



Islam in the Age of Globalization: Diaspora, Identity Formation, and Cultural Negotiation

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Abstract

Received: April-08-2026

Revised: June-12-2026

Accepted: June-20-2026

Published: June-26-2026

Citation: Abdullah, Umer. "Islam in the Age of Globalization: Diaspora, Identity Formation, and Cultural Negotiation." *IttesaaI-Journal of Connecting Discourses* 3, no. 1 (2026): 81-95.

<https://doi.org/10.64984/ijcd.3.1.2026.35>

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The current research is a systematic review of how globalization has influenced the construction of religious, cultural, and social identities within Muslim diaspora communities. With a narrow scope of literature published in the past 10-25 years, the research is a synthesis of the evidence on the topic of transnationalism, hybridity, and identity negotiation in multicultural and secular host societies. It is seen that Muslim identities within the diaspora are dynamic and constantly negotiated, as there are two forces at work: to maintain the religious tradition and to conform to the secular standards. The study highlighted that some of the themes are contributively connected to transnational networks in preserving cultural continuity, especially amongst the younger generations, and the great difficulties of Islamophobia and political marginalization, considering the hybrid nature of identities. Additionally, the analysis showcased that identity development is not a passive process but an active, dynamic negotiation, which is based on religious adaptation, cultural conservation, and is a reaction to the external socio-political pressures. The review is relevant to the bigger debates about Islam and globalization by pointing to the ambiguities of the diasporic identity and the possible future research directions, such as comparing the experiences of second-generation Muslims and the ultimate impacts of discrimination on religious identity.

Keywords: cultural adaptation, hybridity, Islamic diaspora, Islamophobia, identity crises, transnationalism

Introduction

The modern era has been long subjected by globalization that has not only affected different spheres of social, political, and cultural life, but it has dominated cultures and communities around the world. This global interconnectedness has become an opportunity and a challenge to Muslim communities in the diaspora literature. This is a multifaceted world where identity is always negotiated and redefined as Islam intersects with globalization and diaspora.¹ Since the Muslim diaspora populations are informed by their historical religious backgrounds and their contemporary global circumstances, they are always in a process of becoming, and thus their identities are in a

¹Cameron Brian McAuliffe, "Multicultural Futures: The Negotiation of Identity among Second Generation Iranians of Muslim and Baha'i Background in Sydney, London and Vancouver," Ph.D. Thesis (University of Sydney, 2005), <https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/bitstream/handle/2123/688/adt-NU20051007.09323901front.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

state of flux.² Globalization has been closely associated with the notion of transnationalism, which stresses the mobility and interconnectedness of communities across borders.³ Muslim communities, especially in the western societies, are getting more and more engaged in transnational networks that connect their home nations with the host nations. Not only goods, but also cultural practices, religious beliefs, and social norms can be exchanged using these networks, resulting in the creation of hybrid identities. Nonetheless, this interrelatedness also has its tensions because Muslims in diaspora have to balance their religious practices with the secularism of their new countries.⁴

Negotiation of cultural and religious identity is one of the main themes in the study of diasporas. This negotiation is even more complicated in the situation of globalization because Muslim communities have to balance traditional Islamic customs and the requirements of modernity.⁵ In the case of younger generations of Muslims who are in the diaspora, this process usually includes the formation of hybrid identities, where Islamic values are combined with Western cultural norms. These negotiations are further complicated by the role of media, technology, and social networks in the world, as it offers new sources of cultural exchange and also offer new challenges to identity preservation.⁶

Religion is an important aspect of Muslim identity, particularly in the diaspora. To most, Islam is a way to understand continuity and belongingness in the backdrop of the estranging forces of globalization. However, not everything is a direct continuation of traditions in the practice of Islam in the diaspora. Rather, it can be reinterpreted and modified, with Muslims abroad interacting with their religion and the wider social conventions within which they exist. Global Islamic networks contribute to this reinterpretation, which provides new interpretations of Islam that can be more appealing to the experiences of Muslims in the diaspora.⁷

It is difficult to integrate Muslims into multicultural societies. Although multiculturalism gives the Muslim communities a chance to maintain their cultural and religious values, it also introduces issues of political representation, social cohesion, and cultural assimilation. Increased Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiments, especially after the world wars, have also complicated the process of integration, and many Muslims have, over time, tried to keep a strong boundary between the diasporic aspects and the host society. The identity of Muslims in diaspora is mainly influenced by transnationalism. Diasporas are transnational in nature as Tölölyan (1996) points out, as they bind people together across boundaries based on common cultural, social, and political networks. These networks among the Muslims in diaspora can be religiously oriented, which is the observance of Islamic holidays, rituals, and the sustenance of communal relationships through mosques and online.⁸ Such transnational networks not only promote the feeling of global Muslim

²S. A. Hamed Hosseini, "Political Identity of Muslim Youth in Western Diaspora: Towards an Integrative Research Agenda," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 33 (4), (2013): 464-476, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602004.2013.866348>.

³Khachig Tölölyan, "Rethinking Diaspora(s): Stateless Power in the Transnational Moment," *Diaspora* 5 (1), (1996): 3-36,

⁴Tölölyan, "Rethinking Diaspora(s): Stateless Power in the Transnational Moment."

⁵Rainer Bauböck, and Thomas Faist, eds. *Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods* (Amsterdam University Press, 2010), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt46mz31>.

⁶Faist, "Transnationalism and Diaspora Studies: Theories and Trends."

⁷Md Zinarul Hoque Biswas, "Globalization and its Impact on the Muslim Society in India," *Journal of Muslim Studies* 12 (2), (2024): 33-56, <https://www.ijhss.com/files/7.-Dr.-Md-Zinarul-Hoque-Biswas.pdf>

⁸Thomas Faist, "Transnational Social Spaces out of International Migration: Evolution, Significance and Future Prospects," *European Journal of Sociology* 39 (2), (1998): 213-247, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0003975600007621>

identity, but they also provide the arena of redefining the Islamic practice to the challenges and opportunities presented by globalization.⁹

It is unlikely that the recent academic fascination with Violent Islamic Extremism (VIE) and Islamic Extremism (IE) is in part due to the securitization of political Islam, which has increasingly been perceived as one of the biggest threats to Europe in the 21st century. Before the September 11, 2001, act, religiously motivated terrorism, specifically Islamic terrorism, had largely been ignored in the study of terrorism. This has taken a different turn following the attacks, and both scholars and practitioners have gone a long way in understanding the mechanisms of radicalization. Nevertheless, the radicalization research has been comparatively slow in progressing, even with these developments. The reasons given above have assisted in the determination of the factors in checklists that can be described as contributing to the process; still, a solid and cohesive working theory is elusive.¹⁰

Terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda have been credited to a great extent with radicalization and recruitment of individuals, when in fact these groups only form a tiny portion of a wider range of non-violent political Islam. This is a very narrow scope of emphasis on the extremist groups, which may be explained in part by the sensitivity of the matter. The ideological and religious grounds of Islamic extremism make it intrinsically related to one of the rapidly expanding religions in the world. The fear of being labeled as Islamophobic has caused European governments to be reluctant to deal with sub-state elements that might be aiding the global Jihadist movement indirectly. Although cases of discrimination are to be noted and dealt with, the unwillingness to consider Islamic extremism as something more than a marginal phenomenon related to certain interpretations of Islam has impeded the responsiveness of governments in dealing with the challenge.¹¹

Over the years, researchers have come up with several theories to explain why individuals and groups of people feel the need to indulge in violent activities, which they perceive to be a religious obligation. The development of Islamic theology has been one of the areas of interest that has fractured into different competing schools of thought and sects. Knowledge of these theological divisions has played a critical role in explaining the process of radicalization in a religious context. Another concept that has contributed to helping understand the process of radicalization of a person is the social movement theory and the study of socialization of potential Jihadists.

One of the assumptions is that the actions of people are usually influenced by their social identities, and some scholars suggest that some of these identities are more prone to radicalization. These identities might be developed depending on numerous factors such as cultural, political, and religious influences. The other major theme in the literature is the perceived conflict between Western and Islamic values, which some hold is the root cause of resentment and leads to the radicalization of people, particularly those residing in the West. These arguments tend to overlap with the research on integration that examines the difficulties of Muslim immigrants and their

⁹Faist, "Transnational Social Spaces out of International Migration," 213-247.

¹⁰Richard Jackson, "The Study of Terrorism 10 Years After 9/11: Successes, Issues, Challenges." *Uluslararası İlişkiler / International Relations* 8, no. 32 (2012): 1-16, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43926200>.

¹¹John Calvert, *Sayyid Qutb and the Origins of Radical Islam* (London: Hurst, 2010); Shmuel Bar, "The Religious Sources of Islamic Terrorism," *Policy Review* 125 (June/July 2004): 27-37.

descendants in European communities. These integration problems have become the keystone of numerous state-funded radicalization prevention initiatives.

One of the most crucial areas of learning about radicalization is the integration debate. Most researchers claim that the lack of successful integration of Muslim communities in European societies leads to their alienation, disenfranchisement, and frustration, which, in its turn, preconditions the radical ideologies to establish their roots. It is this viewpoint that highlights the importance of improved social integration policies and more attempts to fight discrimination and exclusion. Nevertheless, some of them indicate that it is not just about integration but about the conflict between values and cultural practices that causes radicalization. Other scholars believe that it is not only the social or economic marginalization of Muslim communities that is the problem, but the ideological struggle that is being waged even within Islam itself. They cite the emergence of Salafists and other radical versions of the Islamic religion as contributing factors to the radicalization of people. According to them, this ideological struggle is not just a reaction to the actions and policies of the West but has a more fundamental theoretical basis in the Muslim world itself.¹²

Further, the importance of social media and other online platforms in the radicalization process has also gained significant attention. Terrorist groups and radical organizations have taken advantage of this to propagate their ideologies, recruit new members, and establish a feeling of community among their like-minded fellows. The internet has given these groups a unique capability to access people worldwide, without the limitations and constraints of the state. Consequently, both scholars and policymakers are struggling to deal with the problem of online radicalization and regulate the proliferation of extremist ideologies. Even though these are different methods of conceptualizing radicalization, all the literature shares a single factor, and that is the complexity and multidimensionality of the issue. Radicalization is not a linear process but is instead the process that is affected by a great number of factors, such as personal experiences, social conditions, religious beliefs, political grievances, and geopolitical issues. Although scholars have gone a long way in determining the factors that lead to radicalization, much more needs to be done in terms of how these factors interact and how they can be alleviated.¹³

The focus of governments and security agencies has shifted to the prevention part, where they have sought to intervene before people are entangled in violent extremism. Such activities usually encompass the counter-radicalization efforts, which aim at involving vulnerable people and groups, providing them with other options instead of extremist ideologies. A lot of these programs are aimed at positive social integration, education, and job opportunities, and the grievances that can render individuals more prone to radicalization. Nevertheless, these programs have had mixed success, and critics believe that they usually do not respond to the actual causes of radicalization, like ideological desires and religious orientation.¹⁴ In order to comprehend Islam in the era of globalization, it is important to go beyond the small security-centered discourse and contextualize

¹²Tinka M. Veldhuis, and Jørgen Staun, *Islamist Radicalisation: A Root Cause Model* (Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael 2009), <http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/?id=7740>, https://www.djis.dk/files/media/publications/import/islamist_radicalisation.veldhuis_and_staun.pdf

¹³Randy Borum, "Radicalization into Violent Extremism I: A Review of Social Science Theories," *Journal of Strategic Security* 4, 4 (2011): 8, <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/jss/vol4/iss4/2/>.

¹⁴Michael Barkun, "Religious Violence and the Myth of Fundamentalism," in Leonard Weinberg and Ami Pedahzur (eds.), *Religious Fundamentalism and Political Extremism* (London: Frank Cass, 2005), 60.

the problem within the context of overall social, cultural, and political changes. Globalization has increased migration, transnational communication, and cultural interaction, leading to the creation of large communities of Muslim diaspora in Europe, North America, and other regions of the world. At these new locations, Muslims are found in a constant state of identity construction and cultural negotiation, where they have to negotiate between religious affiliation, national citizenship, cultural heritage, and the forces of assimilation into host societies. This background is paramount to why the debate of political Islam, radicalization, and violent extremism cannot be taken out of the context of the broader confrontations of the diaspora life, marginalization, representation, and globalization itself.

Despite the significant achievements in the identification of the causal and operational factors of radicalization, there is still a lot to be accomplished. Studies of political Islam and violent Islamic extremism have produced valuable information about the motivations of some people and social, political, and ideological circumstances that might lead to radicalization. Nevertheless, such discourses tend to be reductionist when they are more inclined to understand Muslim communities solely in terms of security. This would be a dangerous move to overlook the reality that the vast majority of Muslims in the diasporas are not actually attracted to the messages of violence, but are rather actively engaged in the negotiation of hybrid identities and the process of seeking an active form of inclusion in the host societies. In the era of globalization, Muslim identities are not merely constructed by the specifics of religions, but also by migration experiences, racialization, citizenship conflicts, media images, inequalities in classes, and transnational attachments. Thus, it is not possible to consider radicalization as a single religious process, but as one of the possible results of a much broader spectrum of social disintegration, crisis of identity, political disappointment, and ideology.¹⁵

The construction of identity and ideology has also been changed by globalization. The Muslims are now linked simultaneously to a variety of cultural and political discourses through the digital media, satellite television, social platforms, and transnational religious networks. A young Muslim in a Western diaspora community can be locally discriminated against, be fed global media discourses about Islam, and still be emotionally connected to a homeland ancestry, and be exposed to messages about religion or politics on the Internet, describing global injustices in highly emotive language. This transnational state of affairs may form both opportunities and strains. On the one hand, it allows the generation of rich, plural, and hybrid Muslim identities, which are adaptive, creative, and cosmopolitan. Conversely, globalization can aggravate a sense of alienation and render strict ideological discourses more desirable where people feel excluded or victimized by Islamophobia, racism, or the sense of nonbelonging. In this regard, the research on radicalization should be related to the research on the identity of a diaspora and cultural negotiation.¹⁶

Cultural negotiation is a concept that is particularly significant in this case. The communities of Muslim diasporas do not merely maintain a fixed Islamic identity, nor do they merely assimilate into other dominant cultures. Instead, they keep reformulating religious practices, social values, gender roles, and political commitments in accordance with the evolving global and local circumstances. The result of this process is frequently the debates about what it means to be a

¹⁵Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

¹⁶Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Islamic Activism and Social Movement Theory: A New Direction for Research," *Mediterranean Politics* 7:3 (September 26, 2007): 202.

Muslim in a secular society, what it means to be a Muslim and to engage in pluralistic public life, and what it means to answer the demands of the Western stereotypes and the norms of the Muslim community. Failure of societies to establish an inclusive civic space in which such negotiation can occur, polarization can intensify. In this case, it is possible that people will be susceptible to simplistic ideological constructs that categorize the world into two opposites, like believer/unbeliever, West/Islam, or purity/corruption.

2. Literature Review

Globalization has transformed cultural, political, and religious identities, particularly among the Muslim communities in diaspora literature. The contact of globalization and the migration patterns of Muslims have resulted in the identity transformation, which is mostly characterized by the negotiation and hybridization of cultural practices. This review will also examine the impacts of globalization on the identity of Muslims in diaspora, as far as religious and cultural negotiations in the settings of modernity and secularism are concerned.

2.1. Globalization and the Shaping of Muslim Diaspora Identities

Globalization has also increased the transnational relationships of the diaspora communities, such that it has resulted in the formation of hybrid identities where the individuals usually bargain between their religious background and the socio-cultural needs of the host society.¹⁷ The intersection of the local tradition and global influences has resulted in these hybrid identities, especially in cosmopolitan urban centers, where diverse cultural interactions occur. To Muslims, this contact may result in the adaptation of Islamic practices without losing contact with their countries of origin. Multiplicity of identities that can arise in the globalization context, particularly in the diasporic setting, is the focus of the concept of super-diversity as presented.¹⁸

2.2. Religious Identity and the Role of Islam in the Diaspora

The Muslim communities have centralized their identity based on religion, especially when in the diaspora communities where the people aim at maintaining their religious beliefs and adapting to the new world. According to McAuliffe (2010), Islamic identity among the diaspora is influenced by the external forces of the host society and the internal forces of the religion, which conform to the local environment.¹⁹ This two-fold cultural negotiation process has led to varied expressions of Muslims in religion, which are not only based on theological reasoning but also affected by the socio-political context. Also, research by Ameli (2010) and McAuliffe (2010) indicates that the younger generations of Muslims in the diaspora are actively returning to Islam in the process of intellectualization, as opposed to traditionalism, and this marks the transition of religious forms towards individualism.²⁰

¹⁷Claire Alexander, "Diasporas and Hybridity," In P. Hill Collins and J. Solomos (eds.), *Handbook of Race and Ethnic Studies*. London: Sage, 2010), <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446200902.n23>

¹⁸Saied Reza Ameli, *Globalization, Americanization and British Muslim Identity* (London: ICAS, 2010).

¹⁹Brian McAuliffe, "Multicultural Futures: The Negotiation of Identity among Second Generation Iranians of Muslim and Baha'i Background in Sydney, London and Vancouver."

²⁰Rogers Brubaker, "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28 (1), (2005): 1-19. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0141987042000289997>

2.3. Transnationalism and Hybridity in Muslim Diasporas

Transnationalism is a key concept in explaining the identity of Muslim communities in diaspora. The concept of transnationalism, as explained by Brubaker (2005) and Faist (2008), means that there is a steady flow of people, ideas, and resources across boundaries, which enables the diaspora communities to ensure that they remain closely connected to their countries of origin as well as to their host communities.²¹ The result of this transnational experience is that it builds a more complicated hybrid identity in which people merge both their religious and national identity with the values of the host society. Such a hybrid identity in young Muslims is usually characterized by the generational gap, whereby younger Muslims are struggling to align their Islamic religion with the cultural values of the West.²²

2.4. Islamophobia, Secularism, and Multiculturalism in Host Societies

Islamophobia, secularism, and multiculturalism in the West tend to complicate the integration of Muslims. Research has pointed to the challenges Muslims encounter when trying to fit into a secular and multicultural society where their religion is at times perceived to be inconsistent with the national values.²³ McAuliffe (2005) has indicated that the emergence of Islamophobia as a result of political conflicts has contributed to further marginalization of the Muslim communities, which have had to barter their religious identity in the face of increased discrimination. This ostracism has seen others retreat into more traditional interpretations of the Islamic faith and others adopt a strategy of balancing their religious lives with the secular needs of the host society.

2.5. Islamic Radicalization and Identity Crisis in the Diaspora

The emergence of radicalization amongst some parts of the community is one of the more disturbing elements of Muslim identity in the diaspora. Clark McCauley and Moskalenko (2008) suggest that one of how radicalization is perceived to have reacted to a loss of identity is the situation of young Muslims in Europe and North America. Since these people experience a sense of identity crisis, being caught between their religious values and the pressures of assimilation, these people occasionally resort to extremist ideologies to reestablish their niche in society.²⁴ This is directly connected to the identity formation intersection of modernity and the politics of Islam in the diaspora, as shown by Dalgaard-Nielsen (2010) and Kinnvall (2004).²⁵ According to McAuliffe (2005), radicalization is not a religious problem but a socio-political one, which is influenced by the world context in which Muslim communities exist.

The theory of hybridity in the diaspora is the key to the formation of Muslim identities in the globalized world. As discussed by Werbner (2004) and Bhabha (1994), hybridity is the process of cultural mixing in which individuals and communities combine parts of different cultures to form new forms of identity. Such hybridity is especially noticeable in the manner in which the Muslim

²¹Bauböck, and Thomas Faist, (eds.), *Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods*.

²²Hosseini, "Political Identity of Muslim Youth in Western Diaspora: Towards an Integrative Research Agenda," 464-476.

²³Catarina Kinnvall, "Globalization and Religious Nationalism: Self, Identity, and the Search for Ontological Security," *Political Psychology* 25 (5), (2004): 742-764. .

²⁴Tariq Modood, "Muslims and Multiculturalism: The Politics of Identity in the UK," *Patterns of Prejudice* 43 (4), (2009): 347-368..

²⁵Pnina Werbner, "Theorizing Complex Diasporas: Purity and Hybridity in the South Asian Public Sphere in Britain," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30 (5), (2004): 895-911, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183042000245606>

youth in diaspora situations negotiate their religious and cultural background and accept the aspects of the larger culture in which they are situated. This hybridization is not invariably a smooth process, as it often results in the strains within the families and communities as the older generations attempt to maintain the traditional ways, whereas the younger generations are pressured to become more integrated into the host community.²⁶

2.6. Theoretical Framework

This study uses a blend of transnationalism, hybridity, and social identity theory to examine the experiences of Islamic communities in diaspora in relation to globalization and diaspora.

Transnationalism provides an invaluable theoretical perspective on the current relationships that diaspora communities have with their countries of origin. It dispels the notion of migration being a unidirectional, linear event; rather, it focuses on how migrants are at once attached to both their host society and their homeland under various social, economic, and cultural modalities. Transnationalism is particularly significant in relation to the Muslim diaspora because it emphasizes how Muslim communities maintain connections based on religious activities, political activities, and family ties. This continuous interaction in transnational networks results in the formation of hybrid identities in which people bargain between the host society culture and home culture.²⁷

Bhabha (1994) also explains that transnationalism assists in explaining the ways of creating transnational communities operating across several national borders, establishing spaces where identity can become fluid and multifaceted. Such communities provide a sense of belonging not defined by geographical boundaries, especially concerning Muslims who have to find their way through the multifaceted levels of their religious and national belonging in the diaspora.²⁸ The hybridity theory examines how cultural identities are shaped as a result of the interplay and fusion of various cultures, especially in the globalization process. In the case of Muslims in the diaspora, this hybrid identity is a negotiation process whereby the individuals would adjust their Islamic practices to the new social and cultural standards they face in the host society. The cultural adaptation process usually leads to a hybridization of religious and secular customs, which form a new type of identity that is not traditional or modern but a combination of both worlds.²⁹

According to Werbner (2004) and Bhabha (1994), hybridity is not a passive blending of cultures but is an active and dynamic process of resistance, adaptation, and transformation. Within the Muslim communities, hybridity enables people to find a balance between the religious requirements and the requirements of the multicultural society that will, consequently, redefine Islamic practices and interpretations to suit the global context. This is especially evident in the case of younger generations of Muslims in the diaspora, since they usually integrate the aspects of both Islamic cultures with the local, secular standards to come up with new identities.³⁰

²⁶Werbner, "Theorizing Complex Diasporas: Purity and Hybridity in the South Asian Public Sphere in Britain," 895-911.

²⁷Dina Al Raffie, "Social Identity Theory for Investigating Islamic Extremism in the Diaspora," *Journal of Strategic Security*, 6 (4), (2013): 67-91, <https://doi.org/10.5038/1944-0472.6.4.4>

²⁸Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994).

²⁹Jocelyne Cesari, *When Islam and Democracy Meet: Muslims in Europe and the United States* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

³⁰Bauböck, Thomas Faist, eds. *Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods*.

The social identity theory³¹ is a critical concept towards explaining how the people in the diasporas develop their identities relative to their in-group (the Muslim community) and the out-group (the host society) at large. According to this theory, individuals identify themselves with different social groups, and these groups contribute towards the development of self-concept and their behaviors. In the example of Muslims in the diaspora, religious identity is at the heart of defining how they perceive themselves and also the way they relate to other people in the host society. Within the diaspora, Muslims tend to feel that they belong to a transnational Muslim ummah (community), and at the same time, they struggle to affirm their national identity in the host nation. The external factors that affect this dual or hybrid identity include discrimination, political alienation, and the socio-political situation in the host society. The social identity theory is therefore useful in explaining how the Muslims in diaspora deal with the conflict between their own religious and cultural context and the force to conform to the expectations of the host country that is not always in harmony with their religious beliefs.³²

The political Islam is also analyzed within the framework of the theoretical framework and the politicization of Islamic identity in diaspora communities. Islamism or political Islam is the process of political mobilization and integration of Islamic religious values in political and social life. In most cases, the political happenings in the world, including the War on Terror or the emergence of ISIS, determine the Islamic identity of many Muslims in the diaspora, especially in Western societies.³³ Here, Islam is not only a religious self, but also a political one, in which Muslims have been torn between the need to protect their religious identity and the political issues surrounding their religion.

This study is based on the theories of transnationalism, hybridity, and social identity as the frameworks to understand the dynamic and diverse identities of Muslim communities in the diaspora. Through the concept of transnationalism, we understand how the diaspora communities can stay connected with their mother countries and, at the same time, adapt to the new cultural rules.³⁴ The concept of hybridity enables us to see how the Muslims in diasporas incorporate their traditional religious beliefs with secular ideals to create such hybrid identities. Lastly, social identity theory can be used to understand the way in which religious identity in diaspora is formed due to the personal and collective experiences under the impact of internal community processes and external social pressure.³⁵

3. Methodology

In the proposed research, the systematic review methodology was adopted to explore the convergence of globalization, Islam, diaspora, and identity negotiation among Muslim communities. Scholarly articles, books, and reports from 2010 to 2025 were reviewed, and an extensive search will be performed in academic databases, including Google Scholar, JSTOR,

³¹Sabine Trepte, Laura S. Loy, "Social Identity Theory and Self-Categorization Theory," In *The International Encyclopedia of Media Effects*, eds P. Rössler, C.A. Hoffner and L. Zoonen, (John Wiley & Sons, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118783764.wbieme0088>

³²Hosseini, "Political Identity of Muslim Youth in Western Diaspora: Towards an Integrative Research Agenda," 464-476.

³³Tariq Modood, "Muslims and Multiculturalism: The Politics of Identity in the UK," 347-368.

³⁴Olivier Roy, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

³⁵Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-first Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

PubMed, and Scopus. The keywords that were used in the search were Islam in diaspora, globalization, Muslim identity, transnationalism, and hybrid identity. The studies that were included are those that are related to the Muslim communities in diaspora and those that dealt with the effects of globalization on their religious, cultural, and social identity. The research was dependent on its relevance to identity negotiation, transnationalism, and the impacts of globalization, and the research that does not concern the diaspora communities or those studies that are not within the data will be excluded. Relevance of the articles evaluated through screening of titles, abstracts, and full texts, and then the quality of each study will be assessed. The data was pulled out on the main themes like religious adaptation, preservation of culture, identity formation, and the influence of transnational networks. Findings of the studies were synthesized with thematic analysis dividing the information into the aspects of the effect of globalization on Muslim identity, hybridity in cultural negotiation, and the impact of Islam phobia. This approach was unable to understand the influence of globalization on the formation of Muslim identities in the diaspora contexts comprehensively, find patterns, contradictions, and gaps in the literature.

4. Data Analysis

Data analysis of this study entailed a thematic synthesis of the results of the systematic review with a view to establishing major patterns, trends, and gaps in the existing literature on globalization and Muslim identity in diaspora. Following the process of retrieving the pertinent information in the chosen studies, the analysis will be structured around the key themes that occur in the literature, such as religious adaptation, cultural maintenance, identity hybridity, and the contributions of transnational networks to the development of Muslim identities. It will also analyze the effect of Islamophobia and discrimination on identity development in the host societies.

To begin with, the theme of adaptation to religion is core in that Muslim diaspora communities will adapt their religious ways to the secular norms and values of the host societies. Some of the studies have pointed out that the younger generations of Muslims, and especially those who are born or raised in the West, are more likely to interpret the teaching of Islam to suit them to get them to interact with the secular world that surrounds them.³⁶ This is not always a total break with the religious traditions but a selective absorption of Western norms, which has led to the emergence of a hybrid identity.³⁷

Second, the cultural preservation was examined to learn how the diaspora communities' endeavor to preserve their culture, yet they are absorbed and assimilated into the mainstream society. Research has revealed that the Muslim communities, particularly in the cities, can form mosques, community centers, and cultural organizations that act as the center in maintaining the cultural practices, language, as well as religious practices. These institutions assist in the development of a sense of belongingness within the community members, in which they can negotiate their identities amidst the external pressures.³⁸ The information shows the interconnection between cultural preservation and religious practices, whereby most Muslims in

³⁶Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994).

³⁷Peter Beyer, *Religion and Globalization* (London: Sage, 1994).

³⁸Thomas Faist, "Transnationalism and Diasporas in Globalized Spaces," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31 (9), (2008): 547-563.

diaspora rely on religion as a means of cultural survival, but also struggle to cope with multicultural integration.³⁹

In the analysis, the theme of identity hybridity is addressed as well with emphasis on how the Muslims in the diaspora form hybrid identities that are a mix of both the Islamic and the host country cultures. There is the concept of hybridity in the context of diaspora, in which Bhabha (1994) explains that cultures mix to form new forms of identity, which are dynamic and fluid. This is especially notable in the case of Muslim youth who are usually caught in the tension between the conservative Islamic culture and the urge to fit into the other societal expectations of their new countries. Data analysis determines how such hybridity not only consists of cultural mixing but of negotiation and transformation where people are active in creating their identity based on the religious and social context.⁴⁰

Finally, a discussion of transnational networks in the formation of Muslim identities in the diaspora will be conducted. Researchers have indicated that globalization enables Muslims to maintain ties with their countries of origin in transnational networks that enable them to communicate, practice religion, and engage in politics. These networks offer the Muslims a platform to have a religious and cultural connection to their homeland, and at the same time connect with the host society. The discussion will examine the effects of these transnational connections on identity formation, especially among second-generation Muslims who are exposed to various cultures.⁴¹

Lastly, the effects of Islamophobia on Muslim identity were critically analyzed. The literature suggests that the Muslim diaspora is usually discriminated against and marginalized because of increasing Islamophobia in the West. Such marginalization may result in a process of withdrawing to more conservative or separatist forms of Islam, especially among the younger Muslims who feel out of place in the mainstream society. The information helped to point out the way Islamophobia can influence not only the outer image of Muslims but also inner identity processes, which lead to the feeling of exclusion and political opposition.⁴²

In general, the literature review was synthesized in the data analysis to provide an extensive picture of how globalization influences the identity of Muslims in the diaspora communities. The trends of religious adaptation, cultural preservation, hybridity, transnationalism, and the impact of Islamophobia will be identified in the analysis, and this will allow developing a subtle description of the process of identity formation among Muslims in the diaspora.

5. Discussion

The results of this systematic review provide some important understanding of how globalization can affect the identity formation of Muslim communities in diaspora. The study shows that there is a complicated relationship between transnationalism, hybridization, and the modification of

³⁹Hosseini, "Political Identity of Muslim Youth in Western Diaspora: Towards an Integrative Research Agenda," 464-476.

⁴⁰Catarina Kinnvall, "Globalization and Religious Nationalism: Self, Identity, and the Search for Ontological Security," 742-764.

⁴¹Cameron McAuliffe, "A Home Far Away? Religious Identity and Transnational Relations in the Iranian Diaspora," *Global Networks - a Journal of Transnational Affairs* 7 (3), (2007): 307-327.

⁴²Tariq Modood, "Muslims and Multiculturalism: The Politics of Identity in the UK," 347-368.

religious practices, and that each of these variables has a role in the continued negotiation of the Muslim identity in the framework of global interconnectedness.

The role of transnational networks in the formation of Muslim identities is one of the most important findings. As the review illustrates, diaspora Muslims can stay connected with their countries of origin in several ways, including family relations, religion, and protest actions. Such networks are a source of continuity as well as a means of accessing the global Muslim communities and a means of maintaining the religious and cultural practices despite the assimilation pressures that the host societies present. This observation is consistent with the contention of Werbner (2004) that globalization has provided space to so-called transnational communities that cut across national boundaries and allow Muslims to retain their cultural and religious identities and fit in the larger community.

The review also brings out the core aspect of hybrid identities in the process of negotiating the identity of Muslims in the diaspora. According to Bhabha (1994) and Werbner (2004), hybridity is not a passive form of cultural convergence but a dynamic process of resistance, adaptation, and transformation. Diasporic Muslim communities are also taking an active role in defining themselves by adding elements of their religious roots and the secularism of the host societies. Such a hybridity is most pronounced in younger generations, who are exposed to their Islamic religion as well as the wider cultural and social standards of their surroundings. This is in line with the findings of Hosseini (2013), which highlight the need to balance the practice of religion with the need to be part of secular and multicultural societies.

Also, one of the themes of the literature is the role of religion as a core element of identity among Muslims in the diaspora communities. Prayer and fasting are among the religious practices that are used not just as a way of connecting with the spirit but also as a form of cultural identification. This is especially important in the light of the Muslim diaspora where the religious practices are of great help in preserving a sense of belonging and unity among the community members, even at a time when they are adjusting to their new surroundings. Nevertheless, it is also implied in the literature that religious activities in the diaspora tend to be re-read and adapted to the reality of life in the globalized, secular world.

Lastly, the influence of Islamophobia and political exclusion on the identity of Muslims is also determined in the study. Islamophobia, especially in the face of events such as 9/11, in the world has increased the state of marginalization and exclusion of individuals in the West. These experiences of discrimination frequently result in a reaffirmation of religious identity, as Kinnvall (2004) and Hosseini (2013) suggest: some Muslims withdraw into more conservative or separatist versions of Islam. Such a reaction to Islamophobia reflects the multidimensionality of the connection between foreign political pressure and domestic identity formation processes in Muslim diasporas.

6. Conclusion

This study has enlightened the complexity in which globalization influences the religious, cultural, and social identities of Muslims in diaspora. The paper has demonstrated that Muslim identities in diaspora are fluid and always negotiated, which is subject to both the global forces and local circumstances. The identity formation process is characterized by a fragile state between holding onto religious and cultural heritage and adopting the secular and multicultural values of the host society. Transnational networks, hybridity, and religion all feature prominently in this kind of

negotiation process, as the diaspora Muslims manage to maintain their identity as they fit into new cultural norms. The review also presents the problems of Muslim communities in the diaspora literature, especially the issue of Islamophobia and political marginalization, which makes the process of integration and identity negotiation even more difficult. These issues highlight the necessity of a more subtle interpretation of the complicated nature of diasporic identity and how globalization affects the lives of Muslims in the contemporary world. The study has also contributed to the larger discussion of Islam and globalization as it offers meaningful information on the impact of globalization on identity formation among the Muslim diaspora communities.

7. Future Recommendations

Further studies may also examine the experiences of the various groups of Muslims in different parts of the world. Considering how the second-generation Muslims adapted to the reality of their lives as they walk the fine line between their faith and the secularism of the host communities. Additionally, the study of Islamophobia and its effect on the religious and cultural identity of Muslims would be more helpful in understanding the issues of integration and how discrimination contributes to the formation of Muslim identities in the diaspora.

Author Contribution

Umer Abdullah is the sole author

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Funding Statement

This research received no external funding.

Generative AI Disclosure Statement

No generative artificial intelligence tools were used in the preparation of this manuscript.

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