

Exploring the Security Dimension of Islamophobia: An analysis of Hollywood Movies

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Abstract

The study was conducted to address and explore the security dimension of Islamophobia in Hollywood movies. Therefore, the objective of the study is to investigate the representation of Muslims in Hollywood movies and to explore the securitization of Muslims. Securitization theory has been used as the theoretical framework of this study. The methodology used for this purpose consisted of quantitative analysis and analyzing three movies released by Hollywood. It was found that the portrayal of Muslims on Hollywood platforms is problematic and has produced securitized images of Muslims. Researchers selected three movies: *American Sniper*, *The Dictator* and *Clean Skin*, released by Hollywood movies by utilizing purposive sampling technique. The finding shows that *The Dictator* produced more securitized scenes than *American Sniper* and *Clean Skin*. All three movies produced negative content related to Muslims. The *Dictator* and *American Sniper* produced more securitized images of Muslims Women as a Threat theme, Muslims as a Threat and Muslims Children as a Threat as compared to the *Clean Skin*. All of the three

movies had produced very few scenes in the Immigrants and Refugees category. All three movies produced negative content on attributes related to Muslims category like, Turban, Cap, beard, Hijab and dress. Hollywood movies in the process of securitization of Muslims; Muslims are being linked with terrorism and extremism, and framed as a security threat. Hence, by following Islamophobic discourses, Hollywood movies have produced securitized the image of Muslims.

Key Words: Islam, Muslims, Securitization, Islamophobia, Hollywood movies

Introduction

A Runnymede Trust Report (1997) described Islamophobia as "an unfounded hostility" towards Islam and Muslims. Report raises concerns about hostility in the form of discrimination against Muslims on major social and political issues. In fact, a report has made Muslims and Islam as a "security threat." Islam is considered immoral, irrational, and old-fashioned. Whereas Muslims are seen as threatening, violent, aggressive and helpful to terrorism. Muslims are divided between "us" and "them", "us" that we are civilized and enlightened while "they" are old-fashioned, violent and senseless¹. Due to Islamophobia, a sizeable portion of the Muslim population in Europe is marginalized. The role performed by mainstream politicians in encouraging Islamophobia has not received as much attention as the role played by far-right organisations and sensationalist media. The lectures are said to contain Islamophobia that is based on generalizations, presumptions, and prejudices about Islam and Muslims. Reflecting on the legacy of a significant recent political dynasty, anti-Muslim prejudice ².Moreover, according to other report feelings of anti-Muslim sentiment has been increasing in Europe. For example, there are mosque debates in different states in the USA; legislation in France about anti-veiling; the "minaret" row in Switzerland; debates over the construction of an Islamic centre near Ground Zero and the massacre of Turkish immigrants in Germany are some of the most well-known examples ³.Additionally, Iqbal (2010) outlines how the historical complexity and deep origins of current discussions on Islamophobia. He has split Islamophobia model into three main domains: first, Manifestation, which relates to the causes of Islamophobia, Second, threat

Perception than finally, social attitude structure + Hollywood movie imagery has the ability and influence to affect viewers' opinions on a range of social, political, or ideological issues. Majority of the world's nations has sizable populations of films and movies moviegoers that regularly watch Hollywood blockbusters for entertainment. These movies regularly misrepresents and mocks Muslims, who number more than a billion and a half, and Islam, which is the second-largest religion in the world. ⁵. To support the idea that such matter helped people to construct their identities, perception regarding Muslims and Islam before and after 9/11 event, a range of Hollywood movies have been reviewed. American culture exemplifies how Hollywood has utilized the images to establish the discourse of "US vs. THEM" in popular culture ⁶. Summarizing above concepts and definitions of Islamophobia, we could say, "Islamophobia is the practice of perceiving Muslims and Islam as political, cultural, and security threat on the premise of apartheid, according to the above study of its principles, definition, many features, and role in the formation of images. These opinions can occasionally manifest in behaviors that are antagonistic and violent toward Muslims and Islam. Discrimination against Muslims in various institutions may be a sign of Islamophobia. Objective of this study is to investigate how the Hollywood films have securitized Islam and Muslims by systematic stereotyping and their negative portrayal. It is important to understand the securitized portrayal of Muslims in Hollywood movies as key discourse of Islamophobia. We intend to analyze the securitized content produced by Hollywood movies regarding Islam and Muslims. *This study is an attempt to explore the securitized images of Muslims produced by Hollywood movies.*

Literature Review

Literature on suggest that after the 9/11 attacks, Muslims have found themselves at the center of mainstream media and film stories about their sociocultural standards. The cinema created a theme for war movies that often depicted Muslims as enemies. Numerous other studies have concluded that people in the West now have negative views about Muslims and Islam which is a result of media misrepresentation. According to the research, Muslims were primarily portrayed in Hollywood films as being opposed to Western ideas of tolerance and equality. The analysis regarding projecting Muslims in films shows that Hollywood movies helps

in multiple ways in fueling anti-Muslim prejudice, commonly known as Islamophobia⁷. In the study by Abraham in (2008) he has demonstrated findings demonstrate how Muslims are portrayed in Western fiction, as experiencing various forms of othering, new hybrid identities and relationships are emerging, rejecting the rhetoric of a "clash of civilizations" between Muslims and the West. It does this by analyzing two novels ("The Taqwacores" and "Bilal's Bread") and two movies ("My Beautiful Laundrette" and "Touch of Pink"). The study's findings also demonstrate how Western Muslims' sociopolitical, cultural and economic circumstances relate to their quest for identity, belonging, and faith⁸.

Further examination of two Hollywood films' content ("The Kingdom" and "Rendition") both films, which center on the post-9/11 environment, were released in 2007 following the 9/11 attacks. The majority of the movie scenes were examined and critiqued with relation to the language they employed, the settings of films scenes, and other things like how the directors described and articulated certain events and scenes using various Islamic symbols⁹.

Content of two additional films; viz. "The Kingdom" and "Rendition"; was reviewed by Alavi in (2015). Both the movies were release in 2007 and both focus on the post-9/11 environment. Majority of the movie scenes were examined and critiqued with relation to the language they employed, the settings of films scenes, and other things like how the directors described and articulated certain events and scenes using various Islamic symbols¹⁰. In the study, "English- Stereotyping of Islam and Muslims In Hollywood Movies", the author looks at how different Muslim groups are portrayed in Hollywood films as well as how Islamic nations are portrayed in the movies. According to the research, every Muslim group was characterized as being antagonistic to the West. The study's findings also demonstrated that citizens of Islamic nations were viewed as being less civilized and that there were obvious problems rather than a peaceful way of life in those nations. The movies also did a horrible job of portraying all five of the Islamic countries¹¹. Another study looked at how six films from the years 2008 to 2011 represented American policy in the fight against terrorism. "Body of Lies," "The Four Horsemen," "Hurt Locker," "The Messenger," "Green Zone," and "The Essential Killing" are some of these movies. The study shown and established that Muslims and Muslim nations are

unfairly and underrepresented in Hollywood films, while the War on Terror is portrayed in a pro-American light¹². Abdullah (2015) has opined that Muslims have always been significant to the West, and western literature. Cinema frequently portrays Muslims in dehumanizing and stereotypical ways. In contrast to post-9/11 novels like “The Reluctant Fundamentalist” and “Once in a Promised Land”, pre-9/11 Hollywood films “True Lies” and “The Siege” plainly illustrate the stereotyped attitude of the West against Muslims. The results show the pre- and post-9/11 era stereotyped, dehumanising, and hostile attitudes of the West against Arabs and Muslims¹³.

In yet another study by Nazar, Noureen, and Mustafa (2021), which focused on media, it has been concluded that Muslims are portrayed negatively, in a fundamentalist, anti-American, low category education/profession, and uncivilised manner. Such a narrative was considered offensive needed to be shunned in order to avoid marginalization of Muslims.¹⁴ In a review of the movie “In the Land of Blood and Honey”, the author has observed that Muslim women is also the target of the orientalist generalisation in American film; she is exposed to sexual and gender stereotypes and is charged with betraying the international order for which she is given the death penalty¹⁵.

According to another research by Harsha Senanayake, “Hollywood and Wicked Other: The Identity Formation of ‘Western Us’ Versus ‘Muslim Others,’” *Open Political Science* 4, no. 1 (January 1, 2021): 64–67, <https://doi.org/10.1515/openps-2021-0007>. Hollywood has presented Muslims as nasty, savage people as a result of Orientalism, post 9/11 Hollywood cinema, and the West's ambition to advance civilization. After 9/11, Hollywood movies significantly contributed to the politicisation of Muslims as a danger to western culture and the securitization of "Muslim strangers." Mecheri (2020) study looks at the American film industry (mostly Hollywood), focusing on the size of the Muslim body and how the Muslim beard is portrayed as a sign of uniqueness and danger in films produced after the 9/11 attacks. In particular, it looks at beards as a physical practice that reveals details about Muslims and as a crucial component that gives life to the stereotypically evil Arab characters in Hollywood films. The essay demonstrates how the rhetoric of dread, danger, and terror has been ingrained

in men's beards by focusing on Hollywood films' depictions of bearded Muslim men ¹⁶. Haider's (2020) analysis of post-9/11 Hollywood film on terrorism and the Middle East brings out as to how these films racialize Muslim identities in order to promote Islamophobia. The study reveals how, in the context of the War on Terror, films criminalise Muslim gender identities, dehumanise their bodies, and devalue their physical and territorial space in order to participate in the political processes of racial construction of Muslim identities. Muslim identities are objectified, dehumanised, and vilified as a result of the racialized depictions of Muslim bodies that are woven into the political discourse surrounding the War on Terror ¹⁷. Ali and Rizvi (2020) analysis of three hugely successful movies that came out after 9/11 revealed that Muslim characters were generally portrayed negatively and unfavorably in comparison to non-Muslim characters, and that these films helped to create an image of Muslims as a symbol of terror, assassins, killers, violent, antifeminists, brutal, and intolerable of other religions. While the majority of Muslim characters were portrayed as militants, lawbreakers, and suicide bombers, Islamic rites, core beliefs, and Muslim culture were described in critical and unflattering terms. On the other hand, non-Muslim characters were portrayed as defenders of world security and peace who loved peace and were intelligent, logical, tolerant, and feminists ¹⁸.

Fatima (2016) in her study regarding Hollywood Movies, identifies use of numerous technique of propaganda to project different anti Islam narratives, in which the West considered Islam is the name of negativity. She identified the different aspects of the portrayal of Islam i.e. social, cultural and political. Muslim and Islam image was spoiled in Hollywood movies. In general, these films specifically convey the unfavourable perceptions about Muslims. She figured out what proportion of movie scenes portrayed Muslims negatively. Study emphasised Hollywood's conviction that films are radicalizing Muslims around the world. ¹⁹.

In analysis of the drama and thriller film *Zero Dark Thirty*; Barnes () is hesitant to adopt terrorist tactics in the beginning of this film (All characters were shown as Muslims). This movie demonstrates that Muslims view the sentimental torture of terrorists as a positive gesture and justifies it as such. Muslims are seen as aggressive and adversaries of European and American populations. In relation to western

policies, they are presented in a negative light, and all of the characters are depicted as Usama Bin Laden's operatives²⁰. In his study, while considering it as a security phenomenon, Iqbal suggests that Islamophobia can be seen via a set of developed parameters under the variables that derive from certain factors related to Islam like "subjugation through jihad," "Islam is a threat to our peace and normalcy!" "Islam propagates violence," and "subjugation through jihad"²¹. Two broad categories related to the security dimension of Islamophobia help us understand the conceptual threat process: ideological threat and existential threat. The ideological threat can be studied and understood in four sub-dimensions, such as totalitarianism, jihadism, wahhabism, and Sharia law. Similarly, the existential threat aspect is classified as a threat from immigrants, refugees, and local Muslims²².

Summarizing the discussion in the above mentioned studies, it may be concluded that all the scholars has pointed out a prominent negativity in the portrayal of Muslims and Islam in global Media. Similarly there is a plethora of research available as evidence that the portrayal of Muslims and Islam in movies platform is problematic. This trend of negativity all around the world regarding Islam and Muslims is increasing. All around the world the researchers have explored and identified different kinds of negative discourses associated with Muslims and Islam by the Media. Similarly, it is pertinent to find out weather and to what extent Hollywood movies have securitized Muslims. Therefore, our study is an attempt to address, explore whether and Muslims are securitized on Hollywood movies and to analyze the themes under which Islam and Muslims are securitized.

Securitization Theory

Securitization theory was applied in the 1990s by security study theorists Ole Weaver, Zap de Wilde and Barry Buchen (1998) from the Copenhagen School (McDonald's, 2008). This theory redefined the conceptual framework in security studies dealing with state and military organizations. This theory deals with the problems, distribution and disappearance of people²³. In particular, Heathcote (2010) argues that this theory contains not only the language 'but outside', but also that social reality²⁴.

Non-politicized > Politicized > Securitized

Process of Securitization Source: Krume (2010) Clearly, this theory has the two main dimensions: first is the securitization process of an issue, secondly, the successful politicization of solitude from political neutralization to eventual politicization (Wæver 2003). Speaking from positions of authority, Elite assures audiences that the threat is captured by the use of speech measures, "not only by describing the existing security situation but also by successfully representing the security situation"²⁵. Messina (2016) takes argues that issue is designed as a threat, and, in the end, the object (the audience) must accept it, which poses a threat to completing the securitization process. This theory has been found to be used in a complete, contemporary form and has great descriptive power and applies to a variety of security issues. Securitization is the process of turning problem into a security problem ²⁶. Securitization refers to extraordinary actions that are next to the rule of law; it is a thrill for the survival of the community due to emergencies. Theorists say that secularism functions outside the realm of politics because it responds to existential threats. It includes actors who see Islam as a threat to secular and political standards and-advocate extraordinary measures to control it ²⁷.

In conclusion, securitization goes beyond the state's efforts to halt international political violence. The restrictions on the burqa are thus a result of a change in policy driven by security concerns, with immigration laws serving as an example. It is also increasingly directed at Islamic religious practices like wearing the burqa. Unexpectedly, this circumstance has resulted in governments having more power to regulate religion in general. As a result, it poses a grave threat to democracy and the freedom of religion throughout Europe. Hence, the Hollywood movies present some issues,—segment of a society, group of people and certain community as a threat to the audience; said process securitization trick. The securitization theory will offer excellent theoretical groundwork and background for examining the securitization process with reference to Islam and Muslims as security threats. This theory will help us contextualize and analyse this issue. This study addresses and analyses the process of securitization by collecting data and content produced by Hollywood movies as a securitization agent and the first step of this process. These are the study research question. RQ1. Whether and to what extent Hollywood

movies produced securitized images of Muslims? RQ2. What are the dominant securitized themes of Muslims in Hollywood movies?

Research Methodology

Content analysis method utilized in this study. As quantitative approach under content analysis method has been selected in Hollywood movies. Hollywood movies released related to Islam and Muslims will be universe of this study. *Purposive sampling technique has been used in this study.* Researcher selected three movies *The Dictator, Clean Skin, American Sniper* released by Hollywood movies. These three movies are the representative of all Hollywood movies related to Islam and Muslims. Each Muslim character and relevant content to Muslims presented in selected Hollywood movies is considered as the unit of analysis. The researcher found many Hollywood movies which are represented Islam and Muslims in a negative way. Movies has been chosen for this study in light of the facts and content that they have produced and are the main and popular movies and have a substantial number of audience. Secondly, Hollywood's movies are popular across the globe and their viewership is more significant than any other form of communication taking place between USA and rest of the world. It certainly makes Hollywood movies a relatively better tool for the research purpose as compared to newspaper, Journals, magazines and radio etc. Coding sheet has been formulated. Once the code book was built with number of scenes related to Muslims Securitized themes, slants and the words used for Muslims was examined and coded by the units of investigation as examined underneath. The selected time period for this study rages from January 2010 to 2015. The movies released in above time span are included in this study. Firstly, January 2002 comes right after incident of 9/11 which was the turning point of relationship between America and the Muslim world. Secondly, extending this study from 2010 till 2015 will help us out to assess this phenomenon over broad spectrum of time besides it will enable us to draw the latest situation out of this. For the measurement of the data, on "Securitization of Muslims". Similarly, the existential threat aspect is classified as a threat to immigrants, refugees and general Muslims, women as a security threat' as proposed by ²⁸ and later on used by ²⁹ in his study has adopted these themes of Securitization. We can operationalize the sub dimensions of existential threat as: General Muslims:

Movie scene, dialogue and dress showing Muslims as general threat to Security and well-being ³⁰ as a matter of concern attributes related to Muslims: such as a support terrorism, beard, dark skin, passionate and violent ³¹ while Muslims women’s: Movie scene, dialogue and dress showing Muslims women’s as potential security challenge, wearing hijab, supporter of terrorism, prohibition of coverage by veil in a public place and demanding ban on Hijab or Niqab ³² Muslims Children: Movie scene, dialogue and dress showing showings Muslim children’s involves in violent activities. Immigrants: Movie scene, dialogue and dress showing immigrants, threat to national security, national sovereignty, human security and ethnic imbalance ³³ negative perception of immigrants as the enemy. Refugees: Movie scene, dialogue and dress showing , refugees, refugee’s link with extremist, charged with ideology of jihad ³⁴ as direct threats to national security. Connecting Muslims with Terrorist Organization: Movie scene, dialogue and dress showing Muslims as having connection with Terrorist organization considered in this category. From many of movies researcher have purposively selected these three movies to guarantee that my outcomes are generalizable. Researcher used techniques to keep away from orderly coding of misrepresentative substance. Researcher endeavor to direct a straightforward coding measure with a comprehensive record of experienced coding difficulties and how they were settled. The same methodology has been previously used by ³⁵ in his study.

Finding and Data Analysis

Quantitative approach used under content analysis method. *Purposive sampling technique has been used in this study.* Three movies *American Sniper, The Dictator, Clean Skin*, released by Hollywood have been selected for study. Here the findings of the study

Table I: Distribution of movies against year and number of scene in Movies

| Name of Movie | Year of Movie | Scenes N (%) |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| The Dictator | 2012 | 76 (42) |
| Clean Skin | 2012 | 51(28) |

Table I show that the Hollywood movie *The Dictator* and *Clean Skin* were released in 2012 while *American Sniper* was released in 2014. Findings show that the Hollywood movies *American Sniper* produced 55 scenes, *The Dictator* produced 76, and *Clean Skin* produced 51. The data from above reveals that Results shows that *The Dictator* produced relatively more scenes than *American Sniper* and *Clean Skin*.

Table I we have shown the year of releases and the number of biased scenes. Number in the bracket () shows the percentage of produced scenes.

Table 2: Distribution of the Securitized Themes in the Movies Reviewed.

| Theme | The Dictator | Clean Skin | American Sniper |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|
| Muslims Women as Threat | 20 | 13 | 13 |
| General Muslims as a Threat | 30 | 4 | 22 |
| Muslims Children as a Threat | 10 | | 15 |
| Immigrants | 4 | | 0 |
| Refugees | 3 | | 0 |
| Muslims' connection with Terrorist organization | 9 | | 5 |

Table 2 elaborates the movie *American Sniper* movie produced 13 scenes in the "Muslim Women as Threats" category, 22 scenes in the "General Muslims as Threats" category, 15 scenes on "Muslim Children as Threats," and 5 scenes on "Muslim Connection with Terrorist Organizations." Similarly, "*The Dictator*" contains 20 scenes depicting Muslims Women as "Threat"; 30 scenes show General Muslims as a Threat. It contains 10 scenes suggesting Muslims Children as a Threat while and 9 scenes on Muslims connection with terrorist organization. Third movie, "*Clean Skin*" produced 13 scenes in Muslims Women as Threat category, 14 scenes in General Muslims as a Threat, 9 scenes on Muslims Children as a Threat while, 6 scenes on Muslims connection with Terrorist organization category. The movie "*The Dictator*" alludes to the refugees or immigrant while the remaining two make no mention of these two categories.

Table 3: Distribution of the Securitized themes slants against movies.

| Category of Theme | The Dictator | | | Clean Skin | | | American Sniper | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| | N(%) | | | N(%) | | | N(%) | | |
| <i>Depiction</i> | <i>Positive</i> | <i>Negative</i> | <i>Positive</i> | <i>Negative</i> | <i>Neutral</i> | <i>Neutral</i> | <i>Positive</i> | <i>Negative</i> | <i>Neutral</i> |
| Muslims Women as Threat | 14(70) | 3(15) | 10(76) | 2(15) | 1(8) | 3(15) | 6(46) | 3(23) | 4(31) |
| General Muslims as a Threat | 20(67) | 6(20) | 18(81) | 3(14) | 1(5) | 4(13) | 10(71) | 0 | (29) |
| Muslims Children as a Threat | 6(67) | 0 | 10(67) | 3(20) | 2(13) | 3(33) | 6(67) | 0 | 3(33) |
| Immigrant | 0 | 2(40) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3(60) | 0 | 0 | 0(0) |
| Refugees | 0 | 2(33) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4(67) | 0 | 0 | 0(0) |

Table 3 illustrates that the Hollywood movie *The Dictator* produced 10 positive scenes in Muslims Women as Threat category, 18 positive scenes in General Muslims as a Threat, 10 positive scenes on Muslims Children as a Threat while, 4 positive scenes on Muslims connection with Terrorist organization category. Similarly, *American Sniper* movie produced 14 positive scenes in Muslims Women as Threat category, 20 positive scenes in General Muslims as a Threat, 6 positive scenes on Muslims Children as a Threat while, 6 positive scenes on Muslims connection with Terrorist organization category. While, *Clean Skin* produced 6 positive scenes in Muslims Women as Threat category, 10 positive scenes in General Muslims as a Threat, 6 positive scenes on Muslims Children as a Threat while, 5 positive scenes on Muslims connection with Terrorist organization category.

Table 4: Distribution of the attributes related to Muslims against movies.

| Attributes | The Dictator | Clean Skin | American Sniper |
|------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|
| Beard | 18 | 12 | 22 |
| Turba/ Cap | 6 | 4 | 9 |

| | | | |
|-----------|----|----|----|
| Hijab | 10 | 6 | 15 |
| Lifestyle | 5 | 6 | 6 |
| Dress | 8 | 11 | 12 |
| Tasbeeh | 0 | 0 | 3 |

Table 4 highlights statistics regarding negative portrayal of attributes in the movies reviewed in this study. *The Dictator* resorted to negative portrayal of attributes related to Muslims negatively as beard 18 times, Turban or Cap 6 times, Hijab 10 times, Dress 8 times. Similarly, the *American Sniper* movie used attributes related to Muslims negatively, such as beard 22 times, turban or cap 9 times, hijab 15 times, and dress 8 times. While, *Clean Skin* used attributes related to Muslims negatively as beard 12 times, Turban or Cap 4 times, Hijab 6 times and Dress 11 times.

Discussion and Conclusion

The act of labeling or classifying a person or group of individuals as a security danger is known as the securitization process, often referred to as a securitization action. This study was conducted to further the exploration of the securitization of Muslims in Hollywood movies and to analyze the themes and sub dimensions under which Muslims have been securitized. Immigration regulations, Police restrictions and other government measures used to protect people from perceived threats are also included. Pressure, the adoption of legislation, laws and policies are also included. Three movies have been reviewed., "*The Dictator*" and "*Clean Skin*" were released in 2012 while "*American Sniper*" was released in 2014. It was observed that "*The Dictator*" produced 76 negative scenes, "*Clean Skin*" produced 51 and "*American Sniper*" produced 55 such scenes. On a comparative basis "*The Dictator*" produced more scenes than "*Clean Skin*" and "*American Sniper*". While addressing the research question of whether and to what extent the reviewed movies produced securitized images of Muslims, the finding of the study illustrates that the "*The Dictator*" produced securitized scenes in the categories "Muslim women as threat" category, "general Muslims as a threat", "Muslim children as a threat", and "Muslim connections with the terrorist organization" category relatively less than "*American Sniper*" movie. "*Clean Skin*" produced less scenes as compared to the other two movies. From the scenes of movies American Sniper the negative scenes has been found 28:28 second as below:

“Hold up. I got a woman and a kid, 200 yards out, moving toward the convoy. The woman cradles something beneath her robes. Her arms aren't swinging. She's carrying something, as she pulls a cylindrical object from her robes. His vision obscured but She just pulled a grenade. An RKG Russian grenade. I think she gave it to the kid”

In many Hollywood films, Muslims are portrayed as security threats as criminals, terrorists, or radicals, like in the case of the documentary "Fitna," which was released by a Dutch MP (2008). Additionally, this portrays Muslims as rude and as having difficulties blending into the western public. Muslims are stigmatised as being dangerous, terrorists, anti-democratic, and backwards-thinking. Furthermore, it has been found that in the script of movie American Sniper:

“The man with the blade is a Jordanian radical funded by Bin Laden, trained by Bin Laden and loyal to Bin Laden. His name is "Zarqawi" and he is the prince of al-Qaeda in Iraq. AQI, his mercenary army, are 5000 strong. They're trained well, paid well and waging the heaviest urban combat since Vietnam. Zarqawi and his Lieutenants are our highest priority. Only way to root them out is to go house-to-house until we find them, or someone who will reveal their whereabouts. We need to clear ten structures an hour. It's aggressive so we'll loosen things up with air support”

Muslims have been presented as terrorists and Islam as a threat to world peace ³⁶. It has been also found that the Hollywood movie *The Dictator and American Sniper* used more attributes related to Muslims negatively as compared to *Clean Skin*. Second research question was, “what are the dominant securitized themes of Muslims in Hollywood movies”? The movies “*The Dictator*”, “*American Sniper*”

and "Clean Skin" produced more scenes in "Muslims Women as Threat" category and "General Muslims as a Threat" category as compared to "Muslims Children as a Threat" and "Muslims connection with Terrorist Organization" category. All three movies produced very few tweets under the "Immigrants and Refugees" category. Research backs up Singh's (2016) conclusions as well as those in the Runnymede Trust report "Islamophobia: A Challenge for All of Us" from 1997. Muslims are concerned about the effects of Islamophobia, such as the beard, dark skin, and scarf worn by terrorists who draw inspiration from traditional religious rituals. The study supported³⁷ results that a significant portion of western countries held Muslims in lower regard than the general public. Similarly, research supports the securitization discourses.³⁸ Study found that Muslim women, adopting the hijab are perceived as a security risk and communicates sympathy for terrorism. Online anti-Muslim propaganda has significantly accelerated the aggressiveness against Muslim women who wear headscarves in the west. This aggression is primarily gendered, with women being seen as a threat³⁹. It has been noted that many European countries recently banned the burqa, but some also forbade the veil. This particular predicament is brought about by the securitization of Islam and Muslims in European nations. Online anti-Muslim propaganda has a significant impact in accelerating violence against Muslim women who choose to wear a headscarf and is substantially gendered.⁴⁰ It has been also found that movies "The Dictator" and "American Sniper" used attributes related to Muslims negatively; such as beard, Turban or Cap, Hijab, Dress relatively more as compared to "Clean Skin". However, there is no proof insinuation that immigrants and Refugees pose a hazard. This category is also known as the existential threat category on other platforms, such as Twitter.

Conclusion

While, concluding the above discussion it is concluded that the Hollywood movies produced securitized images of Muslims considered Muslims opposite to western public and differentiate between 'US' and 'THEM'. It has been found from previous studies that Media-reliant people have more involved in inter-ethnic conflict related to Muslims⁴¹. Similarly, study also confirms that finding of⁴² that media involved in the securitization of Muslims and representing them existential

threat. Through the securitization process, Islam has gained some level of significance in the public discourse as a result of this process. Similar to this, ~~national~~ lawmakers in some countries are currently exploring legislation to outlaw Sharia, the burqa, immigration laws, the deportation of refugees, airport security checks, and many other projects as a result of securitization in a number of European governments. Following the 9/11 attacks, and the advent of war against terrorism, Hollywood movies have portrayed Muslim women as security threats who support terrorism by donning the hijab, which could pose a security risk. While many European nations have banned the burqa, several also forbid the veil. This particular circumstance is brought upon by the securitization of Islam and Muslims. Hollywood movies, in the process of securitizing Muslims, Muslims are being equated with terrorism and framed as a security threat. Muslims pose a great existential threat to west and therefore; a number of politicians in many countries have adopted this understanding and are now considering the adoption of legislation banning Sharia. However, as one of the limitations of this study, it is noteworthy that the researcher selected only three movies as a sample for analysis. This study includes Holly Wood movies released during the selected time period only. This study is limited to the content analysis of selected Hollywood movies. For further research, it is proposed to apply other methods of analysis. It is also proposed that to further explicit and identify the other sub dimensions of ideological and existential threats further. Researchers can further extend this study to other communication means like other social media platforms, TV and newspapers.

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