

Muslims In France: Clash of Culture Muslims Immigrants

¹Mohd Shahril Ahmad Razimi, ²Abd Rahim Romle and ³Mohamed El Amine Boussam

^{1,3}Islamic Business School, Universiti Utara Malaysia, 06010 Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia

²School of Government, Universiti Utara Malaysia, 06010 Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to review the French society and its impact on the Islamic culture, more precisely the impact on the Islamic principle. This document highlights issues that Muslim immigrants or residents face. France has seen a significant shift in its society, from a big empire to one that colonized a country by the German and where the society was a mix of origin people and immigrants from the colonized countries. This shift of power led to a multi-cultural society with a range of diversity especially in the 1960s. However, this cultural diversity poses some challenges for Muslims based on differing needs and expectations. The Muslim community faces a big challenge to adapt in France, this occurs to the people who have experiences to live there and deal with French society. For Muslims to involve in the society they must refer to the principles of their faith and based on the Islamic principle. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the importance of having strategies that identify the needs and expectations of the culturally diverse citizen. This paper aims to investigate and illustrate the culture and the clash of culture in French society. The findings and the work it cannot be general for the Western culture due to many differential policies and systems and background of the society. In other words, this paper addresses the French society and all the institutions under French.

Key words: Culture • Muslim • Immigrant

INTRODUCTION

French society is a combination of many races. France was one of the biggest powers in the 19th century, leading the Mediterranean Sea and starting to colonize the African and Asian countries for the use of the resources and people in the benefits of France society. An example of Algeria was addressing to factories and Moroccan to the agriculture. Furthermore, the statistics of 2009 show the origin of the population of ethnic minorities as 5.23% Maghreb's, 2.94% black (a majority from Sub-Saharan Africa) and 0.71% Turkish.

Hargreaves [1] France was using many tools in the colonized countries. The mantle war was forcing this country to be like a French society and deliver its Christianity, according to Ageron [2] and Cruise-O'Brien, [3] Algeria days before when he got assured that the French would guarantee the right to Islamic practice in Algeria. And this never happened in the first year of the French conquests many mosques and Muslim cemeteries were destroyed or damaged. Christian missionaries who had hoped to see French authorities continue destroying

mosques or dismantle the Muslim tribunals and impose Christian education, were opposed by colonial administrators who favored secular education and respect for indigenous customs.

The racism applied by the French was so controlled, the African treated as slaves for the French as what was happening in Algeria 'it wasn't just a war to gain the land it's more than this. Splitting identity where they adopt a new theories especially for the Muslims to stop education for Algerians use the French language as the first language country. Instead destroy the society and the Muslim civilization by killing and displacement and expulsion of the scholars and Muslims institutions divide and rule the part and every time when the voices rise they end it.

France is often said to have an assimilationist tradition about immigrant minorities. According to Hargreaves [1] "Like the idea of France as a country where ethnicity has no public role". This statement shows the differences that French society has, France is the mixed community that the origin of the minority comes from the colonized countries that immigrate in France after

and before their independence. Furthermore, the finding of Hargreaves show the class of the workers. The immigrant was facing obstacles to gain the legal paper to become a citizenship. But the society still perceives them as non-French people this document will highlight the cultural adaptation of Muslims after their independence it will focus on Maghreb's (North African) people (French population). This paper discusses the multicultural society of France with a focus on the needs and expectations within Islamic community.

Multicultural Society: In the earlier 19th century, the French population was dominated compare to other races even the differentiation in classes the two class; first Class contain the European and French origin the last class is to the immigrant which come in the last category. The majority of this position origin from the colonized countries Asian and African and some European. In the first half of the 19th century a guiding idea in French colonial government was that the Africans could be assimilated into French culture and that the colonies were social laboratories. Political and economic doctrines and interventions and corresponding public policies were first and foremost elaborated in Algeria.

The Second World War and the shift in global power have invoked the process of striving to achieve equal rights and status. Rises sound of liberation around the world, has the effect on the French culture. After the independence of many countries were before under the French roller and the change of the immigrant from a French citizen for colonized countries to an immigrant. The majority of the manual workers has been building up the Remnants of War after the German roller, against their will, who are often unskilled without any experience had using them as the low-level class.

Earlier in the twentieth century, after World War II, unskilled workers came increasingly from Third World countries while European migrants tended to fill more skilled positions. Consequently, since the stereotypical image of an immigrant connoted manual labor, it came to be associated more readily with people of color than with Europeans who were assumed to be white. Class and color together it hierarchical notions of cultural difference relating to the latter thus reinforced each other in this new demarcation of immigrants. This change in the French position and adaptation of workers later on be the main responsible for the multicultural society this diversity described by the Centre for Cultural Ethnicity and Health groups or individuals of a population who are perceived

to be different from the general community. These differences relate primarily to culture, ethnicity, language and religion.

Muslims: A Muslim is refer to someone who follow the path of the prophet Mohamed "sala allah alih wa salem" who is the messenger of the god. Prophet Mohamed present the Islam religion nowadays Islam is one of the largest religions in the world, with over 1 billion followers. It is a monotheistic faith based on revelations received by the Prophet Muhammad in 7th-century Saudi Arabia. The Arabic word Islam means "submission," reflecting the faith's central tenet of submitting to the will of God. Followers of Islam are called Muslims. Tabatabai [4] state; According to the prophet Mohamed and holy Quran book the true purpose of a human being's life is the worship of god, the attainment of His understanding and complete devotion to Him. Thus, the first duty of a Muslim is to worship God and to follow His commands and the second duty is to serve humanity. In addition different Islamic subgroups exist throughout the Muslim world. These subgroups differ in terms of their interpretation of aspects of Islamic belief and practice.

Islam provides a complete way of life for those who are followers and shaping the Muslims lives basic on the Islamic principle. In other word Islam is a culture that has the effect on the Muslims live, from eating and sleeping, to working and playing. However, this culture is responding to the change of new situations. However Saikal [5] describe the codes are followed in A Muslim's life, the Articles of Faith and the Five Pillars of Islam. Lippman [6] the five pillars of Islam are the foundation of Muslim life says. This presented the need for worship and practice faith under the principle acts wich is obligatory to practice these acts for all Muslims. The Islam religion stand on the five pillars: the declaration of faith (Shahadah), the five prescribed daily prayers (Salah), fasting during the month of Ramadan (Sawm), tax on wealth (Zakah) and a pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj). In addition, there are three sources that guide Muslims in the practical living of their daily lives: the holy Quran, the Sunnah (practice of the prophet Mohammad) and the Hadith (sayings of the prophet Mohammad) [7].

Muslim Culture: Culture according to Reid, Trompf [8] refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe and material objects and possessions acquired

by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving. Additionally Leininger [9] state that Culture is the sum of total of the learned behaviour of a group of people that are generally considered to be the tradition of that people and are transmitted from generation to generation'. Within each culture there is a range of norms, values and assumptions, which create subgroups within the larger cultural group. Culture is dynamic, it is not static or fixed. Furthermore Allotey [10] define the culture from other perspective the effect of surrounding environment, Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols that patterns and explicit and implicit are exposed to the change occur in the environment surrounding this groups such as the development of technology and communication, whereas the main core of culture consists of traditional ideas and especially their attached values. it reflect the effect of new situation and pressure.

A Cultural diversity can be seen as the differences between two groups or subgroup this deference appear as the racial belong and ethnic differences, where this experience or human behavior is different in one hand. In other hand other classification of cultural diversity, such as religious affiliation, language more in this matter Canen [11] points to the importance and the value given to a language to identify and sense belonging of cultural group. The impact of this accumulated the need of society to accept and evaluate the cultural diversity more over this Wood *et al.* [12] give state the difference between the origin system based on the western culture and the Islamic culture where it's not fit easily in the system based on western value, belief and practices.

Another feature of culture identity religious beliefs discussed by Canen *et al.* [13], may cause a problematic barrier for communication and adaptation in the social life and society. example of company food provider which wants to expand to countries with different religion it might face big argument such as the Muslims countries needs of meat and mill where it require special techniques for consumption. The need for understanding the religious value for the different groups in order to adapt and accept the different culture and ethnic.

The Clash of Culture: The use of this expression is based on the understanding and the meaning addressed by this phrase where it's used by Nguyen and Kleiner [14] to describe a conflict of two opposite group or philosophy, value, style. Although this phrase has been significantly

used by academics such as Huntington [15] the clash of civilizations and the frame work developed illustrates how easily such misperception leads to visions of Islam as the new threat in a post-cold-war world. The phrase provide clear view and exact description about the situation. It's not about judge a culture whether that aspect is bad or good and right or wrong. It's mere on the ignorance and prejudice come on the surf. Rather than understanding. This clash appears mostly between cultures during the interaction of one individual or group or subgroup with others from different culture. And it be greatest where there is a significant cultural diversity.

In the early 1980 the misunderstanding of religious practices among Muslims lead to a big conflict and rises voice and show aggressiveness toward the Muslims, when the Muslims start building the mosques, and open halal butcher shops and claimed land for Muslims section in cemeteries. Scholar and politician and French people feared for 'a return of Islam' where the aim of Muslims were to be more work and save money back home in one hand, in the other hand in after the settlement of residency from a permanent resident to French nationality holders and determine the return home was impossible. They start the immigrant regarding themselves as a part of French society, because they were never interested in becoming a citizen of nation that destroy their civilization.

The so-called "headscarf affair" this case took hug concentration from the French society and Europe by the French media took accorded significant attention National press state that three Muslims schoolgirl's were obstructed from attending the classroom in a school in Creil, north of Paris in because they reject the orders to remove, many incidence follow the three girl path in many cities throughout France. The authorities took procedure to prevent all school girls to do so. Moreover the development of this conflict raises push the ministry of education to handle this case but the solution still not fit the Muslims principle by allowing the girls to attend the classes except science and physical education class and if it was not accompanied by proselytize or regular unauthorized absences.

Centre for Cultural Ethnicity and Health [16] define the clash of culture where an Islamic person experiences hospitalization in a non-Islamic health-care facility. 'Health is a culturally mediated concept that is understood in the context of a patient /client groups' belief system'. Diversity might exist in such situation with the deference of religion and belief compare a Muslim patient with non-Muslim patient consume the health care

service with non-Islamic principle. Not in line with Islamic principle and belief the Muslim will not accept the health care service thus patient adhering to their religious principle in relation to clothing and gender interaction.

The most important in Muslims believe is the worship, for Muslims performing prayer which is offered five times daily is the most important activity in a Muslim's day. The prayer call in the early morning times of dawn, after midday, late afternoon, after the sunset and at night, this prayers including recitation of Quran versus and must prepare for (salat) by taking (wudu) washing some parts of the body using clean water, where it must cover the body from navel to the knee for a man and for women its prohibited to perform (salat) while in monthly period until taken a ritual bath and need to cover all here body must be dressed modestly, with head, arms and legs covered. This can be challenging in society with different culture to accept the headscarf of women and the facilities for Muslims to performed prayer (salat) in the work place. Even to find clean place fit the Islamic principle can be difficult as few mosque around all the French territories as 5 mosque for more than 4 million Muslims is can be crucial.

The Ramadan month or fasting (sawm) month is one of the five pillars of Islam, where the adult Muslim should fast the whole month according to the Islam principle abstain from food, smoking and drinking and even the conjugal relation from the dawn to sunset. This belief is to elevate their soul and obtain nearness to god by fasting. However, children, chronic patients, elderly, travelling people, pregnant, nursing and menstruating women are allowed exemption from fasting. it might be difficult for a Muslim to perform (sawm) in culture where other people are not doing the same this can create a problematic situation where Muslim are pushed to stop fasting while are working in hard work or not very good situation in the clam of its dangerous for a health. Or in classes this clash can cause other problem of acceptance of other belief in the same country with different attitude.

DISCUSSION

The meeting of the Muslims culture and the European culture is meet of different background and different belief and deferent way of living, this paper presenting the main problem and issues encounter the Muslims in France, it's beyond the scope of this study to provide sample answer and suggest strategies to this issues. However the government should take all responsibilities to clear all this

misunderstanding among non-Muslims for the Islam culture. by recognizing that there are differences exist and secondly is to plan and have strategies to incorporate this differences into the benefit of society. Back to the Muslim culture which is in itself diverse culture, varying by their origin home land, language and the level of practicing Islam religion .example of differences in clothing style, tradition and custom .it represent the challenge can be faced from French society on the Muslim culture.

The literature addressing Muslim culture in the Western society is very limited. As a consequence, it is likely that strategies have not been developed to manage many of the issues that are important to Muslim; for example, the provision of halal food, privacy for women, observing hijab and segregation of genders onwards, prayer facility and visiting. However. Therefore, it is important that these Islamic values, which Muslims in corporate into daily life, are also incorporated into the life for Muslims. The clash of cultures is not an inevitable event, but can be avoided if there are systematic planning and strategies ensure the provision of life is flexible. This flexibility can be more important in the multicultural societies if the needs of the consumer of services such as the health care met their need. More over on this Limage [17] discus the response of educational institution to the Muslims culture and the effect of this community on the French election where his study show how the recent reaction in French politics and the hope for the republic model. when a schoolgirl or adolescent around French start wearing the head scarf , and rejection of been involved in the physical contact we can differentiate two group between the Islamic organization and institution where they support and claim the right to practice the religion and classified as personally meter rather than public issues in the other hand the lectures and are alike was requeste the removal of the head scarf .in many cases the refusal to remove the headscarf were been sent to home or they will be grouped in the library temporary before they send them back by the authority of the school this is against the French low which demonstrate the first demonstrations for and against this sign of `religious` practice were tense and remain so, in spite of the legal decisions taken to date religion as a private matter and the republican ideal of neutrality and secularity in the public sphere; (b) equality as the same treatment for all; (c) the nature of what constitutes legitimate knowledge; and above all, (d) the clash of credibility of current institutions to hold the monopoly for resolving the major social issues of the end of the 20th century. Additionally to this Bigger

[18] highlighted the need of the society to know more about the Muslims and the Islam and the Islam culture, including the good experience that will prepare them to deal with stereotype and making decision and choices based on good information.

The effort spending by the French government and the Education Ministry and the legislations that void, Wing and Smith [19], Bowen, J.R. [20] headscarf affair issue in French, the French public supported the legislative ban. The text of the legislation read: "In the schools, public secondary schools and high schools, wearing symbols or dress by which the students conspicuously manifest a religious affiliation is prohibited" in the other hand voices rise from all over the world, London Member of the European Parliament Human Rights and Civil Liberties Committee Jean Lambert expressed his dismay "Banning the wearing of religious symbols is a clear human rights violation". 84 Human Rights Watch identified the ban as "infringe[ing] the internationally recognized right to freedom of religion," even though it recognized that public institutions could seek to not promote any religion through their words or actions.⁸⁵ However, the outright ban on the headscarf was a step beyond this and Human Rights Watch did not believe that protecting the students' religious freedom undermined secularism. ⁸⁶ Even the United Nations' human rights experts criticized the law, calling it intolerant toward Muslims.

The halal food issue Bonne *et al.* [21] have demonstrate the implication of their research extend to food policy decision-makers and food marketers who might pursue identity- and/or acculturation-related strategies in their distribution and communication efforts targeted at the growing halal food market segment in Western Europe.

CONCLUSION

French has seen a shift of society especially after the independence of many countries and after the world war two, this shift bring by the multi culture. However this culture diversity bring out the diversity in lifestyle, needs and exception for a member of the community. This has important implication for emigrant who live there to which extent they stand. And the procedure taking by the government.

This paper presented an overview of Islamic culture and about the Islam religion and beliefs of Muslims have important implication for the society and culture. From the

practice of religion to the study condition for Muslims, in other world to be a citizen in France. And the need of sustain a system can be adopted from other experiences that can feet the cultural diversity and meet the need of Muslims in France.

In other word the French society must present and reflect the cultural diversity it's contain. Such system was adapted to serve the European community in France it can be transferred to serve and accept the Muslims culture where they can live in peace and without any debt of conflict. This shift must be mirrored in the type and nature of the engagement and development provided by the society and citizen to practice religion and beliefs.

From our own ethnocentric perspective, which is based on respect for diversity as opposed to assimilation into a melting pot, we hope that France will someday see the value of inclusion of the multiplicity of voices of all its peoples, whether they are of the majority religion/culture or not.

REFERENCES

1. Hargreaves, A.G., 2001. Perceptions of ethnic difference in post-war France. *Contributions to the Study of World Literature*, 106: 7-22.
2. Ageron, C.R., 2005. *Les Algériens musulmans et la France 1871-1919*. Paris: Bouchène.
3. Cruise-O'Brien, D., 1967. 'Toward an 'Islamic policy' in French West Africa, 1854-1914', *The Journal of African History*, 8(2): 303-316.
4. Tabatabai, A.S.M.H., 1975. *Shi'ite Islam*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
5. Saikal, A., 2003. *Islam and the West: Conflict or Cooperation*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
6. Lippman, T.W., 1996. *Understanding Islam: An Introduction to the Muslim World*, 2nd edn. New York, NY: Plume.
7. Mohammadi, N., D. Evans and T. Jones, 2007. Muslims in Australian hospitals: The clash of cultures. *International Journal of Nursing Practice*, 13(5): 310-315.
8. Reid, J. and P. Trompf, 1990. *The Health of Immigrant Australia: A Social Perspective*. Sydney: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Group.
9. Leininger, M.M., 1983. Cultural care: An essential goal for nursing and health care. *American Association of Nephrology Nurses and Technicians*, 10: 11-17.

10. Allotey, P., L. Manderson and D. Reidpath, 2002. Addressing cultural diversity in Australian health services. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*, 13: 29-33.
11. Canen, A., 1995. "Preparing Teachers as Facilitators of Language Development and Retention: Some Inter cultural Concerns, Language Maintenance and Revival: Erasmus Intensive Course in Comparative Education. "Trinity College Dublin".
12. Wood, D.F., A. Barone, P. Murphy and D.L. Ward Low, 1995. *International Logistics*. Chapman & Hall.
13. Canen, A.G. and A. Canen, 1999. Logistics and cultural diversity: hand in hand for organisational success. *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal*, 6(1): 3-10.
14. Nguyen, H. and H.B. Kleiner, 2003. The effective management of merges. *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal*, 24: 447-454.
15. Huntington, S.P., 1993. The clash of civilizations. *Foreign Affairs*, pp: 22-49.
16. Centre for Cultural Ethnicity and Health, 2003. *Diversity in Hospitals: Responding to the Needs of Patient and Client Groups from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds. Policy and Resource Guide Prepared by the Acute Diversity Care Collaboration Program*: pp: 1-57.
17. Limage, L.J., 2000. Education and Muslim identity: the case of France. *Comparative Education*, 36(1): 73-94.
18. Bigger, S., 2006. Muslim women's views on dress code and the hijab: some issues for education. *Journal of Beliefs & Values*, 27(2): 215-226.
19. Wing, A.K. and M.N. Smith, 2005. Critical Race Feminism Lifts the Veil: Muslim Women, France and the Headscarf Ban. *UC Davis L. Rev.*, 39: 743.
20. Bowen, J.R., 2007. Why the French don't like headscarves: Islam, the state and public space. *European Review*, 15(3): 397-400.
21. Bonne, K., I. Vermeir, F. Bergeaud-Blackler and W. Verbeke, 2007. Determinants of halal meat consumption in France. *British Food Journal*, 109(5): 367-386.