

Socio-Economic Impediments for Integration of Muslim Immigrants in Europe

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Abstract

When we talk about Muslims in Europe, We are discussing a specific community. This community is living in Europe for centuries and has a decisive role in the continent which is self-evident. Through the Analysis of different natures of social science, we come to know that being 'Muslim' is not only a classification of analysis but also a social, political and religious practice. If same principle is implemented in the case of immigrants, the huge transformation of the public representation made the Europe a place where not only Muslims but all communities have empathy of their origin and religion. Some self-identifications react directly to hegemonic other-identifications. This is most obviously the case where other-identifications are experienced as powerfully stigmatizing. Although it is proved from different studies in Europe that Muslims have not any specific challenge. The same has been presented in the Pew Global Attitudes Project poll of 2006, where most of the Muslims admitted that besides little signs of animosity on some places, majority of Europeans are not hostile towards their religion and place of origin. Most of the Muslims even confessed that beside terrorist incidents occurred in the continent for which Muslims were held responsible; they still have not had any personal bad experience attributable to their race, ethnicity, or religion. Being Muslim in Europe is not a case of stigmatization which is felt in daily life rather discourse leads to some reactively assert a Muslim identification. While Americans are protesting against racism and Europe may follow, the case under study will reveal us about the real challenges being faced by the Muslims in Europe.

Keywords: Migration, Religion, Multicultural, Economies, Refugees.

Introduction

Migration is term generally employs to the in-[immigration] or out-movement [emigration] of people from one place to another for the intent to settle in the new destination temporarily or permanently. This movement can be voluntary or forced within the country or across international borders. International migration is powerful phenomenon around the globe. According to United Nations more than 175 m population which comprises 3% of total World populace, live permanently outside their country of birth. Altogether, 27 m foreign Nationals lived in the European Union (EU-27) Nations in 2007, representing around 7% of the populace. The worldwide population of forcibly displaced individuals today is bigger than the whole population of the United Kingdom. If they are perceived as a country, the mandatorily exiled people would be the 21st most populated in the world. (United Nations, 2015).

At present the most crucial issue regarding forced displacement belongs to Syria. It has turned into Human crisis. According to UNO “with 4.9 million workers, 6.6 million IDPs, and around 250,000 refugee searchers, a plausible 11.7 million Syrians were displaced by end-2015, searching for protection inside Syria or abroad”. The war in Syrian Arab Republic, which completes its seventh year in 2017, has accrued grave thought in view of the substantial refugee influx and humanitarian needs it brought forth. To put these numbers in discernment, on average, 24 persons around the globe were exiled each minute during 2015. Those identified with 30 individuals for every minute a year ago, which remained the most astounding number on record”. (United Nations, 2015)

A significant trend in immigrants is witnessed to move in developed countries such as America and Western Europe. Although these immigrants belong to different cultures, societies and religions from different countries of the World, however, their region of origin and religion plays a decisive role in the making of their future in their new land. As majority of the immigrants belongs to developing countries and most of them are Muslim countries so, these immigrants bring with them their culture, language and traditions. These things play a crucial role in forming their future in Europe as many traditions in the host country may contradict with that of their native one. In order to disseminate in the host society, immigrants have to sacrifice their valuable customs which may also part of their religious traditions.

When immigrants even become ready to pay this cost still they face different difficulties and obstacles in order to alleviate in the host society. The host society is mostly reluctant to absorb them. There may be several reasons including fear of converting into minority in their own country, losing of job, increase in Labor Market competition, Cultural domination and Religious diversity. Muslim immigrants in Europe are no exception and confront some serious situation other than above said. They may be victimized being Muslim even. Are the Muslims alone in this sacrifice or some Non-Muslims may also include? Why immigration is always on the expense of abandoning traditions? What is the future and impact of these immigrants in Europe? These and other questions will be addressed in the research study.

Perception about Muslim Population

The exact number of Muslims in Europe isn't clearly known. There is not any census conducted specifically to know about the number of Muslims in Europe. Rendering upon the Pew Forum “the number of Muslims in Europe in 2010 was close to 44 million (6%), (Pew Forum, 2011) excluding Turkey. The complete figure of Muslims in the European Union in 2010 was around 19 million (3.8%). (Pew Forum, 2011) Almost 9 million Turks are living in Europe, taking out the Turkish population of Turkey, which makes up the greater Muslim community in Europe. (Cole, 2011) A Pew study published in 2015 expected that in 2050 Muslims will make up 10.2% of Europe's populace”. (Seat, 2015)

Analysis about the growing number of Muslims in Europe reveals the fact that it is predominantly due to immigration and higher birth rates. Philip Jenkins of Penn State University guessed about the population of Muslims in Europe. He states that if current growth rate maintains on the same rate, Muslims will reach up to 25% of the Europe's Population in 2100. (BBC, 2005) Eric Kaufman of the University of London, however, has provided a different point of opinion about the growing proportion of Muslims in Europe. He stated that it is due to ‘pro-natal’ where Muslims incline to have more children as compared with that of native population. (Kent, 2008)

The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) furnished a statement in 2007 exposing that “the Muslim population in Europe is overestimated due to the assumption that all descendants of Muslims will definitely become Muslim even in the cases of mixed parenthood”. (Pan, 2005) Although in Germany, It is also evident from different studies that about half of the 42 lac people from a Muslim background no longer practice Islam in adulthood. (“Religionszugehörigkeit Bevölkerung Deutschland” (PDF) (in German). Forschungsgruppe Weltanschauungen in Deutschland. Archived from the original (PDF), 2106).

Muslims Migrants predilection in Europe

According to a research, “currently, the Muslim-majority sections of Europe are Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Kosovo, portions of Bulgaria, Macedonia and Montenegro, as well as nearly Russian regions in Northern Caucasus and the Volga region. The groups entail mostly of ethnic Europeans of the Muslim faith whose religious tradition dates back several hundred years. The transcontinental countries of Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan have also a Muslim majority population. Muslim settlement in Urbanite France rushed during the Algerian War of Independence”. In 1961, West German Government invited first Gastarbeiters. According to the Pew Research Center by the end of 2010, The Muslim population encompassing 6% would expect to reach up to 8% by 2030. (Islamic fundamentalism is widely spread, 2013).

Rendering upon the Pew Research Center’s most recent population estimates some facts are revealed about the Muslim immigrants in Europe. Considering the European Union, Germany and France has the largest number of Muslim immigrants. By 2010, The Population of Muslim immigrants living in Germany comprised 48 lac which makes 5.8% of the country’s population While France had 7.5% Muslim population. The Muslim population in Russia consists of 14 million that is 10% of its population making it the largest on the continent. Thus one can easily conclude that “the Muslim share of Europe’s total population has been increasing steadily. It has increased by 1 percent in recent decade, rising from 4% in 1990 to 6% in 2010. This pattern is expected to continue through 2030 when Muslims are projected to make up 8% of Europe’s population”. If only EU is focused, it was home to about 13 million Muslim workers mostly consisting of Turkish immigrants living in Germany. However, Muslims from Kosovo, Iraq, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Morocco are also part of this population. Whereas, approximately 3 million foreign born Muslims in France consist of generally from France’s previous colonies of Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. (Hackett, 2016)

European Migration Patterns

Source countries and even source regions are particularly essential for understanding European Islam. Country Network systems shape structure of migration, fertility rates, social standpoints and political orientation toward Islamism. French Muslims are to a great extent Maghreb in which a critical (60%) consist of Kabila Berber component among the Algerians that is the biggest segment of French Muslims. (Silverstein, 2004) British Muslims are essentially South Asian. 43 percent is Pakistani, and of these, 70 percent originates from the Mirpur area of Pakistani Kashmir. (Rai, 2006)

According to research in Germany, Holland and the Benelux Nations most Muslims are Turkish or Moroccan. Norway and Sweden have a significant Somali segment to their Muslim populaces. It is worth mentioning that there is limited representation in Europe from the most Salafi Islamist locales, i.e. Saudis and other Mideast Arabs. European Muslims are almost 40 percent more prone to have at least two children as compared with the less religious minded Europeans even controlling for age, marital status, wage and status. Muslim ladies have a tendency to be more religious than others, and thus will presumably stay more fertile on the average. (Cabbage, 2007)

Major Issues to Muslims Community in Europe

A number of issues and difficulties to Muslims in Europe are dissipated after,

1. Being Muslim constitutes a fixed personality, adequate to completely portray an individual. With regards to Muslims, individuals wrongly assume that religion – as compared to nationality, sex, social class, and so forth essentially outplays different personalities.
2. Muslims in Europe are, in one way or the other, inalienably foreigner, the likeness going to Middle-Easterners who are alien to the "local" culture. Roughly 15 to 17 million people of Muslim origin hold

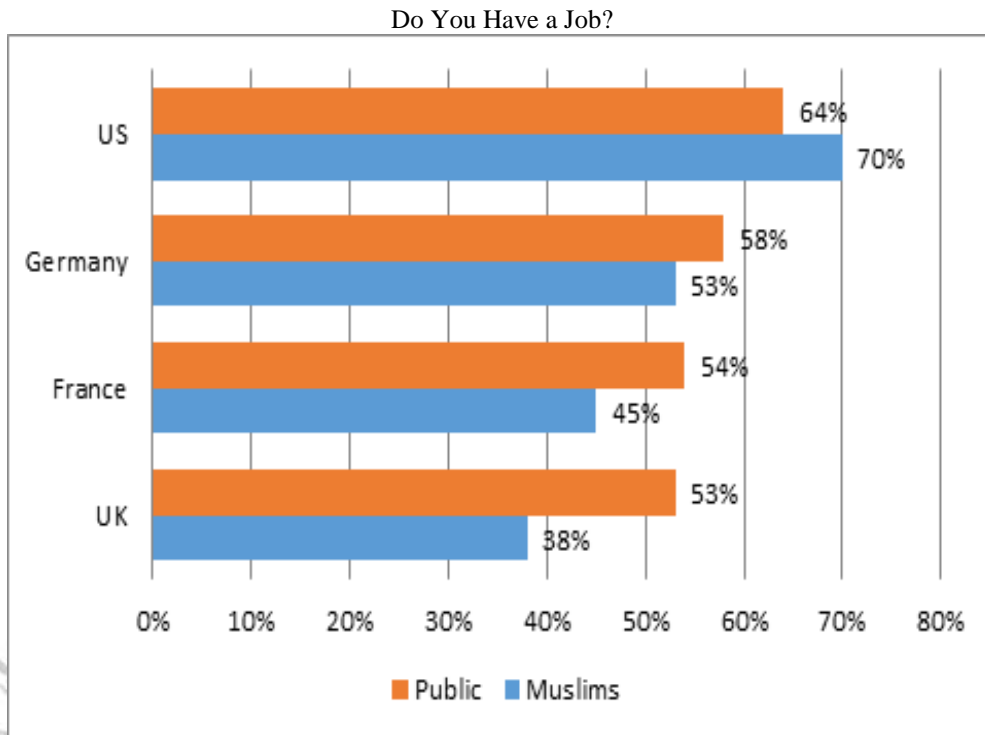
- French, British, German, etc. nationality. Huge numbers of them are glad for this reality and could never consider themselves whatever else than Europeans.
3. Muslims in Europe shape a "distinct, strong and piercing group," in the writings of a 2005 Foreign Affairs article. Actually, they are definitely not a resilient group. Not only is there any unity noticed at the European level, but, when one takes a glance at the national level, what prevails is the significant divisions, either between countries of orientation and their particular culture and brand of Islam.
 4. Muslims are demographically gaining up on the "local" populace. The verifiable presumption behind this extremely across the board myth is that Muslims shape a particular demographic alliance characterized by religion, a coalition which will never mix into other society.
 5. Immigration in Europe characterized by homogeneous ethnically-demarcated Nation-States is recent and distressing. European multicultural provisions made assimilation and integration very expensive and legitimized parallel communities.
 6. Muslim foreigners in Europe are considerably less educated than local Europeans so the literacy difference could clarify the division. Less educated European Muslims are more segregated, less financially prolific, and they are less keen on partaking in legislative issues for collective society. They have less confidence in European institutions and fewer resources to commit for community building.
 7. Western Europe ends up in a conflict between the ideals of modern worldwide tolerance and national, ethnic-based identities that antecede the present bulk of migration. The negative effect on citizenship as an institution has overflowed into different features of life for Muslim immigrants, including business, economic mobility, education, social acknowledgment, and political life. (Vaisse, 2008)

Socio-economic Impacts

Almost, all of the Muslims in Western Europe are immigrants. After World War-II when the economy of Europe was completely devastated, Some European countries initiated guest worker visas for the reconstruction of the economy. The European governments expected at that time about the future of the guest- laborers to move for work and eventually return to their homeland. Muslim community in Europe is perceived as the most problematic minority as far as their social and cultural conditions and their poverty, joblessness, and literacy rates and intergenerational family issues, like enforced or arranged marriages are concerned. Despite Government endeavors in almost every country, oppressed Blacks, Arabs, South Asians, and so forth (whatever their religion) extricate an overwhelming toll on both social and economic integration and feelings of being the member of national community. Mostly Muslim immigrant workers are unskilled and less productive compared with their European counterparts, which means they gain a lower wage, however less wages forestall such lawful offering down. In France, unemployment (which averages 7.2% nationally) can reach up to 40% among Muslim youth. Whereas, German Turks are less interested in higher education and least enrolled in Universities for advanced degrees (less than 25,000 of 236,000 Turkish 18 to 25 years of age) were in Higher education institutes in 2004-2005. While political representation of nonwhites is also poor in these societies. (Vaisse, 2008)

The regulations in the Labor market has made expensive for firms to hire new laborers to boost their businesses. Mostly firms prefer to hire the one whom they are already familiar. Hence, it becomes very challengeable for immigrants to acquire a job as they are unfamiliar in any labor market. The rules and regulations being adopted in the Europe result in bringing down employment rates for Muslim immigrants. Unemployment results in less hope about future which ultimately ends up with fewer opportunities for integration eventually creating hostile feelings about new societies.

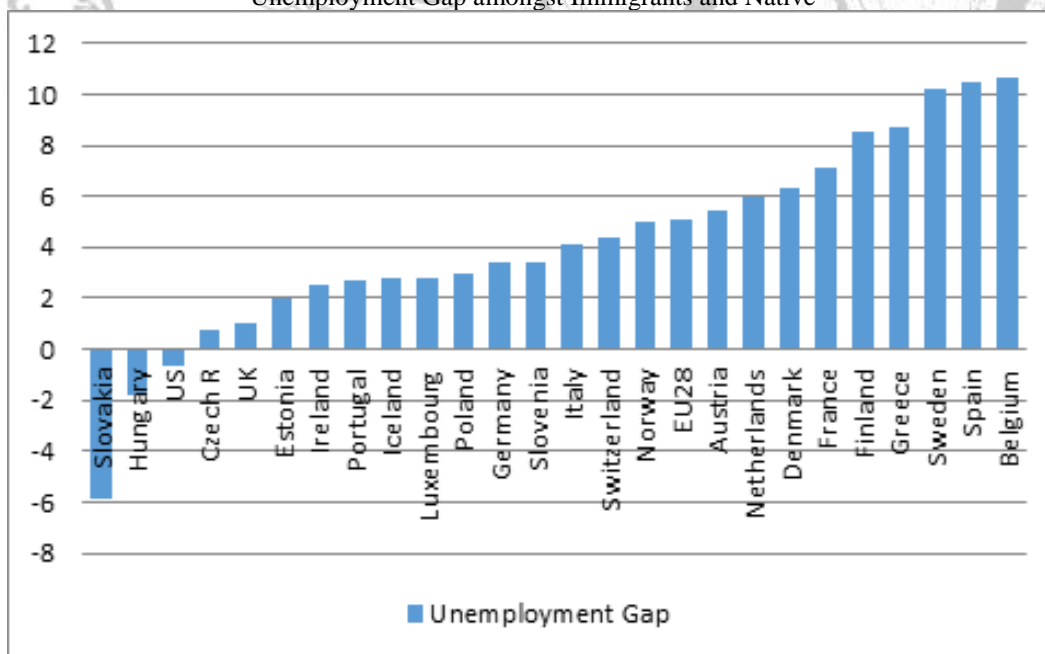
As for as, European labor market rules are concerned, they are lowering down the job opportunities for Muslim immigrants and their descendants as well. Looking at the opinions of different Labor Unions, they support the rules that exclude the immigrants, why because immigrants make excess of labor. Unions also want to exclude the immigrants from employments for the sake of profiting the "insiders" who already have employment decrementing the "outsiders" who mostly belong to Muslim immigrant community.



Source: Gallup.

The figure demonstrates unemployment gap between Natives and the Muslim immigrants. In most European countries the joblessness rate for outsiders is far over that of locals.

Unemployment Gap amongst Immigrants and Native



Source: <http://data.oecd.org/migration/foreign-born-unemployment>

Religious Barriers

It is generally perceived that Europeans are less religious. The seculars in Europe not only reject the role of religion from Public life but also seek to promote a diversity of religious views. It is obvious in the case of France where wearing of burqa (an expression of being religious) at Public places is banned. However, UK is perceived more tolerant of religious differences than France. In Germany, the Religious groups have made legal organizations who take subsidies and funds from Government. Although, these institutions receive advantages from Government but Muslims are still lagging behind to take advantage of the system. (Nowrasteh, 2016)

The local training of Imams have been endeavored by the EU governments at all levels for Muslim community incorporating into the national language; the building up of mosques, with both a ban on the utilization of public funds, the refusal of looking towards outside governments intervention and the desire to get Islam out of the "basements" where it was regularly practiced in the 1980's and 1990's. The control of ritual slaughtering of sheep for the Eid festival while keeping in view the hygiene issues; the appointment of Imams as pastors for the military or for prisoners, where many detainees are Muslims; the setting up of Muslim non-public schools; the construction of Muslim sections in cemeteries are the issues that are urgent to show that Islam isn't a foreign entity. The efforts have been made to integrate the Muslim community but still progress has been slow, regardless of the new State-Islam consultative bodies built up in almost every country. (Vaisse, 2008)

Muslims in Europe also face prejudice and suspiciousness due to terrorist events occurred in the beginning of this century. Due to impact upon law and order, terrorism is counted in the category of its own classification. It rarely exists in relation with Islam, yet radicalization concerns a few of European Muslims, and it generally happens at the fringes of Muslim networks and mosques (except in the UK until recently). As opposed to a prominent thought, European Muslims frequently and firmly denounce violent activities executed for the sake of Islam. Generally speaking, Europe has very different perception of Islam as compared with United States. Keeping in view that, there are more regional based terrorist organizations and so forth more regional terrorists in the prisons of Europe (from the Basque country, Corsica, etc. – but also far-left groups) than Islamist terrorists.

Future Challenges

The Chatham House Royal Institute of International Affairs conducted a survey in 10 European Countries asking online respondents their views on the statement that "all further migration from mainly Muslim countries should be stopped". The results of the survey are overwhelmingly alarming. Most of the respondents expressed their negative attitude towards further immigration of Muslims in Europe. Looking at the results, it is revealed that an average of 55% agreed with the statement in over the 10 European countries surveyed while 25 percent neither agreed nor disagreed. It is alarming to note that only 5% respondents favored the Muslim immigration. 71% of respondent from Poland were in favor of ban on Muslim immigrants which is the highest in the survey. Austria was close behind with 65%. "Public opposition to further migration from Muslim states is especially intense in Austria, Poland, Hungary, France, and Belgium, despite the fact that these countries have varying size of resident Muslim populations," publicized in the report. It was also revealed in the Survey by Chatham House that age played a substantial role in the perspective of those possessing the Anti-Muslim immigration sentiments which was especially high among retirees. Looking into another important factor, i.e. education also remained a decisive factor. It was high among the people who were School-leavers; (59%) were in favor to stop the immigrants, while not as much as half of university graduates agreed with the statement.

Another major cause of the conflict is wrong assumptions. An Imposes Mori Poll conducted in 2016, found that people in Europe have a tendency to extremely overestimate the population of Muslims living in their country without any authentic survey and census. They are prone with the phenomenon that Muslim in the Europe is becoming a dominant factor. The notion was verified by the study that found, French public

perceives the Muslim population 3 to 4 times greater than the real number of Muslims over there. While in case of UK, the situation remained almost the same. Respondents guessed three times more than the actual number of Muslims living in UK. (Reid, 2017)

Conclusion

Scholars in the Western Europe perceive the immigrant families mostly comprising the Muslim minority of 15 million populations as a potential threat to Europeanism. This has brought Muslim community in the public debate as a danger to liberal European esteems where Muslim community's failure to integrate into the native culture have kept on top priority in the policy agendas. Further, Scholarly discussions relating to the immigrants though politicized, have come to the conclusion that about how much tolerance ought to be permitted in modern European social values for practicing the rituals related with and found among Muslim minorities whether these are required by Islam or not (Annual reviews).

Finally, a few challenges need to do with non-Muslim populations and their impression of Islam. Over racial discrimination, there is the specific targeting of Islam (Islamophobia), which shows itself in the shape of attacks on mosques and the fouling of Muslim graves. However, aside from these outrageous cases, there is a consistent schizophrenia in Europe between excessive requests of conformity and inapt demonstrations of "tolerance" or "multiculturalism" with regards to Islam – a large numbers of who verge on arrogance. (Vaisse, 2008)

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