

**APOSTASY: THE INFLUENCE OF
REVISIONISTS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA TO
MALAYSIAN MUSLIMS**

SANTHIRA MOGAN A/L NALATHAMBY

UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

2025

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by

SANTHIRA MOGAN A/L NALATHAMBY

**Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

June 2025

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my gratitude to Allah SWT for giving me the opportunity to be healthy to finish this thesis. I'd like to thank my supervisor, Associate Professor, Dr Jasni Sulong, for his patience and his level of open mindedness for allowing me to embark in a study of this nature, in the interest of academic progress. The entire subject matter of this thesis is new and he has to confront with sensitive materials which are painful to hear. His provoking questions and concerns has made me, the Researcher, to help Muslims understand Islamic history of the 7th century in a critical way, based on Islamic as well as non-Islamic materials. As it is now, there are differences of opinion among Muslims themselves as expressed in the, often quoted Malay phrase, '*ulama tidak sepakat dalam hal ini.*' (The scholars are divided in their opinion in this matter.)

I am seriously grateful to Mun'im Sirry for his on-line lectures and books which provokes Muslims to strike a balance between the traditional Islamic views and the views of the Revisionists. I am greatly indebted to Gabriel Saad Reynolds of Notre Dame University and Derek of Mythvision for providing me with valuable resources for the materials found in this thesis. Gabriel who has his own academic website interviews other academicians both Muslims and Non-Muslims and refers to primary sources of information. Similarly, Derek, who has his own academic website also interviews non-Muslim Islamic scholars who are supporters of Islam as well as otherwise, and provides primary sources of their works. I am greatly indebted to the works of Ahmad Al-Jallad, whose work on paleo-Arabic inscription provides insight into the Arabic language and the religious makeup of the 5th, 6th and 7th century of Arabia which more or less rewrites the history of Islam in a positive way. I am also

grateful to Revisionists Jay Smith who runs Pfanderfilms portal where he provides graphical timelines for Islam's history and Shoemaker, for his academic analysis on the historicity of Islam. My appreciation also extends to Paul Williams, a Muslim, who runs the Blogging Theology website. He tries to defend Islam against the revisionists by interviewing Muslim as well as non-Muslim scholars by offering primary evidence from their publications. 'Islamic Awareness,' another website dedicated to defend Islam, has also been invaluable in contributing to the materials found in this thesis.

I am extremely grateful to social media for it has provided me with some of the latest books published in pdf format which could be downloaded and read without cost. These books are very expensive and are beyond the reach of many students. Furthermore, these books could not be found in our local libraries, especially those books which take a critical look at Islam's history. I would like to express Academia.com for dropping relevant research publications into my email which makes my life easier in looking for relevant hard copy materials. In addition to that, social media sites make reviews on the latest development found by experts in their own field, which might take years for the information to reach if we waited for the information to be published.

Lastly, I would like to extend my appreciation to Majlis Agama Islam Selangor and my wife, for supporting me financially.

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Arabic Script and Roman Script Equivalent.

Arabic		Transcription	
أ	أَلِف	a	ʾalif
ب	بَاء	b	bāʾ
ت	تَاء	t	tāʾ
ث	ثَاء	t	ṯāʾ
ج	جِيم	ǧ	ǧīm
ح	حَاء	ḥ	ḥāʾ
خ	خَاء	ḫ	ḫāʾ
د	دَال	d	dāl
ذ	ذَال	ḏ	ḏāl
ر	رَاء	r	rāʾ
ز	زَاي	z	zāī
س	سِين	s	sīn
ش	شِين	š	šīn
ص	صَاد	ṣ	ṣād
ض	ضَاد	ḍ	ḍād
ط	طَاء	ṭ	ṭāʾ
ظ	ظَاء	ẓ	ẓāʾ
ع	عَيْن	ʿ	ʿayn
غ	غَيْن	ǧ	ǧayn
ف	فَاء	f	fāʾ
ق	قَاف	q	qāf
ك	كَاف	k	kāf
ل	لَام	l	lām
م	مِيم	m	mīm
ن	نُون	n	nūn
و	وَاو	w	wāw
ي	يَاء	y	yāʾ
ه	هَاء	h	hāʾ

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- Appendix A Shariah Criminal Punishments in Some States in Malaysia
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MURTAD: PENGARUH REVISIONIS MELALUI MEDIA SOSIAL TERHADAP MUSLIM DI MALAYSIA

ABSTRAK

Kemunculan Revisionis di media sosial membawa cabaran yang tidak diduga oleh umat Islam. Ia penuh dengan material anti-Islam yang bukan sahaja mencabar kandungan al-Quran and Hadith, malah ia juga menengahkan fitnah kepada kepercayaan Islam seperti dakwaan kewujudan lebih dari 30 Quran yang berbeza dan mempertikaikan kewujudan Mekkah dan Nabi Muhammad (saw) pada tahun 600an TM. Cabaran-cabaran dan persoalan-persoalan tersebut bukan sahaja membuat sebahagian orang Islam ragu akan kesahihan Islam malah ada yang meninggalkan Islam dan menjadi orang Kristian atau Atheis. Matlamat kajian ini ialah untuk memberi perlindungan undang-undang untuk Islam terhadap mereka yang menghina Islam dan memberi hujah-hujah mempertahankan Islam keatas tomahan-tomahan revisionists. Pengkaji telah menggunakan metod campuran, iaitu, kualitatif dan kuantitatif dengan menggunakan Kajian Perpustakaan dan Field Research. Kajian Perpustakaan dijalankan melalui, buku-buku, journal academic dan media sosial dan Field Research dijalankan dengan kaedah Questionnaire. Kajian mendapati bahawa ada kemungkinan besar untuk rakyat Malaysia terpengaruh dengan persoalan musuh-musuh Islam dan mereka murtad dan hidup secara rahsiah. Kajian mendapati bahawa, di luar negara, ramai orang telah murtad and kemungkinan nasib yang sama juga akan timpa rakyat Malaysia, jika kita tidak ambil langkah-langkah yang sesuai. Kajian ini akan diberikan kepada pihak berkuasa, terutamanya, Suruhanjaya Komunikasi dan Multimedia Malaysia, supaya mereka dapat membuat amendmen keatas s.3(3) Akta

Komunikasi and Multimedia 1988, supaya memberi lebih perlindungan kepada agama Islam sebagai agama rasmi di Malaysia.

**APOSTASY: THE INFLUENCE OF REVISIONISTS THROUGH SOCIAL
MEDIA TO MALAYSIAN MUSLIMS**

ABSTRACT

The advent of Revisionists on social media brings with them unexpected challenges to Muslims. Their anti-Islamic materials not only challenge the content of the Quran and the Hadith, but, they also defame the beliefs of Islam by claiming that there exist more than 30 different versions of the Quran and question the existence of Mecca and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in the 600s CE. These questions and challenges not only make Muslims doubt their religion but they make Muslims leave Islam altogether by becoming Christians and Atheists. The objective of this research is to provide legal protection for Islam against those who insult Islam and provide defences against the claims of the Revisionists. The researcher has used qualitative and quantitative research methods, employing both *library research* and *field research*. Library research was done through the study of books, academic journals and social media while field research was done through a Questionnaire. This study focuses particularly on Muslim apostasy in Malaysia. This study suggests that many Malaysians can be potentially be influenced by these anti-Islamic sites and leave Islam as a result. It was found that many people have left Islam overseas and the same fate could potentially happen in Malaysia, if we do not take the necessary steps to prevent it. This research is done with the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Corporation in mind with the hope that they would amendments to s3(3) Communications and Multimedia Act 1988, to provide better legal protection for Islam.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preface

Apostasy is on the increase on a global level, with ramification at the regional levels. According to Gallup polls in the year 2020,¹ only 48% of American felt that religion was important in their lives. It was 58% in 1992. And 64% of their respondents have said that religion is losing its influence in America. Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world today but that is because of the high rate of population growth among Muslims, as reported by Pew Research. Christianity's reign as the world's largest religion will be over and by 2060 and Islam will dominate the world as the largest religious group.²

However, the 'nones,' or the religiously unaffiliated, are on the increase. In North America, the 'nones' are the second largest 'religious' group, with almost a quarter of the population, while in Europe they are the first. In fact, they have overtaken the Catholics, the protestants, and all the followers of non-Christian faiths except Islam.³ The same situation is seen in the Middle East, as revealed by a survey done by BBC News Arabic section that showed non-religiosity is on the rise in these countries.⁴ According to Pew Research,⁵ in Muslim dominated countries like

¹ <https://news.gallup.com/poll/1690/religion.aspx> Retrieved 18.5.21

² Pew Research Centre (2017). *Why Muslims are the world's fastest growing religious group.* <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/04/06/why-muslims-are-the-worlds-fastest-growing-religious-group/> Retrieved 4.5.2021;
<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/aug/27/religion-why-is-faith-growing-and-what-happens-next> Retrieved 4.5.2021

³ Bullard, G. (2016) *The World's Newest Major Religion: No Religion* <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/article/160422-atheism-agnostic-secular-nones-rising-religion> Retrieved 4.5.21

⁴ BBC News Arabic (2019). *The Arab world in seven charts: Are Arabs turning their backs on religion?* <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-48703377> Retrieved 4.5.2021

⁵ <https://www.pewforum.org/2018/06/13/how-religious-commitment-varies-by-country-among-people-of-all-ages/> Retrieved 4.5.2021

Pakistan, Indonesia and Afghanistan, more than 90% of them say that religion is very important while it is only 10% in Japan and 3% in China.

Irreligiosity is also on the rise in Malaysia. If one were to gauge from the social media websites, like Malaysian Atheists, Freethinkers, Agnostics and Their Friends,⁶ Malaysian Atheists & Secular Humanists – MASH,⁷ BEBAS, Sekular dan Saksama,⁸ one can notice ex-Muslims bragging about their new found faith, that is Atheism. It is hypothesized that the growth of Atheism/Agnosticism is due to the fact that anti-religious materials are replete over the Internet and these materials are in the English language, as a result, those who are competent in the English language get exposed to these anti-religious materials and get influenced by them. Anti-Islamic sentiments are pervasive in Europe,⁹ the United States,¹⁰ Australia¹¹ and New Zealand.¹²

The ubiquity and accessibility of social networking sites like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram have allowed far-right extremist and Islamophobic discourses to skyrocket in cyber space.¹³ WikiIslam.net is a website dedicated to

⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/760774403964961/> Malaysian Atheists, Freethinkers, Agnostics and Their Friends Retrieved 4.5.2021

⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/MalaysianAtheists/> Retrieved 4.5.2021

⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/bebasmsia/> Retrieved 4.5.2021

⁹ Caldwell C. (2009). Reflections on the revolution in Europe: Immigration, Islam, and the West. New York: Doubleday; Sniderman PM, Hagendoorn A. (2007) When ways of life collide: Multiculturalism and its Discontents in the Netherlands. Princeton: Princeton University Press. pg 155

¹⁰ Kalkan KO, Layman GC, Uslander EM. (2009) Bands of others? Attitudes toward Muslims in contemporary American society. *The Journal of Politics*. 2009; 71: 847–862; Panagopoulos C. (2006). The polls-trends Arab and Muslim Americans and Islam in the aftermath of 9/11. *Public Opinion Quarterly*. 70: 608–624.

¹¹ Haddad YY, Smith JI. (2002). *Muslim Minorities in the West: Visible and Invisible*. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press; Ho C. (2007). Muslim Women's New Defenders: Women's rights, nationalism and Islamophobia in contemporary Australia. *Women's Studies International Forum*. 2007; 30:290–298.

¹² Kabir SN, Bourk M. (2012) *Representing Islam and Muslims in New Zealand newspapers*. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*. 32: 324–338.

¹³ Awan, I., and Zempi. (2017). *I Will Blow Your Face OFF'—Virtual and Physical World Anti Muslim Hate Crime*. *British Journal of Criminology*, 57, no. 2: 362–80; Imran Awan is Deputy Director of the Centre for Applied Criminology at Birmingham City University; Williams, Matthew L., and Burnap, P. (2016). *Cyberhate on Social Media in the Aftermath of Woolwich: A Case Study in Computational Criminology and Big Data*. *British Journal of Criminology*, 56, no. 2: 211–38; Magdy, Walid, Darwish, K. and Abokhodair, N. (2015). *Quantifying Public Response towards Islam on Twitter After Paris Attacks*. arXiv preprint

tarnish Islam by finding faults in the scientific miracles contained in the Quran.¹⁴ It belittles the Quran by claiming that all the scientific miracles in the Quran are false. Similarly, YouTube is another platform that does more damage to Islam. Hatun Tash, debated Muslims on YouTube claiming that there are 30 different versions of the Quran back in 2017.¹⁵ Today, more non-Muslims are talking about the different Qurans and are demanding an answer for the differences from the Muslims. Daniel Brubaker has published a book on the amendments done to the Quran.¹⁶ Dan Gibson on the other hand, has published a book on the early Kiblas claiming that all the early Kiblas faced Petra.¹⁷ Tom Holland, claims that the Mecca that we know of today did not exist during Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) time.¹⁸ The fiery speaker, Christian Prince have been debating Muslims and making them leave Islam. A Malaysian Chinese Muslim revert, together with his Malay wife, converted out of Islam after having a debate with him.¹⁹

The negative impact to Islam needs to be controlled wisely, through government interventions and laws. Laws are like a sharp knife. It can be used for both good and bad. Social Media, if not controlled by Laws can become a dangerous platform, therefore, it has to be monitored and bad influences like pornography, gay sex, money making scams, intellectual property theft etc. has to be cut off. The same thing can be said about Islam. Islam being the official religion of the country needs the

arXiv:1512.04570v1. [cs.SI] 14 Dec. <https://arxiv.org/pdf/1512.04570.pdf> Retrieved 17.5.2021

¹⁴ https://wikiislam.net/wiki/Scientific_Errors_in_the_Quran Retrieved 4.5.2021

¹⁵ Different Arabic Qur'ans - *Hatun Tash vs Muhammad Hijab* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F5hSov3GTrM> Retrieved 4.5.2021

¹⁶ Brubaker, D. (2019) *Corrections in Early Qur`ān Manuscripts: Twenty Examples* (Quran Manuscript Change Studies) 20 Examples. Think and Tell Press, Lovettsville. Pg. 27

¹⁷ Gibson, Dan. (2017) *Early Islamic Qiblas: A survey of mosques built between 1AH/622 C.E. and 263 AH/876* Independent Scholar Press. pg 11

¹⁸ Holland, T. (2012) *In the Shadow of the Sword*. Little Brown. London, UK. Pg 298

¹⁹ *Mualaf Asal Malaysia vs Christian Prince*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s9gdXHnHgNM> Retrieved 5.5.2021

support of the government for it to flourish. Apart from support, it also needs adequate protection from anti-Muslims who try to tarnish the name of Islam. In order to protect Islam, the government through the Multimedia and Communications Act 1998, could block anti-Islamic websites as it does for websites like pornography, gay sex, money making scams etc. The Department of Islamic Development (JAKIM), the State Religious Departments, the *Jabatan Kehakiman Syariah Malaysia* should be constantly on the lookout for deviate teachings, apostasies and attempts to influence Muslims to other religions on the Internet.

1.2 Background of Study

The British who ruled Malaya prior to 1957 left important legacies, which resulted in Malaysians inheriting not only the English Law but also western ideologies like human rights, women emancipation, freedom of speech, freedom of religion etc. All these have, fortunately enabled Malaysians to pursue higher education and trade internationally with ease. However, Malaysian Muslims are faced with a delimita. While these ideologies have, on the one hand, enabled many people to move ahead in life and enabled them to learn about Islam and embrace it, on the hand hand, these same ideologies, have also given rise to anti-Islamic sentiments which results in Malaysian Muslims' eventual leaving Islam.

With the advent of social media, some Malaysians are coming in contact with anti-Islamic materials which condemn God, our prophet, the Quran and the hadiths. These materials take various forms, like, debates, talks, articles, talk shows etc. They debate quranic issues like the existence of God, our prophet splitting the moon into two, the history of Islam, the Kaaba, the quranic science etc. Those who are weak in faith would find themselves influenced by these materials and leave Islam, especially

those who lack Islamic education as well as those who come from families who are not religious.

Furthermore, the mushrooming of many Atheist groups on social media from various countries of the world advocate the putting aside of metaphysics and the spiritual. They champion 'logic and reason' and advise the public to rely on 'logic and reason' alone to explain creation. Evolution has become the new science and creation becomes the pseudo-science for these Atheist groups. The universe was created from nothing and it has always existed in perpetual existence. The universe has nothing to do with God, the Atheists say.²⁰

The anti-Islamic movement is in fact, an organized and global movement as the Ex-Muslims of America,²¹ The Richard Dawkins Foundation,²² The Skeptic Society²³ etc. They are educated and people of means and connections. They are highly persuasive in their speech and they inject reason to influence believers. Apart from Atheist organizations, Christian organizations also wield tremendous power over Muslims. Among them include, Cira International,²⁴ Pfanderfilm,²⁵ Sneakers Corner.²⁶ etc. They are mostly located in the West and exert considerable power over the world population.

Today, anti-Islamic materials are found not only in the English language but they are also found in all major languages of the world through works of translations, notably, in Indonesian. The barrier between English speakers and Malay speakers are

²⁰ Krauss, L. and Dawkins, R. (2014). *A Universe from Nothing*. New York: Atria Books; Krauss, L. (2018). *The Greatest Story Ever Told...So Far*. New York; Simon & Schuster, Ltd; Brucker, J.D. (2016). *Good Needs to Go: Why Christian Beliefs Fail*. California. CreateSpace.

²¹ <https://exmuslims.org/about-us/> Retrieved 18.9.21

²² <https://richarddawkins.net/aboutus/> Retrieved 18.9.21

²³ https://www.skeptic.com/about_us/ Retrieved 18.9.21

²⁴ <https://soundcloud.com/godtracker/founder-of-cira-international-al-fadi-you-cannot-fake-being-a-follower-of-jesus> Retrieved 18.9.21

²⁵ <https://www.pfander.uk/about/> Retrieved 18.9.21

²⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/c/SneakersCorner/videos> Retrieved 18.9.21

in fact eroding. Once it was believed that only English speakers were victims of anti-Islamic materials found on the Internet but the years of 2020 saw an increase in translated materials among the largest Muslim community in the world, Indonesia.²⁷ Indonesian Malay is similar to the Malaysian Malay and consequently more Malaysians are influenced by the anti-Islamic materials found on the Internet. The second largest Muslim country, India is not spared either, anti-Islamic materials have found themselves onto Indian soils through translated works of Dan Gibson.²⁸ And the third largest Muslim country in the world, Pakistan has not been left out either, anti-Islamic materials has penetrated Pakistan through translated works in the Urdu language.²⁹ The Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason and Science, has entered into an understanding with the Center for Inquiry in Washington DC to translate his atheist books into Arabic, Urdu, Farsi, and Indonesian.

1.3 Literature Review

Literature review³⁰ studies a collection of published materials on a particular area of research, such as journals, academic publications, books and articles. It brings forth how knowledge has evolved within the field, highlighting what has already been done, what is generally accepted, what is emerging and what is the current state of thinking on the topic. Literature Review is an important component to define the perimeters of the research to participate meaningfully, in the discussion of the study

²⁷ <https://tolaksyariatislam.wordpress.com/2020/06/08/koleksi-buku-christian-prince-dalam-bahasa-indonesia/> Retrieved 18.9.21

²⁸ <https://nabataea.net/cinema/sacredcity/the-sacred-city-hindi/> Retrieved 18.9.21

²⁹ <https://nabataea.net/cinema/sacredcity/the-sacred-city-urdu/> Retrieved 18.9.21

³⁰ Fink, A. (2014). *Conducting Research Literature Reviews: From the Internet to Paper*. Fourth edition. Thousand Oaks, CA SAGE. pg. 6: Frodeman, R. (2010). *The Oxford Handbook of Interdisciplinarity*. New York: Oxford University Press. pg. 117-130

say, Paulus, Lester and Demster.³¹ Welman and Kruger³² stated that the literature review is essential to determine the ‘current state of knowledge’ about the research title. It concerns the key sources related to the main trends, polemics and gaps in a research area and proposes how a particular research project addresses this gap. This study will explore the literature review, under the following themes: ‘Revisionists and their Materials,’ ‘Social Media and Islam,’ and ‘The Lack of Legal Protection.’ The themes are real to the problems faced by Muslims today. The following literature review is based on Ph.D dissertations and published articles in reputable Journals written both within Malaysia and on the worldstage that affects the Muslim Ummah.

1.3.1 Revisionists and their Materials

The Revisionists are scholars who do not rely on the Quran, Hadith or Seerah to find the historical truth about Islam. Mu’im Sirry, an assistant professor of theology at Notre Dame University outlines in his publication, *Controversies Over Islamic Origins: An introduction to Traditionalism and Revisionism*,³³ that the Islamic narration of Prophet Muhammad, Mecca and the Quran has to be re-examined for there is lack of historical support in sources outside of Islam. He quotes Shoemaker, who says that ‘fresh doubts concerning the traditions of earliest Islam and their accuracy began to emerge.’³⁴ Sirry points out that Muslim traditionalist scholars claim that Muslim sources preserves historical fact through an unbroken chain of narration (*isnad*) through oral traditions. The lack of written sources contemporary to the life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) matters not for the traditionalists but Revisionist cast doubts

³¹ Paulus, T.M., Lester, J.N. & Demster, P.G. (2014) *Digital Tools for Qualitative Research*, Sage, London. pg 49.

³² Welman, J.C. & Kruger, S.J. (1999). *Research Methodology for the Business and Administrative Sciences*. Oxford University Press, Cape Town. pg. 253

³³ Sirry, M. (2021). *Controversies over Islamic Origins*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

³⁴ Ibid. pg 3.

on the oral traditions. Gregor Schoeler puts forward the view that Islamic traditions emerged as oral form and was not written 200 years after the Prophet's death.³⁵ They demand to see written records written by non-Muslim scholars. Sirry later says that Muslim scholars were aware quite early that many reports circulating about Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), or stories about the emergence of Islam, were distorted or even fictitious.³⁶ Sirry goes on to say that Revisionists make use of inscriptions, coins, tombstones, travellers graffiti etc., produced close to the birth of Prophet Muhammad. What strikes the Revisionists most is the name for a person, 'Muhammad' and the word, 'Islam' as referring to his religion, as lacking during the time of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).³⁷ The work of Mu'im Sirry had prompted the Researcher to study deeper, into the division between the Traditional Muslim scholars and the Revisionists.

Research Gap: It was found that in most instances, Mu'im Sirry seems to be in agreement with the Revisionists, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) did not exist, that the place called Mecca did not exist during the Prophet's time and the writing of the Quran might have human intervention rather than 100 per cent, God's word. Whereas, the Researcher disagrees with his views and intends to show that research is being done now and new evidence are being brought forward to show the truth of the Quran, the Prophet and the place, Mecca.

1.3.2 Social Media and Islam

Giulia Evolvi, who is a PhD holder from the University of Colorado Boulders and an expert in Media and Religion, has used Twitter to better understand how people express their ideas in relation to certain events because it is public and free. Twitter is a public platform that allows the public to create general statements and to directly

³⁵ Ibid. pg. 30

³⁶ Ibid. pg 12

³⁷ Ibid. pg 40

respond to other users. Therefore, Islamophobic users can target a Muslim person or talk about Islam in general. In her publication *Hate in a Tweet: Exploring Internet-Based Islamophobic Discourses*, Evolvi,³⁸ explains that Internet-based criticism against Islam often tries to portray Islam as incompatible with Western values. She argues that online hate speech differs from offline hate speech in the sense that the Internet assures anonymity, and provides instant access at no cost.³⁹

Her research found that the tweets claim that Islam needs to be rejected because it is intrinsically violent and is incompatible with Western civilization, for Islam is seen as being inferior to the West. Often, tweets perpetuate rape discourses by invoking the need for protecting Western women from the “primitive” and irrational sexual impulses of Muslims. The tweets claim that Brexit would protect the UK against Muslims. Islam is seen as propagating terrorism and as such, Brexit is a strategy to prevent an open conflict between Muslims and non-Muslims in the UK. They are invading foreigners, says one tweet. The exclusion of Muslims from UK would serve as a precaution against Islam says another. Yet another tweet claims that it is not racist, but it is a desire to protect your country and culture from Muslim takeover and destruction.⁴⁰

Evolvi also runs the report of The Runnymede Trust⁴¹ which distinguishes between open constructive criticism and closed criticism. Constructive criticism of

³⁸ Evolvi, G. (2018) *Hate in a Tweet: Exploring Internet-Based Islamophobic Discourses*. Center for Religious Studies (CERES), Ruhr University Bochum, Universitätsstr. 90a, 44789 Bochum, Germany. Religions 2018, 9(10), 307; <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel9100307>

³⁹ Brown, A. (2018). What Is so Special about Online (as Compared to Offline) Hate Speech? *Ethnicities* 18: 297–326.

⁴⁰ As found in Evolvi, G. (2018) *Hate in a Tweet: Exploring Internet-Based Islamophobic Discourses*. Center for Religious Studies (CERES), Ruhr University Bochum, Universitätsstr. 90a, 44789 Bochum, Germany.

⁴¹ Runnymede Trust. 1997. *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All*. Runnymede Trust Publications and Resources. Available online: <https://www.runnymedetrust.org/companies/17/74/Islamophobia-A-Challenge-for-Us-All.html> Retrieved 13.7.2021

Muslim practices and beliefs, produce communications in a democratic society. Whereas closed criticisms, based on prejudices and hostility, leads to Islamophobia. A closed view would consider Islam as monolithic and unable to change to new realities; it considers itself as separate from and having nothing in common with other cultures; Islam is deemed as inferior to the West; It is projected as violent and aggressive; Islam is considered as a political ideology, not a true religion; discriminatory practices against Muslims are justified and Muslims are excluded from mainstream society and Islamophobia is seen as natural. Many non-Muslim academics agree to these views.⁴²

While Giulia Evolvi dealt with twitter, Muhammad Ittefaq, a PhD student from Kansas University and Taufiq Ahmad⁴³ dealt with Facebook, in 2021, titled, *Representation of Islam and Muslims on Social Media: A discourse Analysis of Facebook*, put forward their findings on how social media, Facebook, particularly has been instrumental in spreading ‘Islamophobia.’ They say it outright, that social media changed how we communicate and how it empowers users with the ability to upload, share, like and tag posts. Despite its versatility, very often, it is not monitored or updated. Its role and effectiveness in creating awareness among its users on various social, political, economic and religious issues has become questionable. Content on social media exist without being authenticated but it is widely shared spreading anti-Islam sentiments among users. Ittefaq and Ahmad, studied the bad things user say

⁴² Gardner, Rod, Yasemin Karakaşoğlu, and Sigrid Luchtenberg. (2008). *Islamophobia in the Media: A Response from Multicultural Education*. Intercultural Education 19: 119–36; Hopkins, Nick, and Vered Kahani-Hopkins. (2006). *Minority Group Members’ Theories of Intergroup Contact: A Case Study of British Muslims’ Conceptualizations of Islamophobia and Social Change*. British Journal of Social Psychology 45: 245–64; Hussain, Serena, and Jamil Sherif. (2014). *Minority Religions in the Census: The Case of British Muslims*. Religion 44: 414–33.

⁴³ Ittefaq, M; Ahmad, T. (2021) *Representation of Islam and Muslims on Social Media: A discourse Analysis of Facebook*. Journal of Media Critiques [JMC] Vol.4 No.13 doi: 10.17349/jmc118103 P-ISSN: 2056-9785 E-ISSN: 2056 9793 Retrieved 17.5.2021; Taufiq is a graduate fellow at the Institute of Media and Communication Science, Technical University Ilmenau, Germany and Ittefaq is a Lecturer at Department of Mass Communication and Media, University of Gujrat Sub-Campus Narowal, Pakistan.

about Islam and Muslims on Facebook, the biggest social media platform, with 2.07 billion monthly active users as of September 2017 at the time of their study.⁴⁴ The Online Hate Prevention Institute⁴⁵ highlighted that Muslims are considered as a threat to non-Muslim culture, identity, economy and security. The most common topics discussed on Facebook with regards to Islam are sharia law, Quran as an evil book, halal meat, Islam's intolerance of other religions, Islamic terrorism, hijacking, the subjugation of women through the wearing of the hijab, force marriages with minors, punishment for apostasy and so on. Among the Western media, Islam and Muslims have become hot topics. They portray Islam negatively as terrorists, suicide bombers, and hijackers. Newspapers carry biased news about suicide bombings. Hollywood portrays bad guys as Arab terrorists.⁴⁶ Even magazines do the same thing. In American television dramas, Muslims are portrayed as dangerous immigrants not as citizens.⁴⁷ Ittefaq and Ahmad found that in many posts on Facebook, Muslim women projected as jihadists. A Sudanese woman was shown in a post carrying a placard, which says - sharia will dominate the world. In a most liked picture, five pillars of Islam have been mentioned as fascism, terrorism, feudalism, anti-Semitism and extremism. In around 54 Facebook posts Muslims were portrayed as murdering machines. They were shown to be slaughtering humans like animals, cutting throats and playing with the head of a killed man.⁴⁸

Various metaphors have been used to describe burqa clad women with words associated with 'mask' and 'potato sack.' Muslim women were depicted as being

⁴⁴ Facebook Company, (2017). Retrieved from <https://newsroom.fb.com/company-info/> 23.3.2021

⁴⁵ <https://ohpi.org.au/>

⁴⁶ Thussu, D. K. (1997). *How Media Manipulates Truth about Terrorism*. Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 32, No., 264-267.

⁴⁷ Dajani, K., & Michelmore, C. (1999). *Islam in Time, 1944-1994*. Studies in Popular Culture, 22 (1), 53-62.

⁴⁸ Ittefaq, M; Ahmad, T. (2021) *Representation of Islam and Muslims on social Media: A discourse Analysis of Facebook*. Journal of Media Critiques [JMC] Vol.4 No.13 doi: 10.17349/jmc118103

forced into marriages, like little girls, the hijab is seen as subjugating for women. They are kept away from men. Symbolic language is used as in - where there is sharia, there is misery. Halal is called 'barbaric and inhuman' and Islam is called a 'cult.' There were headline across Facebook which said: Keep Sharia out of America and Britain; Women killed for being raped; Mosques are spreading jihad; Stop all mosques in UK, Islam should not be at workplace; Women sentenced to death for leaving Islam. Islam does not fit in western culture.⁴⁹ In one post two people were trying to cut the throat of an innocent man and in the caption read: They are following the order of Al-Quran. Muslims are being looked down upon at many places. They are considered inferior to the western society.⁵⁰

Research Gap: While Evolvi, explains that Internet-based criticism against Islam often tries to portray Islam as incompatible with Western values and is inferior to the West. Rejecting Islam would protect Britain and its culture from Muslim takeover and destruction. Ittefaq and Ahmad, who studied Facebook highlights the bad things user say about Islam and Muslims. These studies no doubt reveal the prejudice people have towards Islam but they are not as dangerous as attacking the very essence of Islam, that is, the Revisionist aim of proving the non-existence of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), Mecca and the human involvement in writing the Quran.

1.3.3 The Lack of Legal Protection

Gholam Reza Nuei, in his PhD dissertation,⁵¹ *Apostasy from a Quranic and Hadith Perspective: A Study on Converted Iranians in Malaysia* cites a field research

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Nuei, R. G. (2018). *Apostasy from a Quranic and Hadith Perspective: A Study on Converted Iranians in Malaysia*. PhD Dissertation, UM. Online access, <http://studentsrepo.um.edu.my/10802/>

by Woodberry,⁵² *Five Reasons Muslim Convert (to Christianity)*, where 750 Muslims were interviewed from 1991 to 2007. The outcome of the survey showed the following reasons why these ex-Muslims chose Christianity: First: The lifestyle of Christians; The power of God in Answering prayers; Dissatisfaction with the type of Islam they had experienced; Spiritual truth in the Bible and Biblical teaching about the love of God. Gholam also cites another research by Georges Housney,⁵³ *Why 100 Former Muslims Converted to Christianity*, where Georges reveals that the conversion to Christianity is driven more by its positive aspects than the negative aspects of Islam. Gholam adds that Christians are People of the Book (*'Ahl al-Kitab*). The Quran in surah Al-Ankabut verse 46 tells the People of the Book that Our Allah and Your Allah is one and in Surah al-Yunus verse 94, Allah tells Muslims to consult the Book (Torah and the Bible), if they are in doubt.

Among the negative aspect of Islam, Gholam says, is that the freedom of religion as experienced by non-Muslims and ex-Muslims is lacking among Muslims. The death penalty for those who leave Islam as per the hadith of Bukhari,⁵⁴ is another negative aspect of Islam. In Gholam's study, those Iranians who converted in Malaysia claim that they are happier and more peaceful now than when they were Muslims. Their claims seem to conform to Woodberry's research above, that the Bible is easier to read and understand compared to the Quran. They found that message of Jesus in the Bible, about love very appealing without any strict dress code, a big contrast to the

⁵² Woodberry, J.D. (1996) *Contextualizing Among Muslims Reusing Common Pillars*, IJFM, Vol 13:4, Oct-Dec 1996 pg 171.

⁵³ <http://biblicalmissiology.org/20013/04/08/factor-leading-to-conversion-of-muslims-to-christ>; <http://www.christianitytoday.com/gleaning/2013/april/why-100-former-muslims-converted-to-christianity.html> as found in Nuei, R. G. (2018). *Apostasy from a Quranic and Hadith Perspective: A Study on Converted Iranians in Malaysia*. PhD Dissertation, UM. Online access <http://studentsrepo.um.edu.my/10802/>

⁵⁴ Sahih Bukhari, Vol 4, Book 52, Number 260:

extreme dress code of Islam, its call for prayer, and punishment for apostasy, fornication and theft.

In another Phd Dissertation, *Living among the Breakage: Contextual theology-making and ex-Muslim Christians*, Duane Alexander Miller⁵⁵ list the attraction of Christianity to Iranians. He says that Christianity is presented with a purified way of being Iranian, without any negative influences of Islam and Arab-ness. One of the participants from an ex-Shite Iranian background relates the joyful worship of Christians, in his language, Persian, intrigued him, while working in Lebanon. The concept of joyful worship of God piqued his curiosity and eventually lead to his conversion to Christianity. In Gholam's study, one of the Iranian converts to Christianity, a trained Baptist missionary well known among the Iranian church goes in Kuala Lumpur, said that he was worried at first of being caught by the Iranian and the Malaysian security, but after eight years in Malaysia, he feels more secure and safer here in Malaysia compared to his home country in Iran. He claimed that many Malaysians are surprised of his activities here as an ex-Iranian Muslim doing Christian missionary work in Malaysia. He says that he is motivated by these words and intends to bring as many people as possible to Christianity.

Research Gap: These reviews reveal a strange fact, while it is difficult for Malaysian Muslims to convert out of Islam, but it is easy for foreigners to come to Malaysia or go to other countries, get access to the Bible and attend churches and convert to Christianity. The purpose of these research is to put a stop to such practices and close the loopholes in the laws of Malaysia. These Iranian ex-Muslims claim that they are happier in Malaysia than in their home country, Iran, as ex-Muslims. It

⁵⁵ Miller, D.A (2014) *Living among the Breakage: Contextual theology-making and ex-Muslim Christians*. PhD Dissertation, University of Edinburg. pg.149

appears to the Researcher that the authorities are unaware of what is happening right under their noses. It is through researches like this that the authorities be let known.

In another study, University of Wollongong, PhD student, Maghaireh, presented a paper, *Shariah Law and cyber-sectarian conflict: how can Islamic Criminal Law respond to cybercrime?*⁵⁶ says that Shariah Criminal law is divided into *Hudud, Qisas and Takzir*. The Hudud category specifically addresses six forms of physical crimes: apostasy, drinking wine, adultery, theft, defamation, and highway robbery. It is a law given by God and it has to be followed.⁵⁷ The *Qisas* category protects human life against all forms of physical violence, such as murder and injury.⁵⁸ Cybercrime does not fall under the Hudud or *Qisas*. The *takzir* category deals with the least serious crimes.⁵⁹ It is unspecific and flexible, and those crimes which do not fall into crimes of *Hudud* or *Qisas*, are punished under *Takzir*.⁶⁰ For example, the punishment for theft is amputation under Hudud but if the amount stolen is very small then, the punishment is carried out under *takzir*. The Prophet said ‘The hand is not cut off for fruit or palm pith.’⁶¹ The judge in *takzir* cases uses his unrestricted discretion and impose punishment as he deems fit while taking into consideration Ijtihad (reasoning), *Maslahah Mursalah*, (public interest) and *Qiyas* (juristic analogy).

As to cybercrimes, the Shariah does not explicitly criminalise it. Because Shariah traditional sources are not sufficient to address cybercrimes, a secular criminal code is needed. The code is needed to protect the public good, that is the Maslahah. Despite the lack of provisions in the Quran and Hadith for cybercrimes, Saudi Arabia

⁵⁶ Maghaireh, A. (2009). Shariah Law and cyber-sectarian conflict: how can Islamic Criminal Law respond to cyber. Vol 2 (2) International Journal of Cyber Criminology 337-44

⁵⁷ Quraishi, M. (2005). *Muslims and Crime: A Comparative Study*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate.pg. 22

⁵⁸ Barak, G. (2000). *Crime and Crime Control: A global view*. Greenwood Publishing Group. pg. xi

⁵⁹ Vogel F. (2000). *Islamic law and legal system*. Leiden: Brill. pg 33

⁶⁰ Rudolph, P. (2005). *Crime and punishment in Islamic law*. Cambridge University Press.pg.30

⁶¹ Malik's Muwatta Book 41, Number 41.11.32

has enacted the modern Cybercrimes Act, equivalent to that found in developed countries, to punish cyber criminals appropriately. It criminalises hacking acts, including cyber-sabotage.

Research Gap: The findings above highlight the importance of a cyber protection for Islam but they do not give compelling reasons why such a law is need. These studies have failed to bring to our attention the atrocities done by enemies of Islam in tarnishing Islam's name. The fact is, the Quran is being attacked, the hadiths are being attacked and our prophet (pbuh) is being attacked without any compunction. This research is giving many reasons and evidences why cyber protection for Islam is imminent. Though Malaysia has its, Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Corporation Act 1998 but as it is now, it does not do much to protect Islam as much as it gives protection to non-Islamic matters, with regards to commerce and personal matters. This dissertation will provide recommendations to achieve the goal of protecting Islam.

1.4 The Conceptual Framework

This research is done based on the Conceptual Framework of which, personal experience, literature review and the theoretical framework are its three components. The Conceptual Framework sets the limit and the interconnectivity of Muslim apostasy. Green⁶² and Ravitch and Riggan⁶³ brings to our attention that a conceptual framework should be regarded as the mental map that connects the various dimensions of the research process such as the researcher's prior knowledge, the literature surveys and theoretical framework. The Conceptual Framework has been regarded as a key

⁶² Green, H.E. (2014) *'Use of Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks in Qualitative Research'*, Nurse Research 21(6), 34–38. <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.21.6.34.e1252>

⁶³ Ravitch, S.M. & Riggan, M. (2017) *Reason and Rigor: How Conceptual Frameworks Guide Research*, 2nd ed., Sage, London. pg. 153

to unravelling the complex social and group dynamics such as culture, educational background and socio-economic status of one's study subjects,⁶⁴ as expressed by scholars such as Maree and Ravitch⁶⁵ and Riggan.⁶⁶ In addition to that, Silverman⁶⁷ and Leggett,⁶⁸ have maintained that social science research is interconnected with progressive levels of abstraction. For instance, the definition of 'religion' is only possible if doctrines, rituals, scriptures, constitute a specific religion. Furthermore, the definition of 'religion' also depends on the societal context.

To express the intricacies of a research meaningfully, the Conceptual Framework should make use of the Theoretical Framework as advocated by Creswell & Poth.⁶⁹ The Theoretical Framework, according to Swanson,⁷⁰ consists of the theories expressed by experts in the field of the current research which summarizes concepts and theories based on published materials which help in data analysis and interpretation. What experts in the field say is the theoretical framework helps researchers to make proper analysis of data, interpret the findings, discuss the findings and make appropriate recommendations and conclusions.

1.4.1 The Theory of Planned Behaviour

Muslim engagement in religious activities on the Internet is influenced by several factors, among others they include, their skills in using social media, Internet

⁶⁴ Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, C.M. & Ormston, R. (2014). *Qualitative Research Practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*, 2nd ed., Sage, London pg.13.

⁶⁵ Maree, J.G. (ed.), (2012) *Complete Your Thesis or Dissertation Successfully: Practical Guidelines*. Juta, Cape Town. pg. 212

⁶⁶ Ravitch, S.M. & Riggan, M. (2017) *Reason and Rigor: How Conceptual Frameworks Guide Research*, 2nd ed., Sage, London. pg. 136.

⁶⁷ Silverman, D. (2005) *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*, 2nd ed, Sage, London. pg. 9

⁶⁸ Leggett, A., 2011, *Constructs, Variables and Operationalization*, in J.F. Hair, R.P. Bush & D.J. Ortinau (eds.), *Marketing Research within a Changing Information Environment*. McGraw-Hill, Boston. pg. 56–93,

⁶⁹ Creswell, J.W. & Poth, C.N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among five approaches* [4th Ed.] Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. pg. 34

⁷⁰ Swanson, R. A. (2013). *Theory building in applied disciplines*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler. pg 122

communication tools and their attitude towards technology as theorized in the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). The advent of the Internet can be seen as revolutionary for all religions. According to Campbell,⁷¹ “the Internet is changing the ways people of faith spread their beliefs and make converts.” The TPB is one of the most frequently cited and influential models for the prediction of human social Behaviour,⁷² since its introduction 26 years ago. Specifically, TPB assumes that Behavioural intentions are determined by three interacting constructs; attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control, which seem relevant to behavioural, normative, and control beliefs concerning behaviour.⁷³

TPB can be traced to Fishbein and Ajzen⁷⁴ who presented the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) whose central thesis is that an individual’s thoughts and perception act as determinants of behaviour. Hale, Householder, and Greene,⁷⁵ further say that individuals are influenced by personal attitudes and perceived social pressure, especially from family, friends, or peers. Ajzen asserted that, no matter how, people automatically behave according to their beliefs. It is only in this sense that behaviour is said to be planned.⁷⁶ In short, the TPB assumes that an individual’s behaviours or intentions are based on three basic factors. Firstly, it is personal in nature – the individual’s attitude towards the behaviour. Secondly, it reflects social influence – the individual’s subjective norms. Finally, it pertains to issues of control – the individual’s

⁷¹ Campbell, H. (2006). Religious and the Internet. *Communication Research Trends*, 25, 3–24. Pg. 5.

⁷² Ajzen, I. (2011). *The theory of planned behaviour: Reactions and reflections*. *Psychology & Health*, 26, 1113–1127. doi:10.1080/08870446.2011.613995

⁷³ Ajzen, I. (1991). *The theory of planned Behaviour*. *Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes*, 50, 179–211. doi:10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T

⁷⁴ Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). *Belief, attitude, intention and behaviour: An introduction to theory and research*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

⁷⁵ Hale, J. L., Householder, B. J., & Green, K. L. (2002). *The theory of reasoned action*. In J. P. Dillard, & M. Pfau (Eds.), *The persuasion handbook: Developments in theory and practice* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. pg. 259–286. 10.4135/9781412976046

⁷⁶ Ajzen, I. (2011). *The theory of planned behaviour: Reactions and reflections*. *Psychology & Health*, 26, 1113–1127. doi:10.1080/08870446.2011.613995 pg. 1116

perceived behavioural control.⁷⁷ When applied to the study, each of these factors, namely attitudes towards the Internet, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control, lend their collective weight in explaining the state of engagement in online religious activities among Muslims in Malaysia.

The majority views on Islam are taken without question and accepted as authoritative. The majority doesn't care about what the minority has to say. There is an assumption by Muslims that it would be difficult for minority to influence the majority. Minority influence, occurs when a few people question established societal beliefs by proposing alternative views.⁷⁸ But unlike the majority view, which is taken for granted, the minority view is subject to scrutiny and is careful analysis. If an individual is convinced that the minority view is correct, it results in attitude change. However, such changes are compartmentalized as private views not the public views. However, minority views can become big by snowballing. To influence the majority, the minority has to present information and arguments that the majority does not know or expect.⁷⁹ This unexpected information is scrutinized and after consideration, members of the majority might convert to the minority group.⁸⁰ Professor of social psychology at Leuven University, Van Avermaet, suggests that having the support from 'key leaders' of the majority could be instrumental to the success of the minority, as the public trust and respect these 'key leaders'⁸¹ if the views of the minority are

⁷⁷ Ajzen, I. (1991). *The theory of planned Behaviour. Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes*, 50, 179–211. doi:10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T; Ajzen, I. (2005). *Attitudes, personality, and Behaviour* (2nd ed.). Berkshire, UK: McGraw-Hill International; Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (2010). *Predicting and changing behaviour: The reason action approach*. Madison Avenue, NY: Psychology Press, Taylor and Francis, Group LLC. pg. 153

⁷⁸ Gardikiotis, A. (2011). *Minority influence*. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*. 5 (9): 679–693

⁷⁹ Wood, W., Lundgren, S., Ouellette, J., Busceme, S., & Blackstone, T. (1994). *Minority Influence: A Meta-Analytic Review of Social Influence Processes*. *Psychological Bulletin*. Vol 115, No 3, pg. 323-345.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Van Avermaet, E. (1996). *Social influence in small groups*. Introduction to Social Psychology: A European Perspective (2nd Ed.). Blackwell. pg 32

consistent, flexible, and appealing to the majority but any wavering opinions from the minority group could lead the majority to dismiss the minority's claims and opinions.⁸²

1.4.2 Graphical Representation

Marshall and Rossman⁸³ are of the view that a graphical representation is very important to see the overall picture and the interconnectivity of ideas involved.

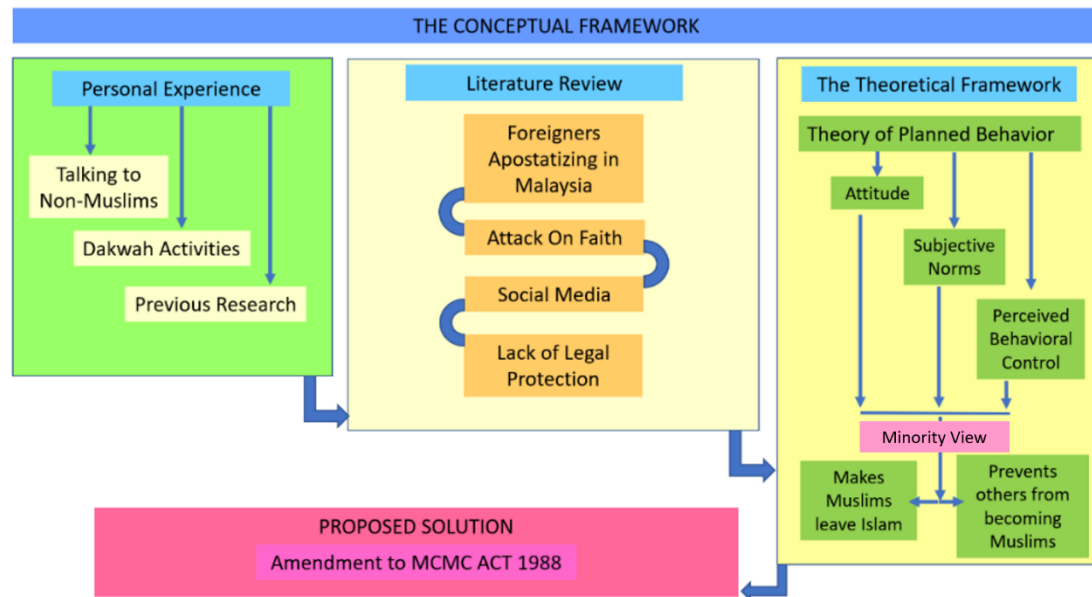


Image 1.1 The Conceptual Framework and the Interconnections of its Components.

Diagram 1 represents the entire Conceptual Framework of this thesis. The Conceptual Framework consist of 3 components – Personal Experience, Literature Review and the Theoretical Framework. Personal Experience is gained by talking to Non-Muslims, reading newspapers, social media etc. Then, the topics under literature review was explored, after that the theoretical framework was executed through the Theory of Planned Behaviour. Then, these 3 components are referenced to the minority views by subjecting the minority view through critical scrutiny. The entire process

⁸² Aronson, E., Wilson, T.D., & Akert, A.M. (2007). *Social Psychology* (6th Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall. Pg 177

⁸³ Marshall, C., & Rossman, G.B. (2016). *Designing Qualitative Research* [6th ed.] Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE pg. 14

helped in the proper analysis of data, interpretation the findings thus enabling the Researcher to come to a proper conclusion and propose a solution.

1.5 Problem Statements

Apostasy is rampant all over the world and Malaysian Muslims are not spared. What used to be a hushed up matter is now done openly on Social Media. Since the publication of four books in the 2000s, apostasy skyrocketed, almost all on the Internet and took the world by storm. The four books are,⁸⁴ *The End of Faith* (2004) by Sam Harris, *Breaking the Spell*, (2006) by Daniel Dennett, *The God Delusion*, (2006) by Richard Dawkins and *God is Not Great*, (2007) by Christopher Hitchens. These apostates have openly challenged Muslim and belittle Islam by their anti-Islamic claims and the law is powerless to take action against them. Laws, if they are strong enough and if they are properly enforced, apostasy can be contained. Islam used to be attacked via the print media, via books, magazines and newspapers but today they happen rampantly over social media. Because social media is available for free and is easily available to anyone who possesses a smart phone, it reaches far more people. Today, the main source of information is the Internet, not our homes, or masjids. In fact, a 2018 survey by strategic communications firm, Broteur Partners, revealed that nearly half of Gen Z, those born between 1996-2012, get their information on YouTube as their first and second source of news and Millennials, those born between 1981-1996, are the second group that relies on YouTube as their main source of news. Under the circumstances it makes more sense to choose YouTube as the main source of research. The Researcher is of the opinion that Malaysian cyberlaws are not strong

⁸⁴ Cimino, R. and Smith, C. (2011). *The new atheism and the formation of the imagined secularist community*. Journal of Media and Religion 10(1): 24–38.

enough to protect Islam and we Muslims have to take a concerted effort to fight for a change in law so that we can arrest apostasy effectively.

1.5.1 Apostasy in Islam

Apostasy in Islam requires one to commit shirk either through words, actions or personal conviction. Equating anyone with Allah is considered shirk or denying Allah of his powers is considered shirk. Muslim identity is defined by Islam and as such, it sets limits on what Muslims are allowed to do and not to do. Islam is the lens through which many Muslims filter what is considered good, ethical, and so on.⁸⁵ However, the advent of social media and the proliferation of liberal (*mutazillah*) materials have caused concerns among many Muslims. So do the questioning and doubting the authentic Hadiths, Seerah, challenging Prophet Muhammad's very existence and casting doubt whether Mecca existed or not can all give rise to shirk, blasphemy and eventually lead to apostasy.

What is even more serious is the propagation of these ideas to the public and influence them to apostatize. Apostasy has happened not just in America or Europe, it also happened in strictly Islamic countries like Tunisia, Libya, Pakistan, Iran, Indonesia, Sudan, Malaysia etc. The Saudis were caught off guard when the American journal, *The New Republic*, revealed the high number of Muslim apostates in their country.⁸⁶ It is claimed that the Atheist, Richard Dawkin's, book, the *God Delusion* is the most downloaded book in the Middle East, particularly in Saudi Arabia. Today, Richard Dawkins has released his book for free download in the Arabic language in

⁸⁵ al-Attas, S. M. N. (1978). *Islam and Secularism*. Kuala Lumpur: Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia, pg. 97; Siddiqi, M. I. (1965). *The reconstruction of religious thought in Islam*. Lahore. pg. 9; Hidayatullah, E. A., & Arif. S. (2022). Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas' Exposition on the Concept of Ethics. *Afkar: Jurnal Akidah & Pemikiran Islam*, 24(1), 409–446. <https://doi.org/10.22452/afkar.vol24no1.12>

⁸⁶ Hasan Suroor (2021) *Why are young Muslims leaving Islam*. The Telegraph Online. <https://www.telegraphindia.com/india/why-are-young-muslims-leaving-islam/cid/1704203> Retrieved 14.7.2021

Saudi Arabia.⁸⁷ One of the reasons why this is happening is because, social media offers, privacy. One can be assured that one can remain incognito on social media while denying the majesty of Allah. It has been happening under our nose and we have been ignorant of it until now. Unless we take steps to overcome this menace, it will never end. We can do a lot to prevent it from happening but the question is, are we? No one seems to be aware that apostasy is happening in such a large scale at our own doors. It is time that we took the necessary steps to prevent such treason against Islam. We need to protect our *iman and ummah*.

1.5.2 Revisionists as one of the Potential Cause of Apostasy

We can openly see Muslims leaving Islam practically every day after having debates with these people, though they do not label themselves as revisionists but they do talk about the Revisionists materials extensively in their debates with Muslims, prominent among them are Christian Prince (a Christian), Rob Christian (an Ex-Muslim and once an ardent follower of Zakir Naik), Adam Seekers, (another Ex-Muslim and an ardent follower of Zakir Naik), and others. In these particular videos, a Malay boy and a Malaysian Chinese convert left Islam after debating Christian Prince.⁸⁸ In another video a family of 5 Pakistanis, left Islam, after just 2 weeks of listening to Christian Prince.⁸⁹ And according to the caller, he says that his brother doesn't speak English and he would help him get out. Globally many Muslims are leaving Islam after lengthy debates with Christian Prince. According to *The Independent, UK*, reported the views of Maryam Namazie, the founder of the Ex-

⁸⁷ Download Dawkins' God Delusion In Arabic For Free.

<https://aardvarchaeology.wordpress.com/2013/11/07/download-dawkins-god-delusion-in-arabic-for-free/> Retrieved 5.Nov 2023

⁸⁸ Malay guy leave Islam. Christian Prince https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJ3a_SU2vJI. Retrieved 31.10.21; Malaysian Muallaf debate Christian Prince (Malay Subtitle)

⁸⁹ A Family Of 5 leaves Islam <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLy95jYfRDs> Retrieved 31.10.21

Muslims of Britain that a tsunami of Muslims are leaving Islam all over the world.⁹⁰ Muslims are not allowed to cross the red line. When Muslims engage in direct confrontation with the West debating women's rights, human rights, freedom of religion, equality between man and women etc., a change of opinion happens among Muslims.

Lately, the Revisionists have had a great influence on Muslims. They attack Islam to the core. They provoke Muslims all over the world to question the history of Islam, the Quran, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the very existence of historical places, such as Mecca and Medina. These materials are framed by the so-called 'educated elite' of the West and unfortunately, many western educated Muslims have joined hands with the Revisionists and questions what Muslims have thus far held so dear to their hearts. Questioning or doubting the Quran can give rise to shirk, in that, they question the authenticity of the Quran, the very existence of Prophet Muhammad and the place called Mecca. They do extensive research and try to get Muslims to engage in an academic discussion and debate with them, while going live on social media. Though English is the de facto language of the Internet, other languages are also used as a platform to attack Islam. According to Statista.com,⁹¹ English is the most common language of the Internet in the year 2020 at 25.9%. This is followed by Chinese at 19.4%. Then comes Spanish at 7.9%. However, these materials are translated into Indonesian Malay, a language Malaysians a familiar and understand very well. It is our duty, as faithful Malaysian Muslims, to protect and preserve the purity of our religion. We need to close the gates that allow access to anti-Islamic materials. Otherwise, more and more Muslims will get potentially be influenced by

⁹⁰ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ex-muslims-fear-atheism-violent-revenge-tsunami-of-atheism-a7344661.html> Retrieved 31.10.21

⁹¹ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/262946/share-of-the-most-common-languages-on-the-internet/> Retrieved 14.5.2021