

Exploring Dynamism in Response of the Societies of Muslims towards Multiculturalism in Global World

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Abstract:

The present Global world is facing numerous challenges. The emergence of modernism and post-modernism has given the rise of complex social structure in the global world. The emergence of multiculturalism is one such complex social structure. This is also one of the powerful approaches for adjusting the diverse cultures to promote the peace and stability in the world.

Various societies are responding to the challenges of the multiculturalism in own ways to bring peace and security to their nations and the world. The ongoing responses to the multiculturalism should be studied to understand it in the better way. Like other societies, Muslim Society is also responding to multiculturalism. There is a need to study the response of the society of Muslims to understand the challenges of multiculturalism and world peace.

The present paper is about the exploring the dynamism in the response of the Muslim Societies towards the multiculturalism. How the societies of Muslims around the world are seeing the trend of multiculturalism? Is multiculturalism a threat to the Muslim Societies or an opportunity? How the response of multiculturalism can be a threat to the peace of the global world? Is multiculturalism essential for the present day global world? How the Muslim Societies are responding to multiculturalism? Are the responses of the Muslim societies appropriate towards multiculturalism in the present day global world? What the societies of the Muslims around the world should respond? These are the questions which this paper has tried to answer.

Key words: Multiculturalism; Modernity; Dynamism; Radicalism; Globalization; Muslim society; Pub-culture

INTRODUCTION:

The present day global world is characterized by the coming of the numerous communities based on race, culture, religion or particular identity. The time and place have lost the value in the interaction of the communities. A large number of the members of the communities have migrated from one region of the world to another region of the world. These members of the communities have carried with them their own culture to another regions or nations or countries. As a result, there have been emerging many cultures in many countries and nations in the present day global world.

With the passage of time, more and more people with the same background of culture joined the migrated people, resulted in the emergence of multiculturalism. This trend has been emerged in European, American, Australian continents etc. on the large scale due to economic development and more opportunity for better life while less happened in Asian and African continents due to fewer opportunities and economic development. India presents a different scenario on the multicultural front due to her political history. Here, the presence of numerous cultures is the result of geographical region and conquests of India by numerous races.

The increasing trend of migration in the global world has led to the emergence of multiculturalism in many nations of the world. Thus, those societies which have domination of a particular culture due to the presence of a group of people of a particular identity have started to lose the control on the national culture. The problem became more complex when instead of “assimilation” or “melting point” the migrated people have started to not only asserted their own cultural identity but

tried to “promote and dominate”. Such condition created the tension and challenges to the host countries around the world.

For many countries which had been created on the particular identity, it was “existential threat”. In many countries, the culture of migrated people in the global world was so rapid and powerful that host countries had to consider the way and mean to protect the balance of own societies. In many countries there have been tried to adjust the culture of migrated people to enrich the national culture for the peace and security. What to do with the migrated culture? What should be the response of the host culture towards the culture of migrated people? These questions have led the rise of discourse on “Multiculturalism” in the global world.

Multiculturalism can be defined as “a system of beliefs and behaviors that recognizes and respects the presence of all diverse groups in an organization or society, acknowledges and values their socio-cultural differences, and encourages and enables their continued contribution within an inclusive cultural context which empowers all within the organization or society”¹

Multiculturalism is a product of economic, political, religious factors etc. As a political factor ‘multiculturalism’ is the product of imperialism and colonialism. A large number of the population transferred from one region to another region; the culture of one region was transplanted in another region. This can be seen in the conquests of India by numerous groups of people; European colonization of America and mass migration of Jews in Palestine.

As a religious factor, ‘multiculturalism’ is the product of religion where religion has brought a particular culture into existence. The culture of Muslims is different from other religions on the basis of adoption of religious teachings in once own life. The culture of Hindu, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist etc is due to the application of religious teachings in their respective lives.

In present day global world 'multiculturalism' is more economical in nature. A large number of people are migrating from one part of the world to another part of the world. The business operation of Multi-National Corporations (MNCs) has made possible the mixing of the people in the world which has strengthened the rise of 'multiculturalism' in the global world. The trend of 'multiculturalism' has created challenges and opportunities for the nations and people around the world. The seeking of the peace is important discourse for multiculturalism in present day global world.

In the present day global world like other societies, the societies of Muslims are also facing the challenges of 'multiculturalism' worldwide. In this paper, there has been taken the notion of two societies of Muslims. One is that society where Muslims are native and another is the societies of migrated Muslims in the host countries. How both these societies are responding to the 'multiculturalism'? What is the dynamism in their responses? How the responses are important for the world peace and peace of their countries? What should be done to make better responses towards multiculturalism?

The present paper has tried to explore the dynamism in the responses of the societies of Muslims towards multiculturalism in the global world.

SCOPE OF STUDY

The present paper is important to understand the response of the societies of Muslims towards multiculturalism. The population of Muslims in the world as per the PEW Research, 2012 was about 1.6 billion in 2010 and expected to be 2.8 billion in 2050. Muslims are 23.2 percent of the world population. Table-1 gives the number of population of various religions.

Table-1 Size of Major Religious Groups, 2012 2

S.No	Name of the Religion	Percentage to the world Population
1	Christianity	31.5
2	Muslim	23.2
3	Unaffiliated	16.3
4	Hindu	15
5	Buddhist	7.1
6	Folk	5.9
7	Other	0.8
8	Jewish	0.2

Source: PEW Research Centre

What would be the population of religious groups from 2010 to 2050 in the world? The Table-2 shows the estimated changes in the size of the Population of the religions of the world. This is important for understanding the dynamism of Muslim responses towards multiculturalism.

Table-2 Estimated Change in Population Size, 2010-2050 3

S.No	Name of the Religion	Estimated Change in Population Size, 2010-2050
1	Muslims	73
2	Christians	35
3	Hindus	34
4	Jews	16
5	Folk Religions	11
6	Unaffiliated	9
7	Other Religions	6
8	Buddhists	-0.3

Source: PEW Research Centre

The Table-2 shows that “Muslims are the only major religious group projected to increase faster than the world’s population as a whole.”⁴ As a result, the structure of the population of the world would be change, which would enhance the power of the Muslims in the world. This would also change the relation of the Muslim with other religious groups.

Where do the Muslims inhabit in the world? The Table-3 shows the regions of Muslims in the world. There are four major regions of the inhabitation of Muslims in the world.

Table-3 Muslims Population in Global World 5

S.N O	Category of Nations	Number of countries and location	Number of Total Population in 2010	Percentage to global Muslim Population in 2010	Number of Total Population in 2030	Percentage to global Muslim Population in 2030
1	Muslim Majority	49 Middle East, South East Asia, South Asia etc	1.2 billion	74	1.7	78
2	Non-Muslim Majority	Developing Countries of sub-Saharan Africa, Asia-Pacific (excluding Australia, Japan and New Zealand), and Central and South America, including the Caribbean	376 million	23	416	19
3	Non-Muslim Majority Developed Countries	it includes all countries in Europe (except Albania and Kosovo, which have Muslim majorities) and North America, plus Australia, New	42 million	2.7	62	2.9

		Zealand and Japan				
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Source: PEW Research Centre

The Table-3 shows that about 78 percent of Muslims are living in Muslim-majority nations; 19 percent is living in non-Muslims majority nations. So, multiculturalism is important for Muslims societies' worldwide. With projected population of 2050, multiculturalism is more important for the Muslims and the world.

The countries of Muslims have the major share of natural resources of the world. Some of the countries are located on highly strategically position of the world. Some of them have control over the flow of the trade and commerce of the world.

Due to globalization and insecurity in Muslim countries, a large number of the Muslims have migrated to another countries which directly or indirectly controlling the economy, polity and cultural trend of the world. The migration of Muslims in many western nations and their settlement has given rise to the parallel culture, different to the national culture. This trend has given rise to militant nationalism in many nations of the west .It has also posed many challenges for the host countries and the migrated Muslims. The peace and security of the world have been threatened in many regions of the world.

The trend of multiculturalism which emerged in many countries of the world to bring the diverse groups in unity for the national development and the world peace has been disturbed. In such condition many scholars have questioned the fate of 'multiculturalism'.

There is no doubt that in many countries like Britain, France, Germany, America ,the challenges have come from the migrated Muslims as they refused to assimilate with the national culture of the host' nations and insisted on the adherence of their own culture which can be called parallel

culture based on Islamic identity or their own culture of national origin.

The tussle between the identity of national culture and the culture of migrated people has further worsened with the conflict on many social and political issues. Why the Muslims insist on keeping their religious and social values by rejecting the values of majority which are dominating the national culture? How the response of Muslims towards the national culture could be strengthened by strengthening the 'multiculturalism'? Is multiculturalism a threat to the national culture of a nation? Is culture of any nation stagnant? Can culture be imposed to bring peace and security in the nation? Can hegemonization of the culture could be successful? This paper has tried to find out the answer of all these questions.

This paper is important to understand the acute challenges facing by the many nations and the peace and security of the world.

QUESTION OF THE STUDY

Numerous questions have been raised to understand the dynamism of the responses of the Muslim societies towards 'multiculturalism'. There are various factors for operating successful 'multiculturalism'. These factors are the political values (like the 'political equality', Democracy, Human Rights, Terrorism, Violence etc.) Social and cultural values (like social equality, dress, food, architecture, festivals, morality, sexuality, pub etc) and economic values (like system of economy, market system, control on natural resources, wealth distribution, employment opportunity etc.)

What are the attitude and belief of the Muslim societies on these factors essential for the successful functioning of 'multiculturalism' in nation or the world? What are the responses of these societies towards multiculturalism? Are their responses positive towards 'multiculturalism'? Are their

responses are negative? What are the possibilities of the success of ‘multiculturalism’ in the societies of Muslim countries and in the societies of host countries where Muslims are migrated and settled in the large numbers? What are the differences in their responses? What are the similarities in their responses towards ‘multiculturalism’?

These are the questions, which this paper has tried to answer to understand the dynamism in responses of the Muslim societies towards multiculturalism.

METHODOLOGY

The present study has adopted the descriptive analytical method to understand the problems. In the study, secondary data have been used. Most of the data have been taken from the Survey conducted by the national and international organizations working in the various fields.

At many places in the paper, data have been used to present a comparative study to understand the problems in better way. So, the various dimensions of multiculturalism could be understood rationally.

DISCUSSION IN DETAIL

In a multi-religious, multi-regional, multi-language and multi-racial global world there is need of strong multiculturalism for the peace and security. Multiculturalism provides an opportunity to all the cultures to develop and prosperous by interacting positively. The globalization has increased the interaction among the various cultural zones on the large scale. There is a need that the interaction among the cultural zones should be smooth. So, the security and the world peace could be preserved.

Islam being the second largest religion of the world, and sizeable presence all over the world has to play an important

role for the promotion of multiculturalism. As a world religion, it is essential for Islam to promote multiculturalism.

There is no doubt that for many centuries, Islam and Muslims were the leading religious, political and cultural power of the world. The countries of Islam have various cultural differences from each other. The binding forces of them are the religion and the common culture that comes into existence by the following of Islam. But for the past many years this bond has been eroding, resulting in the increasing violence in the Islamic countries. The killing and displacement of millions of people in Islamic countries should be taken as a walk up call by the Muslims to understand the power of culture projected through the seed of nationalism.

Another hand there has been an increase in eroding in the better relation between the Muslims and other religious groups. There are many social and cultural issues that worsening the relationship between them. In many cases, the violence has erupted between them. The ongoing tussle in Europe, America and even in India should be taken seriously by the Muslim societies.

The first question is that what are the issues of multiculturalism on which there is a tussle between the societies of Muslims and others? The second question is what are the responses of Muslim Societies on these controversial issues? The third question is what should be done to improve the relation to making multiculturalism successful in the world? The fourth question is what are the perceptions of Muslim societies and other societies towards each other?

For successful multiculturalism, there is a need to agree on the certain basic principles of the modern age. These basic principles are Human Rights, Democracy, Human Equality, Social Justice, Social and cultural values. There are certain elements like terrorism, Organization, Traditions, Festivals, social practices and values, political ambition of the societies etc which hampering in the successful relation between the

societies of Muslims and others. On the question of basic components of multiculturalism, there is need to find the response of Muslim societies to understand the dynamism. What do they think about these basic components of multiculturalism? How they are responding to the basic of multiculturalism?

The Pew research center is an American think tank body based in Washington D.C. This organization provides information on social issues, public opinion, and demographic trends for the world and the USA. The Pew research center has conducted an opinion poll in 39 Muslim countries of the world on various issues related to society, religion, politics, economics and culture. The Table-4 gives the names of the countries and number of the sample for a survey taken by Pew Research on various issues. These issues are related to the peace and security of the world and also the basis of the good relationship between the Muslims and other religious groups.

Table-4 Countries Surveyed in 2011-2012 and Sample Sizes 6

S.No.	Country	Muslims in Sample	Total Sample Size
1	Afghanistan	1,509	1509
2	Albania	788	1,032
3	Azerbaijan	996	1000
4	Bangladesh	1,918	2,196
5	Bosnia-Herzegovina*	1,007	1,605
6	Egypt	1,798	2000
7	Indonesia	1,880	2000
8	Iraq	1,416	1,469
9	Jordan	966	1000
10	Kazakhstan	998	1,469
11	Kosovo	1,266	1,485
12	Kyrgyzstan	1,292	1,500
13	Lebanon	551	979
14	Malaysia	1,244	1,983
15	Morocco	1,472	1,474
16	Niger	946	1,002
17	Pakistan	1,450	1,512
18	Palestinian Territories	994	1,002
19	Russia*	1,050	2,704

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20	Tajikistan	1,453	1,470
21	Thailand^	1,010	1,010
22	Tunisia	1,450	1,454
23	Turkey	1,485	1,501
24	Uzbekistan	965	1000

Source: Pew Research Centre

The survey has been taken in both the Muslim and non-Muslim in Muslim majority countries. The largest sample is 1,918 from Bangladesh and smallest is 551 from Lebanon.

The survey was conducted about the opinion of Muslims on seven issues. These issues were (a) Beliefs About Sharia (b) Religion and Politics (c) Morality (d) Women in Society (e) Relations Among Muslims (f) Interfaith Relations and (g) Religion, Science and Popular Culture. These issues are important for the understanding of the dynamism of responses of the societies of Muslims towards the multiculturalism.

The first element for the success of multiculturalism is the attitude of the people of one culture towards the people of another culture. This includes the attitude towards social, political and moral values of one culture. What is the attitude of Muslims towards the values of other cultures and religions? As per the pew research centre which conducted survey states that “in 34 of the 38 countries where the question was asked, at least half of Muslims believe that Islam is the only true religion that can lead to eternal life in heaven.”⁷ Table –5 shows the percentage of response by the Muslims on faith which can be the basis of the existence of multiculturalism.

Table- 5 Percentage of response on the question of how many faiths leads to Heaven?

Q-55 How Many Faiths Lead to Heaven?	Name of the country	Many Religions	Islam Alone	Q-55 How Many Faiths Lead to Heaven?	Name of the country	Many Religions	Islam Alone
Southern-Eastern Europe							
	Kosovo -	24	59		Bosnia Herz.	36	58

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	Russia	30	52		Albania	25	37
Central Asia							
	Tajikistan	10	84		Turkey	19	74
	Kyrgyzstan	20	69		Uzbekistan	14	66
	Azerbaijan	18	63		Kazakhstan	49	29
Southeast Asia							
	Malaysia	4	93		Indonesia	9	87
	Thailand	11	87				
South Asia							
	Pakistan	3	92		Bangladesh	8	88

Source: pew Research Centre

The response shows the negative opinion about other religions and positive attitude towards own religion. The same can be said by the followers of other religions. This type of question should not be asked. As this type of question belong to the very basic of Islam whose denial would put Muslims out of Islam and as a religious person nobody could answer these questions in negative. This sort of question would serve as a point of conflict between Muslims and other religious people which would weaken the trend of multiculturalism.

Another question that has been asked is about the belief of the people in converting other people which is one of the main reasons of the conflict among the religious communities in the present day. The data collected by pew research on this question has been given in the table-6.

Table-6 Percentage of the Muslims believe in the proselytizing as religious Duty

S.No	Name of the country	Disagree	Agree	S. No	Name of the country	Disagree	Agree
Southern-Eastern Europe							
	Kosovo -	55	26		Bosnia Herz.	59	33
	Russia	51	40		Albania	72	16
Central Asia							
	Tajikistan	27	69		Turkey	58	39
	Kyrgyzstan	50	36		Kazakhstan	77	15
	Azerbaijan	36	42				
South East Asia							
	Malaysia	16	79		Indonesia	65	31
	Thailand	22	74				
South Asia							
	Pakistan	3	92		Bangladesh	26	69

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	Afghanistan	4	96			
Middle East-North Africa						
	Egypt	9	88		Jordan	6 92
	Iraq	20	66		Morocco	14 63
	Palestinian terr.	10	82		Tunisia	25 73
	Lebanon	44	52			
Sub-Saharan Africa*						
	Niger	9	89		Nigeria	7 89
	Djibouti	11	84		Ethiopia	21 78
	Mali	7	89		Ghana	6 92
	Congo DR	6	84		Liberia	5 93
	Tanzania	8	87		Uganda	13 84
	Kenya	13	85		Cameroon	15 84
	Senegal	21	75		Guinea Bissau	13 82
	Chad	11	88			

Source: Pew Research Centre

The response shows that Muslims around the world is not uniform on this issue. The countries of South East Asia, South Asia, Sub-Saharan and the Middle East have the larger number of the people believe in this proposition. As per the PEW Research “In most countries surveyed, at least half of Muslims believe it is their religious duty to try to convert others to the Islamic faith. Only in Indonesia and some countries in Central Asia and Southern and Eastern Europe do a clear majority say Muslims are not obliged to proselytize.”⁸

Without the good relation between two most powerful religious communities of the world, there is no question of the success of multiculturalism in the world. And what they think about each other? The data have been collected from the countries given in the Table – 7.

Table-7 Hostility between the Muslims and Christianity

	Name of the country	Christians hostile toward Muslims	Muslims hostile toward Christian		Name of the country	Christians hostile toward Muslims	Muslims hostile toward Christian
Southern-Eastern Europe							
	Kosovo -	6	4		Bosnia Herz.	31	14
	Russia	20	13		Albania	2	4
Central Asia							

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	Kyrgyzstan	8	9		Kazakhstan	6	6
Southeast Asia							
	Malaysia	20	13		Indonesia	21	16
	Thailand	12	09				
South Asia							
Afghanistan							
Middle East-North Africa							
	Egypt	50	35		Lebanon	27	27
Sub-Saharan Africa*							
	Nigeria	16	11				
	Djibouti	25	23		Ethiopia	17	14
	Mali	10	21		Ghana	28	26
	Congo DR	37	18		Liberia	23	18
	Tanzania	28	23		Uganda	20	16
	Kenya	21	10		Chad	34	38
	Senegal	13	16		Guinea Bissau	41	49

Source: PEW Research Centre

In most cases, the data shows that Christians are more hostile towards Muslims. What are the causes of hostilities between these two communities? According to PEW Research Centre “A minority of Muslims in 24 of the 26 countries where the question was asked say “most” or “many” Muslims and Christians are hostile toward one another. In Thailand, a small percentage of Muslims report hostilities between Muslims and Buddhists in their country”⁹

The change is the law of nature. The coming of modernity has divided society in most of the regions of the world. How the Muslim societies see the modernity in the context of their religion. What are their responses towards the components of modernity? How they see the outcome of modernity? Are they ready to accept modernity? The table-8 shows the response of Muslims toward modernity.

Table- 8 Percentage of Muslims who say Yes or No to modernity

	Name of the country	Yes to Modernity	No to modernity		Name of the country	Yes to Modernity	No to modernity
Southern-Eastern Europe							
	Kosovo -	57	23		Bosnia Herz.	54	40
	Russia	69	22		Albania	58	34
Central Asia							
	Turkey	49	38		Uzbekistan	58	28

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	Kyrgyzstan	74	21		Kazakhstan	73	23
	Tajikistan	69	20		Azerbaijan	79	13
Southeast Asia							
	Malaysia	59	23		Indonesia	70	21
	Thailand	64	32				
South Asia							
	Bangladesh	39	55		Pakistan	34	30
	Afghanistan	56	32				
Middle East-North Africa							
	Egypt	76	22		Lebanon	51	45
	Tunisia	46	50		Palestine & Terri.	72	21
	Jordan	83	15		Iraq	60	27
	Morocco	55	26				
Sub-Saharan Africa*							
	Nigeria	51	38				
	Djibouti	44	40		Ethiopia	49	44
	Mali	52	16		Ghana	54	31
	Congo DR	39	30		Liberia	45	35
	Tanzania	50	47		Uganda	51	36
	Kenya	40	54		Chad	39	59
	Senegal	62	20		Guinea Bissau	42	37

Source: PEW Research Centre

The table-8 shows Middle East-North Africa is more open to accepting modernity than other Muslim countries. These regions are the hinter land of Islamic civilization. These data show that Muslims are not against modernity.

How many percentages of Muslims like the components of western modernity which can be seen in Western Music, movies, and television? The data given in Table-9 have been taken from the following countries given in the Table-9.

Table-9 Showing the liking of popular culture in percentage by Muslims

	Name of the Country	Percentage of people like the Popular Culture of the West		Name of the Country	Percentage of people like the Popular Culture of the West
Southern-Eastern Europe					
	Kosovo -	69		Bosnia Herz.	62
	Russia	52		Albania	77
Central Asia					
	Turkey	49		Uzbekistan	38
	Kyrgyzstan	45		Kazakhstan	56
	Tajikistan	57		Azerbaijan	55

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Southeast Asia				
Malaysia	50		Indonesia	41
Thailand	22			
South Asia				
Bangladesh	30		Pakistan	20
Afghanistan	25			
Middle East-North Africa				
Egypt	33			
Tunisia	38		Palestine & Terri.	37
Jordan	36		Iraq	40
Morocco	52			
Sub-Saharan Africa*				
Nigeria	51		Ethiopia	29
Djibouti	48		Ghana	53
Mali	62		Liberia	55
Congo DR	42		Uganda	47
Tanzania	33		Chad	53
Kenya	50		Guinea Bissau	71
Senegal	56			

Source: PEW Research

The surprising fact is that Bollywood is more popular in Muslim Countries than Western entertainment. According to Pew research Centre “Bollywood cultural exports music and movies from India are broadly popular in Central Asia, where at least half of Muslims in all the countries surveyed say they enjoy this type of entertainment.”¹⁰

In political matter, democracy is another bone of contention between Islamic countries and the western nations. Most of the major nations of Islamic world have non-democratic form of government. The rulers of Muslim countries are not in favour of democratic system while the western nation approach towards Muslim nations is full of duality. They criticize Muslim nations for not to be democratic while they help the non-democratic nations to topple the democratic governments. The example can be seen in case of Palestine, Egypt, Pakistan etc.

In case of religious freedom, the Muslims are not worse as projected by the media around the world. In spite of this duality how many percentages of people back the democracy and religious freedom? The Table-10, show the backing of democracy in the Muslims regions.

Table – 10 percentage of the people back the democracy and religious freedom

S.No.	Name of the Region	Prefer democracy over strong leader	Say religious freedom is a good thing
1	Southern Eastern Europe	58	95
2	South East Asia	64	93
3	Central Asia	52	92
4	South Asia	45	97
5	Middle East and North Africa	55	85
6	Sub-Saharan Africa	72	94

Source: PEW Research Centre

The data from Table-10 show that in most of the countries, people prefer democracy over strong leadership (kingship or dictatorship). The percentage of people believe in religious freedom is very high. These data show that the problem with regard to religious freedom and promotion of democracy is not with the common Muslims but somewhere. It may be with political leadership of Muslim nations or foreign powers intervening in the Islamic countries.

There is no denying of the fact, that religious leaders in Muslim societies play very important role. Islam has molded the religious and political authority into a single body and individual. The period of Khilafat and life of numerous khalifas (caliphates) are examples of embodying the religious and political authority into one. In later years, the efforts of political thinkers of Islamic and western worlds destabilize the political system of Islam by arguing the separation of powers. The works of Montesquieu on the division of powers brought revolutionary changes in the political discourse of the world. And Islam could not escape. As a result, Islamic political system brought one more important class into the society of Muslims. This was the emergence of “Ulema” or religious leaders. Otherwise, there is no provision of the division of religious and political obligations in Islam. How the Muslims see the political role of their

religious leaders. The Table-11 gives the beliefs of the Muslims about their religious leaders.

Table-11: shows the religious leaders should have political influence

S. No	Regions of the World	Median % of Muslims who believe religious leaders should have political influence.
1	South East Asia	79
2	South Asia	69
3	Middle East-North Africa	65
4	Central Asia	28
5	Southern-Eastern Europe	22

Source: PEW Research

The Table-11 shows that Muslims majority regions give a bigger role to play to their religious leaders. There are many reasons for this. One of the important causes is the creation and nourishment of the religious leaders in these regions by the rulers who serve the interest of ruling class from time to time. The best example can be seen from Pakistan where the political leaders with the help of religious leaders, America and others helped Mujahid of Afghanistan against Russia.

One of the major threats to multiculturalism is the curtailment of freedom by religious groups to practice their faith. What is the attitude of the Muslims towards the religious freedom of others? In many countries of Asia where Muslims are in the minority, the attitude of Muslims serves as a model for reaction by the religious groups of non-Muslim nations. The Table-12 gives the data on religious freedom in Muslim societies towards other religions.

Table- 12 Freedom to Practice their Faith, Percentage of Muslims who say they (other religions) are very free to practice their faith

Name of the country	They themselves	People of other religion	Diff.	Name of the country	They themselves	People of other religion	Diff.
Southern-Eastern Europe							

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Kosovo -	84	85	-1	Bosnia Herz.	74	71	+3
Russia	52	51	+1	Albania	79	76	+3
Central Asia							
Turkey	78	58	+20	Uzbekistan	39	26	+13
Kyrgyzstan	68	48	+20	Kazakhstan	68	57	+11
Tajikistan	60	47	+17	Azerbaijan	71	64	+07
Southeast Asia							
Malaysia	72	60	+12	Indonesia	75	64	+11
Thailand	84	79	+5				
South Asia							
Bangladesh	70	62	+12	Pakistan	88	75	+13
Afghanistan	72						
Middle East-North Africa							
Egypt	46	31	+15	Lebanon	90	89	+1
Tunisia	80	81	-1	Palestine & Terri.	60	56	+4
Jordan	73	51	+22	Iraq	48	37	+11
Morocco	88	78	+10				
Sub-Saharan Africa*							
Niger	92	82	+10	Ethiopia	78	79	-1
Djibouti	79	65	+14	Ghana	97	97	0
Mali	83	78	+5	Liberia	83	80	+3
Congo DR	69	70	-1	Uganda	78	86	-8
Tanzania	93	89	+4	Chad	70	68	+2
Kenya	67	70	-03	Guinea Bissau	82	83	-1
Senegal	97	93	+4	Nigeria	79	76	+3
Source: Pew Research Centre							

The data from Table-12 shows that the most liberal region of the Islamic world is European nations where the difference is negligible while the big differences can be seen from the nations of Central Asia. The land of Islam- the Middle East is not as volatile as projected by Media.

Another issue in seeing the dynamism in the response of Muslims is to see the attitude of them towards extremism. The word extreme can convey different meaning to different groups of people. There is needed to take liberal attitude while defining the extremism. In term of religious extremism, there must be

seen the reaction towards other religion, not the following of own religion in totality. Here the Table-13 gives the concern level of the Muslim societies towards all sort of extremism.

Table-13 Percentage of Muslims who are very or somewhat concerned

Name of the Country	Muslim Extremism	Total Very/Somewhat concerned
Southern-Easter Europe		
Kosovo -	22	45
Russia	20	46
Bosnia Herz.	27	63
Albania	9	21
Central Asia		
Azerbaijan	46	63
Kazakhstan	32	62
Tajikistan	24	39
Kyrgyzstan	23	37
Turkey	13	06
Southeast Asia		
Indonesia	53	78
Malaysia	08	63
South Asia		
Pakistan	40	56
Bangladesh	22	55
Middle East –North Africa		
Iraq	45	68
Tunisia	25	67
Jordan	20	67
Morocco	20	65
Egypt	22	62
Palestinian Terr.	22	56
Lebanon	19	46
Sub-Saharan Africa*		
Nigeria	26	50
Djibouti	36	49
Mali	20	28
Congo DR	10	39
Tanzania	16	46
Kenya	33	57
Senegal	17	45
Ethiopia	24	52
Ghana	45	62
Liberia	24	46
Uganda	27	54
Chad	33	61
Guinea Bissau	54	72

Source: PEW Research

The data from Table-13 shows that the major concerned areas are South East Asia, Middle East-North Africa, and South Asia. There should be questions on the causes of the extremism in these regions. Does the extremism inherent in the Muslims or political promoted by the foreign intervening powers or the functioning of the Muslim rulers?

As per the survey, there is “widespread concern about religious extremism in southeast Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East-North African region.” 11 The survey finds that they are more concerned about the Muslims extremists than other extremists group.

The important thing for the Muslims is to live according to the Sharia, the laws drawn from the various sources of Islam. The strict implementation of Sharia means, no liberalism for those who believe in the modern way of life e.g. drinking wine, Pub culture, Brothels, homosexuality, lesbianism etc. The implementation of Sharia means strict life codes to the Muslims too. In such cases, there would be very little space for other cultures and religions which are the antagonist to Islam. The implementation of Sharia in Islamic countries depends upon the will of the people and power of the ruler. How many percentages of people back the Sharia? The Table-14 shows the data for favouring of the Sharia in the given regions.

Table- 14 Data about favouring enshrining of sharia.

S.No.	Name of the Region	Median % of Muslims who favour enshrining Sharia
1	South Asia	84
2	South East Asia	77
3	Middle East and North Africa	74
4	Sub-Saharan Africa	64
5	Southern Eastern Europe	18
6	Central Asia	12

Source: PEW

The data from Table-14 show that 84 percent people of South Asia favour Sharia. While the percentage of the people favouring Sharia from South East Asia, Middle East and North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa are 77, 74 and 64 respectively. The percentage of Southern Europe and Central Asian nations is negligible.

The favouring of Sharia in South Asia, Middle East and North Africa and Sub-Saharan regions are the presence of the Muslims as majority communities. There should not be a matter of concern if they allow the other religious groups to follow their own religion without any interference. The Muslims can follow own sharia. And to know the fact, there is essential to know the opinion of the minority communities on the application of sharia. If Sharia is not creating any problem for them then, there is no need to question and make hue and cry on the application of Sharia in these regions.

Can Multiculturalism develop if people believe in the different level of morality? What are the constituents of morality? What is the standard of accepted morality? What are the sources of morality? Can the people of the world accept the same moral standard? What will decide the application of morality in the whole world? There is a serious difference between the Muslims and the people of other religions on the question of acceptance of morality which creating disunity among the people. This is also creating major hurdles in the way of multiculturalism. Here, there are some issues which have been considered as a part of morality in advanced nations. These are beliefs in one god, prostitution, Homosexuality, suicide, extra-marital affairs etc. What will decide what is morally right? What the Muslims think on these issues.

On the issue of believing in one God to be, Table-15 shows the median% responses of the Muslims.

Table-15 Median % of Muslims who say yes to be moral by believing in one god

S. No.	Name of the Region	Median % of Muslims who say yes to believe in one god to be moral
1	South Asia	87
2	South East Asia	94
3	Middle East and North Africa	91
4	Sub-Saharan Africa	70
5	Southern Eastern Europe	61
6	Central Asia	69

Source: PEW Research

The Table-15 shows that for the Muslims believing in one god is criteria to be called a moral person. The percentage of people believe in one god to be moral is very high in Muslims countries. The percentage is 94% in South East Asia, 91% in the Middle East and North Africa, 87 % in South Asia, 70% in Sub-Saharan Africa, 69% in Central Asia and 61% in Southern Eastern Europe .Believing in one god is the foundation of Islam and first and foremost condition to be Muslims. No Muslim can deny it.

How Muslim societies see the standard of morality? There is data which show how the societies of Muslim use to see the following practices of other societies an act of immorality While other accept these practices as the sign of modernity and development. In such cases, the conflict is inevitable which is not good for multiculturalism. Table-16 shows the wide agreement that certain behaviours morally wrong.

Table-16 Median % of Muslims who say each behaviour is morally wrong.

S.No	Region of the World	Prostitution	Homosexuality	Suicide	Sex Outside marriage	Drinking Alcohol	Abortion	Euthanasia
1	Southern Eastern Europe	90	83	83	67	62	71	64

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2	Central Asia	89	85	80	85	66	61	62
3	South East Asia	94	95	95	94	93	93	88
4	South Asia	84	79	80	87	82	64	68
5	Middle East and North Africa	95	93	82	94	84	72	75
6	Sub-Saharan Africa*	91	91	89	78	82	88	80

Source: PEW Resource

*Data for all countries except Niger from “Tolerance and Tension: Islam and Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa”.

The Table-16 shows that most of the practices of modernity are rejected by the Muslims with majority while the same is accepted by the people of other religious groups. As a result, there is found wider differences between the Muslims and other religious communities. These differences are major hurdles in the way of development of multiculturalism and cause of emergence of the radical groups in both sides. There is no need to ask such question to any religious groups which challenge the core principle of those religious groups.

There are certain issues that are the bone of contention among the people of various cultures. What is right in one culture could not be right in another culture. The rights of the women are such issues. The Table-17 gives the opinion of the Muslims towards certain rights of the women. What is the position of the rights of the women in Sharia? Table-17 shows the Sharia and Moral beliefs on the rights of the women.

Table-17 Opinion about Sharia and moral Belief (in context of divorce and family planning).

S.No	Name of the country	% who say divorce is morally acceptable			% who say family planning is morally acceptable		
		Favor Sharia	Oppose sharia	diff	Favor Sharia	Oppose	diff
1	Bangladesh	66	44	+22	50	28	+22

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2	Lebanon	72	61	+11	36	49	-13
3	Albania	26	55	-39	-	-	-
4	Kazakhstan	26	59	-33	28	52	-24
5	Russia	41	60	-19	30	45	-15
6	Kosovo	45	57	-12	-	-	-
7	Kyrgyzstan	38	48	-10	41	51	-10

Source: PEW Research

The Table-17 shows the acceptance of women rights in the context of Sharia. On the question of favour of divorce and opposition on the basis of Sharia, the differences are ranging from -39 to +22. On the question of family planning in the context of Sharia the differences are -24 to +22. So, in both cases, the rights of the women are not in the light of present day demand while the women of other religious groups have such rights on their will in the context of divorce and the Family planning.

The other rights of women like freedom of veil and her choice of marriage are given in the table-18. These two rights are major points of the tussle between the Muslims and others both on cultural and religious grounds. Due to the practice of these two, many critics of Islam termed it as least modern religion.

Table-18 shows the attitudes toward Women's Rights (Median % of Muslims who completely or mostly agree on the following rights of the women)

S.No.	Name of the Region	A women should have the right to choose if she veils	A wife must obey her husband
1	Southern Eastern Europe	88	43
2	South East Asia	79	93
3	Central Asia	73	70
4	South Asia	56	88
5	Middle East and North Africa	53	87
6	Sub-Saharan Africa	40	

Source: PEW Research

The data from Table-18 shows that women have the choice with thumbing approval for the veil. In the case of the choice of obeying her husband, the woman has not approval of the majority. This shows the lack of application of modern values in the Islamic countries. The noteworthy matter is that in more educated and modern society like European nations, the women have more freedom and equality.

What is the attitude of Muslims toward Suicide Bombing? Are they justified it or not? The suicide bombing is not allowed in Islam until it is not used as a weapon to defend himself. The Muslims are not the first community that is using suicide bombing as a deterrent in present day. On the major scale suicide bombing has been used by Liberation of Tamil Tiger Elam (LTTE) in Srilanka. This organization also used suicide bombing to kill Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. The increasing use of suicide bombing as a deterrent or create havoc among enemies has been rising in the Muslim countries due to the inaction of Islamic Ulema. It has been seen that Ulema affiliated to one party legalize it while Ulema affiliated to other faction illegalize it. What the opinion of the people on this issue of suicide bombing? The Table-19 shows the opinion of Muslims towards suicide bombing.

Table -19 Percentage of Muslims who say Suicide bombing in defense of Islam or Favouing Suicide bombing

Name of the countries	Percentage who rarely/never justified	Often/sometimes justified
Kosovo -	82	11
Russia	90	04
Bosnia Herz.	96	03
Albania	92	04
	Central Asia	
Azerbaijan	96	01
Kazakhstan	95	02
Tajikistan	85	03
Kyrgyzstan	82	10
Turkey	78	15
	Southeast Asia	
Indonesia	92	07

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Malaysia	74	18
South Asia		
Pakistan	80	13
Bangladesh	26	71
Afghanistan	39	58
Middle East –North Africa		
Iraq	91	07
Tunisia	84	12
Jordan	82	15
Morocco	74	09
Egypt	68	29
Palestinian Terr.	49	40

Source: pew Research

The Table-19 shows that majority of the Muslims reject suicide bombing. The percentage of rejection of bombing is as higher as 96 percent. Among the 20 countries 17 has rejected it with the big majority. Only three countries have yet less than 50 percent approval.

On the above-mentioned issues, the Muslims are very much strict to their core Islamic Values which are taken by other communities negatively. These issues are major hurdles in the establishment of a better relation between the Muslims and other communities. . These are the issues on which the societies of Muslims have to respond positively to strengthen the multiculturalism. There is needed IJTIHAD (the decision taken in the light of rationality) which has been stopped in the Islamic world. The most of the FATWAs (opinion of the Mufti) are based on various schools of thought from whom they belong. Multiculturalism cannot be a major force until the Muslims and other religious groups have tolerance towards each other which needs the development of liberalism among the communities. On many issues why the Muslims of a particular region are more liberal and tolerant towards other groups of people? For example, the region of Easter European is more liberal than other regions of the Islamic world. The reason is the adoption of modern education by the Muslims of this region. What about

the educational status of the Muslims? The Table-20 shows the literacy level of the Muslims countries.

Table-20 Literacy rate of the Muslim countries

S.No	Name of the Country	Percentage of Literacy rate	Year of survey
Ex-Soviet countries			
1	Kazakhstan: 99.5%	99.5	1999
2	Tajikistan	99.4	2003
3	Uzbekistan	99.3	2003
4	Turkmenistan	98.8	1999
5	Azerbaijan	98.8	2003
Islamic States			
6	Afghanistan	28.1	2000
7	Bahrain	89.1	2003
8	Brunei:	91.8	2003
9	Iran:	79.4	2003
10	Mauritania:	41.7	2003
11	Oman:	81.4	2003
12	Pakistan:	49.9	2005
13	Yemen:	50.2	2003
14	Saudi Arabia:	78.8	2003
15	Iraq	40.4	2003
Islam as State Religion:			
16	Qatar:	89	2004
17	Algeria	70	2003
18	Bangladesh	43.1	2003
19	Egypt	71.4	2005
20	Kuwait	93.3	2005
21	Malaysia	88.9	2003
22	Maldives	93.8	2006
23	Morocco	52.3	2004
24	Tunisia	74.3	2004
25	UAE	77.9	2003
Secular states with Muslim pluralities and majorities, excluding ex-Soviet:			
26	Burkina Faso	21.8	2003
27	Gambia	40.01	2003
28	Guinea-Bissau	42.4	2003
29	Mali	46.4	2003
30	Senegal	40.2	2003
31	Chad	47.5	2003
32	Djibouti	69.9	2003
33	Somalia	37.8	2001

34	Indonesia	90.4%	2004
35	Albania	86.5%	2003
36	Bosnia and Herzegovina	96.7	2000
37	Turkey	87.4	2004

Source(s):http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/edu_li...and
<http://www.iinanews.com/page/public/report.aspx?id=10377#>

The data from Table-20 show that there are some countries of the Muslims where their literacy rate is much higher e.g. the majority of ex-Soviet countries, South East Asia etc. but pathetic in the Islamic state and Secular countries of Africa, South Asia etc. According to the report of OIC, “Nearly 40 percent, (with varying percentages in the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation) of the Muslim world's population cannot read or write, which means that there are hundreds of millions of illiterates in the OIC countries, mostly female, according to a report prepared by OIC and obtained by the International Islamic News Agency (IINA)” 12

On the basis of education, many religious communities around the world have reached the advanced level of modern civilization. They are in a position to collaborate with each others. But in the case of the Muslims, there are some hurdles. There may be the causes of ideological, religious or deliberate segregation of the Muslims from the international community. And if the last one the segregation is, then the Muslims are responsible for this too due to their exclusive nature. As they have not examined their cultures, religious practices and ideological discourses in the light of modernity while others are unable to understand the course of history in the changing of the society. They want to change the Muslims over the night. But the question is; had their societies changed over the night? The history tells us that their societies took hundreds of years to change. One example is enough to understand the change of the minds of the western nations on the right of the women. The French revolution gave the slogan of “liberty, equality and fraternity” but the women got the right to vote only in 1946.

On the basis of the study, one can say that the dynamism of the response of societies of Muslims towards multiculturalism needs to be enhanced. They need more multiculturalism to be world religion than other religions. There is no doubt that they ruled over the world for centuries and succeeded to create multicultural societies in the medieval times. But in modern time they have to remodel their societies to make them acceptable to hundreds of the thousand modern brains.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The response of Muslims toward the multiculturalism is somehow not up to the mark. The issues on which the positive responses of one community toward other communities are rested is lacking in the societies of Muslims. The responses of the societies of Muslim majority countries are different from the societies of the Muslims of non-Islamic nations. Those societies of Muslims are more responsive towards multiculturalism which is in secular state or in non-Islamic countries.

The responses of the societies of Muslims are lacking on many points which encourage the interaction among the people. The Muslims literacy rate is less than other advanced religious communities. The approach towards the basics of multiculturalism is very negative in the Muslim societies. On many issues, which have been found in survey reveal that a section of the Muslim societies still living in the medieval period. Another hand, on many issues they are more positive than other societies.

In totality, the responses of Muslim societies towards multiculturalism are slow and will take time to reach on the points for interaction essential for multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is necessary for the Muslims societies in general and for the societies where they are in the minority in

particular. Multiculturalism is essence of the peace and security in the present day global world.

SUGGESTIONS

1 -There is needed more and more liberalism in the societies of Muslims. If Islam has to be a dominant religion of the world then Muslims have to be liberal on many issues e.g. women rights, rights of the children, modern education etc

2-There is needed to increase education in the societies of Muslims. The level of education that some Muslim Societies have could not promote strong multiculturalism. Education gives vision to a community. A community without vision could not make multiculturalism stronger.

3-In some societies of Muslims need to be modernized at the massive level. These societies like Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa and south Asia need modernizations in all spheres of life.

4- The emergence of multiculturalism is the future of the global world. In most of the places, there is tussle and conflict between the members of Muslim Societies and other societies. In such circumstances, there is need to mold the society on the aims and objectives of the humanity on the earth.

5-There is need of Ijtihad (discourse) in Islamic sharia in the context of the demand of the humanity. Here ijthihad does not means undue interference in the laws of Islam but presenting the solution to the problems emerged in modern times due to fast changing of the society.

6-There is needed that members of other societies should help the Muslim societies to come out from isolation. There should not be a policy of isolation toward Muslim societies but help to

bring them in the main stream. No society can be changed over a night. It takes hundreds and thousands years to change.

7 There is the need to strengthen the multiculturalism. This is not the duty of Muslims alone to make multiculturalism strong but all. The global world which is expanding with the passage of the time needs peace and security to sustain. This could be possible when the various cultures of the world cooperate with each other and avoid the conflict by solving the issues.

8-There is needed to bring the peace in the Muslim countries. The violence cannot bring peace and prosperity.

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