

Alleviating Prejudice against Muslims in the United States

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Abstract

This article examines levels of prejudice against Muslims in the United States and explores the different ways through which such prejudice could be alleviated and its ramifications could be mitigated. In particular, the article focuses on the potential role that might be played by the so-called prejudice-reduction methods including persuasion, education, and communication to alleviate prejudice against Muslims and mitigate its ramifications. The article concludes by underscoring the fact that prejudice is a long-lasting American value that is here to stay. Prejudice against Muslim on the other hand may need more time to deal with and require the mobilization of more resources to mitigate its ramifications.

Keywords: Prejudice, Muslims, American, Persuasion, Education, Communication.

Introduction

Despite optimistic reports that prejudice against minorities is losing steam in the United States, prejudice against Muslims is rising rapidly and dramatically. Manifestations of such prejudice are well-documented in public opinion polls, professional surveys, academic studies, and media reports. To better understand prejudice against Muslims in the United States and the potentials of alleviating such problem, the current article will define prejudice, briefly review its key theoretical approaches, and provide a short report about American Muslims and the types of prejudice they encounter. Then, the article will examine prejudice-reduction methods including persuasion, education, and communication and discuss their potentials in alleviating prejudice against Muslims and mitigating its ramifications. Finally, unless stated otherwise, Muslims, Muslim-Americans, American-Muslims, and U.S. Muslims will be used interchangeably in this article.

Prejudice

Prejudice refers to the tendency to think about other groups in negative ways, to attach negative emotions to them, and to prejudice individuals on the basis of their group memberships (Healey, 2006). There are two types of prejudice: cognitive (thinking) and affective (emotional) (Alibeli & Yaghi, 2012). Cognitive prejudice functions through employing stereotypes against other groups like 'Muslims are terrorists'. Affective prejudice on the other hand functions through expressing negative emotions toward other groups like contempt or hatred such as saying 'I hate Muslims' (Alibeli & Yaghi, 2012; Healey, 2006).

Due to the complexity and dimensionality of prejudice, a number of theoretical approaches were established to examine the way prejudice develops, reasons behind its development, and the process through which it passes from one degeneration to another (Alibeli & Yaghi, 2012). These approaches may include but not limited to personality-centered, cultural-based and power-conflict approach (Schaeffer, 2006).

Personality centered approaches like projection, scapegoating, and authoritarian personality locate prejudice within personality dynamics and people's early childhood experience. According to the projection approach, prejudice develops because of the significant emotional role it plays for prejudiced people.

In terms of this, prejudice enables prejudice holders to avoid guilt or ill-feeling by projecting onto others “feeling they cannot admit they have themselves” (Healey, 2006: 83). In other words, prejudice holders not only deny their prejudice but also project such prejudice onto other group or groups (Alibeli & Yaghi, 2012). To make the situation even worse, projection may transform itself and take the shape of scapegoating. Instead of dealing with the real causes of anger and frustration in society, some people have the tendency to shift responsibility and blame minority groups of such anger and frustration and scapegoat them (Schaeffer, 2006). Although scapegoating approach explains the process through which prejudice develops, it fails to explain why a certain group is being targeted and or scapegoated in the first place. On the other hand, Authoritarian personality theory tends to link prejudice to the adherence to traditional values, relationship with authority figures, and to views concerning power and toughness in early stages of life (Schaefer, 2006). Authoritarian personality has more chances to develop among children who are harshly disciplined in their early stages of life, among those encounter limited communication with their parents, and those who have cold or distance parents (Healey, 2006). Those children have the potential of developing a great deal of anger and hostility toward their parents; anger and hostility that they cannot express. To vent such emotions, children learn to displace these emotions and project them onto others, minorities in particular (Alibeli & Yaghi, 2012; Simpson & Yinger, 1985).

Cultural-based theories of prejudice examine the effect of cultural norms and social situations on prejudice. Cultural norms may play significant roles in creating the environment for more prejudice or less of it in society. As well, they may determine which groups to be favored or despised (Schaeffer, 2006). According to this approach, it is a big mistake to view prejudice as a symptom of a malfunction personality. On the contrary, prejudice is better seen as a sign of a well-fitted in its prejudiced community personality. Holding prejudice enables prejudice holders to connect with each other and to express social solidarity to their prejudiced community. To sum it up, prejudice is to be approached as an expected outcome of a socialization process that endorses prejudice and rewards it directly or indirectly (Alibeli & Yaghi, 2012).

The effect of culture on prejudice is also explained by social distance theory. Social distance indicates the degree of intimacy to which people are willing to accept others (Healey, 2006). Social distance ranges from the least distance: intimate distance, to the most distant: a total rejection of others and a demand for others to be excluded and banned from the country (Alibeli & Yaghi, 2012). Based on decades of studies, Americans have maintained less social distance from white-Europeans and kept more distance from non-Europeans, particularly people of color (Healey, 2006). Based on the most recent studies of social distance, Arabs and Muslims were ranked the least accepted groups by Americans (Alibeli & Yaghi, 2012). Yet, a situation (situational effect) may condition the expression of prejudice in society. Certain situations may turn an unprejudiced person into prejudice and may deter the most bigoted from voicing their prejudice (Merton, 1968). A situation may include, but not limited to, in-place laws and regulation, the desire to look tolerant or the desire to make a business deal. Although personality and cultural approaches did provide important insights explaining prejudice, they stopped short from explaining why prejudice does exist in the first place (Alibeli & Yaghi, 2012). To tackle this problem, we may turn to the power-conflict approaches.

According to power-conflict approaches, prejudice is an expected result of the ever-increasing competition over scarce resources in society. Often, dominant groups in society establish norms denigrating minorities and belittling them to rationalize exploitation and justify the unequal distribution of resources (Healey, 2006). Accordingly, slave trade can be seen as no more than a different way of recruiting labor to harness natural resources. Apparently, skin color was not the driving force behind slavery from Africa. On the contrary, Africans’ slavery was driven by the belief that Africans were the best workers for mining and heavy plantations labor (Cox, 1948). Therefore, a search for cheap labor led to a system of racial subordination where whites became the masters/slave owners and Africans were dehumanized and turned into property-like slaves (Alibeli & Yaghi, 2012). To summarize, prejudice does exist and last because it benefits someone or because some group may gain by it. However, despite power-conflict theories’ significant contribution, such theories fail to explain why some people who have no apparent material stakes or benefit from practicing prejudice can still be very prejudiced (Healey, 2006).

American Muslims

U.S. Muslims represent an array of groups of people that vary in their arrival time, cultural background, and in their religious traditions and practices (David, 2004).

Muslims' relationship with America began with the arrival of a number of Muslim slaves from West Africa during the peak of slave trade in the 15th century. Estimates indicated that about 14 to 20 percent of West Africans slaves brought to America were Muslims (U.S. State Department, 2010). Yet, Muslims' voluntary immigration to the United States started the late 19th to early 20th century from certain Middle Eastern countries like Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, and Palestine. However, immigration to America has grown very rapidly since the 1950s with the arrival of an ever-increasing numbers of college students from a number of Muslim countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Indonesia to name a few (Schaffer, 2006; U.S. State Department, 2010).

Because U.S. Census Bureau does not track people's religious affiliation, there is no official figure of Muslims' population size in the country. However, estimates of such population size range from about 2.5 millions (Pew, 2009) to about 7 millions (CAIR, 2010). In spite of some early immigration, three fourth of American's Muslims were first generation immigrants compared to around one fourth who were U.S. Born (U.S. State Department, 2010). Nonetheless, about 77 percent of Muslims living in the country were American citizens (U.S. Department of State, 2008).

When it comes to race and ethnicity, about 38 percent of Muslims were white, 26 percent were black, 20 percent were Asian, and 16 percent identified themselves with mixed racial background (Pew, 2006). On the other hand, about 26 percent of U.S. Muslim were Middle Eastern Arabs, 25 percent South Asians, 24 percent African Americans, 10 percent Not Arabs Middle Eastern, 6 percent East Asians, and about 12 percent had other ethnicities (Schaeffer, 2006). Also, Muslims affiliated themselves with diverse religious traditions. In terms of this, about 36 percent of Muslims were Sunnis, 12 percent Shia (Shiites) and 12 percent associate themselves with other traditions like Salafi and Sufi. Yet, about 40 percent of considered themselves as 'just Muslims' (CAIR, 2006). Despite such differences, "all Muslims, Sunni, Shi'i, African Americans or Asian Americans can pray together in the same mosque without any theological or ethnic segregation" (Halim, 2006, p. 241). On the other hand, about one fourth of all Muslims and about one third of immigrant Muslims had a college degree. Also, about 41 percent of U.S. born Muslims and about 45 percent of immigrant Muslims reported an annual income of \$50 thousand or more compared to 19 percent of immigrant ones indicating a \$100 thousand or more (Pew, 2006).

Finally, U.S. Muslims adopt more or less a socially conservative ideology. They oppose premarital sex, abortion, and homosexuality. As well, they believe the government should do more to protect order and morality in society (Alibeli & Yaghi, 2012). On the other hand, Muslims are more or less economically liberals. They believe the government should play a bigger role in society, demand more governmental services, and believe the government is to do more to help the needy (Alibeli & Yaghi, 2012). Finally, close to two third of Muslims are democrats or leaning democrats, about one fourth independent and about 11 percent are Republicans (Pew, 2006). In conclusion, notwithstanding diversity shaping all aspects of Muslims' life in the United States, Muslims continued to be singled out as homogenized category, negatively stereotyped and being exposed to elevated levels of prejudice and some unaccounted for discrimination.

Prejudice against American Muslims

Although public opinion toward Muslims and Islam has never been high, September 11, 2001 attack has pushed it to unprecedented low. Since then, more Americans turn to view Muslims and Islam rather negatively. Expression of such prejudice may fall in one or more of three overlapping categories: Anti-Muslims sentiments, anti-Islam ideology, and anti-Muslim's policy support.

Anti-Muslims sentiments have been steadily growing. More Americans believe that Muslims do not respect Western Values (CNN.com, 2002); Muslims do teach their children to hate the unbelievers; and Muslims value life less than the non-Muslims (CAIR, 2006). Besides, Muslims are being viewed as intolerant, ingenuous, and less respectful of women to name a few (Pew, 2006).

Anti-Islam ideology is ever-increasing also. A growing number of Americans believes Islam promotes violence (CNN.com, 2002); teaches disrespect for non-Muslims (Morris, 2003); encourages violence more than other religions (Pew, 2010); and teaches violence and hatred (CAIR, 2006).

More interestingly, public support for an anti-Muslims' policy is rising. Plurality of Americans does support enacting policies to restrict Muslims freedom, to limit their civil liberty and require them to register where they live with the Federal government (Cornell University, 2004). In addition, growing numbers of Americans endorse government policy to infiltrate Muslim's civic and volunteer organizations as well as locking Muslims up in case they are planning terrorist attacks (CAIR, 2006). In the end, attitudes toward Islam hit bottom in 2010 with only 30 percent of Americans view Islam favorably compared to about 47 percent in the wake of September 11, 2001 attack (Pew, 2010).

Alleviating Prejudice

It has been widely believed that persuasion, especially through mass media, education, and communication could function individually and or collectively to alleviate prejudice and mitigate its consequences (Healey, 2006). It has been argued that persuasion is capable of shaping public opinions and changing individuals' attitudes. In doing so, persuasion does follow different and often contradictory paths ranging from a highly emotional face-to-face interaction to an objective and factual delivery of information via mass media especially television. For instance, mass media may play a major role in developing attitudes and creating feeling toward other groups through conveying these groups' lifestyles, beliefs, values, and norms and or by constantly reflecting the dominant group's sentiments or views toward these groups, minority in particular.

Literature on the effect of mass media on public opinions toward minorities is mixed and lacks consensus. For instance, Vidmar and Rokeach (1974) examined the effect of *All in the Family*, the popular 1970s TV show, on the viewers' prejudice against minorities. Despite its popularity, *All in the Family* was found to leave but little or minimal effect on attitudes toward minorities. In some occasions, it did reinforce existing prejudicial attitudes rather than reducing them. Interestingly enough, extremely prejudiced people were found to avoid watching the show all together (Vildmar and Milton, 1974).

More recent studies suggested somehow a different relationship between certain types of media coverage and a reduction of prejudice. In terms of this, positive TV coverage of minority groups was found to reduce prejudice under some conditions for certain people (Groves, 1999). For example, exposure to programs like the "Sesame Street" aiming at improving children attitudes toward racial and ethnic minorities was believed to show promising influence (Coover, 2001). Such influence however is limited. People have the tendency to avoid messages that conflict with their own beliefs and values. Also, rules of selectivity allow people to maintain their prejudice despite strong and convincing counter arguments (Healey, 2006).

Whereas persuasion aims at changing opinions and attitudes, education aims at informing and enlightening. For that matter, education is deemed to be the most effective answer to prejudice and discrimination. Education broadens people's perspectives; encourages them to see prejudice and discrimination in its social and cultural context. It also urges people to examine the whole complex of social factors that make, maintain, and perpetuate prejudice and discrimination.

Although prejudice against Muslims is on the rise in the USA, prejudice against other minority groups is believed to be declining. Coincidentally or otherwise, such decline has been traced back to the rising levels of educational attainments among Americans since the 1950s. Thus, it was found that as educational levels increase, expression of prejudice does decrease in society. Yet, it is not clear whether education is wrecking prejudice or whether educated people are more adept at hiding their true feeling and only reveal most socially accepted attitudes (Gallagher, 2001).

Alleviating prejudice through education however endures a number of limitations similar to those persuasion encounters. For example, unpleasant messages received in educational institutions might be avoided and counter-prejudice argument might be shunned. Additionally, selective perception may limit or nullify arguments contrary to prejudiced people opinions. Selective perception may also enable educated people to sustain their prejudice and perpetuate their prejudicial views despite otherwise information (Healey, 2006).

Finally, contact through increased communication between groups is deemed to be an effective remedy for prejudice and discrimination. It was argued that letting people get together and talk to each other will reduce prejudice and diminish discrimination.

By getting together and interacting, people would see that they are all the same with similar problems, hopes, and dreams (Healey, 2006). Yet, contact argument looks too simple and very good to be true.

Obviously, contact in itself is not a guaranteed cure for prejudice and ill feelings. Depending on the situation, contact may lead to different and sometimes conflicting results. It may reduce prejudice in society or increase it. When contact takes place “under conditions of structural inequality in which people have unequal status because of the structure of society, prejudice is likely to be reinforced, not reduced.” (Healey, 2006: 116). For instance, daily contact between slaves and slave owners in the U.S. South during slavery time did, in fact, enforce and strengthen prejudice rather than reducing it. Nonetheless, contact may reduce prejudice when members of different groups who enjoy equal status and who share common goals, noncompetitively engage in a long-term interaction that is free from threat or competition and being actively endorsed by authority figures like parents, community leaders and or politicians.

Early studies on the effect of interaction on prejudice associated groups’ interaction with rivalry and competition. In terms of this, unchecked rivalry and competition often transform themselves into prejudice and/or discrimination (Muzafer, Harrey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961). Other studies however found that interaction and more of it would reduce prejudice and help people get along with each other (Deutsch & Collins, 1951). Although the findings of early studies about the relationship between interaction and prejudice’s reduction are inconsistent, more recent studies support the projection of contact hypothesis by indicating that contact between and among groups will eventually lead to a noticeable reduction of prejudice (Sigleman & Welch, 1993).

Discussion

As mentioned before, studies about the effect of persuasion, education, and communication on prejudice have produced mixed results. Such effect if any, tend to vary according to the given circumstances. Therefore, it is worth asking to what extent could persuasion, education, and communication alleviate prejudice against Muslims and under what circumstances?

Based on what we know so far, it is safe to say that alleviating prejudice against Muslims is a little more said than done. A number of social and cultural forces directly or indirectly have led to the creation of prejudice, endorsed and under some circumstance encouraged it. Also, causes of prejudice may make efforts to mitigate prejudice possible or break them. Accordingly, it seems as if personality-rooted prejudice be the hardest to alleviate. It is deeply-rooted and constitutes an integral part of prejudice-holders’ personalities. Also, it enables those prejudice-holders to maintain self-esteem and social balance by projecting their ill-feeling onto others and scapegoat them. As well, it allows them to vent their anger and hostility onto others with little, if any, consequences. Under such circumstances, media messages questioning prejudice against minority groups like Muslims or criticizing it are likely to fall on deaf ears. A similar argument can be made concerning the culturally-based prejudice. Media effort to reduce prejudice against Muslims is more likely to fail as long as prejudice is deemed to be an integral part of American values and so long it is seen by some as a symbol of patriotism, loyalty and as an appropriate way to express solidarity and connection. Furthermore, any well-intended media efforts to counter against-Muslim prejudice is expected to fall short due to the ever-increasing social distance between Muslims and follow Americans and as long as Muslims being considered the least group to be welcome, admitted, or accepted by Americans (Healey, 2006).

Compared to personality-rooted and culturally-based prejudice, power-conflict prejudice seems the least difficult to entertain. This prejudice tends to decline as the given conflict fades away and diminishes. For example, Americans no longer hold prejudice against German and/or Japanese people although Germany and Japan were Americans’ venomous enemies in World War II. Contrary to the politically and economically driven conflict between the United States and both of Japan and Germany in first part of the twentieth century, American-Muslim conflict is more likely to be driven by cultural and religious factors. Unfortunately, cultural and religious conflict is long lasting and takes long and often very long time to crack. Besides, corporate-owned media is less inclined, capable, or willing to question its *consumers’* strongly-held beliefs, values, and norm or challenge them. In a very competitive field over rating and financial profit, media outlets are more likely to endorse, support or, at least, reflect its audience deeply-held sentiments rather than questioning them.

Despite previous discussion and despite the widely-held belief accusing the media of fueling anti-minority sentiments and spreading them over, media is found to play a positive and promising role for certain people under some circumstances. As discussed before, positive exposure of minority groups in 'Sesame Street' decreased prejudice and improved attitudes toward the intended minorities. As far as this article's concern, it is highly unlikely that the media is willing to or even capable of 'Sesame Street' Muslims and enhance their public image. On the contrary, American media is loaded, unsupportive and unfair to Muslims at large. American media has consistently vilified Muslims as machine-gun wielding and bomb blowing evils (Shaheen, 2001). 24/7 cable news outlets have been filled with reports and activities denigrating Muslims and demonizing them. Such activities range from Qur'an burning ceremony, ground zero's mosque-building saga, Peter King's chairing a U.S. House of Representative hearing on Muslims to Fox news Emmy Award winning show, *the 24*, featuring a middle class Muslim family engaging in terrorism and conspiracy to kill Americans. In the midst of this smear and tear campaign, even prejudice-free sane American will find it difficult to think rationally about Muslims. Rather, his/her ability to view Muslims reasonably or positively is more likely to be compromised and become harder and harder to attain.

In spite of the potential role believed to be played by education to alleviate prejudice, reality is much more complicated. Education, in itself, is not value-free and does not exist in a vacuum. Rather, education is nothing but another social institution that is responsible for the transmission of culturally approved beliefs, values, and norms from one generation to another. Furthermore, educational process, curricula, classroom activities, and knowledge are pre-determined and pre-approved by politicians in a way that maintains society's existing culture. Also, education is funded, managed, and administered by politicians or their appointees. Thus, through education, older and more powerful groups tend to pass their cultural beliefs, values, and norms including their prejudice to their younger generations. Playing politics in setting educational agenda has not been more obvious than in the State of Texas. In 2010 Republicans who control Texas State Board of Education were able to inject their conservative ideals into social studies, history and economics textbooks. These ideals are to be taught for millions of students in and out of Texas for long time. For so long, board members have been locked in an ideological battle between conservative Republican members who question Darwin's theory of evolution and who believe that the Founding Fathers were guided by Christian principles and a few liberal Democrats and moderate Republicans who aim at preserving a politically and religiously free schools teaching issue like Darwinism and observing the separation between the church and state (McKinley, 2010). Politically-oriented curricula changes were widely decried by educators and historians as being factually inaccurate and ideologically and politically motivated. Rather, they were considered by some as an attempt to rewrite history (Birnbaum, 2010). Having this in mind, it seems less likely that formal education will heal prejudice against Muslims as long as educational process is influenced, being vulnerable to, or controlled by politicians who play the popularity game, who may shun the truth, and who may ignore the facts in order to get elected or re-elected (Birnbaum, 2010).

Politically and ideologically-free Liberal education, *if any*, is expected to do but little in changing attitudes toward Muslims especially among those with personality-based or culturally-rooted prejudice. Highly prejudiced people will shun or even avoid factual knowledge or neutral information in schools as long as these ideas counter their deeply-held beliefs about the world in general and about minority groups like Muslims in particular (Healey, 2006). Now, how far can education go with those strongly believe in groups' inherent racial hierarchy or biologically-driven stratification? The answer is not too far. Also, to what extent can education change the attitudes of those who deeply believe in Muslims' cultural inferiority? Unfortunately, the extent of change is limited in a society that values prejudice and tolerates discrimination.

Finally, group contact is thought to be also as an effective way to counter prejudice and to mitigate its undesirable consequences. However, opportunities to usher a group-to-group contact have been fallen victim to local, national and/or international crises. Moreover, contact between Muslims and their fellow Americans is also falling victim to regional/geographical, cultural, racial, ideological, and political barriers.

First of all, most Muslims live in big cities like Chicago, Detroit, New York and Los Angeles. Often, they reside in more ethnic-concentrated neighborhoods that are close to their ethnic restaurants, stores, schools, worship places, and businesses. Under such conditions, contact between Muslims and other Americans especially Rural, Southerners, and mid-country dwellers seems difficult or unattainable.

Religious and ideological barriers also play a significant role in limiting communication and restricting contact. Muslims pray, observe religious holidays, and celebrate ethnic events in their close-by mosques. Christians Americans perform similar activities but in their own churches. As a result, another barrier is installed maintaining existing social distance between the two groups and diminishing opportunities for much needed contact especially in such sacred places. Furthermore, ideological and political orientations tend to widen the gap between Muslims and large segment of American people. Differences over fundamental issues like U.S. foreign policy, Israeli-Palestinian question, wars in the Middle East, and the fine line between freedom of speech and respecting each other's religion and religious figures add more salt to an already bleeding wound. Such differences deepen the existing lack of trust and allow negative views to thrive, and extremists to run the show. Race and racism should not be ignored either. Plurality of White Americans tends, when all possible, to distance themselves from or avoid any contact with blacks or dark-skinned people. This avoidance includes not only Africans and African-Americans Muslims but also all dark-skinned Muslims with Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Indonesian descent to name a few. Interestingly enough, Africans and some-how darker-skinned Muslims makes a little more than half of all Muslims in America.

At the micro level, individual contact between Muslim and non-Muslim tend to be, in general, formal and business-like. Much of such contact may happen in formal or semi-formal setting like government offices, businesses, schools, hospitals, and work places. Such contact is expected to be specific, formal, and limited in goal and scope. Thus, formal setting will lead to formal interaction, and formal interaction is less likely to change the status quo of prejudice and ill-feeling of the very many.

Conclusion

Building on what has been discussed before; it is fair to say that prejudice against Muslims is here to stay. A number of interacting and overlapping social and cultural factors allowed prejudice to rapidly grow and last and for so long. Unmaking prejudice and/or alleviating its ramifications require more time and resources. It also requires the willingness of both sides to deal with the real and deeper roots of the problem rather than massaging its symptoms. Without such willingness, neither, persuasion, education, nor contact will lead to any fruitful results.

To set up a real and honest dialogue, Americans, despite their religious affiliations should acknowledge the fact that all of them are there to stay. Neither group will vanish nor a certain religion to evaporate. Hence, it is in the best interest of all to avoid creating the conditions for hostility or fanning the fire of prejudice. Citizens should be individually judged by what they do rather than by whom they are, the group they belong to, and/or the religion they adhere to.

While we tend to place much of the blame on plurality of non-Muslim Americans for holding and expressing prejudice against Muslims, Muslims are not completely guilt-free. Muslim ought to stop playing the victim's role all the time and should refrain from being played folly by extremists on both sides of the isle. Muslims should also feel and act as American citizens despite obstacles, prejudice or discrimination. Muslims need to be more socially visible, more active, and more involved in American's civic society and American's voluntary organizations. Furthermore, Muslims are to reach out and intensify their interaction with their follow Americans with the aim to persuade them in actions rather than in words that they are just like them: civil, loyal and very patriotic. More importantly, Muslims may need to remember that to be respected; they are to respect other groups' culture and religious orientations. Respecting America's way of life and being tolerant to its diversity is a crucial step toward mutual respect and understanding. Until the development of such respect and understanding, mass media persuasion, education, and group contact will do but little to alleviate prejudice and mitigate its manifestations.

Finally, it is worth noting here that not all Americans are prejudice-holders or having negative feeling against Muslims. Plurality of Americans including the young, less religious, more educated, liberals, and democrats have less or no prejudice against Muslims. Rather, they are very tolerant and culturally sensitive (Pew, 2010).

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