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The Political Existence of Muslim Immigrants in The United Kingdom

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Abstract

This paper examines the political existence of British Muslim immigrants amidst rising discrimination and Islamophobia in the UK. The aim is to determine how Muslim immigrant politics persists and develops. The approach used is descriptive-qualitative, based on library research. This paper concludes that the growing issues of Islamophobia, sentiment, and racism against Muslim immigrants in the UK have not diminished the political existence of Muslim immigrants. This is evidenced by the election of Muslim politicians from both the Labour and Conservative parties to political positions in the UK. Their qualities and capacities as Muslim immigrant politicians, along with their ability to adapt to the values of liberalism and democracy in British life, have paved the way for them to achieve equality before the law, recognition of individual rights, and recognition of human rights. The election of Sadiq Khan as mayor of London for two terms is evidence of the persistence and worth of Muslim immigrant politics.

Keywords: British muslim, immigrant, political existence

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji eksistensi politik imigran Muslim Inggris di tengah persepsi negatif Barat terhadap Islam. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif dengan metode studi pustaka. Makalah ini menyimpulkan bahwa citra negatif yang dibangun oleh dunia Barat terhadap Islam tidak menghapus eksistensi politik imigran Muslim di Inggris. Hal ini dibuktikan dengan terpilihnya politisi Muslim dari Partai Buruh maupun Partai Konservatif ke berbagai jabatan politik di Inggris, baik sebagai wali kota, anggota parlemen, maupun menteri. Namun, sentimen terhadap imigran Muslim tidak dapat sepenuhnya dihilangkan karena tindakan terorisme yang dilakukan oleh kelompok-kelompok yang mengatasnamakan Islam—padahal tidak mewakili ajaran Islam—berdampak pada komunitas Muslim itu sendiri. Padahal, komunitas ini telah tumbuh dan berkembang serta menikmati kebebasan dalam menjalankan ajaran agamanya di Inggris. Tindakan terorisme tersebut sering kali digambarkan oleh para cendekiawan Muslim sebagai bentuk kebodohan.

Kata Kunci: Muslim Inggris, imigran, eksistensi politik

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INTRODUCTION

Islam has existed in the UK since the country's formation in 1707. Islam entered the UK through individual contact between the British people and the Islamic community, as well as through groups of Muslims who came to trade and work in the UK. Currently, there are around 2,869,000 Muslims in the UK, which is 4.6 percent of the total population. This figure has increased significantly compared to the 2001 census, which recorded only 1,647,000 people of the Islamic faith (Tyang Ndusun, 2011).

The above developments are also inseparable from the role of Islamic organizations in the UK, which have given a unique flavor to the development of Islam. These organizations have opened the eyes of the British people to Islam, which they do openly and interactively with the British and non-Muslim communities. In general, Muslims in the UK enjoy freedom to practice their religion. A forum attended by Cardinal Vincent Nichols, leader of the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales, and Chief Rabbi Efraim Mirvis brought together figures from various religions in London. This interfaith forum in London was attended by Cardinal Vincent Nichols, leader of the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales, and Chief Rabbi Efraim Mirvis. Maulana Syed Ali Raza Rizvi believes that *"in the UK, Muslims are freer to practice their beliefs. Compared to other European countries and many Islamic countries, London is more Islamic than many Muslim countries in general"* (telegraph.co.uk, Republika Daily archive). This means that the UK is considered more Islamic than other countries because of its freedom of worship and its multicultural population. In the UK, Islam can be seen as a form of love and justice. These are values that should be applied by all countries in the world.

However, the religious freedom of Muslims in the UK began to receive negative attention after the bombing of the *World Trade Center* Twin Towers in *New York City* on September 11, 2001. This event gave rise to *Islamophobia* in Western society (Akhmad Muamar, 2013). There are many definitions of Islamophobia, one that is often used to explain Islamophobia is the definition from Runnymede Trust, which states that "Islamophobia is the shorthand way of referring to dread or hatred of Islam and, therefore, to fear or dislike of all or most Muslims" (Leonie Jackson, 2018). Islamophobia is a racial anti-Muslim threat that is very dangerous to human rights, fundamental aspects of citizenship, and social life between Muslims and non-Muslims throughout the world. (Muhammad Rafi Wisnu Pratama, Gonda Yumitro, and Gautam Kumar Jha, 2024).

In 1997, *the Runnymede Trust*, a British research institute that developed the idea of a multi-ethnic United Kingdom, expressed a similar view in *"Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All"* (Jasafat, 2014). An international conference titled *"Islam and the Media's "* which was held by the Center for Media, Religion, and Culture at the University of Colorado-Boulder in January 2014 discussed the negative stigma attached to Islam and Muslims by the media

discusses the racialization that the media labels Islam and Muslims, especially after the events of September 11, 2001, and a number of terror acts committed in the name of Islam by militant and extremist groups that are not actually part of the mainstream Muslim community. (Ayub Khan, 2006)

Racialization of Islam is also in line with research conducted in the UK prior to the events of September 11, 2001, which showed that, in general, the UK media presented Islam as a threat. This was not only true for British society, but also for their social norms (Jasafat, 2014). This assessment was counterproductive to the diversity of Muslims in the UK, who, before the bombings, were considered a community of love and justice, due to their peaceful preaching, teachings, and interactions with British and non-British communities.

The sentiments of British citizens towards immigrants are not without reason, they assume that the arrival of the wave of immigrants to the UK causes the emergence of socio-economic problems such as high unemployment rates and increased state spending on public services. This is then exacerbated by sentiments issued by British Conservatives who say similar narratives that smell of anti-immigration. (Muhammad Rafi Wisnu Pratama, Gonda Yumitro, and Gautam Kumar Jha, 2024). As said by David Cameron, "I believe controlling immigration and bringing it down is of vital importance to the future of our country," and he pledged to "reduce net migration to the levels we saw in the 1980s and 1990s" (BBC News, 2011). This means that controlling the flow of immigration is important for the future of Britain.

When the British Exit happened on June 23, 2016, it was an event where the UK withdrew from the European Union (Poltak Partogi Nainggolan, 2016). The Muslim community, following Brexit, felt that the challenges and dynamics they faced were increasingly difficult. They feared a decline in tolerance and freedom of expression, which had long been a tradition in British social life. Post-Brexit, there was an increase in hate speech, particularly religious-based (Cinar, 2022).

Based on the background above, this paper attempts to discuss the existence of Muslim immigrant politicians in the UK. Will his political participation, which has been a concern for Muslims and non-Muslims worldwide, be affected by the rising racist and Islamophobic sentiments in the UK, or will he continue to exist with his quality and capacity as a Muslim politician. This paper discusses the political participation of British Muslim immigrants amidst the growing issue of Islamophobia against the Muslim community. It also examines the political development of Muslim immigrants in Britain and the consequences of policies issued by the British government.

RESEARCH APPROACH

This research utilizes a library-based, qualitative approach to conduct descriptive analytical research, focusing on the political significance of Muslim immigrants in the UK. The use of a historical approach and case studies, as supported by Jack S. Levy (2003), necessitates an in-depth, non-numerical analysis of past events to provide detailed scientific insights.

This model analysis focuses on data in the form of words or sentences generated from the research object and related to the event. To collect the data required for this article, the author conducted a literature review using various tools such as Google Scholar, other journal sources, and trusted websites. This was accomplished by collecting, processing, analyzing, and interpreting the data and sources in the form of literature, as mentioned previously.

Migration and Immigrants

Islamic countries, especially those in the Middle East, often experience prolonged conflicts. Conflict in a country is the cause of high Muslim migration rates around the world (Ali Geno Berutu, 2019). One of the theories that explains population migration around the world is that it is caused by security issues (Gusnelly, 2010). Furthermore, regarding the theory of migration as explained by Everett S. Lee (1976) in his writing entitled *A Theory of Migration*, it is stated that the volume of migration in a region develops in accordance with the diversity of the region. In the area of origin and the destination area, there are positive, negative, and neutral factors. Positive factors are factors that provide benefits if one lives in that area; for example, the area has schools, job opportunities, and a good climate. Negative factors are factors that give a negative value to the area concerned so that a person wants to move from that place because certain needs are not met. The difference in cumulative values between the two places tends to cause population migration (Sri Djoko, M.A.S., et al., 2015).

Migration is the demographic component that has the most interconnections with various aspects of society, such as politics, economics, social life, and culture. Therefore, understanding migration cannot be separated from the complex social setting and context of society. The political aspect, in particular, has a close and reciprocal relationship with migration. Political policies that favor one community will harm and even oppress other communities (Abdul Haris, 2001). Anti-terrorism policies in the United States have become an obstacle to migration, especially from the six countries mentioned by Trump that have Muslim-majority populations, namely Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen. This political policy is considered an anti-Islamic movement (Liston P. Siregar, 2019). However, for the United States, it is an act of being selective towards foreigners entering their country.

Second, Transnational Movements (Irza Khurun, 2017), Islam is increasingly hated, so it is spreading throughout communities around the world, including the United States. The US government is trying to damage the image of Islam by creating a frightening image of Islam,

giving rise to Islamophobia in order to limit the spread of this Abrahamic religion. US media propaganda has created a negative image, identifying Islam with terrorists that must be fought (Jeffrey Kaplan, 2006). However, the crimes committed by a small minority of Muslims cannot represent Islam, which is embraced by one-third of the world's population. Currently, almost all countries have Muslim residents. In addition to immigrants, local residents are beginning to like Islam and believe in it. Islam is not only a religion that deals with rituals (worship) but also a way of life for its followers. Muslims have become accustomed to visiting countries (kingdoms, states) with trade routes. They work as traders while also spreading the message of the truth of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.

This means that Muslim communities have become accustomed to transcending national borders and are not hindered by the administrative and demographic boundaries of a country. This way of life has given rise to a movement without national boundaries, the Transnational Movement. To strengthen the struggle for religion, transnational organizations have been established. Those who belong to the same organization build a shared commitment that they are brothers. Therefore, visiting countries where there are followers of their organization is common, and it is obligatory to visit fellow brothers in Islam. This phenomenon has triggered migration in the aspects of social and religious organizations.

In this article, the term Muslim immigrants refers to individuals from Muslim-majority countries who have migrated to the UK and have chosen to settle permanently, rather than return to their countries of origin. These individuals now live in the UK as British citizens, enjoying equal rights and protections under the country's legal and constitutional framework. Many have taken on active roles in both governmental and non-governmental sectors, including holding political positions. Due to their diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds, Muslim immigrants in the UK have often mobilized fellow Muslims around shared goals, particularly in matters related to religion and politics. This specific group is the focus when referring to Muslim immigrants throughout the article.

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The issue of immigration was a hot topic during the Brexit debate. The British public believed that the influx of immigrants into the UK had exceeded the appropriate limits (Hardi Alunaza SD & Virginia Sherin, 2018). Some argued that Britain's departure from the European Union was a form of xenophobia and racism, reinforced by the Eurosceptic sentiments echoed by British Prime Minister David Cameron. This led to fears that Brexit would shift British society, which had initially begun to be structured as an inclusive society, towards a strong narrative of xenophobia and racism (Khalili, 2017).

The Arrival of Muslim Immigrants in the UK

The history of the Muslim community's growth in the UK dates back to the colonial period. The earliest Muslim immigrants were Yemenis from Aden, who arrived in the 19th century as maritime workers. Over time, they established the first Muslim community in the UK. As the British Empire expanded, Muslims from various colonial territories also migrated to Britain, particularly during the post-war labor shortages of the 1960s, when job opportunities were extended to citizens of former colonies (K. Gilles, 2003). Many of these early Muslim settlers gathered in port cities such as Cardiff, where they formed tight-knit communities. Notably, the first mosque in Britain was established in Cardiff in 1870.

Before the turn of the 20th century, another wave of Muslim immigrants arrived from India and settled near London, where they established the Shah Jehan Mosque in Woking—the first purpose-built mosque in the UK. During the first half of the 19th century, Muslims also migrated to England from regions such as Cyprus, Egypt, and Iraq. By the 1950s, Muslims from India and Pakistan who had settled in cities like Birmingham and Bradford began to enjoy the same legal status as native British citizens. This period saw the emergence of more mosques across the country, reflecting the growing presence of the Muslim community.

It was not until the 1970s that Indian Muslim immigrants in the UK began to gain formal political recognition, as political parties increasingly sought support from ethnic minority voters during general elections. Although many of these immigrants were not yet fluent in English and their political outlooks often reflected the perspectives of their countries of origin, by 1992, Muslim citizens in the UK had become significantly more engaged in political participation (Muflih Fahmi, 2020).

By the eve of World War II, the Muslim population in Britain had reached approximately 50,000. Following the war, immigration increased significantly, doubling the Muslim population to around 100,000 by 1951. Immigration peaked during the 1960s, primarily from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. However, in the 1970s, the British government adopted stricter immigration policies, particularly targeting migrants from former colonies, which slowed the influx of Muslims from abroad. In 1971, the Muslim population in the UK had grown to roughly 500,000, accounting for about 1.8% of the total population. This number continued to rise, reaching approximately 1,250,000 by 1982, or 2.2% of the UK population. Of these, at least

700,000 were British citizens, and around 30,000 were Muslim students enrolled at universities across the country. The majority of Muslims in the UK follow the Hanafi school of thought, with smaller groups adhering to the Shafi'i, Ja'fari, or Ismaili schools (M. Ali Kettani, 2005)

In the UK, there are two major groups or sects embraced by British Muslims. The first is the Deobandi sect which was originated from India in the 19th century. It emphasizes Sunni orthodoxy, Hanafi jurisprudence, and a cautious approach to Sufism, accepting certain Sufi practices but rejecting what they see as un-Islamic innovations (*bid'ah*). In the UK, many mosques and madrasas are associated with the Deobandi tradition, especially in South Asian communities. In contrast to the Deobandi, the second school is Bareilvi movement which was also originated in India, founded by Ahmed Raza Khan of Bareilly. It strongly emphasizes love and reverence for the Prophet Muhammad, including celebrating his birthday (*Mawlid*) and visiting saints' shrines. Bareilvis are generally considered more open to Sufi traditions than the Deobandis. They often stand in contrast to Deobandis, especially regarding practices seen as "innovations." (H. Albert, 1998).

According to the 2011 National Census, there are 2.7 million Muslims living in England and Wales, an increase of nearly one million from the previous census. Five percent of that number are adults, while 9.1 percent are children under the age of five. Most Muslims live in Bradford, Luton, Blackburn, Birmingham, London, and Dewsbury. In addition, Muslim populations can also be found in High Wycombe, Slough, Leicester, Derby, Manchester, Liverpool, and the factory towns of Northern England.

Overall, Muslims in England have a slightly higher social status, consisting of professionals, doctors, engineers, and civil servants. However, the majority are factory workers or employees of small companies. Geographically, around 40% of all Muslims in England are located in the Greater London area, with the majority of the rest in Lancashire, Yorkshire, and the Midlands. Politically, the influence of the Muslim community is still very small, but it cannot be ignored. In the UK, the Muslim population continues to grow, primarily due to the natural increase in births exceeding the number of deaths (M. Ali Kettani, 2005).

The Life of Muslim Immigrants in the UK

The right to freedom of religion in the United Kingdom is regulated by three constituent legal systems, namely national law, European law, and international law. The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) guarantees freedom of religion as enshrined in Article 9, which states: "The right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion includes the freedom to change religion or belief and the freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice, and observance."

Islam in the UK is the largest non-Christian religion. It is predominantly practiced by immigrants from South Asia (Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India) or descendants of immigrants from that region. Other communities come from the Middle East, Afghanistan, Malaysia, and Somalia, as well as a small number from African countries such as Nigeria, Uganda, and Sierra Leone. (Born Abroad Countries of Birth, 2005).

Maulana Rizvi emphasized that Islam, unlike Judaism or Christianity in their established historical forms, is represented in the UK by a relatively new community of British Muslims. He stressed that Islam promotes peaceful coexistence, mutual respect, and love for others, values that can flourish in a multicultural society such as Britain. Rizvi added that life in the UK provides opportunities for Muslims to live out Islamic values with greater passion and relevance (Nashih Nashrullah, 2020). In this context, it is important to recall the principle of religious freedom enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights: “Freedom to manifest one’s religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of public safety, order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.”

British Muslims can generally be divided into three broad groups. The first consists of those with non-British cultural backgrounds who migrated to the UK, whether as workers, students, or family members of earlier migrants. The second group comprises the children and grandchildren of these migrants, often described as living between two worlds. While modern schools and institutions encourage integration, this process can gradually erode their traditional cultural and religious identities. The third group is composed of native British people who have converted to Islam, commonly referred to as the “revert” community. Although relatively small in number compared to the first two groups, they play a visible role in the British Muslim landscape (Hasyim Aidid, 2012).

According to Robin Philips, the presence of this third group is partly linked to demographic changes in England. He argues that a “demographic crisis” among the white population has created conditions that facilitate the growth of Islam in the country (Teguh Setiawan and Sri Budi Eko Wardani, *Denyut Islam di Eropa [The Pulse of Islam in Europe]*, 2002)

At present, demographic differences between religious groups in the UK point to significant long-term shifts. The majority of white Christians are aged 40 and above, while South Asian Muslims are generally younger, with many under 30. This imbalance is likely to influence the religious and cultural landscape of the UK over the next 30 to 50 years. Religious participation rates already reflect this trend: mosque attendance stands at around 70 percent, compared with only 5 percent for churches. According to Hasyim Aidid (2012), this contrast is linked to the age profile of the communities—Muslims, especially of South Asian origin, are predominantly young and maintain strong religious commitment, while many white Christians are older and display declining enthusiasm for religious practice. Consequently, some

churches in the UK have been converted into mosques, as dwindling congregations can no longer support their upkeep.

Nevertheless, these demographic shifts have coincided with rising Islamophobia across Europe, including in Britain. A 2015 survey reported that 60 percent of British Muslims experienced discrimination or pressure in practicing their faith—an increase from 40 percent in a similar survey conducted in 2010. Respondents largely attributed this rise in hostility to political rhetoric and unbalanced media coverage. (<https://republika.co.id/page/penulis/320/nashih-nashrullah>)

Islam is one of the world's largest religions, with adherents not only in the Middle East and Asia but also across Europe and the Americas. According to the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life (The Future of the Global Muslim Population, January 2011), the global Muslim population stood at approximately 1.62 billion in 2010 (Stencel, 2011). The number of Muslims worldwide has continued to grow, with an estimated increase of 21 percent between 2000 and 2010, and projections suggesting a rise of 26 percent by 2020 (Ali Geno Brutu, 2019).

It should also be recognized that Islam is not monolithic, and this diversity is clearly visible within the Muslim community in the United Kingdom. As noted by Hasyim Aidid (2012), this diversity often falls under the category of internal tolerance—the ability of Muslims to coexist with one another despite differences in ethnic, cultural, or theological background. Strong sentiments, whether ethnic, racial, or religious, sometimes create tensions within the community. One example is the informal classification of mosques according to the dominant ethnicity of their founders and congregations, leading to designations such as “Pakistani mosques,” “Arab mosques,” or “Bangladeshi mosques.” In addition to ethnicity, there is also a division based on religious affiliation, resulting in distinct spaces such as Shia mosques, Ahmadiyya mosques, and others. These patterns reflect both the plural character of Islam in the UK and the challenges of building unity within diversity

Although the UK has implemented the principle of multiculturalism in their country, it is not uncommon for Muslims to face challenges from the EDL or English Defence League and the Afro-Caribbean community (Hasyim Aidid, 2012). *The English Defence League* (EDL) is a protest movement that opposes anything considered to be Islamization, Sharia law, and Islamic extremism in the UK. The EDL has been described as Islamophobic. The EDL originated from a group known as the United Peoples of Luton (UPL). The UPL was formed in response to demonstrations organized by the Islamic extremist organization Al- Muhajirun, which opposed the war in Afghanistan. Their group consisted of hardline Christians, Jews, gays, Sikhs, and even hooligans. Even more amusing, there was a neo-Nazi group that joined even though their ideology was contrary to that of the Jews, considering the events of the Holocaust (Frank Peter and Rafael Ortega, 2014).

Research from Hope Not Hate shows that 54% of the British public feels that Islam in general is a threat to the UK, and 31% believe that Muslim migration to the UK is part of a broader plan to “Islamize” the UK (Fear, 2018). British politicians have portrayed the presence of Muslims in the UK as the root cause of extremism and terrorism, making it difficult for Muslims to coexist with their neighbors. Unease arose within Muslim communities following Britain’s departure from the European Union, fearing it would prevent hundreds of thousands of Muslim refugees from conflict-affected countries from fleeing to the UK (Muslim Association of Britain, 2016).

The presence of Muslims in Britain after Brexit, particularly in political discourse, almost always leads to sentiment and discrimination. For example, during the 2016 London mayoral election, Conservative candidate Zac Goldsmith attempted to attract voters by using xenophobic and racist narratives, particularly against Islam. Moreover, his opponent at the time, Sadiq Khan, was of Pakistani descent (Robert Mackey, 2016). Immigrant sentiment, coupled with racist and xenophobic rhetoric, poses a significant threat and challenge for Muslim groups in the UK. Furthermore, following the Brexit referendum, Muslims have experienced labeling and stigmatization from British society in general due to the issue of immigration, which is closely linked to hate speech incidents. This is evident in data showing a 15-25% increase in racial and religious hate speech in the UK (Joanna Clifton-Sprigg et al., 2021).

In an effort to accommodate Muslims in the UK on a broad and national scale, British Muslim immigrants formed the Mosque Council, that have aims to voice the aspirations of the Muslim community and fighting for their Islamic identity. The members of the Mosque Council consist of representatives who have been mandated or appointed by various Islamic groups and mosques. This method is a solution to the quite stark differences between the Barelvi and Deobandi groups in particular, as well as other smaller Islamic groups. The main task of the Mosque Council is to represent Muslim citizens in dialogue and negotiations to fulfill their rights and to manage social activities for Muslim citizens. This has resulted in a good relationship between Muslim citizens and the local government and the royal family (Muflih Fahmi. 2020).

Muslim immigrants in the UK are politically opposed to the Conservative Party, which they consider to be anti-immigrant because it pays more attention to white workers and the lower middle class. The Labour Party has taken advantage of this opportunity to gain votes and support from “ethnic minorities” in various local elections in various cities. This was the case in Birmingham and Bradford. Eventually, one of the Muslim representatives was appointed as the head of the Race Relations Unit of the Birmingham City Council, who was in fact a former secretary of a mosque in the Birmingham area. This was a breath of fresh air for Muslims to gain access to the city government to obtain the rights of their minority community (Muflih Fahmi. 2020).

However, for Islamic community leaders, whether they hold positions in government or not, access to politics is not the ultimate goal, but merely an instrument to strengthen their position of power and influence over fellow Muslims in the UK. In the 1987 general election campaign, Muslims across the UK were asked by one of the participants in the election, who was from the Labour Party, to actively vote for candidates who would fight for the Muslim community to obtain Islamic legal protection for their educational rights in the UK. The climax came in 1992 when eleven Muslim citizens in the city of Bradford were elected to the city council, all of whom were members of the Labour Party (Muflih Fahmi. 2020).

Amidst rampant Islamophobia in Europe, particularly in the UK, London, one of the world's *trademark cities*, has for the first time a Muslim mayor. Khan himself is a Labour Party politician. He was elected and officially inaugurated as mayor of London on Saturday, September 19, 2016. Although a Muslim, Khan insists he will not give preferential treatment to the Muslim community in London. As mayor, Khan promises to serve all Londoners. *"I want every Londoner to have the same opportunities that this city has given me and my family. Opportunities not just to survive, but to thrive,"* (Sadiq Khan, 2016). This means that Khan emphasizes that he is not a leader of Muslims, but represents all residents of the British capital. *"Let me be clear, I am not a Muslim leader or spokesperson. I am the mayor of London, and I speak for all Londoners."*

The participation of Muslims in the political life of the United Kingdom has steadily increased, with a growing number holding seats in parliament and occupying key positions such as ministers and mayors. Public opinion toward minority communities in Britain is often shaped by media narratives; therefore, positive portrayals and the visibility of Muslim achievements in public life can significantly improve perceptions of Islam. A notable example is Sadiq Khan, a Labour Party politician who was elected mayor of London in 2016, an event widely regarded as a historic milestone for British Muslims (Siti Nuraisyah Amini, 2016). His success demonstrated that, despite considerable challenges, Muslims can attain high office in the UK's democratic system. Even before Khan's election, however, several other Muslim politicians had already played important roles in British politics. Among them are the following five figures:

1. Mohammad Lutfur Rahman born on September 12, 1965, Bangladesh is a British politician who became the first directly elected mayor of Tower Hamlets, a borough in East London, in 2010. Initially a member of the Labour Party and serving as a councillor between 2008 and 2010, Rahman later stood as an independent candidate and won the mayoralty. His election was significant as it marked the growing political representation of British Muslims at the local government level.
2. Humza Yousaf born on March 28, 1971 is a Scottish politician and member of the Scottish National Party (SNP). He was first elected to the Scottish Parliament in 2011, representing Glasgow. The son of immigrants—his father from Pakistan and his mother from Kenya—

Yousaf rapidly advanced within Scottish politics. He served as Minister for External Affairs and International Development, and later as Minister for Europe and International Development. In 2023, he was elected leader of the SNP and became First Minister of Scotland, making him the first Muslim to hold the highest political office in a devolved administration within the United Kingdom. His career illustrates both the growing diversity of British politics and the rising influence of British Muslims in leadership positions.

3. Baroness Sayeeda Hussain Warsi (b. March 28, 1971) is a British lawyer, politician, and member of the Conservative Party. Of Pakistani heritage, she became the first Muslim woman to serve in a British cabinet. Between 2010 and 2012, she was appointed Minister without Portfolio in Prime Minister David Cameron's first cabinet, making her the first Muslim woman to attend Cabinet meetings. She later served as Senior Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and as Minister for Faith and Communities. Warsi resigned from her post in August 2014 over the government's policy on Gaza, a decision that highlighted her commitment to principle and human rights. Her career represents a historic milestone for Muslim women in British politics.
4. Shabana Mahmood (b. September 17, 1980) is a British politician of Pakistani heritage and a member of the Labour Party. Born in Birmingham, she was elected as the Member of Parliament (MP) for Birmingham Ladywood in 2010, becoming one of the first Muslim women elected to the House of Commons. Mahmood has since held several shadow ministerial roles, and in 2023 she was appointed Shadow Secretary of State for Justice, making her one of the most senior Muslim politicians in the Labour Party. Her career reflects the increasing representation of Muslim women in British politics and their growing influence within major political parties.
5. Amjad Mahmood Bashir (b. 1952) is a British politician of Pakistani heritage who served as a Member of the European Parliament (MEP) for the Yorkshire and Humber region. He was first elected in 2014 as a representative of the UK Independence Party (UKIP). In January 2015, however, he defected to the Conservative Party, citing disagreements with UKIP policies (Internasional.kompas.com, 2016). Bashir's career illustrates both the diversity of political affiliations among British Muslims and their growing presence in European as well as national political arenas. (Internasional.kompas.com, 2016).

The composition of British Muslim immigrants, who hold the second-largest position among the total non-Christian population, has had a significant political, social, economic, and cultural impact on the UK. The positive impact of their presence has significantly impacted economic growth, the sustainability of democracy, and cultural acculturation in the UK.

The impact on British economic growth stems from their contributions to the business sector and the workforce, mostly of productive age, distributed evenly across the professional and labor sectors, contributing to the UK's economic productivity. The impact on democratic

sustainability is emphasized by their participation in politics. Their presence in parliament adds color, particularly regarding political policy. Furthermore, their participation in Muslim organizations ultimately contributes to the material and spiritual aspirations of British Muslim immigrants. Finally, the positive impact of cultural acculturation is evident in the cultural contact between immigrants and local residents.

The relationship then acculturated and formed a multicultural society. This aligns with the values of liberalism that are highly regarded by Western European cultures. These values include democracy, individual freedom, equality before the law, recognition of individual rights, and respect for human rights. Moreover, multiculturalism is also a manifestation of democratic values. (Siswanto, 2012), This means that Muslim immigrant politics demonstrates the mutual influence and formation of a new, more diverse culture between Muslim immigrants and British society. The result of this acculturation is a more diverse and inclusive society. Liberal values such as democracy, freedom, equality, and the recognition of individual rights are highly esteemed by Western European societies, particularly in England.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that the issue of Islamophobia, sentiment, and racism that has developed against Muslim immigrants in the UK does not eliminate the political existence of Muslim immigrants. This can be proven by the election of Muslim politicians from both the Labour and Conservative parties to political positions in the UK, whether as mayors, members of parliament, or ministers. They continue to exist with their quality and capacity as Muslim politicians. Their ability to adapt and implement the values of liberalism and democracy in life in England paved the way for them to gain equal rights before the law, recognition of individual rights, and recognition of human rights. The election of Sadiq Khan as London's mayor for two terms is proof that the political power of Muslim immigrants remains resilient and worthy of consideration

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