Countering Islamophobia in Portugal: experience of Indonesian Muslim expatriates

Sa'adi

State Institute of Islamic Studies (IAIN) Salatiga
E-mail: ssaadidr@gmail.com
DOI:10.18326/ijims.v11i1.29-53

The main purpose of this research is to investigate the Indonesian Muslim expatriate experiences in countering Islamophobia in Portugal. There are 488 Indonesian expatriates in Portugal, of whom 384 (78%) are Muslims, working on diplomatic missions, students, traders, professionals, laborers, and others. To analyze the data, the researcher used triangulation techniques such as interviews through guided written questions, observation, and documentation, using factor analyses covering items of Portugal government policy on religious life, characters of Portuguese culture, the characters of Indonesian Muslim socio-culture, educational background of Indonesian Muslim expatriates, and normative Islamic teaching inspiring their socioreligious views and attitude. As the main findings, the research revealed that in countering the Islamophobia experience, the Indonesian Muslim expatriates in Portugal feel joy, safety, peace, a harmonious life. Also, they feel like in their home towns; they can access public services easily and practice private, and religious activities normally, although the number of mosques in public places is very few. None of them experienced extreme hatred, prejudice, harassment, hostility, bad words, bad attitudes and treatments, discrimination, and Islamophobia from local citizens or other groups.

Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk menemukan berbagai variasi pengalaman para ekspatriat muslim Indonesia dalam menghadapi pobia Islam di Portugal. Ada 488 ekspatriat Indonesia di Portugal, yang mana 384 (78%) dari mereka adalah muslim, yang bekerja sebagai misi diplomatik, mahasiswa, pedagang, profesional, dan pekerja yang tinggal di beberapa kota, dan sebagai metode untuk mengumpulkan data, peneliti menggunakan teknik triangulasi berupa interview, obervasi lapangan dan dokumentasi, yang kemudian semua data tersebut dianalisis dengan menggunakan analisis faktor yang meliputi: kebijakan pemerintah Portugal dalam bidang kehidupan agama, karakter budaya masyarakat Portugal, karakter latar belakang sosio kultural para ekspatriat muslim Indonesia, dan ajaran normatif Islam yang menginspirasi pandangan serta sikap sosial beragama mereka. Sebagai temuan terpenting penelitian ini adalah bahwa para ekspatriat muslim Indonesia di Portugal sangat berhasil dalam mengatasi pobia Islam, sehingga mereka merasa aman, nyaman, damai, laras dan merasakan hidup seperti di negeri sendiri dalam mengkases pelayanan publik dan melaksanakan kegiatan agama dan kehidupan harian, meskipun ada kendala seperti langkanya tempat masjid di tempat-tempat umum. Mereka tidak pernah mengalami perlakuan yang tidak menyenangkan, kekerasan, ucapan kasar, kecurigaan, permusuhan, diskriminasi dan pobia Islam dari warga setempat.

Keywords: *Islamophobia*; *Portugal*; *Indonesian Muslims*; *Xenophobia*

Introduction

The most popular recent issue of Islamophobia incident in France refers to President Macron's speech on October 2nd, 2020 about the crisis of Muslim countries. This attracts many observers to study the interlink factors around the phenomenon. It has caused wide criticisms and different forms of reaction in many Muslim countries. In the Western world context, anti-Muslim sentiments and Islamophobia have attracted researchers especially after the black September 11th, 2001 New York terror attacks and its effect towards Muslims and Islamic belief on their identity formation as an important discourse.[1] Immigrants from Muslim countries have been

---

[1]Sirin R. Selcuk, and Aida B. Balsano, "Editor's Introduction. Pathways to Identity and Positive Development Among Muslim Youth in the West", *Applied Developmental Science*, Vol.

generally considered as a source of the rising problems of Islamophobia and caused the right political party's supporters to emphasize the importance of ethnic issues and religious backgrounds.[2] Muslims become the most significant number among immigrants in Western Europe in general, and also in Portugal. The precise number is unknown, but recent statistics data show an estimation of 9 million,[3] to 15 million.[4]

Located in the south part of Europe, Portugal has been a stable country for a long time. Recently, there is increasing development of multireligious immigrant societies.[5] Most of them come from major Muslim countries. Between 13 and 14 million Muslim immigrants live in Western Europe, as many of them live in Portugal.[6]

There are phenomena of anti-Asian and anti-Arab racism that have changed to anti-Muslim racism" and this has been followed by discrimination and the terror attacks.[7] These phenomena led politically to debates focused on problems of Muslim immigrants, who are often considered as difficult to social integration,[8] while the right-wing political party leaders and individuals in many neighboring countries have promoted

---

11, No. 3 (2007), 109-111.

[2]Thomas F. Pettigrew, "Reactions toward the new minorities of Western Europe", *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 24 (1998), 77-103.

[3]Joel S. Fetzer, J. Christoper Soper, "The roots of public attitudes toward state accommodation of European Muslims' religious practices before and after September 11", *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 42, Issue 2 (2003), 247-258.

[4]Tariq Modood, "Muslims and the politics of difference", *The Political Quarterly*, Vol. 74, Issue 1 (2003), 100-115.

[5]Bernd Simon, *Identity in modern society: A social psychological perspective*. Malden, USA-MA: Backwell Publishing, 2004: 103.

[6]B. Maréchal, *A guidebook on Islam and Muslims in the wide contemporary Europe*, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium: Academy Bruylant, 2002.

[7]Scott Poynting, and Victoria Mason, "The resistible rise of Islamophobia: Anti-Muslim racism in the UK and Australia before 11 September 2001", *Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 43, Issue 1 (2007), 62-86.

[8]Clive D. Field, "Islamophobia in contemporary Britain: The evidence of the opinion polls, 1988-2006", *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, Vol. 18, Issue 4 (2007), 447-477.

cultural harmony, eradicated hostility, and social tension atmosphere.[9]

As a comparison in Portugal, immigration's impact on religious public policy has become a very important political issue in England, France, and Germany over the last four decades.[10] There was a survey in 2004 that major Muslim participants living in some Western European countries have ever experienced terror and the oppression of women.[11] It also found that more than half of them believed that Christian and Muslim communities could hardly coexist peacefully.[12]

In some Portuguese cities, there are 488 Indonesian expatriates, of whom 384 (78%) are Muslims. They stay there working on diplomatic missions, or as students, traders, professionals, laborers, etc.[13] They live in a secular and non-Muslim country (majorly catholic) which is very different in terms of the religious and socio-cultural atmosphere. They may experience religious, social, and cultural shocks and tension while experiencing such phenomena, especially that of possible Islamophobia. This paper is to reveal how Indonesian Muslim expatriates could live harmoniously, respond and counter possible Islamophobia in Portugal.

Studies of Islamophobia in Western Europe

Kawatar Najib and Peter Hopkins found experiences of oppression restrict and limit mobility veiled women void in central spaces, and crowded districts especially when they are alone or with other neighbor community

---

[9]Hans G. Betz & Susi Meret, "Revisiting Lepanto: The political mobilization against Islam in contemporary Western Europe", *Patterns of Prejudice*, Vol. 43, Issue 3 (2009), 313-334.

[10]Dietrich Thränhadt, "The political uses of xenophobia in England, France and Germany", *Party Politics*, Vol. 1, Issue 3 (1995), 323-345..

[11]H. Bauder and Semmelroggenn, J., "Immigration and Imagination of Nationhood in the German Parliament", *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 15(1), 2009: 1-26.

[12]E. Noelle, *Der Kampf der Kulturen*, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 15 September 2004: 5.

[13]Report from the Embassy of The Republic of Indonesia, Lisbon, 2020.

restaurants and cafes.[14] That experience also changed their strategies to be strong and integrated especially through their clothes. The findings of the research contribute to the political and feminist geographies of Muslim women and their multiple negotiations of "Muslimness" to Muslim phobia acts. This study differs from that one since it merely focuses on Indonesian Muslim expatriates in Portugal.

Hajra Tahir, Jonas Renningsdalem Kunst, and David Lacland Sam found that Muslims in Norway experienced real threats, the more behavioral violence, but acculturation did not mediate this bad relation. In Great Britain, Muslims could manage mainstream acculturation orientation rather than more violent intentions, with very few threats. Acculturation of religions mediated relationship as symbolic threat associated with more support for military violence. Assimilation and integration of Muslims there showed their support for violence militarily. The findings of the research contribute to ending violence and promoting better relations among diverse ethnical groups in European countries.[15] This study is not related to military violence, but more intensively with cultural and religious life.

Farid Hafez found important phenomena in the field study of anti-Muslim racism and Islamophobia, namely Islamophobia studies. It is rich in various approaches to the concept of the subject in academic works of literature. There are three "schools of thought" studies of Islamophobia. The first surveys on Islamophobia concept especially related to prejudice researches, the second studies about racism phenomena from the postcolonial era, and the third thought focuses on the second period

---

[14]Kawatar Najib, and Peter Hopkins, "A Veiled Muslim Women's Strategies in Response to Islamophobia in Paris", *Journal of Political Geography,* Vol. 73 (2019), 103-111.

[15]Hajra Tahir, Jonas Renningsdalem Kunst, David Lacland Sam, "Threat, "Anti-Western Hostility and Violence among European Muslims: The mediating Role of Acculturation", *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, Vol. 73 (2019), 74-88.

through the decolonial perspective.[16] This study has a specific characteristic that it has no relation with the post-colonial era but in a good recent atmosphere of the two nations.

A related study was also done by Leslie S. Lebl, who found that there is a lack of a serious struggle for the future of European Land, because of very different visions among the EU, the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The EU aims for a very sophisticated Western civilization; the Brotherhood and OIC view the European continent as a part of the future Caliphate, governed by *sharia*. This competition to some extent affects social, political, and cultural criticism and serious tensions.[17] Indonesia is a member of OIC, and Indonesian Muslims are generally moderate Sunnites, who are not affiliated with caliphate ideology.

Manal Hamzeh found that both FIFA and Muslim-majority nations used medicalized and their cultural fashion notions of the *hijab*, based on safety considerations and dress laws. Double standards of hijab phobia deny Muslim women players the integrity of their bodies and will exclude them from any world football competitions.[18] In that research, he used Arab, Muslim, and Anti-racist feminist theories, to analyze a colonist and Muslim patriarchal alliance which were built on two gathering and racializing logics which refers to the overlapping logic as hijab phobia. This study covers more aspects of social, cultural, and educational life, not limited to *hijab* in Portugal.

Becky L. Choma, Reeshma Haji, Gordon Hodson, and Mark Hoffarth study showed the influential factor of religious identification among

---

[16]Farid Hafez, "School of Thought in Islamophobia Studies: Prejudice, racism, and Decoloniality", *Islamophobia Studies Journal*, Vol.4, No. 2 (2018), 210-225.

[17]Leslie S. Lebl, "The EU, The Muslim Brotherhood and the organization of Islamic Cooperation", *Foreign Policy Research Institute* (2012), 101-119.

[18]Manal Hamzeh, "FIFA's Double Hijabo Phobia: A Colonist and Islamist Alliance Racializing soccer Players", *Women Studies International Forum*, Vol. 63 (2017), 11-16.

Christians and disgust sensitivity intergroup, with an affect-laden of individual difference variables that reflects reactive disgust and revulsion toward their out-group on different variables of religiosity. These include perception of religious threat from out-group, faith-based schooling attitudes, children's intercultural adoption, banning religious symbols banning, and Islamophobia attitudes. The result of the study showed the relevance of in-group religious identification and Intergroup Disgust Sensitivity to interfaith prejudice differently. Meta-analytic integration confirmed that Intergroup Disgust Sensitivity robustly predicts Islamophobia. It implies that prejudice of religious out-group is considered.[19] The present study has its relevance to reveal types of Islamophobia phenomena in Portugal among Indonesian Muslim expatriates.

Francesco Fiodelle studied the spatial impact and the Muslim presence characteristics in Italy. As Islam is now the second most important religion in Italy, it becomes a prevalent religion among immigrants. The researcher found the need for quantitative and qualitative urgent services and provision of spatial public facilities as landmarks for Muslims now and next decades in Milan City, such as places for worships, *Halal* food centers and butcheries, burial locations, and forms of public life. This could reduce Islamophobia.[20] This has relation with Indonesian Muslims' difficulties to find Islamic public facilities in Portugal such as mosques, Islamic schools, and halal food centers.

Jolanda Van Der Noll managed research on how society responds to civil liberties among Muslims in fashion, such as using head veils,

---

[19]Becky L. Choma, Reeshma Haji, Gordon Hodson, Mark Hoffarth, "Avoiding Cultural Contamination: Intergroup Disgust Sensitivity and Religious Identification as Predictors of Interfaith Threat, Faith-Based Policies, and Islamophobia", *Personality and Individual Differences*, Vol. 95 (2016), 50-55.

[20]Francesco Chiodelli, "Religion and the City: A Review on Muslim Spatiality in Italian Cities", *Cities*, Vol. 44 (2015), 19-28.

providing facilities for Islamic educational centers, building mosques, and official policies as recognition of Islam in the form of public holidays for Muslims. He found restrictions among people with negative as well positive attitudes towards Muslims, and that individuals' value orientation affects independently and supports their perception and attitude especially related to civil liberties of Muslims. These findings are contributive to prove the relationship between prejudice and social tolerance, and the current issues about Islam and Muslims among Western people.[21] This present study has specific nature in that it reveals the way Indonesian Muslim Expatriates live a life of harmony in Portugal who are mainly Catholics.

Other researchers, Jonas R. Kunst, David L. Sam, and Pal Ulleberg showed a positive relationship between the Perceived Islamophobia Scale (PIS) and the perceived stress and discrimination. They also found that higher religious level and identification of ethnicity, control discrimination. The PIS was proved valid and reliable to measure different groups among Muslim minorities. Perceptions of Islamophobia predicted negatively psychological distress after they controlled discrimination experiences, and anti-discrimination laws are sufficient for the protection of minority Muslims from the negative stigma effects on psychological wellbeing.[22] The present article shows the difference that it studied Muslims as the expatriate experience of countering Islamophobia in Portugal.

Zan Stabac and Ola Listaug study found negative perception against Muslim immigrants was wider than that of against others, and that affected the individuals and country levels as predictors of their prejudice that resemble findings in anti-minority surveys in general. It also similarly found the same case in both Eastern and Western Europe. It proved the prejudice

---

[21]Jolanda Van Der Noll, "Religious toleration of Muslim in the German Public Sphere", *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, Vol. 38 (2014), 60-74.

[22]Jonas R. Kunst, David L. Sam, Pal Ulleberg, "Perceived Islamophobia: Scale and Development", *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, Vol. 37 (2013), 255-237.

aggregate levels are lower in the West. The finding also indicates that Muslims in Europe particularly experience phobia and prejudices, lasting before the September 11th, 2001 attacks. This research finding supports a group conflict theory. The Muslim population number in a country does not increase to the anti-Muslim prejudice level.[23] This study specifically describes how Indonesian Muslim expatriates experience encountering Islamophobia such as prejudice and discrimination in Portugal.

Discourses on Islamophobia in European context

Islamophobia as a socio-religious term was commonly used at the end of the 1980s mainly describing fear and hatred towards Islam and Muslims in the social group context.[24] Many pieces of research and publications have widely exposed an increment of Islamophobia in many Western majority populations and media.[25] Terminologically Islamophobia refers to hatred, fear, dislike, or prejudice in perceptions and attitudes against Islam or Muslim generally, specifically when viewed as geopolitical sources or terrorism issues.[26] Studies of Islamophobia include researches of prejudice in a social life context, racist discrimination and describes it in the postcolonial era, and the decolonial perspective.[27] The term of Islamophobia was historically never found in the Muslim works of literature, except in later Arabic

---

[23]Zan Stabac and Ola Listaug, "Anti Muslim Prejudice in Europe: A Multilevel analysis of Survey Data from 30 Countries", *Social Science Research Journal*, Vol. 37, Issue 1 (2008), 268-286.

[24]Runnymede Trust Commission, *Islamophobia: A challenge for us all*, London, England: The Runnymede Trust, 1997.

[25]Amir Saeed, "Media, Racism and Islamophobia: The representation of Islam and Muslims in the media", *Sociology Compass,* Vol. 1, No. 2 (2007), 443-462; S. Poynting & V. Mason, "Tolerance, Freedom, Justice and Peace? Britain, Australia and anti-Muslim Racism Since 11 September 2001", *Journal of Intercultural Studies,* Vol. 27, No. 4 (2006), 365-391

[26]A. Marquina, & V. G. Rebolledo, "The Dialogue between the European Union and the Islamic World in Interreligious Dialogues: Christians, Jews, Muslims", *Annals of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts,* Vol. 24, No. 10, (2000), 166-68.

[27]Farid Hafez, "School of Thought in Islamophobia Studies: Prejudice, racism, and Decoloniality", *Islamophobia Studies Journal*, Vol.4, No. 2 (2018), 210-225.

translation of the 1990s as *ruhāb al-Islām*, literally means "hatred or fear towards Islam".[28] Then it was clarified as "an outlook or world-view involving an unfounded dread and dislike of Muslims, as results in practices of social exclusion and racial discrimination." [29]

Several scholars consider sources of Islamophobia partly rooted in the September 11th, 2001 attacks, ISIS, and Islamic extremists, the increasing number of Muslim immigrants in European countries. It may also as a response to the identity of Muslims globally. Islamophobia is closely related to a negative attitude and feeling towards Muslims and Islam, such as intolerant against Muslims, anti-Muslimism, hatred of Muslims, anti-Islamism, and anti-Muslim prejudice and anti-Muslim.[30]

The term of Muslim phobia is focused on discrimination towards Muslims especially on religious affiliation and adherence, as Carpente names it Islamophobism[31]. Persons who treat Muslims discriminatively are generally called Islamophobes, and Kuwara identifies it as Islamophobists,[32] and Halliday mentions it anti Muslimists[33], and Amine Saeed's term as Islamophobiac, or anti-Muhammadan or Muslim phobia.[34] The word also means intense dislike or fear of Islam, especially as a political force, hostility, or prejudice towards Islam. Islamophobia is a form of violation

---

[28]Lee, S.A, Gibbons, J. A., Thompson, J. M. and Timani, H. S., "The Islamophobia scale: Instrument Development and Initial Validation", *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (2009), 92–105.

[29]Meer Nasar and Modood Tariq, "Refutations of Racism in the 'Muslim Question'", *Patterns of Prejudice*, Vol. 43 3–4 (2009), 335–54.

[30]Ayhan Kaya, "Islamophobia", in Jocelyne Cesari (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of European Islam*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

[31]Markus Carpente, *Diversity, Intercultural Encounters, and Education*, Cambridge: Cambridge Press, 2013, 65. Raphael Walden, Racism and Human Rights, 2004, 8

[32]Ibrahim Kuwara, *Islam Nigeria-UK Road Tour*, 2004, 6

[33]Fred Halliday, *Two hours that shook the world*, New York: MacMillan, 2002, 97.

[34]See Erdag Goknar and Orhan Pamuk, *Secularism and Blasphemy*, London: Routledge, 2013: 218-19.

to humanity that threats social harmony"[35]

Besides, Islamophobia could broadly connote a negative emotion and actions towards other people or different groups for a certain category or identity. It is as a social reversion, prejudice, practice, acts such as discrimination, attack or exclusion produced towards Muslims or be associated with Islam".[36] It is a kind of intolerance, even religious hatred in society, and deliberately misunderstands and misrepresents contemporary Muslims. They consider immigrant Muslims in European countries may become terrorists; and they could not appreciate the great achievements of scientists, artists, philosophers, and poets of Muslims in the past centuries.[37]

Huntington popularly exposed a clash of civilizations theory between the West civilization and Islam. Europe by contrast perceives Islam as an interruptive force that, through the process of transculturation, it may be the challenge of the alleged European Judeo⬚Christian heritages. Islamophobia is perceived as stems of effort for defense and cultural resistance against the possible effects of real multicultural relation between Islamic and European-Western civilizations.[38]

One prominent theory of Islamophobia is the deprivation of disadvantaged relationships economically and devaluation towards strangers, especially during economic crises.[39] It also underlies the contact hypothesis that personal

---

[35]Oxford Dictionaries, "Islamophobia", Retrieved 10 November 2019; Dictionary. com Unabridged, "Islamophobia", Random House. retrieved 10 November 2019; Collins Dictionary, "Islamophobia", retrieved 10 November 2019.

[36]Erik Bleich, "Defining and Researching Islamophobia", *Review of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (2012), 180-189.

[37]Michael Walzer, "Islamism and the Left", *Dissent* (Winter 2015), https://www. dissentmagazine.org/article/islamism-and-the-left retrieved Dec. 2020.

[38]Gabriele Marranci, "Multiculturalism, Islam and the clash of civilizations theory: rethinking Islamophobia", *Journal of Culture and Religion: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (2006), 105-117.

[39]"Counter-Islamophobia Kit", Equinet European Network of Equality Bodies. 4 October 2019. https://equineteurope.org/2018/counter-islamophobia-kit/ Retrieved 1 March 2020.

contacts with people of out-groups may reduce their stereotypes.[40] Some researchers on Islamophobia prove that intensive relations and direct contacts with Muslims decrease negative attitudes and feelings towards them. Mass media can also make illusions about direct contact and socially can influence people's attitudes towards foreigners or strangers.[41]

The concept of Islamophobia could also be explained by the authoritarian personality theory. It sees authoritarian persons who cannot enjoy their own life so that they hate the lives of others. [42] It is relevant with the intergroup theory that investigates people's division in their groups between "we" and the "others". While Social Identity Theory (SIT) categorizes people with their groups to develop their confidence and self-esteem based on religious, national, or cultural backgrounds. This can be managed to promote the importance of their in-group by looking down at the importance of an out-group.[43]

Finally, "open" and "closed" is a theory that the following "closed" views are equated with Islamophobia: Islam is perceived as static, monolithic, and unresponsive to change, irrespective of "other" cultures and values. It is also normally and naturally viewed as aggressive, violent, threatening, and supportive of terrorism, political ideology and engaged in a clash of civilizations.[44]

---

[40]See Gordon W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice*, Cambridge: Adison Wesley Publishing Company, 1954; Thomas F. Pettigrew, Linda R. Trop, "A Meta-Analytic Test of Intergroup Contact Theory", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 90, No. 5 (2006), 751-783.

[41]Donald Horton, Richard R. Wohl, "Mass communication and para-social interaction: Observations on intimacy at a distance", *Psychiatry:* Journal for the Study of Interpersonal Processes, Vol .19 (1956), 215–29.

[42]Theodor W. Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel J. Levinson, R. Nevitt Sanford, *The Authoritarian Personality,* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950, 75.

[43]Henri Tajfel, John C. Turner, "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior", in Stephen Worchel, William G. Austin (eds..), *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, 2nd Edition, Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1986, 7–24.

[44]The Runny Report, "Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All", *Runnymede Trust*, 1997

Muslims responses to Islamophobia in Portugal

Portugal is a secular nation in which religious affair is separated from the government. Although its population is mainly catholic, the government guarantees the freedom for its citizens to embrace and practice their religions and beliefs. It is formally declared in the national constitution approval decree Diário da República No. 86/1976, Series I of 1976-04-10 Article 41 about rights of conscience, religion, and worship freedoms: 1. Conscience, religion, and worship freedoms are inviolable. 2. No persecution, abrogation of individuals' rights, or exemption from their obligations or civic duties because of their basic convictions or religious practices and beliefs. 3. None can be questioned by any authority about their beliefs or religious practice, except for the collection of statistical data not individually identifiable, nor be harmed by rejection to reply. 4. Churches and religious places to be separated from the State and are free in their organization and the practice of their religious functions and worship. 5. The right of freedom to teach any religious practices and teachings within the respective confession scope is guaranteed, as well as the use of proper media for the continuation of its activities. 6. The right to conscientious objection is guaranteed, under the terms of the law.[45]

There are 9.134 Muslims di Portugal or about 0,1% of the total population. But the Muslim community in Lisbon continuously grew in 2011, up to about 40.000 in number. But in 2020 their number increases up to 65,000 in population.[46] They are immigrants from Mozambique, Kenya, Macao, Goa of India, Eastern Indonesia, and India Muslims. Many of them are also from West Africa, the Middle East, such as Egypt, Morocco, and *Al-jazair*. Most of them are Sunnite, then *Syi'ah* and *Ahmadiyah* groups.

---

[45]Amended by Article 33 of Constitutional Law No. 1/82 - Diário da República No. 227/1982, Series I of 1982-09-30, effective from 1982-10-30.

[46]Source: *Instituto Nacional de Estatistica*, Portugal, 2019.

Besides, there are also many Muslim converts among native Portuguese.[47]

In 1968, an Islamic Institute was established in Lisbon namely *al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah Li lisybunah*. It made its office in an apartment as well as the place of worship for Muslims. Then in 1977, the Government of Portugal granted land to the Institute to build a grand mosque and Islamic center (Mesquita Central de Lisboa) in Lisbon and its building was completed in 1985. Up to the present time, there are 2 big mosques, 24 small mosques in the Lisbon area, and other cities such as Coimbra, Vila de Conde, Evora, and di Porto. Totally in 2020, there are 53 mosques around Portugal.[48] Besides, there are also Islamic schools from kindergarten, elementary, junior schools, and senior high schools in Lisbon. They also publish Islamic *al-Qalam, an-Nur,* and *al-Furqan* magazines in Arabic and Portuguese. They also publish books and handle Islamic conferences and television programs.[49]

From the 1980s up to the 1990s was the most harmonious life among different religious groups in Portugal. But after the Black September 11th, 2001 tragedy, the situation changed drastically, since there were prejudices towards the Muslim community as terrorist or violent supporters. There were then some limitations of Muslim activities from a certain group of citizens, not from the government. That was reflected in the provocative column written by Dr. Miguel Sousa Tavares published in *The Public* daily newspaper entitled Islam, Terror, and Lies. In early 2009 another religious leader also warned intolerantly of the danger of marriage between Muslim and non-Muslim. And it was difficult to conduct an open dialogue of Muslim leaders with their counterparts. It was Mohammed Youssouf

---

47 *Instituto Nacional de Estatística* census report in 1991.

48 Source: *Instituto Halal de* Portugal, 2020.

49 https://m.republika.co.id/berita/pi6f5o313/sumbangan-islam-untuk-portugal (acessed on october 20th, 2019)

Adamqy the chief editor of *al-Furqan* Magazine who was successful to open dialogue about peaceful, friendly, and moderate Islam to counter the negative images of Islam and Muslim written in *The Public*, to reclaim harmonious relation with the non-Muslim community and also by setting up various cultural and social activities in the Grand Mosque and Islamic centers by inviting them.[50]

Indonesian Muslim expatriates response to Islamophobia

This survey was conducted in some procedures to collect related valid data in three angulation ways such as field observation, a document study; deep interviews (guided written questions). The data having been collected then was processed in three stages: data display, data reduction, and data analyses through discussion and interpretation. The last step is the conclusion, reflection, and recommendation.

Indonesian Muslims in Portugal mainly stay in the capital city Lisbon and Porto, and some stay in big cities such as Algarve, Povoa, de Farzim, Coimbra, Figuera da FozVilla do Conde, Sines, and Braga. They vary in professions such as diplomatic mission, students, labors, professionals, traders, and others such as writer and household wives. There are 488 Indonesian expatriates and immigrants in Portugal, and 384 (78 %) of them are Muslims as population.[51] This survey purposively took 17 persons as samples representing members of those groups based on their different professions and backgrounds such as education, socio-religious organization, culture, and family in Indonesia. As a sociological religious survey, it tried to reveal the phenomena of their religious experience as Muslims countering Islamophobia in such a secular country.

---

[50]https://muslimobsession.com/islam-dalam-jiwa-portugal/ (accessed on Ocktober 21, 2019)
[51]Statistical report, the Embassy of The Republic of Indonesia, Lisbon, 2020.

The field activities lasted from October 4 up to 18th, 2019, started by visiting the Indonesian Embassy in Lisbon on October 4th, 2019, as well as joining gathering meetings of Indonesian citizens in the embassy hall. On that occasion, fortunately, the writer met some key persons such as The Indonesian Ambassador to the Republic of Portugal, the attaches of communication, some officials, staffs, and other expatriates as respondents, and interviewed them about their experiences as Muslims in practicing their religious teachings (difficulties that they meet and facilities that they enjoy), their responding and countering Islamophobia during their long stay in Portugal. The next days the writer visited some mosques and Islamic centers in Lisbon (Plasa de Espana), meeting and interviewing some Muslim leaders (*imam*), visiting Islamic school and multicultural association in Amadora District and dialogue with respondents living there, visiting Porto City for meeting with respondents there.

On the last day, on October 20th, 2019 the writer visited the Moorish castle palace and museum to observe the historical link of past and present as the Muslim community exist in Portugal and visited the Geronimo Monastery Cathedral and Padrao dos Descobrimentos where Vasco da Gama's fleet set up his historical voyage to India in July 1497, and Fernando Magelhanes to Indonesia on September 20th, 1519 for their mission of Gold, Glory, and Gospel (3G). This visit was significant to match historical, cultural, and religious relations between Portugal and Indonesia to complete data collection for the whole research.

The questions as main data were set up in 10 items addressed to 17 respondents, and these are the findings of their responses. As expatriate Muslims in Portugal, they feel joy, safety, ease, peace, freedom, friendliness, prosperity, and no danger. All respondents say that they never meet uneasiness in communication and social interaction with citizens of Portugal in their identity as Muslims. They enjoy the Government of

Portugal Republic policies as just, no discrimination, democratic, respective, accommodative, supporting their religious activities needs and neutral. And as a very important finding from their life as Muslim expatriates, none respondents experienced extreme hatred, prejudice, harassment, hostility, bad words, bad attitude and treatments, discrimination, and Islamophobia from local citizens or other groups.

Indonesian Muslim expatriates find few mosques to pray in public places, and also Islamic schools for their children are only in Lisbon. These make it difficult to practice their religious obligations such as daily prayers when touring or being out of their homes. They experience in their daily life that local citizens are so tolerant, humanist, welcome, friendly, helpful, open, respecting Muslim cultures, impersonal of other affairs, and treat fairly towards Muslims. Female Muslims experience and feel freedom, joy, peace, save and relax to wear their Muslim fashion such as *hijab* (head veils) and face shield (*niqab*) without any negative reaction from others.

Among Indonesian Muslim expatriates and other immigrants, Muslims live together helpfully, peacefully, tolerantly, respecting each other, meet regularly in mosques, cooperatively, greeting and introducing themselves, providing snacks and drinks in mosques on Fridays, and breakfasting month. Gaining *halal* food is easy in some places and markets, also *halal* butchery in Lisbon is owned by Muslim immigrants, informing each other about *halal* food centers, but the trouble on a journey to gain *halal* food, rare *halal* restaurant to find, and difficult to find labeled *halal* manufactured foods.

To perform Islamic rites such as daily prayers, it is difficult to meet mosques in public places and facilities. Mosques are still scarce in numbers, far distance from their homes, place of activities, work, offices, campus, and the problem of transportation to perform Friday prayer. Islamic schools are still limited in numbers. Only in Lisbon, some kindergarten until

senior high school can be found. Islamic lectures and Friday preaching are delivered in Arabic, Portuguese language and others, and not in Indonesian.

Using sociological religious study approach,[52] in the following section, the researcher discusses and interprets the findings above through factor analyses such as Portugal government policy on religious life, characters of Portuguese culture, the characters of Indonesian Muslim socio-culture, educational background of Indonesian Muslim expatriates in Portugal, and at last normative Islamic teaching inspiring their socioreligious views and attitude.

Based on the whole findings in the field above, it can be inferred that Indonesian Muslim expatriates stay in Portugal enjoyably and peacefully and never experience serious Islamophobia. This can be analyzed and reflected for some consideration and reasonable factors. The Republic of Portugal is a democratic and secular nation in which religious affair is separated from the government. Religion is the domain of individuals and religious community life. Although its population is mainly catholic, the government vows to preserve the freedom for its citizens to embrace and practice their religions and beliefs as it is declared in its national constitution.[53] The government policies towards Muslim immigrants and expatriates Indonesians are neutral and fair for any religion, support their facilities, and keep their freedom of worship and their organizational functions. Besides Portuguese people, in general, live rationally, secularly, liberally, prosperously, humanist, friendly, rich in traditions, love arts and live in harmony, and open to foreigners.[54] This of course makes those

---

[52]Read Zakiyuddin Baidhawy, *Pendekatan dan Metode Studi Islam*, Yogyakarta: Insan Madani, 2011: 264-271.

[53]The approval decree of Diário da República No. 86/1976, Series I of 1976-04-10 Article 41 about Freedom of conscience, religion and worship.

[54]Pedro Veloso, Susana Fonseca and Sergio Fonseca, "Portugal a Journey through Mainland

Muslim immigrants and expatriates enjoyable to work, peaceful to live with them, and to feel at home.

Accordingly, the dominant characters of Indonesian Muslim culture are mainly moderate, tolerant, friendly, like harmony, dialogue, collective and social-oriented (*rukun*), compromise, adaptive, accommodative towards different views, syncretic, diverse, respecting others, and avoid conflicts.[55] Those phenomena are supported by the sociocultural religious factor that the mainstream of preaching (*da'wa*) and Islamic education in Indonesia is majorly moderate peaceful Sunnite, dominated by *Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdatul Ulama* (NU) as moderate and largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia.[56] Besides the national ideology and philosophy, *Pancasila* fully promotes and appreciates pluralism, multiculturalism, diversity, humanity, unity, democracy, and justice. That is in line with the policy of the minister of Religious Affairs to adopt and disseminate a moderate understanding of Islam as a great tradition, eradicate any extremism and radicalism to avoid terrorism.[57] Those values are embodied in the deep minds and way of life among Indonesian Muslim expatriates in Portugal and seem to match with those of Portugal's so that they enjoy living there.

From educational background, Indonesian Muslim expatriates in Portugal are majorly university graduates, being good qualified human recourse, working as diplomats, officers, professionals, traders, businessmen, laborers, postgraduate students, and household wives. They ideally had ever been trained with the habits of rational rather than emotional

---

Portugal", https://www.bertrand.pt/livro/portugal-mainland-journeys-and-stories-sergio-fonseca/15081707.

[55]Nur Huda, *Islam Nusantara, Sejarah Sosial Intelektual Islam di Indonesia*, Yogyakarta: ArruzMedia, 2020, 13-25; Zainal Abidin bin Syamsuddin, *Fakta Baru Walisongo*, Jakarta: Pustaka Imam Bonjol, 2018: 14-23.

[56]Four respondents say that they are supporters of Muhammadiyah organization, as according to them it has modern, moderate, progressive, rational and open views compatible with modern culture such as in Portugal.

[57]https://bimasislam.kemenag.go.id retrieved August 17th, 2020.

ways of thinking, analytical critical towards cases, having realistic smart creative and open minds, working skillfully and professionally, future and achievement-focused orientation, rich of plural perspectives, multicultural and pluralistic horizon, respective others, flexible and communicative with others.[58] These are compatible with the concept of High Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)[59] as intensively promoted nowadays. These values are urgently needed by every immigrant and expatriate to achieve a successful career as "guests" in their new sociocultural environment.

Normatively speaking the Qur'anic verses and narrations (*hadiths*) of Prophet Muhammad as the main sources of their religious Islamic teaching is rich in spiritual values, ethical and moral guidance for Muslims to live with others respecting pluralistic backgrounds and diversities, promoting human dignity, justice, responsibility, cooperation, tolerance, plurality, love, brotherhood, authentic universal brotherhood, peace, equality, emancipation, charity, independence and freedom from any form of slavery and oppression.[60] Those Islamic spirituals, ethical and moral values are truly compatible with multiculturalism, pluralism, and modern international relation codes nowadays.

Based on those interlink factors analyses above, it could be inferred that the Islamophobia experience among Indonesian Muslim expatriates in Portugal could be countered and minimized very successfully since those values are contradictory with Islamophobia. It reveals important finding that the interrelation of good governmental policies, the character of local people culture, and cultural ethics, religious view, national ideology, and educational backgrounds of Muslim expatriates or immigrants guarantee successful countering Islamophobia.

---

[58]Muhammad Ali, *Pendidikan untuk Pembangunan Nasional,* Jakarta: Imtima, 2009, 121-128; Budi Munawar Rahman (ed.), *Pendidikan Karakter, Pendidikan Menghidupkan Nilai untuk Pesantren, Madrasah dan Sekolah,* Jakarta: The Asia Foundation, 2017, 249-277.

[59]https://tophat.com/glossary/h/high-order-thingking-skills/ , retrieved Oct. 18th, 2020.

[60]See Hammudah Abdulati, *Islam in Focus,* Nashr City: El-Falah, 1997, 67-79.

Conclusions

This study of Indonesian Muslims expatriates encountering Islamophobia experience in Portugal comes to the findings that secular democratic country with majorly catholicity, Portugal administration policies, and the Portuguese people culture in contact with Muslim immigrants especially those of Indonesian Muslim expatriates are open, humanist, tolerant, friendly, respectful, supportive and soft. So, they never experience Islamophobia and any discrimination from local citizens. This makes them free to perform their religious teachings and education of their children, and enjoy harmonious lifelike in their hometowns of Indonesia.

As such good governmental policies and its people basic character of culture towards immigrants, interacting with the characters of Indonesian Muslim socio-culture (such as harmony, 'moderatism,' pluralism and inclusivism), educational backgrounds of the immigrants, and social humanistic values of Islamic teaching inspiring their socio-religious views and attitudes (such as brotherhood, charity, and equality) become the main factors of successful experience encountering Islamophobia among Indonesian Muslims expatriates in Portugal. Then this research finding can be recommended as a significant example of a policy model for a possible solution to Islamophobia conflicts or other similar social crises in different regions or countries.

Bibliography

Abidin bin Syamsuddin, Zainal. *Fakta Baru Walisongo*. Jakarta: Pustaka Imam Bonjol, 2018.

Adorno, Theodor W. Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel J. Levinson, R. Nevitt Sanford, *The Authoritarian Personality*, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950.

Ali, Mohammad. *Pendidikan Untuk Pembangunan Nasional: Menuju Bangsa Indonesia yang Mandiri dan Berdaya Saing Tinggi.* Bandung: Imtima, 2009.

Allport, Gordon W. *The Nature of Prejudice*. Cambridge: Adison Wesley Publishing Company, 1954.

Amended Constitutional Law of Portugal, No. 1/82 - Diário da República No. 227/1982, Article 33, Series I of 1982-09-30, effective from 1982-10-30.

Approval Decree of Diário da República No. 86/1976, Series I of 1976-04-10 Article 41 about Freedom of Conscience, Religion and Worship.

Baidhawy, Zakiyuddin. *Pendekatan dan Metode Studi Islam.* Yogyakarta: Insan Madani, 2011.

Bauder, H. & Semmelroggenn, J., "Immigration and Imagination of Nationhood in the German parliament". *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics,* Vol. 15, Issue 1 (2009): 1-26.

Betz, Hans G. & Susi Meret, "Revisiting Lepanto: The political mobilization against Islam in contemporary Western Europe", *Patterns of Prejudice,* Vol. 43, Issue 3 (2009), 313-334.

Bleich, Erik, "Defining and Researching Islamophobia", *Review of Middle East Studies,* Vol. 46, No. 2 (2012): 180-189.

Carpente, Markus. *Diversity, Intercultural Encounters, and Education.* Cambridge: Cambridge Press, 2013, 65

Choma, Becky L., Reeshma Haji, Gordon Hodson, Mark Hoffarth, "Avoiding Cultural Contamination: Intergroup Disgust Sensitivity and Religious Identification as Predictors of Interfaith Threat, Faith-Based Policies, and Islamophobia", *Personality and Individual Differences,* Vol. 95 (2016): 50-55.

Chiodelli, Francesco, "Religion and the City: A Review on Muslim Spatiality in Italian Cities", *Cities,* Vol. 44 (2015): 19-28.

Embassy of The Republic of Indonesia. *Statistical Report.* Portugal, Lisbon, 2020.

Equinet European Network of Equality Bodies, "Counter-Islamophobia Kit", 4 October 2019. https://equineteurope.org/2018/counter-islamophobia-kit/ Retrieved 1 March 2020.

Fetzer,Joel S. and J. Christoper Soper, "The roots of public attitudes toward state accommodation of European Muslims' religious practices before and after September 11", *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion,* Vol. 42, Issue 2 (2003): 247-258.

Field, Clive D., "Islamophobia in contemporary Britain: The evidence of the opinion polls, 1988-2006", *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations,* Vol. 18, Issue 4 (2007): 447-477.

Goknar, Erdag and Orhan Pamuk. *Secularism and Blasphemy.* London: Routledge, 2013.

Hafez, Farid, "School of Thought in Islamophobia Studies: Prejudice, racism, and Decoloniality", *Islamophobia Studies Journal,* Vol.4, No. 2 (2018): 210-225.

Halliday, Fred. T*wo Hours that Shook the World.* New York: Mac Millen, 2002.

Hamzeh, Manal, "FIFA's Double Hijabo Phobia: A Colonist and Islamist Alliance Racializing soccer Players", *Women Studies International Forum,* Vol. 63 (2017): 11-16.

Hamzeh, Manal, "Conducted a research on FIFA's Double Hijabo Phobia: A Colonist and Islamist Alliance Racializing soccer Players",*Women Studies International Forum Journal,* Vol. 63 (2017): 11-16.

Herm, Mikael, "National Identity: "A Comparison of Sweden, Germany and Australia", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 24,* 1998, 3, S.: 45-469.

Horton, Donald & Richard R. Wohl, "Mass communication and para-social interaction: Observations on intimacy at a distance", *Psychiatry:* Journal for the Study of Interpersonal Processes, Vol .19 (1956), 215–29.

Huda, Nur. *Islam Nusantara, Sejarah Sosial Intelektual Islam di Indonesia.* Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruz Media, 2020, 13-25.

Instituto Nacional de Estatística, Portugal, Census Report in 1991.

Instituto Nacional de Estatistica, Portugal, Census Report in 2019.

Instituto Halal de Portugal, 2020.

Kaya, Ayhan, "Islamophobia", in Jocelyne Cesari (ed.). *The Oxford Handbook of European Islam.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Kunst, Jonas R., David L. Sam, Pal Ulleberg, "Perceived Islamophobia: Scale and Development", *International Journal of Intercultural Relations,* Vol. 37 (2013): 255-237.

Kuwara, Ibrahim. *Islam Nigeria-UK Road Tour.* 2004.

Lebl, Leslie SE., "The EU, The Muslim Brotherhood and the organization of Islamic Cooperation", *Foreign Policy Research Institute* (2012): 101-119.

Marquina, A., and V. G. Rebolledo, "The Dialogue between the European Union and the Islamic World in Interreligious Dialogues: Christians, Jews, Muslims", *Annuals of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts,* Vol. 24, No. 10 (2000): 166-68.

Marranci, Gabriele, "Multiculturalism, Islam and the clash of civilizations theory: rethinking Islamophobia",*Journal of Culture and Religion: An Interdisciplinary Journal,* Vol. 5, No. 1 (2006): 105-117.

Maréchal, B. *A guidebook on Islam and Muslims in the wide contemporary Europe.* Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium: Academy Bruylant, 2002.

Modood, Tariq, "Muslims and the politics of difference", *The Political Quarterly*, Vol. 74, Issue 1 (2003): 100-115.

Munawar Rahman, Budi. (Ed.), *Pendidikan Karakter, Pendidikan Menghidupkan Nilai*

untuk Pesantren, Madrasah dan Sekolah. Jakarta: The Asia Foundation, 2017.

Najib, Kawatar and Peter Hopkins, "A Veiled Muslim Women's Strategies in Response to Islamophobia in Paris", *Journal of Political Geography*, Vol. 73 (2019), 103-111.

Nasar, Meer and Modood Tariq, "Refutations of Racism in the 'Muslim Question'", *Patterns of Prejudice*, Vol. 43 3–4 (2009): 335–54.

Nielsen, Jorgen S., "Children's Voices: Studies of Interethnic Conflict and Violence in European Schools", *Muslims in Western Europe*, 2004: 1-69.

Noelle, E. *Der Kampf der Kulturen*. Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 15 September 2004: 5.

Pettigrew, T. F., Linda R. Trop, A Meta-Analytic Test of Intergroup Contact Theory, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 90, No. 5 (2006), 751-783.

Pettigrew, Thomas. F., "Reactions toward the new minorities of Western Europe", *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 24 (1998): 77-103.

Poynting, Scott and Victoria Mason, "Tolerance, Freedom, Justice and Peace? Britain, Australia and anti-Muslim Racism Since 11 September 2001", *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (2006): 365-39

Poynting, Scott and Victoria Mason, "The resistible rise of Islamophobia: Anti-Muslim racism in the UK and Australia before 11 September 2001", *Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 43, Issue 1 (2007): 62-86.

Runnymede Trust Commission. *Islamophobia: A challenge for Us All.* England, London: The Runnymede Trust, 1997.

Saeed, Amir., "Media, Racism and Islamophobia: The representation of Islam and Muslims in the media", *Sociology Compass*, 1(2), 2007: 443-462.

S.A., Lee, Thompson, Gibbons, J. A., J. M. and Timani, H. S., "The Islamophobia Scale: Instrument Development and Initial Validation", *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, Vol. 19, No.2 (2009): 92–105.

Simon, Bernd. *Identity in Modern Society: A Social Psychological Perspective.* Malden, US-MA: Backwell Publishing, 2004.

Sirin R. Selcuk, and Aida B. Balsano, "Editor's Introduction. Pathways to Identity and Positive Developmen Among Muslim Youth in the West", *Applied Developmental Science*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (2007): 109-111.

Stabac, Zan and Ola Listaug, "Anti-Muslim Prejudice in Europe: A Multilevel analysis of Survey Data from 30 Countries", *Social Science Research Journal*, Vol. 37, Issue 1 (2008): 7–24.

Tahir, Hajra, Jonas Renningsdalem Kunst, David Lacland Sam, "Threat, Anti-Western Hostility and Violence among European Muslims: The Mediating

Role of Acculturation", *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, Vol. 73 (2019): 74-88.

Tajfel, Henri, John C. Turner, "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior", in Stephen Worchel, William G. Austin (eds..). *Psychology of Intergroup Relations.* 2nd Edition, Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1986: 7–24.

Thränhadt, Dietrich, "The political uses of xenophobia in England, France and Germany", *Party Politics*, Vol. 1, Issue 3 (1995): 323-345.

Van Der Noll, Jolanda, "Religious toleration of Muslim in the German Public Sphere", *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, Vol. 38 (2014), 60-74.

Veloso, Pedro, Susana Fonseca and Sergio Fonseca, "Portugal a Journey through Mainland Portugal", https://www.bertrand.pt/livro/portugal-mainland-journeys-and-stories-sergio-fonseca/15081707.

Walzer, Michael, "Islamism and the Left", *Dissent* (Winter 2015), https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/islamism-and-the-left retrieved Dec. 2020.