Mujahidin against the Soviet Union. After Zarqawi's death Abu Bakar al-Baghdadi owned the Zarqawi mission not only to reconstruct strength in Iraq but to expand Zarqawi's mission to neighboring Syria. Al Qaida in Iraq created as a shield organization under the name "Islamic State in Iraq" which was gradually destabilized by the US troops. A council of Sunni Muslims Sahwa (Awakening) has been created in Iraq to counter the hostilities of Al Qaida in Iraq. Islamic State in Iraq created the Al-Nusra Front who joined the militants fighting against President Bashar Al-Assad in Syria. In April 2013 Baghdadi declared the unification of his forces in Iraq and Syria and the establishment of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. In the middle of 2014, Baghdadi make a declaration that we have occupied entire regions of Syria and captured major cities in Iraq and today we have placed the foundation of "Islamic State" and the beginning of an "Islamic Caliphate". In the announcement Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi declared the establishment of an "Islamic State or Islamic Caliphate" a state governed by a Caliph as a God's deputy on earth in accordance with Islamic law or Sharia and Muslims all around the world are invited to pledge allegiance to the Caliph Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi.

### **Agenda Setting Theory**

Agenda Setting is a process by which the mass media controls, what we think and how we

behave in the society. Walter Lippmann, first observed this function, in the 1920. Lippmann pointed out that the media dominates over the creation of pictures in our minds, he believed that the public reacts not to actual events but according to the pictures created in their minds by the mass media. Therefore, the agenda setting theory is used to redesign all the events occurring in our environment. American Political Scientist Entman (1993) defined framing as “selecting some aspects of a reality and making it more prominent in a media discourse in such a way as to promote a particular issue/agenda defining its causal interpretation, moral evaluation or the treatment recommendation. Everyone is exposed, to some extent by the content of the mass media. Maxwell McCombs asserts that the agenda setting theory deals with how these worldviews of journalism substantially influence the pictures of the world held by the public. Priming reflects how what is considered important in media, often becomes highly importance by the public is called framing. Priming declares that news media exposure causes the activation of related knowledge, which is more likely to be retrieved and used in later judgments because it is more accessible in memory and comes to mind spontaneously and effortlessly. Logically, it would signify that the more something is mentioned in the written media, e.g. a certain term, the more it is used in this sense by those who have been exposed to it”.

### 3. CODING CATEGORIES

A computer research tool LexisNexis is utilized to retrieve relevant editorials about Islam and Muslims from both US newspapers The New York Times and The Washington Post. This research study is conducted by analyzing the complete editorial story and determining whether and what kind of themes and frames has been utilized while editorializing Islam and Muslims. The retrieved editorials of both the newspapers are then subjected to a textual analysis to explore the latent meaning behind the words and hidden themes between the lines. A textual analysis is a commonly used to analyze the newspaper’s content; articles and texts. Editorials are categorized as positive, negative or neutral using sentiment analysis. The peak of any content analysis is the categorization of any communication contents. Through the construction of categories and then interlinking them, the collection of data and interpretation of research question becomes possible.

- I. **Terrorism:** the systematic and strategic use of violence and brutalities to create a general atmosphere of fear and terror in the public to bring about particular political or economic objectives. Terrorism has been practiced by some groups with both rightist and leftist objectives, by nationalistic and religious groups, by revolutionaries and even by state institutions such as armies, intelligence services and police. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/terrorism>
- II. **Muslims:** Persons who follows the religion of Islam. It sounds similar to the word Islam. This is because both of the words come from the same root s-l-m which means peace. A Muslim is someone who practices Islam. <https://ing.org/>
- III. **ISIS: Islamic State in Iraq and Syria:** Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Arabic abbreviation Dā‘ash or Daesh, also called Islamic State in Iraq and Syria a transnational Sunni militant group operating primarily in western Iraq and eastern Syria. First appearing under the name ISIL in April 2013. <https://www.britannica.com>
- IV. **Islam:** Islam is a major world religion promulgated by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH in Arabia in the 7th century. The Arabic term Islam, literally means “surrender” illuminates the fundamental idea of Islam is that the believer called a Muslim accepts or surrender to the will of Allah Almighty. <https://www.britannica.com>

#### Operationalization of Categories

The process of operationalization involves “compiling a list of real characteristics represented



by the concept for the purpose of measurement with the construction of measuring instrument scale or questionnaire. Items are categorized as indicators of the list of denoted characteristics and are operationalized as under positive, negative and neutral towards the topic of research”.

#### Episodic Frame

The episodic frame focuses on isolated events or individual actions without contextual elaboration. In this study Terrorism, Muslims, ISIS and Islam are the episodic frames.

#### Thematic Frame

The thematic frame considers events in a broader context and compares them with other events, persons or groups.

#### Associative Frame

Associative frames are the conceptual networking or associating themes with each other in support of opinion cultivated.

### 4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Table 1. *How the Western media generally portray Islam?*

Portrayal of Islam	NYT	WP	P-value
Terrorism	563	524	0.249 <sup>NS</sup>
Extremism	303	169	0.000**
Threat	219	187	0.124 <sup>NS</sup>
Militancy	121	80	0.005**
Jihad	32	92	0.000**

According to the table 1 western media generally and US newspapers especially portray Islam as an element of inciting terrorism and violence and Muslims as extremist and militant groups always remains busy in militant activities and became a threat for the modern world. Figure 1 show that western media generally and both selected newspapers especially associated Islam 47% with terrorism, 21% with extremism, 18% with threat and danger to the western world, 9% with militancy and 5% with Jihad. As per comparative treatment of both the newspapers The New York Time frame editorial stories 45.5% about terrorism, 24.5% about extremism, 17.7% about a threat to the western world, 9.8% about militancy and 2.6% about Jihad whereas The Washington Post frame editorial stories 49.8% about terrorism, 16.1% about extremism, 17.8% about a threat to the western world, 7.6% about militancy and 8.7% about Jihad.

Table 2. *What are the dominant themes integrated in mainstream US media about Islam?*

Dominant Themes	NYT	WP	P-value
Terrorism	972	871	0.020*
Islamic State	799	375	0.000**
Al-Qaida	116	175	0.001**
Sunni	155	127	0.108 <sup>NS</sup>
Brotherhood	80	109	0.041*
Taliban	41	85	0.000**
Caliphate	18	9	0.122 <sup>NS</sup>

*Chi-square value = 151.01\*\*, P-value = 0.000, \*\* = Highly significant (P<0.01)*

Table 2 shows that during the period of this study mainstream western media generally and both selected newspapers especially integrated terrorism as a dominant theme with ration 47%, Islamic State 30%, Al-Qaida 7%, Sunni 7%, Brotherhood 5%, Taliban 3%, and Caliphate 1%. While on the other hand The New York Time frame Islam under the theme of terrorism with ratio 45%, Islamic State 36%, Al-Qaida 6%, Sunni 7%, Brotherhood 6%, Taliban 2%, and Caliphate 1% as compared to The Washington Post terrorism with ratio 50%, Islamic State 21%, Al-Qaida 10%, Sunni 7%, Brotherhood 6%, Taliban 5%, and

Caliphate 1% which shows that The Washington Post remains more conservative in its treatment of Islam and Muslims.

Table 3. *What are the prominent frames incorporated by the US Press while covering Islam?*

Episodic Frame	Thematic Frame	Associated Frame
	Terror	Bombing, Murder Hostage
Terrorism	Attack	SEPT. 11, 9/1, Threat,
	War	War, Fight, Fear
	Fight	Killing, Ban,
	Extremists	Undemocratic, Hardliners, Uncivilized
Muslim	Terrorists	Fighters, Jihadist, Shiite
	Fundamentalists	Women Slaver, Sex-Crazy,
	Militant	Sunni, Kurd/Kurdish,
	Islamic State	Islamic World, ISIS.ISIL
ISIS	Caliphate	Calipha, Jihad
	Muslim world	Beheading, abusing, Killing,
	Sharaia Law	Islamic World, Holy war
	Terrorism	Violence, Radical,
Islamic	Jihadism	Wahabism, Islamophobia
	Extremism	Extremism, Cancer, Haven
	Militancy	Menace, Danger

Table 3 Shows that western media covered issues related to Islam and Muslims under four main or episodic frames as terrorism, Muslims, ISIS, and Islamic giving them the historic theme under thematic frame. Western media dominantly frame Islam under episodic or main frame of terrorism with sub frames of terror, attack, war and fight with associative or metal frames of bombing, murder, hostage, Sept. 11, 9/11, threat, war, fight, fear, killing and ban. Secondly western media frames Muslims under the theme of extremists, terrorists, fundamentalists and militants presenting them as undemocratic, hardliners, uncivilized, fighters, jihadist, Shiite, women slaver and sex-crazy.

Table: 4. Whether the western media portrayal of Islam is causing Islamophobia in the West

Propagating Islamophobia	NYT	WP	P-Value
ISIS	405	40	0.000**
Extremism	221	139	0.000**
Threat	219	187	0.124 <sup>NS</sup>
Militant	121	80	0.005**
AL QAEDA,	116	175	0.001**
Danger	86	87	1.000 <sup>NS</sup>
Problem	79	58	0.087 <sup>NS</sup>
Taliban	41	85	0.000**

Chi-square value = 321.61\*\*, P-value = 0.000, \*\* = Highly significant (P<0.01)

Table 8 shows that mainstream western media generally and US press especially links Islam with criminal activities and heinous designs of ISIS 21%, threat 19%, Extremism 17%, comparative grounds The New York Time frame ISIS 31%, threat 17%, Extremism 17%, Militant 9%, Al Qaeda 9%, Danger 7%, Problem 6% and Taliban 3% as compared to The Washington Post ISIS 4%, threat 16%, Extremism 16%, Militant 9%, Al Qaeda 21%, Danger 10%, Problem 7% and Taliban 10% which shows that The Washington Post remains more conservative in its treatment of Islam and Muslims.

Table. 5. Nature of US Press towards Islam

Name of Newspaper	Trend			%age		
	Pos	Neg	Neu	Pos	Neg	Neu
The New York Times	10	201	05	4.6%	93.1%	2.3%
The Washington Post	11	226	04	4.6%	93.8%	1.7%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>93.4%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>

Chi-square value = 0.256<sup>NS</sup>, P-value = 0.880, NS = Non-significant (P>0.05)

Table 5 shows that western media generally and US print media especially remains negative towards their treatment of Islam and Muslims. According to the statistical analysis most of the editorial stories of both the selected newspapers on Islam and Muslims are predominantly negative. Both the selected newspapers remain 93.4% negative, 4.6% positive and 2% neutral i.e., The New York Times remains 93.1% negative, 4.6% positive and 2.3% neutral and The Washington Post remains 93.1% negative 4.6% positive and 1.7% neutral towards Islam and Muslims where The Washington Post remains comparatively more negative than The New York Times. The analysis of the data thus, accepts the research hypothesis that western media treat their editorial stories about Islam and Muslims in negative tone rather than being neutral or positive.

### H.1 Western media generally portray Islam as a religion of violence and extremism.

American media has produced a significant amount of coverage on Islam and Muslims especially the Middle East and South Asia, over the past two decades. Events such as the Rushdie Affair, the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Muhammad cartoons controversy, and terrorist episodes in the Middle East have increased the media coverage on Islam and Muslims. Many of these news stories present the western media consumers with a variety of stereotypes, from the Muslim terrorist and martyr to the victimized veiled woman and religious fanatic.

### H.2 US media predominantly cover conflicting issues of the Islamic World.

The New York Times in an editorial The Palm Sunday Attack in Egypt articulated that there is in every case increasingly the experts can do to counteract dread assaults: try to comprehend what drives young men and women to grasp demise and murder and particularly radical Islamism; capture the psychological militants before they burst. *But preventing all*



*further attacks seems fantasy given the conflicts and passions in the Middle East in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, Afghanistan and elsewhere that will continue to breed radicals”.*

War against terrorism is the axis of Washington’s foreign policy because American supremacy is in dominating the conflicting regions and its economy is revolves around the weapon exports.

### **H.3 Mainstream media treatment of Islam is a big reason for increasing Islamophobia in the West.**

America after 16 years of un-ended war in Afghanistan is not in a position to withdraw his troops from the regions and public sentiment is also increasing against spending billions on the war and losing thousands of lives in this war which is still seems to be un-ended.

### **H.4 The tendency of US press while portraying Islam is predominantly negative.**

After decades long campaign of the western media, Taliban are becoming the symbol of Muslims and evil doings of ISIS are considered the results of teachings of Islam. Barbarism and atrocities of so-called Islamic revivalists are become the picture of a true Islamic state which is defaming the historic concept of welfare Islamic State of Madina. All these images are constructed by western media mongers to establish that America and democracy is under attack and is a victim of terrorism having roots in Islam and Muslims. Nothing is Islamic in this so-called “Islamic State” and no one in this group of sadistic killers is struggling to establish real Islamic State but a group of criminals and killers fighting for their heinous desires and hidden agendas.

According to the data, most of the editorial stories by both the newspapers were found strategically associating criminal and terrorist activities with Islam and Muslims and their heinous designs are deliberately portrayed as an effort to create Islamic State or Islamic Caliphate. How 19 sadistic hijackers of 9/11 can be the representative of billions of Muslims living with pure peace and harmony with other religions and different creeds. How a group of throat cutters of Daesh and sex slaves of Boko-Haram can be the striver and struggler to establish an Islamic State of Madina but it all is well planned and strategically designed discourse to defame Muslims to counter growing Islam all over the globe.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

We have never heard the terms Buddhist terrorist, Christian crazy, Jewish fundamentalist or Hindu extremists from the mainstream western media outlets. There is a question mark on the double standards of mainstream western media, when reporters in Bosnia write about the genocide of Bosnian Muslims why they do not label the executioners as Orthodox Christians. Mainstream media did not refer to Goldstein as a Jewish terrorist When he killed several Palestinian Muslims with heavy machine gun while praying in Hebron's Mosque and when extremist Buddhists have murdered thousands of Rohingya Muslims in Burma, Sri Lanka the killers are never labeled as „Buddhist Terrorists“. When a white woman hit a car on a group of Muslims embracing after Eid Prayer in Newcastle, northeast England leaving six seriously injured including three children, western media never termed her as „Christian Crazy“ but even British police claims that we have not noticed any suspicion of terrorism in the accident. During the last few decades, religion and religious issues have increasingly moved into political and public spheres around the world but instead of using religion as a tool for promoting peace and harmony, it has been employed for political and economic objectives. Confrontational religious issues are creating an environment of intolerance and hatred that leads to conflicts among civilizations. The contemporary debates about the clashes between Islam and the West demand deep comprehension of the norms and values of both the religions and civilizations. In this research study the portryal of Islam in western media after ISIS has been analyzed in the US mainstream press but there are various dimensions and

angles of this topic which can be explored in detail. Future research can be done to have a deeper insight and indepth understanding of the relationship between Islam and terrorism. Nothing is Islamic in the so-called “Islamic State” and no one in this group of sadistic killers is beheading to establish Islamic State and no one is kidnapping girls to create a Muslim world but all these heinous crimes against humanity are designed and scripted to defame Islam and blackening Muslim culture to construct and cultivate the opinion that Islam is a violent religion which promote militancy and Muslims are uncivilized, undemocratic and extremists people which cannot move with the walk of modern times and both are a potential threat to the western world. Muslim experts and Islamic scholars should have to appear as an ambassador of peace and civilization to present a better image of Islam in the world. Effective initiatives must be taken to educate non-Muslims about Islamic doctrine of peace, tolerance and harmony. Islamic scholars should have to counter biased and distorted image of Islam and the Muslims planted by mainstream western media which resulted in increasing Islamophobia in the western society and confrontation between the Western world and Islamic countries.

### **Limitations of Research**

The researcher has conducted the research to have an overview about the portrayal of Islam and to investigate the frames used by the western media while representing Muslims after ISIS. The researcher had to rely upon the facts and figures provided by various online databases and web archives. There are many reservations about the authenticity of the available data and about objectivity of the writers. There are many academics and intellectuals all around the world who are working to explore the 9/11 truth to trace the real backers and sponsors of terrorism on the globe. It is also significant to investigate the terrorist activities in the perspectives of regional conflicts, globalization, corporatocracy and clash of civilization rather than only framing these incidents in the perspective of Islam. But the topic of this research limits the researcher to focus only on the framing model and construction theory which is mostly used while associating the terrorism with Muslims and while constructing Islam as a violent religion. The researcher tried its best to keep his personal religious affiliation aside to make this piece of research work more objective and more neutral. The time duration given to the researcher was limited and the issue was much strategic and broader and even considered as a turning point in the history of mankind. Hence with all its limitations, this research work still contributes to the area of knowledge and provides detailed analysis of American Muslim experience in the western media and ultimately in the western society.

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