



MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN GERMANY: CURRENT CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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ABSTRACT

A recent study showed that the number of Muslims had increased significantly in Germany since 2015. Many of them still face challenges in terms of employment and training. Religion may be a secondary cause of these challenges, "but it does not hinder integration in general." "We will do that," was the most famous phrase of German Chancellor Angela Merkel, in 2015, referring to her that her country is capable and ready to receive a large number of refugees, when Germany opened its doors to them and received about one million people, most of them from the Middle East, especially Syria. The author conducted a literature study by quoting from various sources as well as using a descriptive and comparative analysis approach, after about six years, the number of Muslims in Germany has become much larger, and the demographic structure has become less homogeneous, according to a recent official study, conducted by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (PAMF) at the request of the Islam Conference in Germany and the Federal Ministry of the Interior. However, the growing number of Muslims in Germany came under pressure as their numbers grew. Sometimes due to hatred and incitement from outside and within Germany itself. Cultural differences, especially religion, have become a catalyst for the emergence of such hatred. The number of Muslims continues to increase in line with the increasing efforts in cultural assimilation and the ongoing adjustment of the social environment that has changed the situation, which is expected to be better than the previous situation.

Keywords: Community, Germany, Islamophobia, Muslim

INTRODUCTION

Attack on Muslims

"The Muslim population has become more diverse in the context of immigration than in Muslim-majority countries," the head of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Hans-Eckhard Sommer, said at a recent press

conference. "The analyzes show that the impact of debt on integration is often overstated," Zomer said. According to the study conducted by PAMF, between 5.3 and 5.6 million Muslims "with immigrant origins" live in Germany, which is about 900,000 more than in 2015, or 6.4 to 6.7 percent of the population (Hamarneh et al., 2014). German population. According to the study, while the most significant

number of Muslims in Germany hail from Turkey, as was the case for decades, after 2015, many Muslim refugees came from Syria and Iraq.

Anthology

Demands for the liberation of Turkish mosques in Germany from the influence of the Turkish state. What happened in the ten years since the saying "Islam belongs to Germany"? German Bishop of the Spiritual care must be provided to Muslim soldiers. "The Muslim population has become more diverse in the context of immigration than in Muslim-majority countries," the head of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Hans-Eckhard Sommer, said at a recent press conference. "The analyzes show that the impact of debt on integration is often overstated," Zomer said. According to the study conducted by PAMF, between 5.3 and 5.6 million Muslims "with immigrant origins" live in Germany, which is about 900,000 more than in 2015, or 6.4 to 6.7 percent of the population (Jonker, 2006). German population. According to the study, while the most significant number of Muslims in Germany hail from Turkey, as was the case for decades, after 2015, many Muslim refugees came from Syria and Iraq. The German president will receive several Muslim women who work in the social service. The interest in the Muslim community and its problems and concerns in Germany has become more significant than before.

Religion has nothing to do with it!

The study was prepared based on research conducted in 2019 and 2020. In it, a comparison was made between Muslims with immigrant origins on the one hand and Christians who have no religious affiliation on the other. It was found that religion is often not a decisive factor in different directions regarding integration and rehabilitation. For

example, 15.8 percent of those with immigrant origins were Muslims, and 17.5 percent of Christians did not complete their education. For those with immigrant roots in general, 15.3 percent did not meet their education. This shows that Muslims are not very different from other immigrants. Regarding the low level of education and qualification, Christine Tanis, who participated in the study, explains that "it must be noted that many immigrants from the Middle East and the Near East interrupted their education and rehabilitation because of their immigration (Machtans, 2016)."

Also, 74.6 percent of Muslims with immigrant backgrounds do not have a professional qualification, compared to 71.9 percent of Christians with immigrant backgrounds and 72.4 percent of all religions, but for Muslims without an immigrant experience, who has lived in Germany for at least three generations, the proportion of those without a professional qualification is only about 21.8 percent, almost the same as those without an immigrant background (21 percent). As for the percentage of workers among Muslim men with immigrant backgrounds, it amounts to 61 percent and women 41 percent, which is almost the same percentage among the rest of those with immigrant origins, and it is significantly lower compared to Germans (men 77 percent and women 68 percent). "Things such as length of stay, reasons for emigration, and social status had a much greater impact than religion on the integration process," the report said.

German Government Policy

In an interview with "Anatolia," he said: "The media in Germany is still ignoring extremist attacks on Muslims in Europe, and does not publish any news about it to the public opinion (Al-Maz, 2020)." He added, "There is great

awareness and sensitivity towards the issue of racism against Muslims among experts and within anti-extremism circles, but this awareness is not reflected in public opinion in Germany. He continued: "Following the killing of Marwa El-Sherbiny, the Europeans Against the Islamization of the West, an extremist movement known in the media as PEGIDA, joined the wave of hostility to Islam and carried out attacks against Muslims in other German cities." Mazik explained that "the area where El-Sherbiny was murdered has no Muslims because of the hateful hatred of Islam (Al-Maz, 2020)." Since 2015, the Germans have commemorated annually on July 1 the "Anti-Anti-Muslim" Day, in memory of Egyptian Marwa El-Sherbiny 12 years ago in an incident of religious extremism. Marwa El-Sherbiny was killed in 2009 by German extremist Alexander Vince, who stabbed her 18 times with a knife in a Dresden courtroom, killing her and her unborn child instantly in front of her husband and 3-year-old child. In a different context, Mazek criticized German politicians for not condemning the killing of 4 members of a Muslim family due to a "deliberate" run-over accident in Canada recently, suggesting an increase in the rate of physical attacks against Muslims in Europe in general and Germany in particular. Most of the victims receive messages of threats not to report those facts. Official data reflects that "Muslims are victims of acts of violence (Kalmar & Shoshan, 2020). There were 1,075 attacks on Muslims and Islamic installations recorded in Germany in 2017, but observers estimate that the rate of these attacks is much higher than what is officially recorded."

Criticism of ignoring racist attacks against Muslims in Germany

The head of the Supreme Council of German Muslims, Ayman Mazyek, criticized the continued disregard by

political circles and public opinion for what he described as "racist attacks against Muslims in Germany." Mazek said that the media in Germany is still ignoring extremist attacks on Muslims in Europe and does not publish any news about it to the public, according to the Anatolia Agency (Al-Maz, 2020).

Racism awareness

He added that there is great awareness and sensitivity towards racism against Muslims among experts and within anti-extremism circles, but this awareness is not reflected in public opinion in Germany. He added that after the killing of Marwa El-Sherbiny, the "Europeans Against the Islamization of the West" movement, an extremist movement is known in the media as "PEGIDA," joined the wave of hostility to Islam and carried out attacks against Muslims in other German cities (Vakil, 2009).

Hateful Hate

Mazik explained that the area that witnessed the murder of El-Sherbiny does not live in Muslims because of the vicious hatred of Islam, pointing to the formation of a right-wing extremist entity against Muslims and Jews in the city of Dortmund, but the strong civil society organizations in the city formed a wall against the extreme right (Razi al-Fakhr, 2021, p. 76).

Official data indicate that there are Muslims who are victims of acts of violence and that there were 1,075 attacks on Muslims and Islamic installations recorded in Germany in 2017, for example, but observers estimate that the percentage of such attacks is much higher than what is officially registered (Kalmar & Shoshan, 2020).

Anti-Muslim Day

Since 2015, Germans have commemorated annually on July 1 the "Anti-Anti-Muslim" Day, in memory of the killing of Egyptian Marwa El-Sherbiny 12 years ago in an incident of religious extremism.

Marwa El-Sherbiny was killed in 2009 by German extremist Alexander Vince, who stabbed her 18 times with a knife in a Dresden courtroom, killing her and her fetus immediately in front of her husband and 3-year-old child. In a different context, Mazek criticized German politicians for not condemning the killing of 4 members of a Muslim family as a result of a deliberate run-over accident in Canada recently, suggesting an increase in the rate of physical attacks against Muslims in Europe in general and Germany in particular. Most victims receive messages of threats not to report those facts (Halévi & Gresh, 2017, p. 71). New data revealed, on Monday, an increase in attacks against Muslims and their mosques in Germany during 2020, despite the quarantine in the country in light of the Corona pandemic (Halévi & Gresh, 2017, p. 21). The number of attacks, both physical and verbal, against Muslims and Islamic institutions increased in Germany during 2020, despite the restrictions imposed on the movement of citizens due to the Corona pandemic." Last year, Germany recorded 901 crimes with anti-Islam motives, according to the German Interior Ministry's response to a request for a briefing from the parliamentary bloc of the "Left" party. "We are only dealing with the tip of the iceberg in terms of reported crimes," Ola Yelbke, an internal affairs expert in the party's parliamentary bloc, said Monday. Yelbke stated that many daily insults, threats, and even physical attacks go unreported even by those affected out of shame or disgrace. Yelbke noted that with more than 900 crimes reported, more hate crimes against Muslims and places of worship

were recorded in 2019, despite the massive restrictions on public life due to the Corona pandemic (Kalmar & Shoshan, 2020).

In 2019, 884 suspected Islamophobic crimes were recorded

The newspaper report stated that 48 people were injured in attacks last year, compared to 34 injured, including two people who died in the previous year's attacks. According to the same source, the authorities also recorded "77 cases of other attacks, including graffiti and desecration of mosques, most of which were at the hands of right-wing extremists," according to the same source. The report highlights that "the steady increase in this type of attacks continues year after year, 824 attacks in 2018, then 884 in 2019, and finally 901 in 2020." In 2017, when authorities first assessed data on Islamophobia crimes, they recorded at least 950 crimes (Kalmar & Shoshan, 2020). These crimes include, for example, inciting hatred of Muslims or online Muslim refugees as threatening messages and assaulting women who wear headscarves or identifiable Muslim men on the street. Damage to property and Nazi graffiti on the walls of homes and mosques are also part of it. Commenting on these numbers, Ola Yelbki, an internal affairs expert in the Left Party, said, "This is only the tip of the iceberg, and these are the crimes reported," referring to other attacks that could not be officially reported. In statements to the German newspaper "Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung" published today, Yelbke called for the enactment of an effective anti-discrimination law, "so that the fight against discrimination against Muslims does not remain just talk." And Yalbaki added that "although there are fewer opportunities for criminal offenses in public places due to the restrictions of the Corona pandemic, the number of attacks is exacerbating,"

calling on the competent authorities to "enact more effective anti-discrimination laws (Motadel, 2014, p. 31)."

The head of the Regional Office for the Protection of the Constitution (internal intelligence) in the German state of Thuringia, Stefan Kramer, called a few days ago to strengthen state support for Islamic unions and mosques in the German context combating Islamic extremism. "As long as we don't make that possible, we won't have a partner on the other side, and we won't be able to promote worthwhile structures either, which pushes the (Islamic) communities to get financial support from elsewhere," Kramer said in statements to the German newspaper *Rheinische Post*. Kramer added: "If Islam belongs to the Federal Republic of Germany - and I say yes it belongs to it - then we should offer it the same opportunities that we offer to other religious denominations... We shirk our responsibility as a German state when we allow others - such as the Turkish Islamic DITIB Union - to pay the costs of training imams, developing and supplying communities (Hamarnah et al., 2014, p. 31). The former German President Christian Wolf said about ten years ago that Islam is part of Germany in his speech on the twentieth anniversary of German reunification. With this sentence, Wolff sparked a debate that continues to this day. I got angry here, and big thanks there and lots of searches. While there have been positive developments in recent years in the lives of Muslims in Germany despite the obstacles, the far-right groups are trying to reject this matter and attack Muslims, expressing their rejection of the Islamization of Germany. The head of the Supreme Council of German Muslims, Ayman Mazyek, criticized the continued ignoring of the racist attacks against Germany by political circles and public opinion. Attacks on Muslims and mosques in

Germany have decreased since counting the attacks against them in 2017.

The German Ministry of the Interior said, on Friday, August 6, in its response to a request for an inquiry submitted by the "left" bloc in the German Parliament, that a total of 99 hostile crimes Islam took place in the period between April and June. She pointed out that about 113 attacks on Muslims and their places of worship were recorded in the first quarter of this year, constituting half of the similar incidents in the same period last year. As for the form of these violations, they are represented in disrupting religious rituals, directing insults and insults, and causing property damage, in addition to recording physical attacks in at least three cases. According to data from the German Ministry of the Interior, 2017 witnessed the registration of about 1,075 crimes classified as anti-Islam; of these, 239 were attacks on mosques (Terrell, 2021). The majority of the aggressors belong to the "extreme right" parties hostile to refugees and Muslims, which demand the deportation of refugees, and are trying to pressure the government to change its reception policy. Although the internal expert in the "Left" bloc, Ola Yelpke, described the development as "positive," she questioned the statistical results. In this regard, she said, "It seems too early to assume a strong trend in this regard because only the crimes reported will appear in the statistics, While experience has shown that the number of unreported cases is high (Machtans, 2016). Yelpke pointed out that those affected by anti-Islam crimes do not turn to the police due to shame or lack of confidence in the authorities in many cases.

The estimated proportion of Muslims living in Germany is about five million people, equivalent to 6% of the total population. The majority of Muslims in Germany are of Turkish origin, while

the number of Arabs exceeds one million, most of whom are Syrians. German Muslims reside in the capital, Berlin, and the western regions of the country, and the proportion of residents of these areas is approximately 98% of the total number of Muslims there, while the rest live in the eastern regions. From the country (Source: Deutsche Welle + DPA).

Muslims most discriminated against in Germany

Researchers from the American University of Philadelphia confirmed that Muslims of foreign origin in Germany suffer from persecution doubly compared to other non-Muslim foreigners. These results were reached after conducting experiments in about 30 train stations in Germany. The researchers contrived the following situation more than 1,600 times in total at about 30 train stations in Germany: a white German man throws an empty coffee cup onto the platform, and a woman passes him, saying nothing in half of the cases, and in the other half she asks him to pick up his trash from on the sidewalk. And watch passersby, not knowing that the woman is part of the experience, the interactions (Machtans, 2016). A little later, the woman receives a call, leaving a food bag, which drops an orange on the floor during the call. The question is: Will passersby help the woman to collect oranges after they saw her intervention to correct the man's behavior? The result: most cases in which the woman received assistance when she was updating the man's behavior before the orange fell from her, thus proving that she is a lover of order, like many Germans (Kalmar & Shoshan, 2020). But it also depended on whether the woman was wearing a headscarf or not, whether she had a bare face, or whether she was German with white skin. Several teams experimented with train stations, and the man was always white, Germany. The women were either white German or

Turkish, Egyptian, Syrian, or Kurdish (Meirison, 2020).

White German gets help in most cases

The German woman, who showed love for the system, received help in 84% of cases, while the veiled woman, who evaluated the behavior of the German man, received help in only 73% of the faked cases, which is the same percentage of help received by the German woman who was content with just passing near the man. Who threw the garbage without asking him to lift it. The veiled woman, who did not follow the man's behavior, received the slightest help from passersby, receiving support in 60% of the cases. The researchers changed the appearance of this immigrant somewhat in all the train stations in which she played a previous role in the experiment so that she wears either a veil or across clearly or does not carry a religious symbol at all. The result was that when a woman of foreign origin, with bare hair, wore the usual clothes in Germany and carried across or did not bear a religious symbol, she achieved the same willingness to help as the woman who played the German role. And when she was wearing a veil, the percentage of desire to help her decreased by about 10% (Source: Deutsche Welle + DPA).

Showing affiliation with Islam leads to discrimination

In their assessment of the study's findings, the researchers said they found "no indication of the existence of racial persecution." At the same time, however, they concluded that public display of Islam in Germany leads to discrimination, even if a woman of foreign origin strives to adopt German standards. "We found that prejudices against Muslims are obvious and cannot be overridden by good citizenship," senior researcher Nicholas Sambanes explained, as the assistance received by women with

headscarves was always less with the same behavior. In turn, Ulrich Wagner, from the University of Marburg, Germany, commented on the study that there are always some symbols that distinguish the difference and "that at present means in Germany a clear Islamic affiliation." According to his assessment, many societies witness exclusions of people belonging to particular groups, and that political and historical circumstances determine the group currently being excluded.

Why Germany as a testing ground?

According to the University of Pennsylvania, researchers chose Germany as a field for experimenting for several reasons, including many immigrants and refugees there and Germans tend to adopt common standards, especially love of the system. The experiments were conducted in about 30 train stations in several German states; during the experiments, 1614 interactions were monitored between July and August 2011. The experiments observed the reaction of 7142 people who were involved in contrived situations without their knowledge (Source: Deutsche Welle + DPA)

Increasing Number of Muslims in Germany

The Deutsche Welle website said that the study, which was announced by the office in Nuremberg with the German Ministry of the Interior today, Wednesday, showed that "between 5.3 and 5.6 million Muslims currently live in Germany, which is equivalent to 6.4% to 6.7% of the total population." In the last study conducted in 2015, the number of followers of the Islamic religion increased by about 900,000 people. "Within the context of immigration from Islamic countries in the Near and Middle East, the population groups of Muslims have become more diverse in recent years,"

said the head of the office, Hans-Eckhard Sommer. "The analyzes also show that the extent to which religion affects integration is often exaggerated," he added, explaining that other aspects such as length of stay, reasons for immigration, or social status affect the integration process to a much greater extent than religious affiliation. The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees in Germany conducted this considerable study, entitled "Muslim Life in Germany 2020", commissioned by the Islam Conference in Germany (Jonker, 2006). The number of Muslims increased by 900,000 people, compared to the previous study conducted in 2015. The number of Muslims of Turkish origin in Germany is 2.5 million, which is equivalent to 45% of the total number of Muslims. The study indicated that 1.5 million Muslims come from Arab-speaking countries, 19% from the Middle East, and 8% from North Africa. The study showed that 21% of the total number of Muslims are children under 15 years old, 22% are between 15 and 24 years old, and 5% are over 65 years old.

German citizens

A study conducted by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees in Germany indicated that 47% of Muslims are German citizens. The head of the office (Hans-Eckhard Sommer) said that in the context of immigration from Islamic countries in the Near and Middle East, the population groups of Muslims have become more diverse in recent years. He pointed out that analyzes showing the extent to which religion affects integration is often exaggerated, explaining that other aspects such as length of stay, reasons for immigration, or social status affect the integration process to a much greater extent than religious affiliation.

External Influence

However, the preparation of clergy with financial support from the German state raises criticism because it collides with the principle that only religious groups are qualified to prepare. Ditib and Milli Goros, the second largest Muslim group, do not participate in the establishment of the Osnabrück Institute. Rather, Ditib launched its training program in Germany last year. According to Bakr Atlas, Secretary-General of Mili Goros, the preparation of the clergy "should be free from any external influence, especially political influence." However, the head of the Institute of Islam asserts that "the state has no influence, and it has not interfered at all in setting programs." Finding work remains, which is a thorny issue, as wages remain low and are subject to the donations of believers. "We are not an employment agency" tasked with finding work for students, warned Asneev Begic (Machtans, 2016).

CONCLUSION

While some Muslim and non-Muslim immigrants may face challenges that Germans do not meet, the study shows that the majority of Muslims are stable and integrated in Germany. According to the survey, most Muslims born in Germany rated their language skill in general as good or very good, and their professional qualification and educational attainment were relatively higher. For Muslims in general, the percentage was 79 percent. Sixty-five percent of the Muslims surveyed said they had frequent contact with people in their circle of friends who did not have an immigrant background. Those who did not have such a relationship expressed a strong desire to have more connections and contact with the non-immigrant population. The study confirms that some Muslims in Germany face particular

challenges that must be overcome to achieve equality. However, as the survey indicates, when dealing with a group of more than five million people who focus on religion in coping with these challenges, they may ignore other important factors.

Among the findings of the study, too, is that the new Muslim immigrants coming from countries that did not have a large community in Germany do not see that they are related to or belong to the existing Islamic structures and do not see that the existing associations represent them. The study also indicates, in this context, an increase in the number of Muslims who were brought up in Germany, and it shows that these people have a weak connection with the country of origin of their parents. They have their perception of their religious life in Germany. The study did not focus on discrimination but indicated that 70 percent of Muslim women do not wear the veil. As for wearing the veil, 62 percent of those over 65 years old said they wear it, while only 26 percent of those aged between 16 and 25 years old. One of the problems indicated by the study was the Islamic associations, which have a limited representation in Germany. Some of them are directly controlled by Turkey, which must be changed, says Markus Kerber, Secretary (State Minister of) the German Interior Ministry.

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