

Islamophobia and A proper understanding of Islam, A study of Bangladesh

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper was to identify the current overview of Islamophobia and the way to have an ultimate solution for overcoming this. The study advanced the body of knowledge on Islam and Islamophobia by proposing an integrated research model based on accountability, understanding of meaning, the significance of every verse, and regulations of Islam. The paper identified the reasons behind this Islamophobia along with its adverse impact in today's world. The research model was empirically tested using 120 responses, using the online questionnaire survey of different aged and religious people in Bangladesh. Data were analyzed using the structured equation modeling technique. Findings revealed that the verse and the rules of Islam significantly directly and indirectly affected the thoughts of human beings. Overall, the basic pillars of Islamophobia, such as misunderstanding, misleading examples, insufficient knowledge, improper correlation, and implementation, were interrelated with each other and had a particular impact on the people of the world. The study proposed a way that sums up the thoughts of people regarding the issues of Islam, which helped to have a clear view of the present thoughts. More research should be done on this issue to maintain a stable outcome, and based on that, a particular solution can be developed. This research paper had the first step in understanding the meaning of Islamophobia and was considered a way of providing a better solution.

Keywords: *Islamophobia; Bangladesh; peace*



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INTRODUCTION

Islamophobia refers to the fear of or prejudices against Islam. Both Muslims and Non-Muslims are involved with this issue. Islamophobia also defines the hatred of the whole Muslims. Before introducing ourselves as human beings, we all tend to be known by our religion. Whenever people tend to judge without having the proper knowledge, there arises conflict. In the same way, when people do not know about Islam, they come to a misunderstanding part which results in Islamophobia. Not only among non-Muslims but also several Muslims, Islamophobia is also seen to be practiced widely. It is iterations of racism that exists in society today. Like all other racism, it is also rooted in relationships of power. In Bangladesh, Islamophobia is seen in two sectors; the public sphere and the private sphere. In the public sphere, the state, through the law, legislation, and power, defines its expressions against Islam (Keskin, Zuleyha. 2016). No actions are taken against these types of activities in Bangladesh. As a result, this practice is become strongly promoted everywhere, and the number of these people is increasing day by day. The private sphere relates to Islamophobia as done by an individual or a group of individuals. In Bangladesh, it is very common to see Muslims being humiliated everywhere. According to the result of the questionnaire, it is

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found that about 75% of people agree with this point. And these actions are not taken into consideration. Islamophobia is practiced by both Muslims and Non-Muslims (Ramon Grosfoguel. 2012). Surprisingly, in Bangladesh, many Muslims have no proper and perfect understanding of the verses, the rules, and the meaningful content of Islam (Karipek, A. 2020). As a result, Muslims do harass other Muslims regarding the issues of Islam. This is one of the most frustrating parts of Islamophobia. We do have a question in mind, how can Muslims be the ones who maintain this Islamophobia! This happens because of not knowing about Islam (Ramon Grosfoguel. 2012). Islam is the source of peace, a religion where the door of peace and happiness is opened for all (Bryfonski, D. 2013). A person can be able to have the full significance of Islam when he learns the meaning of every part of Islam. Being a Muslim country, Islamophobia is seen in most parts of Bangladesh. The most important part is that most Muslims are not aware of the impact of Islamophobia. They are not aware of these terms. Again, the people who practice Islamophobia do not know the issue and its outcome. Muslims are suffering from Islamophobia, and everywhere they are asked questions and humiliated (Khaldoun Samman. 2012). The way of delivering the messages of Islam to the people is one of the most important parts of analyzing and developing a better solution in Bangladesh. Otherwise, respect for religion will not be continued for everyone. A better understanding of Islam is a way of having peace of mind.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Changing the traditional thinking of people regarding Islam is not that much easy. Some people will continue to practice it though he is given enough proof for this. On the other hand, some practices have changed a lot (Olowo, Adam. 2021). The people who are against Islam will always be against Islam. He has no intention of doing a study on this subject. Islam does not tell people to transform their religion. Islam is the religion that teaches us how to be good people. No particular lessons are provided to make them against their religion. So, Islamophobia remains within them as they don't want to realize the actual significance of Islam.

Living in peace has become quite impossible, as many people have many thoughts. Islam is the religion that shows us the way to have peace of mind (Malik, Arsheed & Sheikh, Mehraj & Razaqi, Mohd 2012). The full meaning of Islam is to have peace by surrendering to Allah SWT. Several surahs are here in the Quran to help people find hope and peace of mind. Islam makes people away from hurting others, disrespecting others, and bullying others. Islam welcomes people with the way of providing ultimate solutions and peace of mind. Islamophobia arises when people lack knowledge of Islam.

Islam is often defined as a religion that creates violence in this da'wah method. The stereotype is formed because some media and literature are always against Islam (Nursita, Rizki & Sahide, Ahmad. 2019). The stereotype is formed by the disclosing of the Islam war and the main reasons behind it. People do not feel the necessity of acquiring knowledge related to Islam and its war. Islam defines the peaceful way of maintaining an international relationship. People tend to reach into conflict with others very often. Islam removes this by presenting a way of maintaining peace of mind.

The absence of a proper understanding of Islam has made people have Islamophobia within themselves. According to the research paper "Knowledge Management and The Islamic Perspective", there has been defined a proper relationship between Islam and the people. (Hidayat, Paidi & Rusydiana, Aam & Rahardjo, Sri & Adham, Adham & Senjiati, Ifa. 2021). Related to this paper, In Bangladesh, people lack Islamic knowledge and which in turn increases Islamophobia within their minds.

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

The proper knowledge of Islam is the first major pillar of this Islamophobia, and this proper knowledge will enlighten every person to be aware of Islamophobia. The absence of knowledge creates confusion which leads to the fear of Islam. Based on this valuable point, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H1: Proper knowledge of Islam will be the best solution for Islamophobia.

Islamophobia is seen to be very common among non-Muslims around the world. As they don't have the proper knowledge of Islam, it is ubiquitous to have this misunderstanding and lack of knowledge regarding Islam within them. They think there are so many rules and regulations and which in turn makes them dissatisfied with Islam. But the surprising matter is that this is seen in Muslims more than non-Muslims. There are many Muslims who have no sufficient knowledge of Islam. They think this is creating boundaries for them. As a result, they are not seen to maintain Islam properly. For example, In Islam, girls are very precious, and they are kept under cover so that they have less opportunity to be harassed by others. This is one of the best examples of the rules of Islam, which has a very significant value. But most Muslims think in the wrong way.

H2: The easier the way of conveying the knowledge of Islam, the better it will be for the non-Muslims to understand the concept

People, in general, are unable to get the exact point if there exists any conflict. Nowadays, many people are making Islam very difficult for all others. As a result, people are becoming demotivated and are having misunderstandings regarding the issue of Islam. Whereas Islam is a religion that has the characteristics of being simple and easy-going, people are making it more and more complicated. Only when it is conveyed more easily will it be effective for all for implementation.

H3: Absence of Complicity results in a better understanding of Islam.

RESEARCH METHOD:

In this section, the research design, questionnaire, data collection procedure, and data analysis are discussed.

The research paper is done using a qualitative research method where 120 people are selected to have responses using the questionnaire. The focused group includes both males and females. With the help of SPSS, the collected responses are calculated, and the frequency of responses is analyzed.

Questionnaire design and data collection

Even though the measures and the patterns were used after analyzing effectively, a draft of the questionnaire was reviewed by the key experts to ensure the understandability and ease aspects of the questionnaire from the respondent's perspective. The pilot was conducted with experts from different Madrasa, along with one faculty member of a leading business school. It was revealed that the respondents found the questionnaire to be simple and easy to understand, and, at the same time, quicker to complete. Besides the positive outcome, a few suggestions were present, and the pattern was redesigned based on the idea.

To empirically test the three hypotheses constructed, a survey was used in which the self-questionnaire was administered, and the main source was the primary data collection. The questionnaire was in English to get the information. Again, while collecting data from face to face, those who were not literate, a people helped them to translate it into Bangla, the mother tongue of Bangladesh. Demographic Information regarding the respondents, occupation, religion, and gender was presented first. After that, the questions related to Islamophobia were started. All the variables were measured using either a Yes/No or a five-point Likert-type scale with anchors ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Moreover, a few questions were designed to have their genuine opinion. So, the design of the questionnaire had both close-ended and open-ended questions. Around 120 people participated, and many were unwilling to share their views. Most of the people were job holders and students. Different religious people participated to share their experiences on this issue.

Statement	Scale	Response Rate (%)
Gender	Male Female Prefer not to say	54.2% 45.8%
Current job status	Student Job Holder Freshers Others	55.8% 27.5% 13.3% 3.4%
Religion	Muslims Hindus Christians Buddhists Irreligious	73.3% 15.8% 8.50% 2.40% 0
Do you think most of the people of Bangladesh know the meaning of Islamophobia and its effect?	Yes No May be	12.5% 75% 12.5%
Do you frequently see Islamophobia around you?	Yes No May be	74.2% 16.7% 9.2%

Do you think everyone who judges Islam and its rules and regulations has enough knowledge of Islam?	Yes No May be	7.5% 82.5% 10%
Do you think Muslims follow culture more than its sunnah?	Yes No May be	62.5% 10.8% 26.7%
Do you think most people are suffering from Islamophobia?	Yes No May be	65.8% 13.3% 20.8%
In Bangladesh, islamophobia activities are observed very frequently	Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree	2.5% 11.7% 12.5% 40.58% 32.5%
Bangladesh has no strong steps or particular solution for this Islamophobia.	Yes No	84.2% 15.8%
"A better understanding of the meaning of verses of the Quran is one of the most important ways of removing Islamophobia" How much do you agree?	Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree	9.5% 1.00% 4.5% 22.5% 62.5%
Most of the Muslims of Bangladesh have no pure knowledge of Islam and its actual significance in every verse.	True False	92.5% 7.5%
How does one respond from the Qur'an to an Islamophobic person?	Varied from person to person	In a better way In an easier way Meaningful way
Removing misleading examples and improper correlations will be considered as a way of having no Islamophobia. How much do you agree with this?	Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree	1.00% 3.02% 15.8% 49.2% 30.8%
In Bangladesh, the adverse impact of Islamophobia should be taken care of, and better-developed steps should be taken to stop these adverse impacts. Can you share your viewpoints with us?	Varied from person to person	
Being a human is the most important and first step toward having a permanent	Yes No May be	98% 1% 1%

solution to Islamophobia. Do you agree with this?		
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Source: Authors' Calculation based on responses

Data Analysis

The data analysis has been completed using a proper modeling approach to test and validate the responses. While working with the data, here, the frequency of answers is collected to know whether the data represents true or false. Here the relationship among different variables is drawn along with the identification of unobservable variables. The reliability test has been completed to validate the responses. Every response was taken for calculation, and the conclusion and recommendations have been developed based on the responses. All responses from 120 people have been measured with proper and equal attention and consideration.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents' demographic profile

About 120 people participated in this questionnaire. The number of male and female respondents was relatively similar. The male respondents were 54.2%, while the female represented 45.8% of the total respondents.

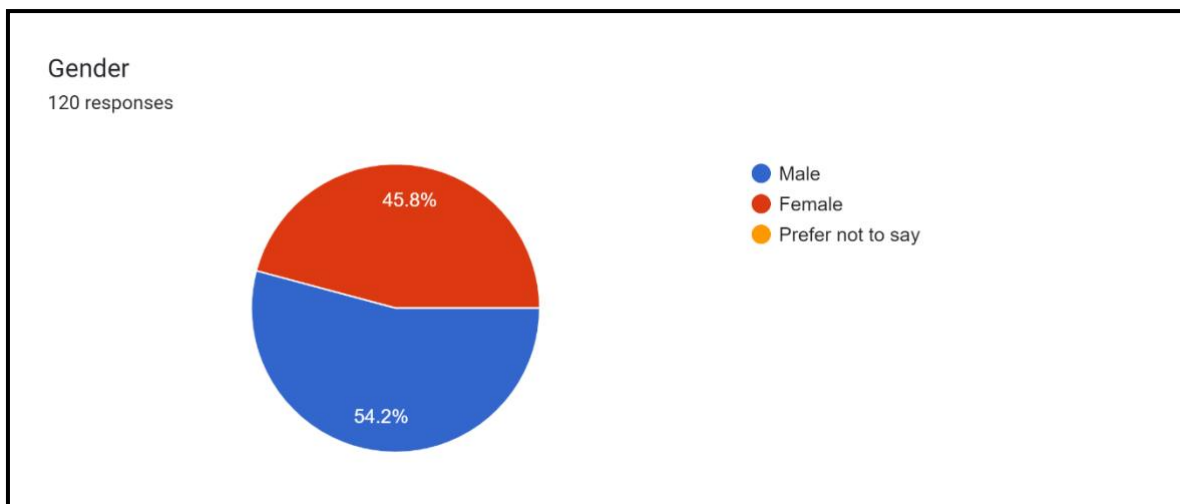


Figure 1 The information on the gender of the respondents'

Here all people were welcome to participate in the questionnaire though this portion is zero.

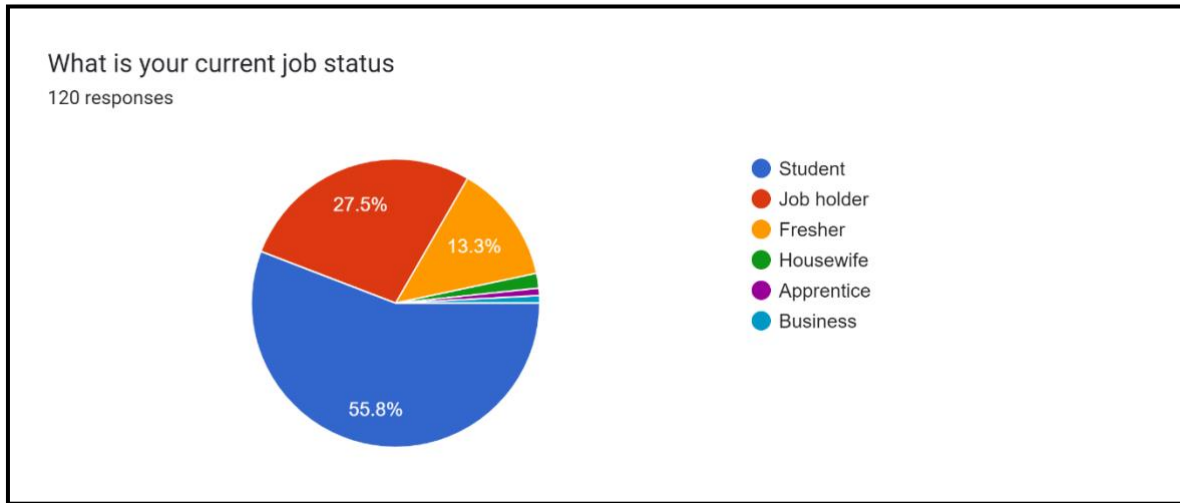


Figure 2 The job status of the respondents'

People from different job statuses have participated here. As a result, variation has been found, which has helped to have a better conclusion that can be regarded as an authentic one. From the chart, it is illustrated that most people were students. 27.5% of respondents were doing the job. This variation has helped to draw a general and well-balanced estimation.

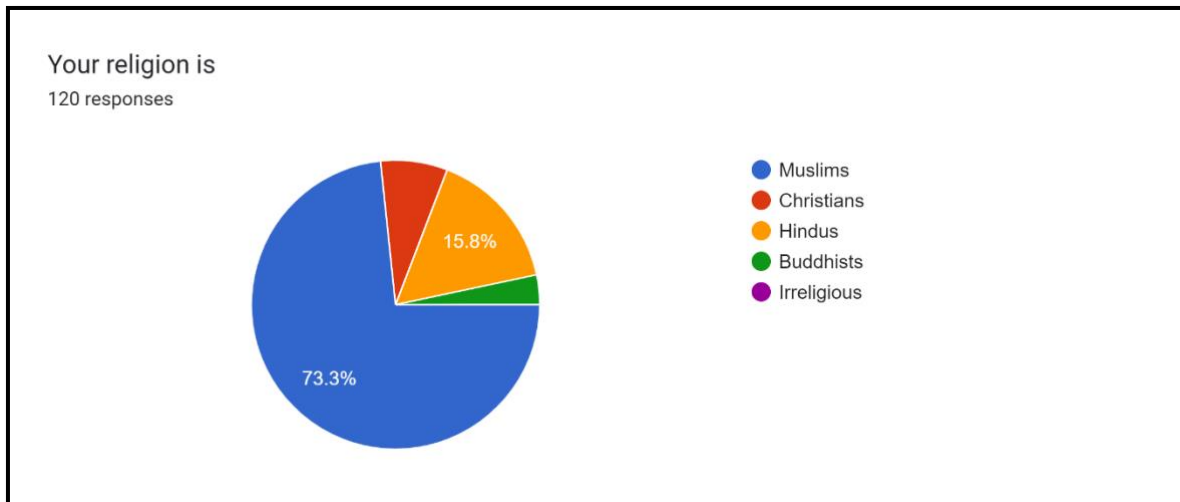


Figure 3 The information on the religion of the respondents'

In this research paper, while collecting data from different people, people from all religion has been included so that their viewpoints can also be added and evaluated. Though the majority were from the Muslim religion, Hindus and Christians were also included here. Throughout the whole questionnaire, they shared their viewpoints along with better suggestions.

Variables and measurement

Several questions were designed to have the outcome of the participants. It included the current thoughts of people regarding Islamophobia, the reasons behind this, the exact steps, and their suggestions from them. Here all possible results will be discussed along with the statistical result.

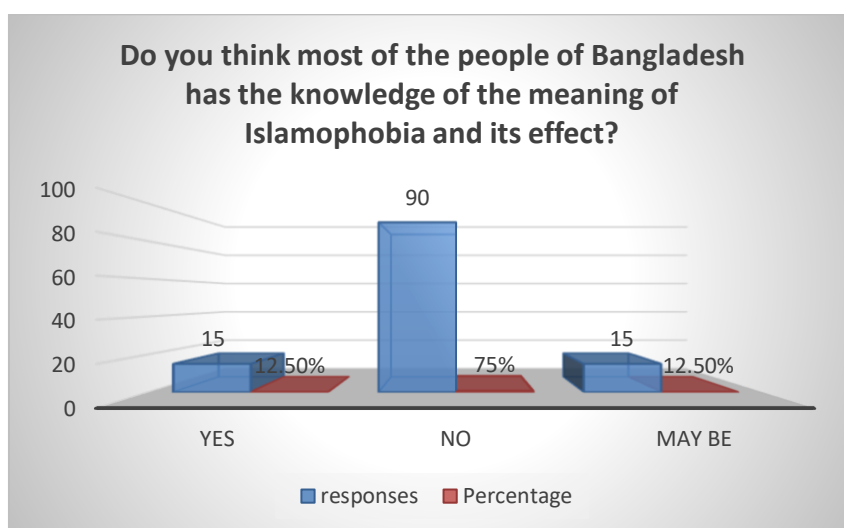


Figure 4 Responses related to the knowledge of people about Islamophobia.

Islamophobia is a term that is not that much known to the people of Bangladesh. As a result, most of them are unaware of the issue. From the questionnaire, it has been found that among 120 people, 75% of people are not familiar with the word, which in turn creates difficulty in solving the issue. Only 12.50% are quite familiar with this. Since the number is very small, they also remain silent regarding this.

This figure verifies the statement of the literature review where there defines a connection between knowledge and Islamophobia. According to the survey, the absence of knowledge of Islam has made Islamophobia remain in their mind.

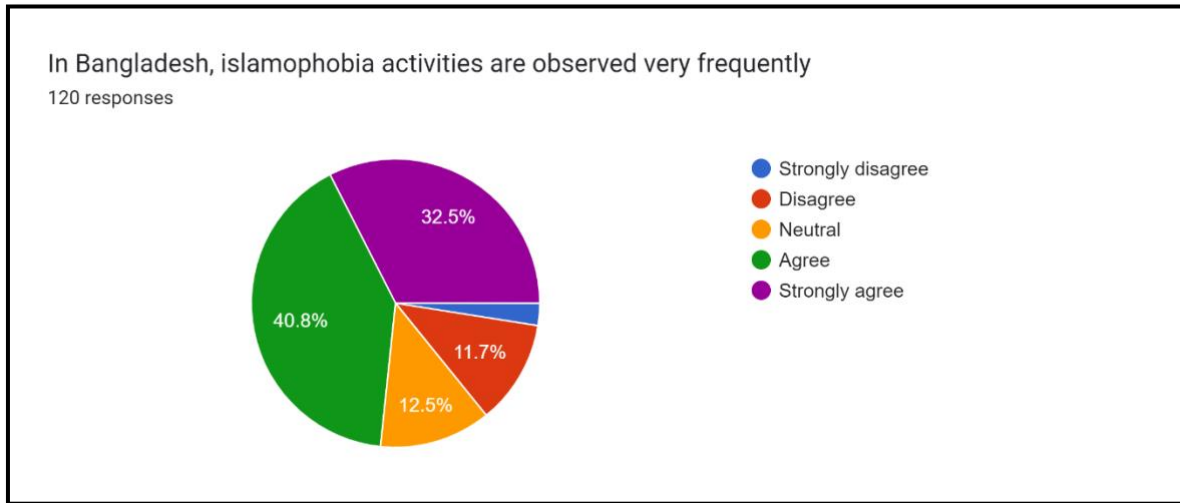


Figure 5 Islamophobia, the frequency within people.

In Bangladesh, being a Muslim country, Islamophobia is seen frequently. Around 40.8% of people out of a total of 120 people agreed with this fact. Several people are against Islam. Even the events against Islam are being recognized very frequently. The surprising fact is that Islamophobia remains mostly among Muslims. Because of the lack of knowledge and the absence of practicing Muslims, this term is being introduced so frequently.

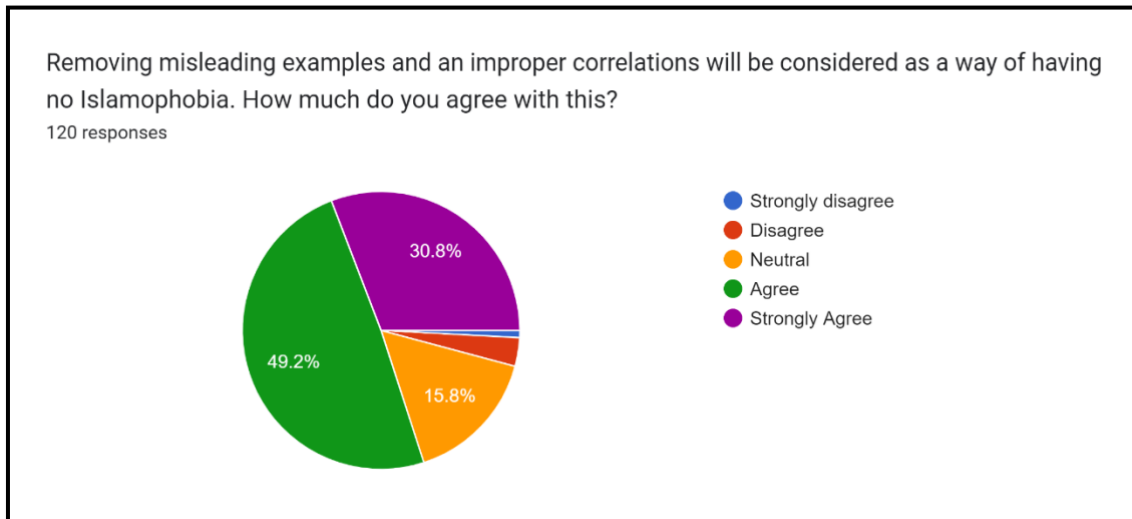


Figure 6 Way of having no Islamophobia

Islamophobia is the term that is caused because of misleading information regarding Islam and the improper relationship between knowledge and the actual terms of Islam. Around 50% of people said that they agreed with the cause and they told to use this as a way of solution to the problem. Islam is the easiest and simple religion. But nowadays, people are making so many complicities and obstacles regarding Islam. As a result, other people and people from other

religions are having misunderstandings regarding the issue of Islam. The absence of correlation also creates confusion among people.

This result supports the statement of the research paper that the stereotypical thinking of humans regarding Islam results in Islamophobia. So if the misleading information can be eliminated, People will realize the actual significance of Islam and its meaning.



Figure 7 Absence of knowledge within people of Bangladesh.

In Bangladesh, people are not that aware of the issue of Islam. They are not practicing Muslims. The verse of the Holy Quran is the best example of the simplicity of religion. If pure knowledge can be gained, there would be no confusion regarding Islam. About 92.5% of people have agreed on this issue. In Bangladesh, People are not that conscious of this issue; as a result, Islamophobia remains among the people of Bangladesh.

This result will be related to the main objective of the research paper, "Knowledge Management and Islamic Perspective". In Bangladesh, as the number of people having proper knowledge of Islam is very low, Islamophobia is increasing day by day.

CONCLUSION

Islamophobia is the term that is remained among the people of Bangladesh. Being a Muslim country, several people have no proper knowledge of Islam. The improper knowledge and improper correlation are the main reason behind the issue. In this study, several people from different religions participated. Most of the people of Bangladesh are unaware of the subject as they are not familiar with the term. People are getting away from the main point of Islam and are busy only with a particular Hadis. Not only Muslims are involved in this, but other religious people are also] unaware of this. So, the one solution of this term can be regarded as the communication of this topic most easily. Proper knowledge and deep insight into Islam are the way to having no Islamophobia in Bangladesh and also in the whole world.

LIMITATIONS & FURTHER RESEARCH

Islamophobia is still an unknown word to a number of people, as this paper has covered 120 participants from Bangladesh. It does still have gaps. Islamophobia remains within every people in the world. So further research should be proposed on this subject and field to verify the outcome. Several limitations were faced while completing the research paper. While doing the research, some basic limitations have been faced, which are given below:

Not every person was interested while making the responses

Not every people is aware of this Islamophobia

No proper steps have been taken for the correction as a result, they were demotivated

Some people think this is very sensitive and do not response

The collection of data was very time-consuming

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