

Role of Media in building an Islamic Society

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Abstract

Media is regarded as an advanced blessed technology of the era of science and development. However, many Muslims deem it a devilish technology that has diminished the image of Islam before international community. The purpose of this research study is to highlight the positive aspects of media that by the virtue of this technology, religion of Islam is fostering throughout the world in the short span of time. Furthermore the study highlights the tremendous effects of media that are being helpful in building an Islamic society. Finally this study stresses upon Muslims to utilize each expect of this modern technology for making better image of Islam throughout the world.

Keywords: *Media, Islam, disseminate, image, technology, effects, Islamic society*

Research Questions

In the light of the research objectives, following questions are designed for the present study:

1. What are the effects of media on Islam?
2. What type of role can be played by media in building an Islamic society?
3. How media can be helpful to portray better image of Muslims before international community?

Introduction

Many so-called Muslim clerics consider media as a curse. They state loopholes and hazardous effects of media on youth and declare it as a tool of devil. This theory is not acceptable at all in the modern era. Infact it is a media that can rapidly convey the teachings of Islam to the people. For building an Islamic society, media can play effective role.

This research study explores the role of media in establishing an Islamic society. Media signifies Television, Internet, Magazines, Websites, Newspapers and application of different software's etc. In this context, media is divided among three categories.

- Electronic Media
- Social Media
- Print Media

The services of multiple tools of media regarding disseminating Islamic teachings .and establishing Islamic society are here in below.

Services of Electronic Media for Islam

According to Merriam Webster Dictionary a medium which electronically transmits information is called Electronic Media. Electronic media is a major source that transmits all kind of news across the world. The popular tools of electronic media are TV Channels. People rely on the information that transmits by these TV channels.

Regarding building an Islamic society TV channels can perform well. There are a lot of TV channels at worldwide which are performing for the cause of Islam.

TV Channels

Different Islamic channels are working on the cause of disseminating Islamic teachings and helping in establishing an Islamic society.

Al Huda

The object of this channel is to develop strong relation with almighty Allah and Holy prophet (p.b.u.h). So as human being can be closer to his creator and his messenger's given shariah. In other words this channel promotes love for Almighty Allah and his prophet (p.b.u.h) in the hearts of Muslims.

JTR Media

Jamiat Ul Rasheed is an Islamic channel. It offers different courses as such Darse Quran, Darsul Hadith, University Graduate courses and post Graduate Courses. On the forum of this channel Islamic scholars tell the solutions of the problems of people. Viewers can understand the interpretation of Quran Via this channel by Mufti Tariq Masood in the program “30 din 30 paray”. It also invokes the spirit of prayers among Muslims by the program “very important tasbeehat”. Such sort of other programs also catch the attractions of Muslim towards religion.

Noor TV

The programs of Noor TV are broad casted in English and Urdu language. This channel was launched in October 2006. Around 70% of the programs of this channel are casted in Urdu, 20% in English. While 10% programs of Noor TV are purely comprised of Sufi principles of Sunni Islam.

Peace TV

Peace TV owned by Dr Zakir Naik. It came into being on September 2007. The programs of peace TV were broad casted in Urdu and English channels. In 2009 a separate Urdu peace TV channel was launched.

Takbeer

This channel was launched in February 2010 by Sultan Bahu Trust. The aim of this channel is to spread the principles of Sufism in Sunni Islam.

Other Islamic channels

Other Islamic channels are increasing day by day. These channels are rendering their incredible services for Islam. Among them Q Tv, Aalim Online Islamic Channel, Ummah channel on Sunni Islamic teachings etc are included.¹

The list of these channels is too long. Considering the shortage of time the purpose of stating about these channels is to highlight the importance of media in establishing an Islamic society. Under this perception one can easily drive that media has become mediator between Islam and its followers.

Impact of social media on Islam

Social media imparted overwhelming effects on the lives of Muslims youth. Through the different tools of social Media such as You Tube, Face book and Twitter, Muslims, mainly new generation acquired platform to disseminate Islam and receives the teachings of Islam by sitting at home. In Arab countries the trend of using social media is exacerbating day by day. Face book is used by almost 45,194,452 users, Twitter by 2,099,706 users and on You Tube almost 90 millions views are received per day from Arab countries. After United States the Arabia is the second biggest region where large number of viewers of You Tube is found.

Proselytization is widely popular among Islamic scholars. Through which many Islamic scholars diffuse the teachings of Islam by creating their pages on the platforms of social media. In this way through their writings, they attract non-Muslims to enter into the circle of Islam. As a rough guess the followers of these scholars exceeded to 60,000. Such as Amr Khalid and Tariq Al Suwaidan are the famous preachers.

They have almost one million followers on face book. Such kinds of star religious scholars make their social media account, that remains on by their kiths and kins even after their demise. So on the plat form of social media many Muslims can be attracted towards Islam. Muslims send invitation to non-Muslims for change of religion in the Europe and United states. These invitations are accepted by non Muslims. Young Muslims discuss Islamic issues on their virtual chat rooms on the platform of social Media. Young Muslims have uploaded around 70,000 videos that deal with the creation of universe. Beside this, they have uploaded various videos on scientific miracles of Quran. In these videos they have asserted that inventions of Science are not new but almighty Allah in al Quran revealed them 1500 years ago. Thus, they gave impression to the people that Islam is a true religion and almighty Allah is the sole creator of universe. In this way if social media is called an Islamic preaching forum it would not be wrong.

Not only religious scholars but also ordinary Muslims are also connected with social media at wide range. They tweet on Quranic verses and Ahadith of holy prophet (p.b.u.h). The increasing degree of religiosity has been widely witnessed on religious occasion, as such in the month of Ramadan, Eid ul Fitar, in the month of Zakat and on the occasion of Hajj. Thus, Islamic faith promotes among believers and non-believers. On these occasions the way of performing religious

rituals are taught through the contents of texts and videos. On the occasion of Hajj videos and clips are dispatched on whats app to the relatives for inspiring them to visit these holy places.

Social Media in current era not only proved to be a plat form of disseminating Islam, but it has become defense forum against the critics of Islam. For example, unpleasant attacks have been launched on the dignity of holy prophet (p.b.u.h).Mockery cartoons were made of beloved holy prophet (p.b.u.h). Non-believers burned the copies of Quran in United States in 2010. Against all these critics Muslims have created their pages and condemned on these mischievous activities through the plat form of social media. These unpleasant incidents triggered Muslims throughout world and the Muslim countries like Pakistan, Jordan and Egypt request the admin of you tube to omit these videos. As such kind of videos were provoking religious sentiments of Muslims. If Muslims would avoid using social media they would not be able to get their protest record throughout the world.²

Websites

By the virtue of social media, countless websites are available which offer multiple Quranic courses as such Al Huda Welfare foundation offer online courses on following subjects,

- learning of Arabic language,
- Tajweed,
- Taleem Ul Quran and Taleem ul Hadith,
- Seerat Ul Nabvi course,
- memorization of Al Quran(Hifz)
- Advancecourse Rahul Bayyan
- Adavance Tahfeez Al Quran Course

The seeker of Quranic knowledge does not need to join any institution. He can get Islamic education on his computer/laptop by the virtue of social media.

People can get answers of their questions in the light of Quranic injunctions by certified clerics and scholars by sending emails or by the questions and answers segment on internet Islamic websites.

Beside this, there are a lot of website which provide help in building Islamic society as such

For knowledge of Quran, Hadith and Dua

- Quran Online

- Hadith online
- Tafsir Ibn e Khatir
- Miracles of Quran
- About Tajweed

Availability of General Websites

- Islamic Finder
- Islam Religion
- Search Truth
- Kalamullah

Websites for new Muslims/Non Muslims

- Islam awareness
- Science Islam
- New Muslim guide
- About Jihad
- Mission Islam

Islamic Blogs

- 1001 inventions
- Lost Islamic History
- Muslima bloggers
- Loon Watch

All these Islamic websites provide knowledge about Islam, Quran and Hadith. These websites provide information that how holy prophet (p.b.u.h) sought out the issues arises in an Islamic state. Through these websites Muslim can get knowledge that on what principles they have to lead their lives, be it of the issues of their domestic or professional or political lives. As such by the website “Islamic finders” people can know about the correct timing of prayers. Search truth website helps us to find knowledge about authentic Hadith and information about Quran. Beside this one can search Islamic names of new born babies. This website teaches online Arabic language.

Similarly the website” Tajweed “focuses on the mistakes made by non Arab Muslims at the time of reciting Quran. It teaches correct learning of Al Quran. Likewise website about “Islamic awareness “counteracts all those blames that are leveled against Islam for preventing non Muslim to enter into the circle of Islam.

“Mission Islam” is a website that conveys message to all the people belonging to different religions that Islam is a religion of all the messengers of Allah including Adam, Abraham, Moses and Jesus (peace be upon all them). This website puts stress that Islam is not a new religion but it emerged after the landing of Adam (p.b.u.h) on the earth. This website deals with controversial topics of Islam. For example concept of Hijab in the international community, removes misconception found among people of different religions about Islam, articles to know about Allah.etc. This website in other words, by such kind of articles is the channel of knowledge between Islam and its followers.

Likewise Islamic bloggers are also contributing their service share for spreading the religion of Islam. Such as a blogger Mufti Hussain Kamani’s blog “lost Islamic history” stated in a topic that why Islamic teachings compel us to follow the advises of our elders. In his uploaded video he told that Quran is filled up with the stories of past messengers. Islam is not a new religion but it is a series of all other religions revealed by almighty Allah. Muslims are taught Islamic teaching through the incidents of past messengers of Allah.

Similarly in 1001 inventions the blogger Salim Al Hassani revealed the facts of inventions that were invented by Muslim Science. That time the west was sunk in the darkness of ignorance. Among these scientists Al Beruni, Ibn e Baitar, Al Haithum, Abu Ali Sina was enjoying tremendous reputation in the knowledge of Science. Al Hassani further states in his blog that Al Zaharvi rendered great services in the field of surgery. He published an exemplary book “Encyclopedia of surgery “in the year of 1000.This book was comprised of 1500 pages. For the next five years this book was used by Europe as a medical reference. Likewise coffee was the production of Yemen used by Sufis for late night devotion. Until 16th century Europe was not able to produce the bean of coffee.

Similarly Flying Machine was also invented by a Muslim scientist in 9th century. The highest educational institution was founded by Princess Fatima Al Firhi with her sister Princess Miriam. These both Firhi sisters are the source of aspiration for the young Muslim women. This educational institution is still operative in Faiz Morocco and it is a big proof that learning is the main core of Islamic tradition. Kitab al-Jabr WA L-Mugabala an authentic book of Algebra was written by a Muslim mathematician.

Furthermore Al Hassani stated that Al Haithum rejected the theories of Euclid and Ptolemy about eye that light is produced by eye itself. He proved that eye reflects light and due to reflection human being can see this world.³

Thus by all this discussion it is proved that social media has not depicted the negative picture of Islam. But it has enlightened good image of Muslims in the view of the world. So social media is a magical plat form which disseminates the message of Islam in very short span of time.

Print Media and Islam

A great misconception is found among the people that print media is doing nothing but exposing negative picture of Islam. In this scenario post 9/11 events are the good example of this series.

After the horrible event of 9/11 the role of print media has become biased against Muslims. It has disseminated the message that Islam and terrorism are not separated with each other.⁴ Infact religious aspiration of Muslims is given the name of radicalism and terrorism. Islam has been negatively depicted in the stories of news paper, as such cases related to suppression of rights of women, radical and terrorist activities at any corner of the world. But the media is failed to highlight the issues of racism and discrimination against Muslims. News papers depicted Muslims as against of democracy. However, apart from this the Muslim of modern world can not be oblivion the positive effects of print media regarding the dissemination of Islam

The purpose of this research study is to diminish the negative effects of print media on Islam.

Print media includes pamphlet, books, booklets, newsletters, news paper, and magazines. Large number of books is available on the history of Islam. People can get easily access on these books by visiting libraries or market. In this era of advanced technology online books are free for readers. The establishment of digital libraries made this work easier. As such university of Karachi has digital library that has connection with other libraries of country. The Books which cannot be read at home computer. Those books can be read out at the air conditioned well settled library of the University of Karachi. Students can down load those invaluable books in their USB and can read them at their home. Vast literature, such as Sahasatta (six authentic books of Ahadith), the book of Imam Malik as Muatta,

commentary on Al Quran by Abdullah Yousuf Ali, Taqi Ul Din, Mohsin Khan, and Ali Hilali are available online.

Magazines

Magazines are also the important components. These magazines spread the teachings of Islam throughout world. Popular magazines are here in below contained.

Ramadan time for reality check

The magazine published by Islamic circle of North America (ICNA) November 2005, consisted of 46 bindings

Aljumah magazine

This magazine is published by Al Muntada Al Islami (January/ February 2005) comprised of 64 bindings.

True Banking

It is a by monthly magazine deals with finance sector and Islamic Banking, published by Halal Reseach Council.

Tehqiqat e Islami

This Magazine is published by Markazi Maktaba Islamic publisher. It discusses many in the form of essays by popular Muslim scholars. Such as “Mazhab ka islami tassawur” and, “Mushtaraq Khandani Nizam or Islam” by Maulana Sultan Ahmed Islahi”.

Likewise Dr Mohammad Razi Ul Islam Nadvi wrote articles on the topics of “Quran Ahl e Kitab aur Musulman” and “Kufur or Kufur Quran ki roshni main”.

Similarly” jaraim or Islam” and “Musulmano ki haqiqi tasveer” written by Maulana Mohammad Jarjis Kirmani.⁵

Muarif

It is a monthly magazine published by Daar ul Musanifin Shibli Academy Azam Garh (India).

The Intellect Magazine

This is a popular magazine. It sheds light on the Islamic principles, Islamic practices, and provide knowledge to lead happy and peaceful life. The contents of this magazine are family oriented articles.

News Papers

Print Media includes newspapers as well. They deal with the news of the Islamic world and Islamic issues facing by Muslim across the world. Various news papers are working for the cause of Islam, which are following as:

Daily Islam/Roznama e Islam newspaper

This news paper sheds light on the problems of Muslim Ummah and provides information about the current situation of Muslim throughout the Muslim.

Dawn News Paper

This is a popular English newspaper of Pakistan, Founded by the Quid e Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah. On each Friday an Article is published on Islamic and social issues.

Islamic Monthly

This news paper is published in United States. It doesn't deal with any religion. The news of this news paper deals with the concerns and problems of Muslims throughout the world. Through the forum of these newspapers discussions are held at vast levels about the pathetic situations of Muslims.

Times of Ummah

All news related to Muslims and Islam are across the world are published in the news paper.

News Papers of Pakistan

As Pakistan is an Islamic state .Under this perception all the news paper publishes news about Muslim world. Beside this various Muslimic articles are published in relating to Islamic issues are published by columinists. Jang news paper, Nawae Wqtand Ummat, etc are the best example of this series. The writers of these news papers express their views on Islamic issues via these news papers.⁶

Journals

Journals also contribute for dissemination of Islam and building an Islamic society. They provide authentic verified religious knowledge to readers about Islam. For providing proof for their topics data is collected from reliable source, that leaves no room of doubt about the knowledge provide by these journals. Names of few Islamic journals are following as,

Journal of Islamic Thoughts and Civilization

This is a HEC recognized Journal. A platform has been provided for publication of their research articles to social scientists and Muslim scholars. The center of publication of this journal is University of management and technology.

Insights

Insights a research journal published by International Islamic University. It is an interdisciplinary journal deals with multiple contents as such Economic, History, Social Science, History, Culture, Ethics, Religion, Faith, Usul Al Fiqh, Sunnah, Tafseer and Quran and its disciplines.

Journal for Islamic studies

This journal is published by the center of contemporary Islam. It focuses on various disciplines but especial focus of journal is on Islam in Africa. All kind of articles are published in the journal as such religious politics, cultural and law etc. The center of publication of this journal is University of Cape Town.

Fikr o Nazar

This research journal is published by Islamic Research Institute. The landmark publications of journal are not merely appreciated by common readers but by reputed scholars as well as. The nature of this journal is interdisciplinary and it provides deep discussions on different aspects of Islam.

Overall study discloses the fact that media is not imparted negative effects on Muslims. However the misuse of media can distract Muslim youth from the righteous path. Every technology has both positive and negative effect. It depends on the user that how he uses the technology. Similar case arises in the case of use of media. The good use of media will leave no room left for making positive image of Muslims and Islam before the international world.

Voice against those brutal activities, which are made against Muslims by non-Muslim super power countries. Infact media is a joint platform through which all Muslims can be united on the agenda of Islam.⁷

Recommendations

Significance of media in this advance period of technology

could not be neglected any more. In this respect it is emphasized that.

- Muslim scholars must be in touch with all types of media channels, be it of electronic, social and print media. So as the message of Islam could disseminate through out the world.
- With the help of media peaceful image of Islam could be presented before international community.
- It is the media through which Islamic scholars can show the right path and can prevent them to indulge any kind of terrorist activities in the name of Islam.
- By the aid of electronic media many films, documentaries and dramas could be broadcasted on various issues, as such the concept of Islam about science, Muslims services in advancement of modern science and technology, injunctions of Quran and Sunnah on fundamental rights, difference between Jihad and Terrorism and glory of Muslim in past era etc.
- For the attraction of children such cartoons should be produce that include the element of Islamic teachings.
- For avoiding the element of dullness various programs should be arranged by the broad casting stations on different issues discussed in different seminars and conferences under the perception of Islam.
- No attractive program should be on air during prayer time. So as particularly children and youth not to be distracted from their religious path.
- It is the prime duty of the print media personals to promote Islam as a tolerant and accommodating religion.
- Social issues of Muslims should be analyzed and reported truthfully through media.
- Muslim scholars and youth must record their protest against the enemies of Islam through the forum of social media.

Conclusion

The study aimed to examine how media can positively play the role in building an Islamic society. Through electronic media, scholars of Islamic world can address the issue of Muslim Ummah and can depict the peaceful image of Islam to the youth and international world,

which had been shattered badly after the event of 9/11. They can give the lesson of tolerance, justice and equity, which are the essential features of Islam and source of dissemination of Islam. Through social media, they can attract non-Muslims to enter into the circle of Islam and can eliminate the negative picture of Islam, which had been framed by the enemies of Islam. By the virtue of print media Muslims can highlight the problems of Muslim Ummah. They can raise voice against those brutal activities, which are made against Muslims by non-Muslim super power countries. Infact media is a joint platform through which all Muslims can be united on the agenda of Islam.

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