

**ANTI-ISLAM PROPAGANDA DURING TRUMP'S ADMINISTRATION  
THROUGH THE 12 STRONG (2018) FILM**

**UNDERGRADUATE THESIS**



**UNIVERSITAS  
ISLAM  
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Proposed to the Department of International Relations  
Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural Sciences  
Universitas Islam Indonesia  
As partial fulfillment of requirements to earn a  
Bachelor Degree in International Relations



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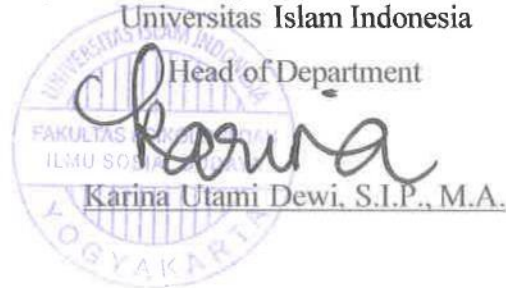


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No other materials are used other than those contained. I have read and understood the university's rules and procedures regarding plagiarism.

Making false statements is considered a violation of academic integrity.

*Wednesday, July 17, 2024,*



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*Awaliyah Wulandari*

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## ABSTRACT

This research investigates how Hollywood film productions affect people's perceptions, ideas, attitudes, behaviours, and actions. The film business has grown to be one of the most influential nowadays, with filmmaking serving as a major cultural component. This study examines how the media reproduces or influences the image of Muslims and Islam. It also covers how the film business is regarded to have a significant impact on the global film industry's ability to generate opinions. The subject then shifts to how Islam is portrayed in films and how Hollywood has been a major influencer in the global film industry. This research looks at many major developments in American foreign policy since Trump's election and their significance for contemporary Islam-West relations. It also looks at the impact of 9/11 on American filmmaking to raise awareness about the growing use of Arab terrorist characters, which damages the ethnic group both in mainstream American society and beyond the world.

**Keywords:** propaganda, film, islam, hollywood, Trump administration

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Islam has a relationship with the west in which the interactions between Islam and the West have long been posed significant theological and political problems in international affairs. Radical Islam, extreme Islam, militant Islam, Islamism, Islamic fundamentalism, and Islamic revolution are all labels used by the West (Bleich, 2011:1581).

The Runnymede Trust Report is where the word "Islamophobia" first arose. According to this study, Islamophobia is the fear or hate of all or most Muslims as a result of unjustified enmity toward Muslims. Islamophobia, often known as anti-Muslim sentiment, is the attitude of prejudice, hostility, or fear against Islam or Muslims. The widespread perception of Islamophobia in Western culture is said to be connected to the West's harsh and erroneous portrayal of Islam (Bleich, 2011:1583).

Islam is frequently portrayed in American media as a clash of civilizations, highlighting the distinctions between the two. This distinction is clear in relation to Islam as a religion and culture. Muslims view this worry as a political issue rather than a religious one. Muslims all across the world are offended by this type of prejudiced media representation of Islam (Qamar, 2017:8).

According to the Arab world, the American media is entirely focused on portraying Islamic nations as havens for cruelty and aggressiveness. Film is a very effective audio-visual medium and has evolved into a more effective method of

communication when compared to other media such as radio and television. Film presents a story through a sequence of pictures that are often shown on a movie theater screen. The film lets viewers watch images in a way that looks like real life situations, only framed in film since it was created using motion picture cameras. The endeavor to imitate experiences in order to convey ideas, thoughts, and tales is known as cinema. Individuals from many walks of life and locations throughout the world watch films in theaters or at home on television (Alalawi, 2015:60).

Hollywood movie pictures have the capacity and power to enable viewers to form ideas, perspectives, and attitudes regarding various social, political, or ideological topics. Most countries throughout the world like Hollywood films. This can affect people's views negatively because Hollywood has portrayed Muslims as cruel, extremists and killers of unarmed civilians, particularly US citizens. This has led to the belief that since the horrific events of 9/11, there is a tendency in the West to view Muslims and Islam negatively. Since September 11, Islam has become politically charged. It has become extremely politicized since 9/11, largely as a result of propaganda theories built on stereotypes that have permeated the news media, notably in Hollywood (Paracha, 2018:16).

A divided world evolved into a unipolar one under the leadership of the United States which declared itself the lone superpower. A terrorist attack on September 11, 2001, however, attacked the New York City twin towers, shattering the fragile peace and altering the course of history. Following the 9/11 attacks, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), led by the United States, invaded Afghanistan and Iraq (Alford, 2009:146).

Al-Qaeda, an Afghan-based terrorist group, was given the blame for the attacks. With this incident, the big players in the Hollywood film business now had a new subject to focus on: terrorism. This menace has altered attitudes not only in the US but also throughout the entire world. Less than a month after the attacks, the world overwhelmingly supported the US in its invasion of Afghanistan due to the immense size of the perceived danger (Alford, 2009:148).

Muslims became the main victims as a result of their shared religious beliefs with the 9/11 attacks. Several films have been produced to promote and defend these wars as legitimate and necessary. Muslims were painted as terrorists and extremists who were to blame for the catastrophe, according to the global audience. There is a significant difference between how Muslims are portrayed in films before and after the tragic events of 9/11 (Beydoun, 2017).

The most popular kind of entertainment in the entire world is Hollywood films. Its films are widely viewed around the world and influence a sizable audience. When there is no other option, people frequently only see other people through the prism of Hollywood (Eijaz, 2018). Hollywood thus plays a significant role in creating social reality. Islam, the second-largest religion in the world, and Muslims, who number more than a billion and a half, have frequently been the target of "misrepresentation and mockery" in Hollywood (Alalawi, 2015).

The United States government provides help or subsidies to the Hollywood business on a non-competitive basis. Several studies have demonstrated that requests from producers to governments are determined by the content of the tale and film script. A film will receive subsidies if it portrays a positive image and helps the US government's international standing. Aside from that, the government

plays a role in developing approved film scripts, resulting in contracts that are uncompetitive in the Hollywood sector. For example, while the United States was led by Donald Trump, the Hollywood business received government subsidies based on the size of the project. This was done to convey the notion that the United States is a superior country with the world's greatest military, as depicted in the film *12 Strong* (2018).

The United States government assists the Hollywood business with distribution disseminated throughout the world with the goal of spreading a positive image of the United States while giving a certain party a negative image or label to meet the goals of the United States. Since the twentieth century, the United States has exploited Hollywood to spread propaganda. Hollywood promotes American ideals and culture, highlighting the country's benefits.

In *12 Strong* film, the US is portrayed as a superpower when compared to other countries and groups. However, ideals such as nationalism, lifestyle, freedom of expression, and sexuality might clash with cultural values in the eastern area. The United States government's assistance to Hollywood is largely in the form of subsidizing film production so that it appears more original.

Since the World Trade Center (WTC) building collapsed on September 11, 2001, the situation in various Middle Eastern nations as a result of the US's escalating actions is one of this event's effects. The US claimed that the suspect in this event was the terrorist group Al-Qaeda, which was commanded by Osama Bin Laden. This well-known organization is based in and grows in the Middle East (Considine, 2017:2).

Following this tragic event, the United States, under the leadership of President Donald Trump, announced the War on Terrorism strategy, which is applicable to all nations across the world, including those in the Middle East. The US also applied these policies in the Middle East, which involved attacking, combating, and eliminating terrorist organizations and any nation thought to sponsor terrorism, particularly nations thought to be working on WMD. These nations include Afghanistan and Iraq, and terrorist groups include the Taliban, Hamas, Hezbollah, and Al-Qaeda (Considine, 2017: 5).

The Trump administration prioritized the abolition of radical Islamic terror groups as a key priority of its foreign policy. Trump's campaign contained five of the most prominent Islamophobic themes, including radical Islamic terrorism as a global threat, radical Islam as the root cause of terrorism, immigrants and refugees from Muslim countries as a threat to America's security and values, and a proposed ban. Trump's propaganda is based on pre-existing racial views, most notably racialized Muslim prejudices. However, claiming that all terrorists are Muslims perpetuates decades of negative stereotypes that portray Muslims and Arabs as uncivilized and evil (Lipka, 2017).

The American administration launched aggressive joint and coalition military operations, after which they strived to reduce funding to armed organizations, expand intelligence sharing, and utilize cyber warfare to undermine propaganda and recruitment activities. In addition, the US has seized and restricted the assets and sources of funding for nations and terrorist organizations (Lipka, 2017).

The 12 Strong film presents an anti-Islamic or Islamophobic viewpoint. In this movie, Muslim groups and Middle Eastern nations are shown as being extremely dangerous and should be avoided. Cinematic terror begins at the beginning of the film, with sequences depicting a number of terrorist. Middle Eastern symbols like burqas and turbans are also used to propagate anti-Islam propaganda messages. This contrasts with the idea of the US as a modern, heroic, and civilized nation. The reason the author used this film is because the American government under the leadership of Donald Trump also played a role in providing support for this anti-Islamic film in the form of support for subsidies for film production.

The US utilizes 12 Strong Film as a tool to persuade the international community to perceive the US favorably. Hollywood film are no longer merely for the audience's amusement; they may also affect people's perceptions of the US and the way of life of the global community. This is because Hollywood film have become international public consumption. As viewers of 12 Strong Film, Americans have expectations about how cultural change would affect the global society. These expectations are classified into three categories: language impacts, lifestyle effects, and ultimately, values and ideology effects. (Alalawi, 2015).

## **1.2 Research Question**

How were Muslims portrayed during Donald Trump's administration through the film 12 Strong?

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

1. To explain how Muslims are portrayed in the film 12 Strong (Eijaz, 2018).

2. To explain anti-Muslim propaganda during the Donald Trump administration (Elfenbein, 2021).

#### **1.4 Research Scope**

The September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States opened a new era of racism, negative views, and xenophobia towards Muslims. The phenomenon of Islamophobia increased when Donald Trump served as president from 2016 to 2020. The US utilizes movies as a tool to persuade the international community to perceive the US favorably because Hollywood movies have become international public consumption (Alalawi, 2015). Propaganda is carried out by America through Hollywood films which perpetuate the rhetoric of Islamophobia, such as in the film *12 Strong* (2018) which will be discussed by the author. The engagement in Hollywood is motivated by sociopolitical factors where watching movies can spark interest in and debate over the mostly negative image of Muslims. Hollywood movies need to be seriously considered since they have the potential to influence other nation states' national identities and integrity (Alford, 2009).

#### **1.5 Literature Review**

According to Patino, Islamophobia is pervasive in Western societies, primarily in North America and Europe. While people who are hostile to Islam view some aspects of Islam as "backward" and cast a negative light on authoritarian regimes, many who are tolerant of Islam regard the term "Islamophobia" as a way to draw attention to the crimes committed by some Muslims. Westerners perceive Islam as an abusive religion and stereotypes and unfavorable generalizations about Muslims have been created. Before 9/11, Hollywood made a significant contribution to the institutionalization of prejudice against Muslims. Muslims,

particularly those from Islamic nations, were subjected to inhumane and cruel treatment as a result of this discrimination and violence. Following the tragic events of 9/11, it is evident that Muslims have been further alienated and divided into several groups in all spheres of society (Patino, 2015).

Paracha discusses that Hollywood is recognized as actively contributing to the stereotype-prone creative mind and the opinion-forming sector in the global cinema industry. After the events of September 11, the idea of Muslims in American films was presented as the Islamic faith being infamous for being nasty, impolite, despised, and ideologically harmful, which actually opposite to their perceptions. The study further believes that most philosophers rely upon the Islamophobic movies' narrative and themes. By ignoring regions and locales where Islam is practiced, the bulk of scholars focused on Arabic characters when they had a good chance to investigate how Islam was portrayed in films (Paracha, 2018:15)

Borah argues that a concept or idea can be transformed into a story and carried out as such. As a result, a movie is used to decide how and when to develop and implement a concept. This depends on how the dialogue is organized via symbolic representation (positive and negative). For instance, using the word "Muslim fundamentalist" in a negative way is a stereotype. The framing aids in the development of opinions about a concept, a theme, or a group. Hence, how events are depicted on the screen shapes people's opinions on important matters. Hollywood movies have a significant role in the ideological production and image-building of the United States (Borah, 2016:10).

Eijaz describes that Hollywood has the largest audience and has a repulsive history in how it portrays the Middle East and Islam. Muslims are frequently described in a binary way. Typically, connotations are negative, portraying Muslims and Islam as a whole as zealots. He specifies that throughout the history of Hollywood, images of the East have been shown with a darker hue. As the social, political, and economic understanding of capitalism, they are denoted. Islamophobia is on the rise, and the media must be held accountable for reproducing such images (Eijaz, 2018:22).

From the arguments above it can be concluded that the media reproduces or can influence the image of Muslims and Islam. The discussion then turns to how Islam is portrayed in movies and how Hollywood is acknowledged as actively influencing the worldwide film industry's ability to generate opinions.

## **1.6 Research Framework**

### **Propaganda Media**

The media-related roles are printer, messenger, producer, dispatcher, and writer. Individuals who manage these communications may not be the same as those who shape their content as propagandists, editors, or censors. Therefore, there is a group divide between manipulators and handlers when discussing symbol specialists as a whole (Lasswell, 1948:220).

Senders and recipients are connected to one another through a series of steps in international communications. Messages sent by a diplomat or foreign journalist may transit via editorial desks before reaching broad audiences, subject to alteration at each relay point along the way (Lasswell, 1948:218).

Lasswell's Model was created primarily to examine mass communication and media propaganda according to his book *The Structure and Function of Communication in Society* (1948). It consists of five components:

a. Who

The individual, group, or organization that develops and sends the communication is referred to as the sender. In mass communication, the sender could be a news institution, an advertising agency, or a political party. The communicator's credibility, competence, and intentions can all have a substantial impact on the message's effectiveness. Television and film media as key message senders in mass communications broadens the variety of potential senders and allows for more precise audience targeting.

b. Says What

The message is the information or substance sent from the sender to the receiver. Facts, opinions, emotions, or any combination of these things can be included. The message might be verbal, nonverbal or a combination of the two. Messages can range from news articles, advertising, and public service announcements to social media posts, movies, and songs in mass communication.

c. In Which Channel

The channel component refers to the medium utilized to send the message. Determining the most effective media for transmitting a message to an audience, ensures effective communication.

d. To Whom

Target audiences that have been studied in order to establish the most successful ways to reach and influence them, as well as which messages are most effective for various types of people. Communicators can tailor their communications to the intended recipients and achieve the desired effect by first analyzing the target audience.

e. With What Effect?

The effect component is concerned with the message's impression on the recipient. Understanding the effect of a message is crucial in a range of communication situations, from mass media campaigns to interpersonal encounters, since it allows for modifications and improvements depending on the message's influence on the target audience.

Equality of communication, can be either one-way or two-way depending on the degree of reciprocity between the communicator and the audience; put another way, two-way communication happens when two or more persons carry out the sending and receiving tasks on the same frequency. Though monologue is practically unheard of, conversations are typically thought to follow a two-way communication structure (Lasswell, 1948, 220).

### **1.7 Provisional Argument**

The election of Trump as president further ensured that people identified terrorism as Muslim. (Lasswell, 1927:630). This triggered directors and film production to be increasingly motivated to make films that raise the issue of Islamophobia. The factor is not only because they are influenced by hating Islam but also because provides huge opportunity because the issue of Islamophobia is

always discussed and become the main topic of discussion during the administration of Donald Trump (Alalawi, 2015:60). Related to the five components proposed by Lasswell, in this issue Trump and the Hollywood industry are the senders. Then the message conveyed is hatred of Islam through films aimed at the global community, especially America. This has a negative impact on Muslims (Lasswell, 1948).

## **1.8 Research Method**

### *1.8.1 Type of the Research*

Through a qualitative analysis approach that is more analytical and descriptive, films from the period that are related to the topic were identified. The method began with an analysis process in the form of searching data in the form of text, images, video and sound. This involved reading the information several times to fully understand the intended meaning. (Noureen, 2019:38).

### *1.8.2 Subject and Object of the Research*

The subjects of this research is Producers of 12 Strong Film include Jerry Bruckheimer, Molly Smith, Thad Luckinbill, Trent Luckinbill and the object is Islamophobia. Muslims have been introduced and represented through American cinema in different ways (Bleich, 2011:1581).

### *1.8.3 Method of Data Collection*

Secondary data or existing statistics show that the study draws on a body of knowledge that has already been compiled by other researchers and then reapplies from a fresh angle (Paracha, 2019: 38).

#### *1.8.4 Process of the Research*

This research describes how the media has become one of the most influential factors today, with films influencing people's perceptions, ideas, attitudes, behaviors and actions. Then, the plethora of stereotypes about Muslims and Islam that are not good are analyzed(Alford, 2009:156).

### **1.9 Thesis Outline**

#### **Chapter 1**

This chapter presents the background and the beginning of Muslims being represented negatively following the 9/11 disaster throughout the Trump administration from 2016 to 2020. It shows how the 12 Strong (2018) film was used to support this narrative.

**Chapter 2** Actor and Objectives of Anti-Islam Propaganda in the 12 Strong (2018) Film

#### **Chapter 3**

Channel, Target, and Effects of Anti-Islam Propaganda during Donald Trump's Presidency (2016-2020).

#### **Chapter 4**

Conclusion from the entire discussion in the previous chapters and islamophobia during the Donald Trump administration (Elfenbein,2021)

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **ACTOR AND OBJECTIVES OF ANTI-ISLAM**

#### **PROPAGANDA IN THE 12 STRONG (2018) FILM**

##### **2.1. Producers of 12 Strong Film are Spreading Anti-Islam Propaganda**

The sender is the first component that needs to be looked at because it has control over a message. One can assess how the sender exerts control or authority over the communication being sent out by examining them. Anyone can use the internet to produce and distribute knowledge to a wide audience through social media, blogs, websites, and films. This could indicate that there are a lot more voices in the media (Lasswell, 1948).

People used to acquire their news from just a few sources, but today they can get it from a variety of senders online. More minority identities, such as women and people of color are conveying messages now that they have more freedom to post online. However, it also empowers people who hold terrible beliefs to share them. In this case, Producers of 12 Strong Film include Jerry Bruckheimer, Molly Smith, Thad Luckinbill, and Trent Luckinbill were the senders.

The United States (US) film business is referred to as Hollywood. Situated in the small Californian municipality of Los Angeles, the majority of the film studios are housed there. Hollywood is the largest film industry in the world. There are numerous images of people of different ethnicities in the film industry. Hollywood movies still have the ability and power to influence viewers' ideas, attitudes, and views on a variety of social, political, and ideological issues depending on what they see and how they interpret it (Terman, 2017:489).

Films have brought audiences to things actual or imagined, allowing people to see and hear things that were previously unavailable. Screenwriters, editors, reporters, anchors, producers, directors, studio owners, and few well-known actors have access to conversations and communication events in the US mass media and Hollywood film industry.

The American action-war film *12 Strong* (2018) was directed by Nicolai Fuglsig and written by Ted Tally and Peter Craig. The film is based on Doug Stanton's non-fiction book *Horse Soldiers*, which relates the narrative of U.S. Army Special Forces sent to Afghanistan shortly after the 9/11 attacks and until the fall of Mazar-i-Sharif. The film's cast includes Chris Hemsworth, Michael Shannon, Michael Pena, Navid Negahban, Trevante Rhodes, Geoff Stults, Thad Luckinbill, Ben O'Toole, William Fichtner, and Rob Riggle. Principal photography began in January 2017 in New Mexico. The producers were Jerry Bruckheimer, Molly Smith, Thad Luckinbill, Trent Luckinbill. Warner Bros. Pictures distributed the picture in the United States on January 19, 2018, in normal and IMAX cinemas.

*12 Strong* Film has become a tool for the US government during the Trump administration to propagate propaganda. With the enormous name of the Hollywood industry, the film produced can have a significant impact on the attitudes of the international society regarding a certain subject based on what is conveyed in the film. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for Hollywood to develop films with issues that are being addressed globally, especially those bearing the message of war on terror such as *12 Strong* Film (Terman, 2017:490).

The most popular entertainment on earth for a long time has been Hollywood. Its movies are watched all around the world and have a big impact on people's beliefs. Those who have no other choice frequently turn to violence. In many situations where there is no other choice, people only see other people through the prism of Hollywood.

Hollywood has a significant influence on how society is shaped. Hollywood has long mocked and misrepresented Islam, the second largest religion in the world, and its 1.5 billion adherents. Therefore, the current study attempts to investigate how Muslims are portrayed in 12 Strong Film. The study also examines the representation of Islamic countries in motion pictures. So the public will view Islam as a weak country while the United States is a strong country and has a positive image as depicted in this film.

Trump has depicted Islamophobia, his anti-Islamic ideology, and Muslims as a serious problem. This triggered directors and film production to be increasingly motivated to make films that raise the issue of Islamophobia. The factor is not only because they are influenced by hating Islam but also can get great opportunities since the issue of Islamophobia is always discussed and was the main topic of discussion during the administration of Donald Trump (Elfenbein, 2021).

Muslims have been wrongfully vilified and stigmatized Islam since 9/11. Because of their faith, Muslim youth in the West are constantly watched over, humiliated, and intimidated as they grow up. Islamophobic speech was a common form of bigotry employed in the 2016 US presidential campaign to incite fear and win votes. Violent incidents that American Muslims and those who are suspected of being Muslim had to deal with, including multiple killings. Numerous Muslim

Americans have come forward to claim instances of workplace discrimination, physical attacks, hate mail, and destruction or burning of their homes, mosques, and community centers (Lipka, 2017).

The number of hate crimes committed in the US against Muslims or those who look like Muslims is at an all-time high. The Southern Poverty Law Center reports that between 2015 and 2016, there were 197% more anti-Muslim hate groups in the US and 67% more anti-Muslim hate crimes. In the month of July in 2017, there were sixty-three attacks on mosques. After going to IHOP with friends, Nabra Hassanen, a 17-year-old Virginia girl, was attacked and killed in June 2017 as she was making her way back to her neighborhood mosque. A month prior, two men attempted to protect two young women who were being harassed by someone dressed as Muslims on a commuter train in Portland, Oregon, but were fatally stabbed in the process (Husain, 2018).

Sympathetic portrayals of Muslims in US media increased after 9/11. When a Muslim is portrayed negatively in a Hollywood movie, the story usually contains a good portrayal of an Arab or Muslim to counterbalance the unfavorable image. Numerous movies have been produced that unfairly portray Arab and Muslim Americans as the targets of hate crimes. The number of hate crimes, workplace discrimination, bias incidents, and discrimination against American Muslims is rising rapidly due to the widespread negative portrayals of Muslims in US commercial media. Trump's support for hate groups and discrimination against Muslims during the campaign and after he assumed office has fostered their rise (Noureen, 2018:6).

The United States 2016 presidential election brought Muslim-Americans into sharper focus in the political landscape of the nation. Donald Trump's calls for a complete ban on Muslim immigrants were repeated by Ted Cruz, the Republican presidential nominee in 2016, who made strong statements about boosting security, including the monitoring of Muslims, following the Brussels attacks. Islamophobia was a defining feature of the presidential election, mostly exemplified by Donald Trump's campaign. His Muslim-immigration restriction drew boisterous cheers from his supporters, despite the fact that party leaders openly opposed his statement. Anger and terror of Muslim-Americans has now spread from the fringes of American culture to mainstream politics and media (Kazi,2017).

Trump repeatedly targeted and blamed Muslims. Trump stated that Muslims should not be allowed to set foot in the United States. To this end, he used authority by naming himself as a powerful person and emphasizing the future American government. He held Muslims accountable for the destructive and tragic events of September 11 as well as all terrorist activities after September 11 in America. By doing this, he effectively made Muslims a group involved in terrorist activities. Trump generalized this issue by accusing all Muslims of being responsible for all kinds of disturbances in the world. He further argued that Americans should be given strong protection against Muslims (Tesler, 2018:154).

Trump emphasized the challenges facing the US, including rising debt and budget deficits, threats from ISIS, unsecured borders with Mexico, unfair trade agreements with China, unsatisfactory deals with the Muslim world, and counter-terrorism. He also portrayed white Americans as being neglected for years due to the influx of immigrants.

Trump not only emphasized anti-Muslim rhetoric, but he also suggested harsh laws and policies targeting the Muslim-American population. Throughout the campaign, he repeatedly claimed fear of Islam and terror from Muslims around the world. Thus, it was not at all strange that Trump came up with a historical declaration, 'Muslim Ban', which genuinely mirrored his Islamophobia.

Additionally, he said that Christian refugees had to come first. This is what initially started a discussion, even though the US administration did not state outright that the majority of people in these nations were Muslims. Instead, it said that Sharia and Jihad were causes of violence, which strengthened the idea that Islamophobia was the driving force behind all of this (BBC, 2017).

The statement "Now, a different threat challenges our world: Radical Islamic Terrorism" was made by Trump during his Ohio campaign rally. According to Donald Trump, Islam is a dangerous religion that will commit evil deeds against American culture. In every speech he gave during the campaign, he consistently drew a connection between the events of September 11 and the carnage in San Bernardino. "Until we are able to determine and understand this problem and the dangerous threat it poses, our country cannot be the victims of horrendous attacks by people who believe only in Jihad, and have no sense of reason or respect for human life". According to Trump, Jihad is an act that jeopardizes American society (Fredericks, 2016). In his speech, Trump also urged people to keep an eye on mosques and emphasized that the Muslim community is to blame for the carnage that has already occurred in America (Rafferty, 2015).

As the Syrian refugee crisis erupted in 2015 and 2016, the movement as a whole became more confrontational toward new arrivals, as anti-Muslim groups increasingly targeted America's refugee program. These organizations typically characterize refugees as terrorist infiltrators. Small anti-refugee groups are sprouting up around the country, fighting refugee relocation on a hyperlocal level, fostering anti-refugee dissent in communities such as Twin Falls, Idaho (Beydoun, 2017:1734).

In the US, Trump's anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim sentiments have heightened anxieties that Muslims represent a serious threat to national security and exacerbated already-existing social divisions. In addition to consistently linking Islam and terrorism on Twitter and in other media, Trump has made clear to his supporters what he believes about Islam and terrorism by taking steps like enacting a travel ban on Muslims, ending the White House's annual iftar dinner tradition, and publicly attacking Muslim Congresswomen (Kazi, 2017).

The stereotype of Muslims as fundamentally radical and misogynistic is frequently reinforced by the mainstream media in the United States. This may give rise to quickly spreading misconceptions and worries regarding Islam's compatibility with the West, particularly as it relates to American ideals of tolerance, equality, and decency. Because of their connection to the 9/11 attacks and the growth in Muslim-related terrorism worldwide, Americans view Muslims far less favorably than they do other minority groups in the nation. Indeed, Islam and Muslims have garnered significant media and political attention, frequently undergoing more harsh portrayals than other American communities. It is evident from this that Islamophobia exists in the US (Jamie, 2018).

## **2.2. Objectives of 12 Strong Film Anti-Islam Propaganda**

Target audiences are studied in order to establish the most successful ways to reach and influence them, as well as which messages are most effective for various types of people. Communicators can tailor their communications to the intended recipients and achieve the desired effect by first analyzing the target audience (Lasswell, 1948).

12 Strong Film Producers have portrayed Muslims as lacking a formal culture to govern their behavior. It appears from their affiliation with 9/11 that they had little influence over other men's life. It is implied that Muslim societies support mass killings carried out for private benefit.

Muslims were targeted as the major victims of the 9/11 attacks because they shared a faith with the attackers. 12 Strong Film have been made to promote and persuade people that these wars are justifiable and necessary. The world was persuaded to believe that Muslims are radicals, and that terrorists are to blame for the disaster. Pre and post 9/11 representations of Muslims in film revealed a substantial shift in how Muslims were portrayed prior to and following the tragic event (Cleland, 2018).

12 Strong Film production present a favorable image of the United States, notwithstanding the lack of direct ties between the film industry and the federal government. Many people characterize America as a nation that defends democracy, is patriotic, opposes violence, and battles for justice in order to bring about world peace. Propaganda plays a key role in the construction of this picture (Husain, 2018).

The portrayal of Muslims in the majority of Middle Eastern films as a bunch of primitive or uncivilized people is an example of American exceptionalism. It is in sharp contrast to representations of a civilized America. According to 12 Strong, education is the main area where America and the Middle East's civilizations are compared. The killing of a teacher by the Taliban in front of female students in a public setting serves as one example of the uncivilization of the Middle East. This is meant to create a sense of dread that if ladies attempt to pursue an education, the same thing will keep happening. Following the teacher's murder, who was murdered because he was thought to have committed a crime, The murderer stood in front of the crowd and loudly said that God forbade girls older than eight years old from attending school (Diaz, 2017).

Trump's attacks on Islam and Muslims are crucial to his campaign's success. As the political elite became desperate to stop paying attention to him, he began using anti-Muslim rhetoric to keep the media's attention. This technique was successful because Islamophobia is quietly increasing in the United States. Anti-Muslim views and worries are more common and passionately felt than at any time since the immediate aftermath of 9/11, and believes they may have gotten worse (Elfenbein, 2021).

Trump's war on Muslims is wildly popular among his followers. That's exactly what makes it so dangerous. It started with Syrian refugees. In early fall, the only thing most Americans knew about the refugee crisis was that 3-year-olds were drowning while trying to escape Syria for Europe and many politicians were

calling for the US to accept thousands more Syrians (Kalan, 2004:87). But Trump started warning darkly about an ISIS coup.

The Constitution provides all Americans the freedom to practice their religion. All of Trump's anti-Muslim measures contradict the spirit of such principle. Many of Trump's suggestions are simply impossible, either constitutionally or practically. Closing mosques would be an apparent nonstarter. Similarly, registering all Muslims in the United States would also be. And Trump's suggestion of how US officials would know whether someone entering the country was Muslim suggests that he has not given this policy much thought (Terman, 2017:495).

Trump's candidacy wasn't about proposing meaningful policies, let alone constitutional ones. Saying outrageous things that hurt Muslim Americans achieves significant purposes for Trump. By making the provocative statements, Trump ensures that he will remain in the news. Both the political media and the political establishment have assumed that enthusiasm for Trump will diminish, and any signs of waning popularity would be interpreted as evidence that Trump is insignificant. But every time this appears to be a possibility, Trump devises another strategy to make himself impossible to ignore (Terman, 2017:496).

Additionally, Trump strengthened his reputation with his conservative supporters by saying something so awful that both Republicans and Democrats denounced him. Voters for Trump perceived him as the only genuinely independent voice in politics, unaffected by political correctness or wealthy benefactors. More proof that America needs Donald Trump to voice the facts that no one else is ready

to acknowledge comes from the fact that even members of his own party find what he's saying to be abhorrent (Tesler, 2018:154).

Trump capitalized on a genuine rise of Islamophobia in the United States and fuelling it even further. This is demonstrated by the fact that Islamophobia was being expressed more openly and violently in 2016 than it has been for decades. Donald Trump would not be receiving a plurality of primary voters' support as a presidential contender if he were not stating things that many Americans believe. Turning those ideas into government policy may be unconstitutional, but it does not make them any less dangerous to American Muslims, who may become victims of intensified Islamophobic violence (Tesler, 2018:155).

**CHAPTER 3**

**CHANNELS, TARGETS, AND EFFECTS OF ANTI-ISLAM**

**PROPAGANDA DURING DONALD TRUMP'S PRESIDENCY**

**3.1. Channels that Spread Anti-Islam Propaganda**

Film has become a superior mode of communication because it is a far more effective auditory-visual medium than media like radio and television. A film is a collection of still images that typically appears on a screen in a theater. Despite being a sizable compilation of still and blocked shots, the movie was captured with a motion picture camera so that the pictures appeared to spectators as if they were real-life scenarios set within a motion picture. The film industry is one that uses experiences to tell tales, present concepts, and deliver messages. People watch movies in theaters or on televisions at home with people from different backgrounds and places in the world (Lasswell,1948).

There is so much material in the 9/11 narrative and classic themes of good and evil or heroes and villains that Arabs are likely to be the ultimate players in a fictitious drama involving terrorists who wish to harm America and the world. The majority of films include bombing scenes, with Arabs and Muslims being the most recognized mercenary groups. Producers made them simple to spot by ensuring that they wore Arabic accents in addition to their regular attire. The scene frequently takes the shape of 9/11, in which Arabs and Muslims disrupt the tranquility in an area with spectacular explosions that leave a path of blood and gore in their wake. Some of these films feature Arab characters as suicide bombers. This clearly

demonstrates how 9/11 affected the way Hollywood stories were told (Qamar, 2017:4).

Demeaning depictions of Muslims have appeared in a great deal of Hollywood productions. Because of Hollywood's widespread influence and propaganda role, these distorted pictures have helped to create a number of misconceptions about Muslims in America and throughout the world. Islamophobia has been a common practice in American movies since its inception. This behavior has played a significant role in the propagation of racist beliefs about them. For a long time, American films have stereotyped Muslims and Arabs (Noureen, 2018:5).

The number of derogatory pictures of Muslims has increased, which has an impact on both American foreign and internal policy and vice versa. Hollywood's distortions of Muslims fluctuated over time in accordance with the realities of US foreign policy. There, Muslims may experience racial discrimination in public areas, lose their jobs, be detained without cause, or experience physical or verbal abuse. Throughout the Islamic world, there have been various targets of what is known as America's War on Terror (Paracha, 2018:7).

The Hollywood film industry's reputation is inextricably linked to its parent nation, the United States, where it first began. The two have had a good friendship for a considerable amount of time. The government offers incentives to the Hollywood industry, with the amount of the benefits varying based on the project that is produced. Subsidies will go to films that project a positive image and enhance the standing of the US government abroad. In addition, the government contributes to the creation of authorized movie scripts (Rehman, 2017:18).

The United States is shown in 12 Strong as the superior party, whereas non-American parties, Afghani parties, and Middle Eastern parties are shown as inferior. The opening moments of the movie make it clear that the action begins when Mitch Nelson's American troops arrive at the base in Uzbekistan. At the Uzbekistan facility, American military commanders clarified that General Dostum's men and Nelson's troops would work together.

*“Military Chief : Dostum cannot take out the Taliban by himself. So here is the plan. We are gonna drop you into Northern Afghanistan. There, you will meet up with a C.I.A. operative who will take you to Dostum.” (00:15:56-00:16:05)*

Dostum is the commander of forces in Afghanistan. Even though Dostum was familiar with the terrain, he needed the United States' leadership to defeat the Taliban and gain control of Mazar-I-Sharif. The second narrative that demonstrates the dominance of the United States is the first encounter between Nelson's forces and Dostum's troops in an area known as the Alamo. Nelson's debate with Dostum exemplifies the teaching of principles and American exceptionalism. Dostum, a native who knew the area better than Nelson, was hesitant to share information with the Americans because trust had not to be properly established.

*“Nelson : General, I'm the captain. This is my team. You speak to me, all right?”*

*Dostum : This is my country.*

*Nelson : I understand that. You own the land, but we own the sky”*

*(00:37:38-00:37:48).*

Nelson's statements imply a class distinction between him and Dostum. The terms "Land" and "Sky" demonstrate how the United States instills higher values in films. This can be observed in the word *sky*, which is located above land. Most Americans believe that the sky provides life because it stores rain and wind. As Nelson's men marched towards the Taliban's initial target position, Bescham, alongside Dostum's troops, they passed through Behi Village. The villagers paid close attention to Nelson's forces.

*“Diller : No he is showing us off. He is saying, “Look at the Americans.*

*They are here with me.” (00:45:00).*

Diller's statements appear to imply that Americans are powerful individuals who non-Americans are proud of. Diller's phrase implies that Dostum now possesses the best force, which is made up of American troops.

This differs from Dostum's representation of non-Americans and Middle Easterners. During the war, Dostum and his soldiers employed horses and rudimentary weapons, whilst the Americans were represented with fighter planes with missiles and advanced coordinate technology, which appear to be diametrically opposed.

*“Nelson : Sir, let me explain the reality on the ground. I'm advising a man how to employ horse-mounted cavalry against T-27 tanks, tactical, and machine gun.... Everywhere I go to, the civilian and local soldiers are always willing to tell me that they are glad the U.S.A. has come” (01:20:47-01:21:38)*

This demonstrates how inferior and low on technology Dostum's party was. The fact that Dostum only had a horse for a military vehicle is proof of this. Nelson and his forces were not able to receive the newest equipment and weaponry from Dostum and his soldiers.

The US displayed its dominance once more when the Taliban were beaten and Dostum reclaimed Mazar-I-Sharif. At the time, Nelson got a communication from high-ranking US military authorities, and his response was broadcast on American television.

Picture 1: Taliban leader kills teacher in front of girls.



Source : Nicolai Fuglsig, 12 Strong, 2018

The locals were frozen as one of the Taliban leaders spoke, despite the fact that his ideas are incompatible with the teachings of the Koran. This demonstrates the challenges that Middle Easterners, particularly women, face in obtaining an education (Noureen, 2018:14).

Afghanistan's circumstances are portrayed as being primitive in addition to the country's educational issues. It is normal to see scenes of conflict and people killing each other. In stark contrast, children can learn and play in the more contemporary and civilized environment found in the United States.

Picture 2: Nelson helps his daughter prepare for school.



Source : Nicolai Fuglsig, 12 Strong, 2018

Najeeb, a young man who serves in Afghanistan and is tasked with assisting Nelson in leading and supervising his unit, is another example of the uncivilization of the Middle East. Due to his obligation to fight for his family, he was unable to attend school (Paracha, 2018:14).

In addition, Americans who fought for Nelson were consistently portrayed as more cerebral and reasonable than non-Americans. The disparity between Dostum and Nelson's perspectives on death is evident. The Taliban and Dostum eloquently illustrate how extremist Islam has perverted the notions of martyrdom and jihad. Radical followers of Islam have martyrdom or martyrdom as their primary objective. Extremist Islam and Muslims have carried out acts of martyrdom, such as the suicide bombing that opens the movie and the World Trade

Center (WTC) plane catastrophe. When he wanted to strike the Taliban's defenses, Dostum also stated an irrational approach (Noureen, 2018:16)

Nelson's description of American troops as logical troops was reflected as he moved closer to the Taliban troops. Nelson did this because the coordinates of the bomb dropped by the American bomber were off target. The initial bombing attempt failed because Dostum directed all troops to remain far from the target. Two opposing viewpoints emphasize Non-America's image as having an incorrect and senseless approach, urging America to adapt its plan to be more sensible (Paracha, 2018:16).

The movie 12 Strong also depicts the barbaric practice of Middle Easterners robbing American soldiers of their combat essentials, such as food supplies, uniforms, and camping gear, which they then resell in local marketplaces. This is evident from the exchange between two US soldiers who desired to purchase items that had been taken from locals. Because they grab and steal from other individuals, Middle Easterners are shown in this scene as uncivilized and avaricious people.

### **3.2. The Main Target of Trump's Propaganda**

Target audiences have been studied in order to establish the most successful ways to reach and influence them, as well as which messages are most effective for various types of people. Messages can be delivered to far more specific subsets of audiences. Advertisers also have improved access to statistics, allowing them to target specific audience demands. Communicators can tailor their communications to the intended recipients and achieve the desired effect by first analyzing the target audience. In this case, those who read newspapers, watch television and movies,

listen to the radio, use the internet, and so on, can be the recipient or audience. (Lasswell, 1948).

The target audience for the film *12 Strong* (2018) includes audiences who are interested in war films with realistic nuances and political themes, fans of famous actors such as Chris Hemsworth, Michael Shannon, and Michael Pena, as well as audiences who are interested in the true story of the history of the United States military in Afghanistan. *12 Strong* grossed \$46.7 million in the United States and Canada, and \$24.1 million in other territories, for a worldwide total of \$70.8 million. In the United States and Canada, *12 Strong* was released on January 19, 2018, grossing \$15–20 million from 3,002 theaters on its opening weekend. The film debuted with \$15.8 million similar to that of other war films. In January 2018, *12 Strong* finished second at the box office behind *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle*. According to ComScore, 55% of the weekend's audience was male, with 79% aged over 25. The following week, the film fell 45% to \$8.6 million, finishing 6th at the box office (Faughnder 2018).

Donald Trump's candidacy was boosted in large part by his Islamophobic position, also known as 'Islamodiversion', which involves demonizing the Muslim population in order to deflect the general public's attention away from dire economic and political inevitabilities. During his election campaign, Donald Trump portrayed the United States as a country full of refugees and immigrants from all over the world, including Muslims. Drawing on the dualistic self-other dialectic, he said that "Islam hates us," portraying Muslim-Americans as fanatics and terrorists (Schleifer, 2016).

The majority of nations value Hollywood films, and a rising number of countries find entertainment in Hollywood blockbusters. Until recently, the majority of the company's revenue came from domestic ticket sales in the United States. However, the importance of overseas markets has increased. Hollywood films have entertained hundreds of millions of people around the world while also providing a new perspective on a range of global challenges.

Both locally and globally, Trump's policy is engaging in language and implementing policies that appeal to his political base's beliefs and interests at the expense of larger considerations for social cohesion, inclusivity, human rights, and international law. While it is difficult to predict the long-term implications of Trumpism for Islam-West relations, it is clear that President Trump's political actions have had a negative impact on relations between Muslims and segments of the larger society in the United States, complicating and exacerbating existing conflicts in the Muslim world (Nduka, 2021).

Trump seems to be trying to impede the rise of Muslim Americans in American public life while also reinforcing the belief among his fans that Islam and Muslims are the antithesis of what it means to be an American. Muslims are actively opposing Islamism and authoritarianism in favor of democracy and freedom across the larger globe (Elfenbein, 2021).

The credibility of the United States among Muslims worldwide may further decline as a new generation of Muslims aspires to a more peaceful and prosperous future, to the extent that Trump has had a lasting impact on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, including Israel's occupation of Palestine, ongoing conflict with Iran, and support for the Saudi monarchy (Considine, 2017).

### **3.3. The Impact on Islam and Muslims**

The effect component is concerned with the message's impression on the recipient. Understanding the effect of a message is crucial in a range of communication situations, from mass media campaigns to interpersonal encounters, since it allows for modifications and improvements depending on the message's influence on the target audience (Lasswell, 1948).

Muslims have suffered as a result of the rise in hate crimes and domestic terrorist attacks against them brought about by this heightened intolerance and anti-Muslim activism. Many other communities suffer from anti-Muslim violence and discrimination as a result of attackers who target Muslims since they are typically just searching for victims in any form that they believe to be Muslim. FBI statistics on hate crimes in 2016 indicated that crimes had an anti-Muslim motive. From 257 cases the year before to 307 incidents in 2015, there was a roughly 19% rise in Muslim bias. From 307 in the prior year to 388 in 2016, or roughly 26 instances, there were more victims, in line with the overall rise in incidences (Considine, 2017).

Perhaps predictably, Muslim Americans voted strongly for Trump's opponent, Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton, in the 2016 presidential election and Joe Biden in the 2020 race. According to Islam in the United States, 78 percent of respondents supported Clinton in the 2016 election, with only 8 percent voting for Trump. Following the election, Muslim Americans' perceptions of President Trump appeared to be overwhelmingly negative, with many expressing anxiety and outrage about the Trump administration's attitudes toward Muslims and the

country's present trajectory. Among Muslim Americans, 74 percent thought President Trump was hostile to Muslims (Pew Research Center, 2017).

Trump has been harshly dismissive of the so-called Squad of progressive Democratic Congresswomen, which includes Ilhan Omar, Rashida Tlaib, Ayanna Pressley, and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. The four first-term lawmakers were ardent critics of President Trump and his administration's policies. Trump constantly insulted Congresswomen, labeling them as Islam-West Relations in the Era of Trump, and unpatriotic savages who must detest our country (Parkinson, 2019).

Trump has also accused Muslim representatives Omar and Tlaib of anti-Semitism and support for terrorist organizations such as Al Qaeda. In September 2019, Trump retweeted an assertion that Omar celebrated in reaction to the 9/11 attacks. Trump's hatred towards these Muslim Congressmen and women appears to reinforce the idea that Muslims should not be officially welcomed as part of American public life.

The American stability would be endangered by the Muslim community, according to many supporters and even Donald Trump. When someone is suspected of having ties to terrorism, Donald Trump stands up to them and takes decisive action. As part of his "American first" campaign, he declared that Native Americans would come before outsiders. As Islam has historically despised America, according to Donald Trump, the Muslim population in America is not an American community (BBC, 2017).

Members of other American extremist movements, such as white supremacists and armed militias, attended anti-Muslim rallies organized by ACT, the American anti-Muslim advocacy group, in 2017. This illustrates the growing radicalization of America's hate movement toward Muslims. Rising anti-Muslim fervor in the United States is supporting the emergence of these hate organizations (Considine, 2017).

Domestic terrorist assaults on Muslims and religious institutions are also common. The May 2017 killing of two individuals and injuring of another on the Portland MAX train was perhaps the most widely documented occurrence. The incident started when Trump supporter and racist Jeremy Christian began harassing what he thought were two young Muslim ladies on a train. When some guys defended the women, they were attacked. In addition, American mosques have been besieged. According to the Council on American-Islamic Relations and the University of California, Berkeley, 78 mosques were attacked in 2015. In 2016, there were 46 similar attacks, and there were 63 by July 2017 (Husain, 2018).

Anti-Muslim hate groups express intense enmity toward Muslims. These organizations portray Muslims as aliens and connect them with intrinsically undesirable characteristics. Muslims are typically characterized as illogical, bigoted, and aggressive, with their teachings allowing pedophilia and prejudice toward homosexuals and women. These groups are also known to hold conspiratorial notions about the harm that the Muslim-American population poses to America. Muslims are viewed as eroding and eventually replacing American democracy and Western civilization with Islamic authoritarianism, according to a conspiracy theory called civilizational jihad (Beydoun, 2017:1733).

Anti-Muslim hate groups allege that Muslims are attempting to undermine the rule of law by imposing their own Islamic legal system, Sharia law, on Americans. The threat posed by the Muslim Brotherhood is also discussed, as anti-Muslim groups continue to assault Muslim civil rights organizations and American Muslim leaders for supposed ties to the Muslim Brotherhood. Many of these organizations advocate for the Muslim Brotherhood to be declared a foreign terrorist organization.

The Trump administration has openly turned anti-Muslim bigotry into federal policy, recruiting known anti-Muslim radicals to government jobs, enforcing the Muslim Ban, and often telling Americans to be wary of Radical Islamic Terrorism. There have been numerous national and local cases of government agencies casting suspicion on Muslims, ranging from the New York Police Department's surveillance program to the FBI's efforts to monitor and infiltrate African-American Muslims during the civil rights struggle.

Trump's antagonistic comments and attempts to remove Islam and Muslims from American public life have sparked fear and anger among American Muslims, but they have aided his political goals with the far-right, white supremacists, and segments of the American voters who share his beliefs (Rupar,2019).

Globally, and particularly in the Middle East, Trump has also been extremely detrimental and difficult. This section will examine multiple key advancements in American foreign policy subsequent to Trump's election and their importance to current Islam-West relations. In addition to the administration's extraordinary support for Israel and its ongoing occupation of Palestine, it discusses global issues such as the escalation of hostilities with Iran, which includes the

United States' withdrawal from the Iran Nuclear Deal, and Saudi Arabia's continued backing of the Kingdom despite its flagrant violations of human rights both at home and in neighboring countries, most notably Yemen (Nduka, 2021:10).

Even though Trump's Middle East policies appear to be a continuation of his predecessors', they have all gone against international law and multilateral treaties in ways that were previously deemed unacceptable or possible. These include supporting Israel's hegemony over the Palestinians, obstructing Iran's ability to develop economically and militarily, and upholding the Saudi monarchy's rule over Arabia. Consequently, it is possible that future American presidents won't be able to undo the longer-term effects of Trumpism in the Middle East (Diaz, 2017).

Many Muslims report feeling disrespected by individuals in the West. Significant numbers in numerous Western countries agree that the West does not appreciate Muslim societies. The impact of 9/11 on American filmmaking in order to raise awareness about the increasing use of Arabs as terrorist characters, has harmed the ethnic group both in mainstream American society and around the world. The depictions promote a framework in which the American public perpetuates misconceptions and unfair branding (Taylor, 2018).

Discriminatory sentiments toward Muslims, viewing the Islamic religion as an enemy and perceived as weak by the West. Hostility toward Islam is also used to excuse discriminatory acts against Muslims and their exclusion from mainstream culture, resulting in anti-Muslim sentiments being viewed as neutral or normal. Islamophobia also conveys the image of hostility, namely in terms of

discrimination, prejudice, and unequal rights, in which Muslims, whether as people or communities, become prey and are excluded from political and social arenas.

12 Strong Film are important in forming public opinion and affecting perceptions and attitudes since they are a powerful cultural component. If this tendency continues, Arabs will be stigmatized, and the image of Islam and Muslims as terrorists, violent people, and fanatics will become ingrained in the collective mind of the American people. Stereotypes of Muslims represented negatively in this film include the fabulously wealthy, sex maniacs, primitive and unrefined, and individuals who enjoy acts of terrorism. All of these preconceptions contribute to the perpetuation of misleading portrayal (Lasswell, 1972).

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **4.1 Conclusion**

The United States' anti-Islam propaganda during the Donald Trump administration was carried out through the film 12 Strong, which depicted Muslims as a group of terrorists who are cruel and violent, hostile to children and women, and do not respect human rights. The United States, which serves as a communicator, delivers political messages by leveraging the Hollywood sector to achieve political objectives, particularly in demonstrating who the United States truly is. The messages in the form of narratives, situations, and characters shown in the film 12 Strong are carried out with a formation of public opinion strategy in which Muslims are positioned as the bad side and the United States as the good party (Lasswell, 1948).

Films are used as a medium for propaganda in order to spread information, as the Hollywood business is well-known on a global scale. Viewers of movies, particularly those who are drawn to Hollywood productions that focus on Middle Eastern conflict and who have an affinity for the lead actors in these productions, are the targets of this political statement. The target audience may consist of people from all over the world given the widespread recognition of the Hollywood business. The United States government's policies and the propaganda influence through the movie 12 Strong had a detrimental effect on Muslims, not just in Muslim America but also globally (Eijaz, 2018:20).

### Analysis of Anti-Islam Propaganda in the 12 Strong (2018) Film

Lasswell Points	Definition	Result of Analysis
Who	The actor who conducted the propaganda	The producers of 12 Strong include Jerry Bruckheimer, Molly Smith, Thad Luckinbill, and Trent Luckinbill
Says What	The message that the communicator will convey to the communicant as the recipient of the message.	Showing a depiction of the bad image of Islam and the good image of the United States
In Which Channel	The media used by communicators to convey messages.	The 12 Strong (2018) Film
To Whom	The person receiving the message.	The 12 Strong film audiences
With What Effect?	The impact that the communicant gets after receiving a message from the communicator. It can take the form of changes in attitudes, feelings or behavior in response to certain issues.	Changing the views and attitudes of the audience after watching the film 12 Strong in which Muslims are seen negatively then triggering people to commit acts of discrimination. This film is considered as one of the efforts of the United States in the interests of its country as a great country

Source: Lasswell The Structure and Function of Communication in Society 1948

Lasswell's analysis of propaganda theory is used to disseminate the type of propaganda used in 12 Strong. The film presents an anti-Islamic or Islamophobic viewpoint. In this movie, Muslim groups and Middle Eastern nations are shown as being extremely dangerous and should be avoided. Cinematic terror begins at the

beginning of the film, with sequences depicting a number of terrorist acts from several years prior to 9/11. Middle Eastern symbols like burqas and turbans are also used to propagate anti-Islam propaganda messages. This contrasts with the idea of the US as a modern, heroic, and civilized nation. Due to this biased portrayal, all Muslim communities in the US and around the world will be subject to racism and misconceptions (Lasswell, 1948).

American propaganda, as portrayed in the 12 Strong film, has the ability to instill in Americans a sense of superiority over those of other nations. The effect of the US counterattack needs to be taken into account. The United States targets all Muslim groups in addition to Islamic terrorist organizations. As a result, Muslim communities face prejudice and misconceptions propagated by the US (Diaz, 2017).

Lasswell claimed that the presence of an information monopoly is one of the factors that contributes to propaganda's effectiveness. Propaganda does not always succeed, according to Lasswell however, this is also explained. Numerous elements, including the quality of the message, the communicator's skill, and the response from the public, influence this (Lasswell, 1948).

There is currently no information on the film 12 Strong regarding the effectiveness of the propaganda in this movies. However, the United States has a good reputation as a patriotic country that values human rights, and it is a difficult country to defeat because of its sophistication and military strategies, which deserve to be considered a superpower in the international world.

## **4.2 Recommendation**

Considering the propaganda revealed in the film *12 Strong* (2018), it would be fascinating to perform additional research on this topic. This research can be utilized as a foundation for future research into anti-Islam propaganda in other Hollywood films, as well as how this film and Donald Trump's rule will affect the future of Islam from the perspective of the international community. As a recommendation and follow-up to this research, the researcher suggests conducting additional research, such as further investigation of the effects of anti-Islam propaganda on the international community's perception of Islam and Muslims, which may not have been fully explored in this study.

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