



GLOBAL MUSLIM DIASPORA

Muslim Communities and Minorities in Non-OIC Member States



SOUTH AFRICA

Country Report Series No:1



ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION
STATISTICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH
AND TRAINING CENTRE FOR ISLAMIC COUNTRIES



GLOBAL MUSLIM DIASPORA:
MUSLIM COMMUNITIES AND MINORITIES IN NON-OIC MEMBER STATES



COUNTRY REPORT SERIES

SOUTH AFRICA



Organization of Islamic Cooperation
**The Statistical, Economic and Social Research and
Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC)**



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Acronyms

AAM	Anti-Apartheid Movement
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
APO	African Political Organization
ASBU	Social Sciences University of Ankara
CTIEC	Cape Town Islamic Education Centre
DA	Democratic Alliance
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMD	Global Muslim Diaspora
GNU	Government of National Unity
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDMSA	Islamic Dawah Movement South Africa
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
IPCI	Islamic Propagation Centre International
MPL	Muslim Personal Law
MYMSA	Muslim Youth Movement South Africa
NP	National Party
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
PAGAD	People Against Gangsterism and Drugs
PBO	Public Benefit Organization
RPD	Reconstruction and Development Program
SACP	South African Communist Party
SACPO	South African Coloured People's Congress
SADN	South African Dawah Network
SAIC	South African Indian Congress
SAIRFR	South Africa International Freedom Report
SANZAF	South African National Zakah Fund
SAP	South African Party
SA int.	South Africa Interview, GMD South Africa Field Study 2018
SA Sur.	South Africa Survey, GMD South Africa Field Study 2018
SA work.	South Africa Workshop, GMD South Africa Field Study 2018
SSUA	Social Sciences University of Ankara
UFD	United Democratic Front
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
VOC	Dutch East India Company

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Foreword

The SESRIC has launched the Global Muslim Diaspora (GMD) Project - a comprehensive research effort trying to analyse challenges, attitudes, experiences and perceptions on a range of issues related to Muslim communities and minorities living in the non-OIC Member States. The main objective of the project is to provide a range of useful comparative statistics and insights, which can help identify issues, initiate cooperation forums and shape future policy.

Islam is not only present in all continents as a religion but also as a cultural and civilizational value. Starting with the *Hijrah* of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Muslim migrants have laid the foundations for the spread of Islamic values, ideas and habits in the regions where they are settled, thus contributed to the cultural richness and economic development of these places.

Today, whenever we raise the point concerning Muslims communities and minorities living in non-OIC Member States, we have in mind a context in which Islam is present through more recent migrations. However, we should keep in mind that many of these countries have also been the homeland of its Muslims for centuries.

Despite the recent growth of literature on Muslims living in non-OIC Member States, our knowledge regarding this subject remains limited and fragmented. The GMD project intends to fill this gap through engaging more closely with the representatives of Muslim communities and minorities in different countries.

In context of GMD project, it is with great pleasure that I present to you the report on South Africa, which affords the political elites, policy makers, analysts and general public the opportunity to understand how the Muslims in South Africa view the most pressing issues they face today. The report on South Africa is based on two basic pillars: desk research and fieldwork – conducted by travelling to South Africa. Survey and workshop with representatives of Muslim communities and minorities and in-depth interviews with Muslim and non-Muslim public opinion leaders are the main components of this fieldwork study, whose results are integrated within the report.

I would like to encourage the readers of this report to have a look on the GMD general report titled “Muslim Communities and Minorities in Non-OIC Member States: Diagnostics, Concepts, Scope and Methodology”, which inter alia provides description of methodology and research activities applied when preparing the report on South Africa.

The development of this report has involved the dedication, skills and efforts of many individuals, to whom I would like to thank.

Amb. Musa Kulaklıkaya
Director General
SESRIC

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Amb. Musa Kulaklıkaya, Director General of the SESRIC, provided pivotal leadership during the preparation of the report. Several SESRIC members also contributed to the finalization of the report, including Dr. Kenan Bağcı, Acting Director of Economic and Social Research Department, and Dr. Erhan Türbedar, Researcher, who coordinated the report on behalf of SESRIC. Kaan Namli, Researcher, edited the report and Fatma Nur Zengin, Events and Communications Specialist, facilitated the fieldworks.

The SESRIC gratefully acknowledges local field workers and the institutions representing Muslim communities and minorities in South Africa for their cooperation and extraordinary support, without which this report would not have been possible.

Executive Summary

This report aims to address a gap in the literature regarding the global Muslim diasporic community by providing a comprehensive outlook on the principle aspects of South Africa's Muslim community. The data and information presented in this study were collected via a survey conducted in Johannesburg (in October 2018), a number of in-depth interviews and roundtable meetings in Johannesburg, Pretoria, and Cape Town (between October 8-12, 2018), a workshop held in Johannesburg (on October 10, 2018) and, a detailed investigation of secondary sources. The survey was conducted with the participation 400 Muslim individuals and the workshop was attended by twenty Muslim and non-Muslim NGOs, social activists, academics, students, and community representatives. A total of twenty-five Muslims and non-Muslims participated in the interviews and seventeen of them contributed to the project through in-depth interviews.

Muslim communities and minorities in South Africa are diverse, as they are in other diasporic communities around the world. The cause of this diversity can be attributed to three major characteristics. First, to their ethnonational and racial background. There are three main Muslim groups in terms of ethnic, national, and racial affiliation: Muslims of Malay (or “*colored*,” a term still in use) origin, Muslims of Indian (or “*Asian*”) origin, and African (or “*Black*”) Muslims. Second, to their historical and organizational presence in the country.

From this perspective, there are two main Muslim groups: *the established Muslims* (i.e., Malay and Indian Muslims who have been in South Africa for centuries and thus are well-established and organized) and *the emerging Muslims* (i.e., new Muslims in the South African Muslim space, such as newly arriving Sub-Saharan African Muslims, South African Black Muslims, and converts). And third, to their socio-economic status. Here, the South African Muslim sector can be split into three main groups: *the affluent* (mainly Indian Muslims and a small group of Malay Muslims who predominantly work in business and trade), *the working class* (mainly Muslims of Malay origin and a small portion of African Muslims), and *the underprivileged* (mainly South African local or black Muslims). In addition to these groupings, there are new Islamic currents that may cause further diversity among South African Muslims such as the arrival of Shia groups and new influxes of Muslim immigrants.

According to the findings of the *2013 Household Survey and Statistics South Africa*, 84.2% of the population in South Africa reported their religious affiliation as “Christian.” The same survey reported that 5% of respondents stated that they follow Ancestral or traditional African religions while 5.5% of the population described their religious affiliation as “nothing in particular.” Muslims made up 2% of the South African population with the highest concentration in the Western Cape (7.3%), KwaZulu-Natal (2.6%), and Gauteng (1.5%).

It is difficult to determine the precise number of Muslims living in South Africa because the 2001 census was the last survey to contain a question on religious affiliation and with the ongoing Muslim influx into the country the numbers are changing rapidly. However, in community surveys and statistics the numbers of Colored and Indian/Asian communities are generally specified. Based on the 2016 Community Survey findings, and the fact that the percentage of Muslim Indians within the Indian/Asian category is around 30%, and the percentage of Malays is around 10% within the Colored category, it is estimated that there are approximately 480,000 Colored Muslims and 400,000 Indian Muslims in South Africa. As of 2018, the number of African Muslims or Black Muslims is reported to be around 100,000 by al-Tshatshu. A small number of White and other Muslims can be added to these figures. These figures are educated estimates deduced from official numbers; however, with the unofficial numbers that include undocumented Muslims, the size of the Muslim community in South Africa would increase considerably.

South Africa appears to have one of the most accommodating legal and political frameworks *vis-à-vis* religious communities, including Muslim ones. Without exception, all participants and contributors to the South Africa field study voiced their content and appreciation for the religious and cultural rights and freedoms they have been enjoying in the country within the existing framework. Certain judicial issues that are pending for resolution such as the Muslim Personal Law, the established Muslim communities' efforts and success in incorporating new Muslim elements, and Muslim groups' and organizations' diligence towards finding an efficient balance in the super-diversity that would govern the South African Muslim space will determine the future of this framework towards to the Muslim community.

Although the Muslim community has achieved a relatively effective intra-communal and inter-communal interaction, the South African Islamic space is not entirely free of tension and contestation. It was observed during the field study that three types of contestation and tension are accumulating in the South African Muslim community: inter-genderal, inter-generational, and inter-racial. The inter-racial conflict is the most profound and tangible of the three. According to many, it is the legacy of Apartheid that inter-racial tensions are so much more conspicuous and vociferous in South Africa. In fact, as with these tensions and many other concern-generating issues, such as the ever-increasing unemployment level and HIV/AIDS pandemic, South Africa is still struggling with the legacy of Apartheid. The Muslim communities' capacity towards addressing and overcoming the challenges and struggles left by the Apartheid stands as an important determiner in the future of Islam in South Africa.

Regarding political representation, it may be argued that Muslim visibility and involvement in politics has been decreasing in the last decade. Having enjoyed political visibility and representation that exceeded their numeric representation in post-Apartheid South Africa, the majority of Muslims interviewed expressed a desire for a political rejuvenation. Nevertheless, considering their size, Muslims are well represented in South Africa and are notably visible. Muslim individuals and organizations, in comparison with other non-Muslim majority contexts, are exceptionally well integrated, active and involved, both socially and

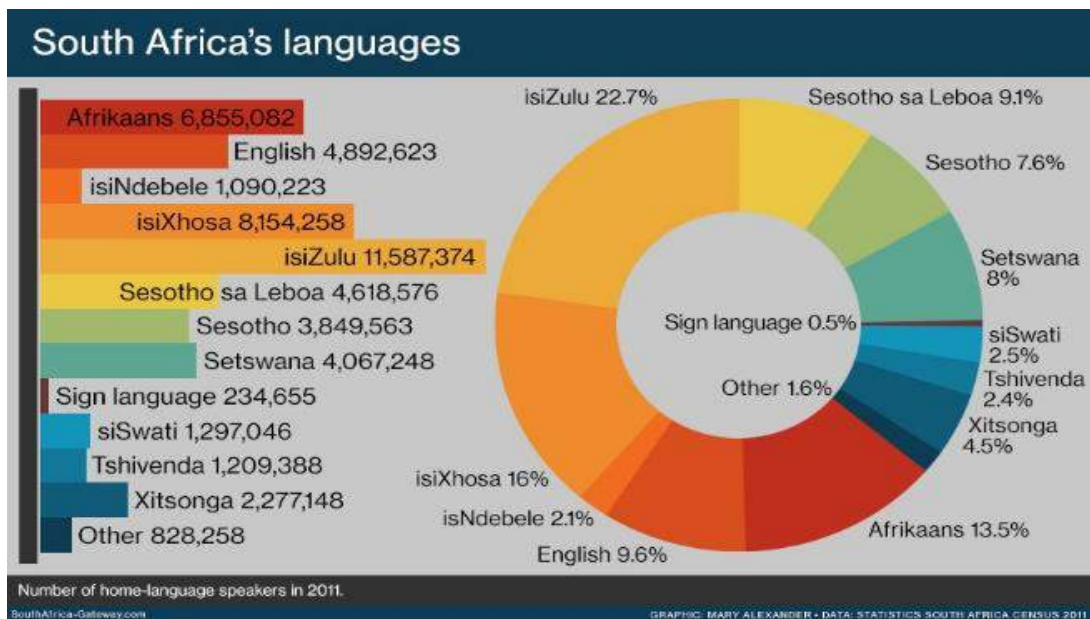
politically. From this perspective, South Africa is an encouraging success story that suggests that if Muslim communities and minorities are provided with equal opportunities and an accommodating framework, and given enough time, they will most likely prosper in different contexts as well.

1 Introduction: Context and Background

This chapter discusses the South African context, both in general and to specific Muslim communities and minorities. The first part gives a brief account of the major historical and political phases that shaped the country, including the Apartheid regime, and post-Apartheid democracy, and the main challenges that South Africans are facing today. Following this, the history of Islam in South Africa and its principal features are outlined.

1.1 South Africa: A Brief History

South Africa is a country marked by the history of colonial rivalry, institutionalized racial discrimination, and a troubled passage to true democracy. Since the abolishment of Apartheid in 1994, the country has three capitals: Pretoria (administrative), Cape Town (legislative), and Bloemfontein (judicial), and is divided into nine administrative divisions, namely the provinces of: Eastern Cape, the Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North West, the Northern Cape and the Western Cape. South Africa has eleven official languages: Afrikaans, English, Sepedi (also known as Sesotho sa Leboa), Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Ndebele, Xhosa and Zulu.



G1: South Africa's languages: Source: Statistics South Africa, based on the 2011 General Household Survey. Graphic by Mary Alexander, South Africa-Gateway.com.

The 2015 General Household Survey indicates that the country's population has increased from 45,8 million in 2002 to 54,4 million in 2015 (Statistics South Africa 2017: 7). The same report reveals that the vast majority of South Africans, 86.0%, identified as Christian, whereas approximately 5.2%

indicated no particular religious affiliation. More than 5% stated that they subscribe to indigenous African beliefs and tribal and ancestral religions in the same year. An estimated 0.2% of individuals adhered to Judaism. Having the highest concentrations in three provinces, Western Cape (5.3%), Gauteng (2.4%), and KwaZulu-Natal (3.3% Indians), Muslims constituted 1.9% of the total population in 2015 (Statistics South Africa 2017: 27-28).

Percentage distribution of religious affiliation by province, 2015: Province (per cent)										
Religious affiliation	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP	RSA
Christian	87,8	83,5	98,4	97,7	78,5	93,3	87,1	93,2	79,9	86,0
Muslim	5,3	0,4	0,9	0,6	2,0	1,5	2,4	0,8	0,9	1,9
African religions ¹	2,8	8,6	0,0	1,4	12,3	3,0	2,3	4,0	4,5	5,4
Hindu	0,4	0,1	0,0	0,0	3,3	0,1	0,8	0,1	0,0	0,9
Jewish	0,5	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,6	0,0	0,1	0,2
Other religion	0,7	0,2	0,3	0,1	0,5	0,1	0,6	0,4	0,2	0,4
Nothing in particular	2,6	7,2	0,3	0,1	3,3	2,1	6,3	1,5	14,4	5,2
Do not know	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

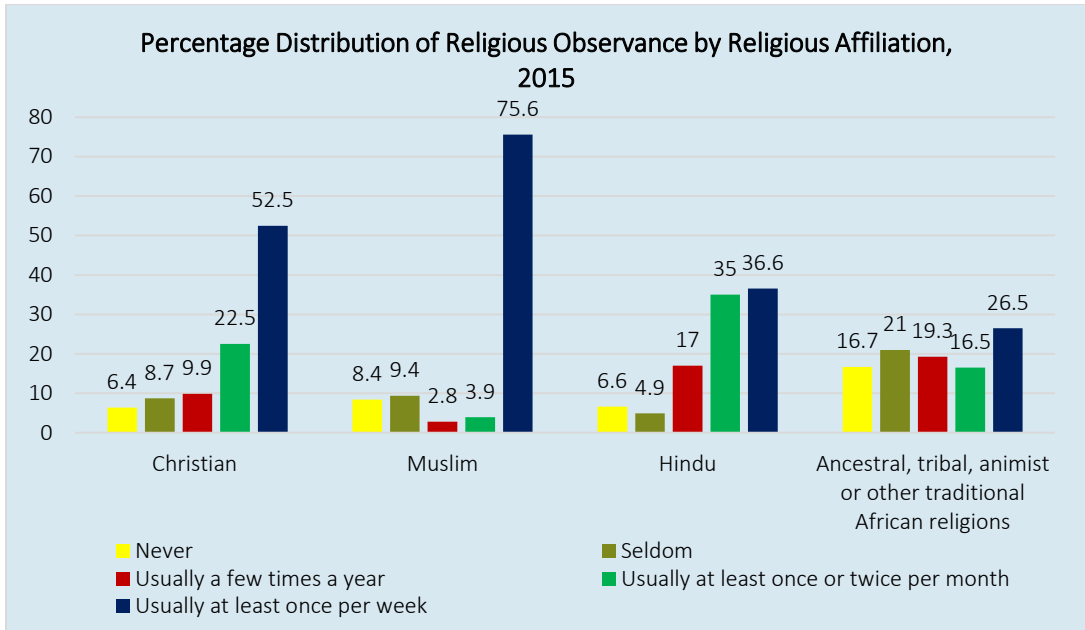
G2: South Africa Religious Affiliations: Source: Statistics South Africa (2017: 28).²

Although a secular country, South Africa is profoundly religious with more than 90% of South Africans associating themselves with a religion according to a 2016 report of the General Household Survey. The same survey indicates that 36.6% of Hindus, 52.5% of Christians and 75.6% of Muslims attend religious events and ceremonies at least once a week (Khan 2017). According to the results of the 2015 General Household Survey, South African Muslims observe their religion and religious requirement more than any other faith group. South Africans who stated that they follow ancestral, tribal, animist or other traditional African beliefs are noted to be the most infrequent attenders to religious services with only 26.5% of them attending religious services and ceremonies at least once a week and 16.7% of them never attend such religious services and ceremonies.

Beginning as a small European colony in Cape, the country later established itself as the largest economy in southern Africa, partly through systematic racial oppression and exploitation. Although slavery in the British Empire lasted around 180 years and was abolished in 1834, the socio-economic and political subjugation of Blacks and Coloreds, and partly of Indians/Asians, continued in the independent government of South Africa until the early 1990s. Blacks were given franchise in an exclusively white-dominated South Africa only 25 years ago, in 1994.

¹ Ancestral, tribal, animist or other traditional African religions.

² Provinces: WC: Western Cape, EC: Eastern Cape, NC: Northern Cape, FS: Free State, KZN: KwaZulu-Natal, NW: North West, GP: Gauteng Province, MP: Mpumalanga Province, LP: Limpopo Province



G3: South Africa Religious Observance: Source: Statistics South Africa (2017: 28)

In the 19th century, South Africa witnessed three major developments. The first being the consolidation of the Zulu kingdom under Shaka, which brought about a period, known as the *Mfecane*, a period of sustained conflict, forced migration, and destruction among African ethnic groups. The second being the lengthy conflict for control over parts of the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and Free State, between certain African tribes and the Afrikaners (Europeans of Dutch origin). The final major development was the discovery of diamonds in Kimberley in 1867 and gold in the Witwatersrand in 1886, which led to two major conflicts between the British and Afrikaners for control of the region (Robinson 2010: 410).

The peace negotiation following the British victory in the Second Boer War (1899-1902), between the British and Afrikaners, brought about the unification of South Africa in 1910. Through the absolute dominance of the Anglo-Boer coalition and the governing the South African Party (SAP), a racially white-exclusive state was formed. The SAP merged with the National Party to form the United Party in 1934. Political power changed hands between parties throughout the 1920s and 30s, however, along with racial disenfranchisement, the definite control over South African urbanization, industrialization, and economy remain the principle concentration and policy for successive administrations. "The contradictory desire for African labor in the towns but residency in the reserves—the requirements for economic growth without black political representation – compelled the enactment of a series of laws designed to uphold the fiction of a 'white South Africa'" (Hendricks 2003: 508). The 1913 Land Act limited landownership by Africans and confined them to the slums in Sophiatown, Alexandria, and Orlando (now Soweto), the 1923 Urban Areas Act restricted African migration. The 1927 Immorality Act described interracial sexual relations as criminal and subject to severe punishment.

Black reaction and opposition to the state's segregation laws and oppression, found its political expression with the establishment of the African Political Organization (APO) in 1902, the African National Congress (ANC) in 1912, the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union in 1919 and the South African Communist Party (SACP) in 1921. The future winner of the first national democratic election in a landslide victory, from its formation until the 1940s, the ANC had been primarily preoccupied with



diplomatic negotiations with the regime for the recognition of the Black community's right to vote.

F1: A typical sign in Apartheid-South Africa, mandating white exclusive usage of the signed facility and its amenities. Media Credits, Photo online, courtesy El C via Wikimedia Commons.

In the 1930s, South Africa's political economy was heavily depended on the migrant labor of Africans, which brought further influxes of African laborers, mineworkers, and employees into urban areas despite the dearth of housing for them. The incessant waves of African urbanization, the escalation of the intra-white capitalist tensions between impoverished Afrikaners and affluent English communities, and Black opposition led to the re-emergence of Afrikaner (Boer) nationalism in the 1940s. Controlling the urban economy, the English attracted the resentment of Afrikaner or Boer capitalists who dominated the agricultural sector (Boer means "farmer" in Afrikaans; colloquially, it means "white South African"). The NP (National Party) commenced a propaganda campaign, raising grave concerns about the immigration control policies' failure and "racial mixing" in the reserves, postulating that racial segregation and purity, and white women were under threat. In order to put an end to the decay of the *volk*, the NP advocated further racial separation and repression of Black opposition, and stricter immigration control measures—through Apartheid—and won the 1948 elections (Hendricks 2003: 509).

As many scholars have indicated in numerous studies, the policy framework and ideology that Apartheid was built on was not new; in fact, it was a turn back to a former stage. Apartheid, in this perspective, was only an attempt to "refine, intensify, and expand those practices and policies geared towards the reproduction of white rule that already existed in South Africa" (Hendricks 2003: 509).

The society was divided into four rigid racial groups, Whites, Coloreds, Indians/Asians, and Blacks Acts under Apartheid rule. The acts that had been introduced to regiment and rigidify racial segregation, viz., The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949), the Population Registration Act (1950), and the Group Areas Act (1950) aggravated social dissociation and racial isolation. Pursuant to the Group Areas

Act, more than 3 million Africans, 300,000 Coloreds, and 150,000 Asians were forcibly relocated into already overpopulated reserves, townships, and rural lands (Robinson 2010: 413).

Anti-apartheid resistance gained momentum in 1955 when several African organizations, among them the ANC, the South African Indian Congress (SAIC), and the South African Colored People's Organization (SACPO), convened at Kliptown, outside of Johannesburg, at a meeting known as the Congress of the People, and adopted the Freedom Charter. The charter outlined the people's demand for a non-racial and free South Africa (Robinson 2010: 413).

Following anti-pass protests (protests against Pass Laws which mandated Blacks to carry passbooks or identity papers and monitored Black mobility within and between urban and rural areas) and the infamous Sharpeville massacre in 1960, a time when an unprecedented level of international pressure had begun built up against the South African Apartheid government, the NP declared certain opposition organizations; the ANP, the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), and SACP, illegal, forcing them to operate at a greater level of secrecy or enter into exile. After the arrestment of Nelson Mandela in 1962, and incarceration of many of his eminent comrades in 1963, the ANC's presence on both the political and military grounds had been almost completely eliminated inside the country.



F2: A poster created and used by the anti-Apartheid Movement

Keeping all pro-ANC and pro-UFD (the United Democratic Front) South Africans under strict surveillance, throughout the early 1960s, South African police had assassinated, arrested, detained, harassed, and neutralized scores of South Africans, often using Black collaborators for assistance (Ellis 1991: 443).³ The government used Black collaborators and "black-on-black" violence as clear indications of the incapacity and unreliability of permitting blacks to run the country (Robinson 2010: 414).

Withdrawing from the British Commonwealth and becoming a republic in 1961, South Africa benefited from sustained economic growth throughout the

³ The poster on the left (F2), was used in an Anti-Apartheid campaign in Britain. The British Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) organized a campaign to force the cancellation of a 1970 tour of Britain by the all-white South African Cricket Team. Poster by the Anti-Apartheid Movement, London, United Kingdom 1970 (or possibly late 1969). Used by permission of the Anti-Apartheid Movement Archives Committee. Collection: Anti-Apartheid Movement Archives, Bodleian Library of Commonwealth and African Studies at Rhodes House, Oxford University, Oxford, UK.



DANNY GLOVER WAS SHOCKED TO HEAR WHAT APARTHEID IS DOING TO SOUTH AFRICAN BLACKS. BUT MORE SHOCKED TO LEARN HE WAS PAYING FOR IT.

As one of the world's most renowned film actors, about the last thing San Francisco's Danny Glover could see himself doing, was supporting apartheid. After an anti-apartheid apartheid with all your heart, that supporting it with your money by doing business with companies that do business with South Africa? Why for a few pennies he has to reveal doing business with apartheid, with Apartheid Business 220-42nd St., C. Newark, N.J. 07102

F3: A poster created and used by Anti-Apartheid Movement

1960s. The formation of the Black Consciousness Movement (1969) and a series of strikes from an ever-increasing Black labor force benefitting from a period of economic growth, along with a number of prominent student boycotts, particularly in Soweto and Johannesburg, renewed the anti-Apartheid resistance inside the country in the 1970s. In addition to the empowerment of anti-Apartheid resistance, the escalation of international pressure, disinvestment and economic sanction campaigns,⁴ and enforced isolation led the NP to relinquish its monopoly over political power and representation. In 1983 the NP granted representation rights to non-blacks and non-whites, which led to a new wave of protests rather than a rejuvenation of the party's political potency and the state's capacity (Hendricks 2003: 510). In this politico-historical conjuncture, the NP's party leadership was split over the future course of action, between taking further repressive measures and looking to compromise. The latter prevailed.

Negotiations between De Klerk's leading NP and a free Nelson Mandela, who was now leading the ANC, the early 1990s resulted in the first national democratic election and victory for the ANC party in 1994.⁵ Under the presidency of Mandela and the joint vice-presidency of De Klerk and Thabo Mbeki, a Government of National Unity (GNU) was formed. Through the commencement of a comprehensive Reconstruction and Development Program (RPD), the new South African government reorganized the existing socio-economic structure and attempted to address disparities, disproportionalities, and regional infrastructural underdevelopment that it had inherited from the Apartheid.

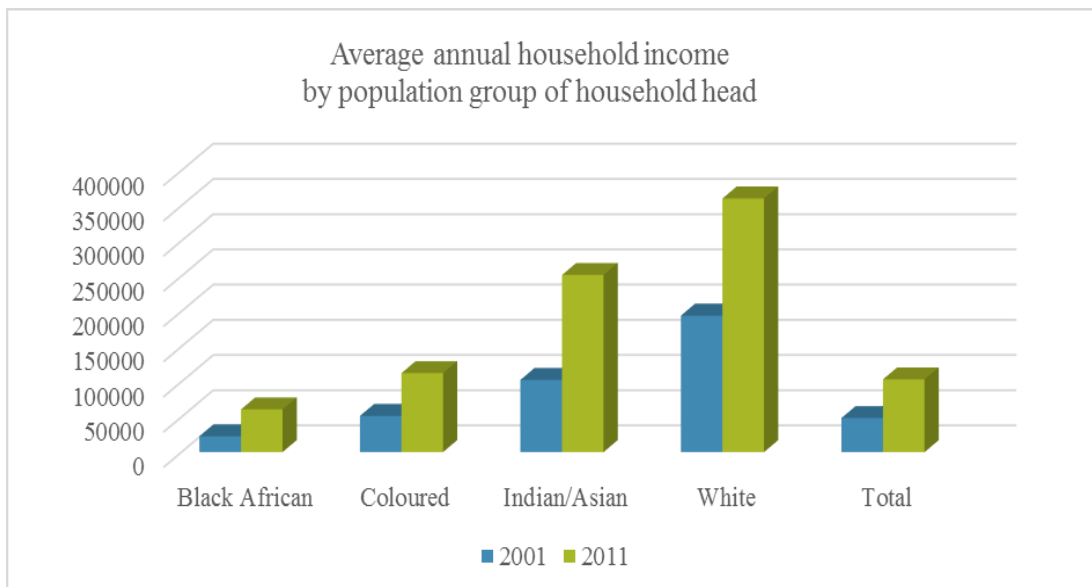
Following Mandela's retirement, the Thabo Mbeki-led ANC increased its parliamentary representation in the second and third national democratic elections in 1999 and 2004. Also, the 2009 National election, proceeded peacefully with another ANC victory, which won just under 66% of the popular

⁴ In the mid-1980s, a campaign for the imposition of economic sanctions on South African government attracted support from a score of American politicians and stars, like the actor Danny Glover, featured in the above poster (F3). By Sergio Peçanha, Alan McLean and Larry Buchanan. Sources: African Activist Archive collections in the Michigan State University Libraries, African National Congress, South African History Online. Downloaded from <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/interactive/2013/12/05/world/africa/Mandelas-Struggle-in-Posters.html>

⁵ Gaining 62.65 % of the vote, the ANC won the election. The NP and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) also received notable support, at 20.39 % and 10.54 %, respectively.

vote. The Democratic Alliance, which was the new official opposition, attracted mainly White and Coloured support in the Cape, gained around 12% in 2004 and just over 16% in 2009 (Clark and Worger 2013: 124). The ANC won the general election in 2014 although receiving 3.8% less of the vote than it did in 2009. There has been much transformation in the ANC-governed South Africa. However, the legacy of Apartheid continues to haunt the country through socio-economic disparities, racial inequities and tensions, increasing unemployment, regional underdevelopment, and crime and safety concerns.

A 2009 *International Monetary Fund Report* noted that the country continues “to face formidable medium-term structural challenges largely reflecting its apartheid legacy” (IMF, 2009). Indeed, the Apartheid’s legacy is nowhere more visible than the socio-economic transformation of South Africa. The ANC attracted certain criticism, particularly in the first years of its rule, for compartmentalizing and favoring political transformation over economic and developmental ones, and for its belated implementation of the economic and social revolution (Clark and Worger 2013: 126). Despite “an impressive seven years of consolidating public finances and pursuing a policy of fiscal restraint against populist pressure” as *The Economist* noted in 2002, the ANC-led government has continued to attract criticism for its failure to effectively address socio-economic disparities and increasing levels of unemployment (cited in Clark and Worger 2013: 126).



G4: South Africa Average Annual Income by population group, Source: Statistics South Africa 2011 Census.

Today there are still certain indicators and consequences of the Apartheid’s legacy. First, Clark and Worger point out that, “profits continue to be generated through the use of exploited and undereducated African labor.” Second, not only is the mining industry still overwhelmingly reliant on migrant African labor, but also “as a result of decreasing gold production within South Africa and a greater investment in gold mines elsewhere (in Africa, Australia, and the United States) made possible by the end of international anti-apartheid measures, now the mining industry employs slightly over half as many men in its mines as it did a decade ago” (Clark and Worger 2013: 126). Third, White South

Africans continue to earn more than five times as much as Blacks and remain the prime beneficiaries of both economic disparities and expansions. “More than a decade after the end of apartheid, 83% of whites were in the top 20% of the population measured by household income, compared with 7.9% of Africans, 25.6% of Coloureds, and 50% of Indians” (Clark and Worger 2013: 126).

Post-Apartheid South Africa is also unable to cope with worryingly high crime rates and overall safety concerns. Muslim communities and minorities are not immune to these problems, thus, many organizations have put the development of practical solutions for preventing and eliminating these issues in their agendas. In one such attempt, a group of South African Muslims in the Cape, in 1996, founded the *PAGAD* (People Against Gangsterism and Drugs) to address the issue of drug and criminal gangs in their neighborhoods, as well as the general problem of crime, social-moral erosion and safety—albeit in a highly controversial manner. The group attracted international attention and provoked much intra- and extra-communal criticism because of its methods, in which violence was confronted with violence and the extrajudicial executions of gang leaders and members (Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 256).

As of 2018, the rapid and continual spread of AIDS is the most pressing crisis in South Africa. While the number of infected South Africans was only 1,352 in 1992, in a decade the number rose to 5 million, with an annual death rate of 360,000 in 2001. HIV/Aids accounted for 57% of children’s deaths between 2000 and 2003. It dropped the average life expectancy from 62 years in 1990 to 50 years in 2007 (Clark and Worger 2013: 129-30). The number of deaths and those infected continues to grow. The ANC-led government and President Mbeki’s belated response and approval of the free provision of antiretroviral drugs for HIV/Aids sufferers, are, in some circles, held responsible for the upsurge of the HIV epidemic. “What the critics often fail to take into account, however,” as Clark and Worger stress, “is the extent to which the apartheid migrant labor system with its constant movement of people throughout southern Africa, has led to the whole region, not just South Africa, having the highest rates of infection in the world” (2013: 129-30).

Antiretroviral availability and use have levelled the infection rates, although the damage is too great to be repaired in the near future. The impact of the epidemic on family structure (1.4 million children were orphaned by HIV/Aids in 2008 and 33% of women aged 25-29 and 25,8% of men aged 30-34 tested positive) and on the economy (mainly through destructing the workforce and placing enormous strain on social and health services) is significant (Clark and Worger 2013: 130).

According to UNAIDS, as of 2017, South Africa has the highest number of HIV cases in the world, accounting for almost 19% of the global number of people living with HIV (an estimated 7.2 million people), 15% of new infections and 11% of AIDS-related deaths. In 2016, the country had around 270,000 new HIV infections and around 110,000 AIDS-related deaths. In 2017, an estimated 280,000 children (aged 0 to 14) were living with HIV (only 58% of them were on treatment).⁶ According to UNICEF’s *Biennial Report South Africa 2016*, HIV and AIDS in South Africa have orphaned more than 2 million children.⁷

⁶ UNAIDS “AIDSinfo”, accessed Nov 2018). See <http://aidsinfo.unaids.org/>

⁷ Accessed Nov 2018, See https://www.unicef.org/southafrica/SAF_resources_biennialreport2014_2015.pdf



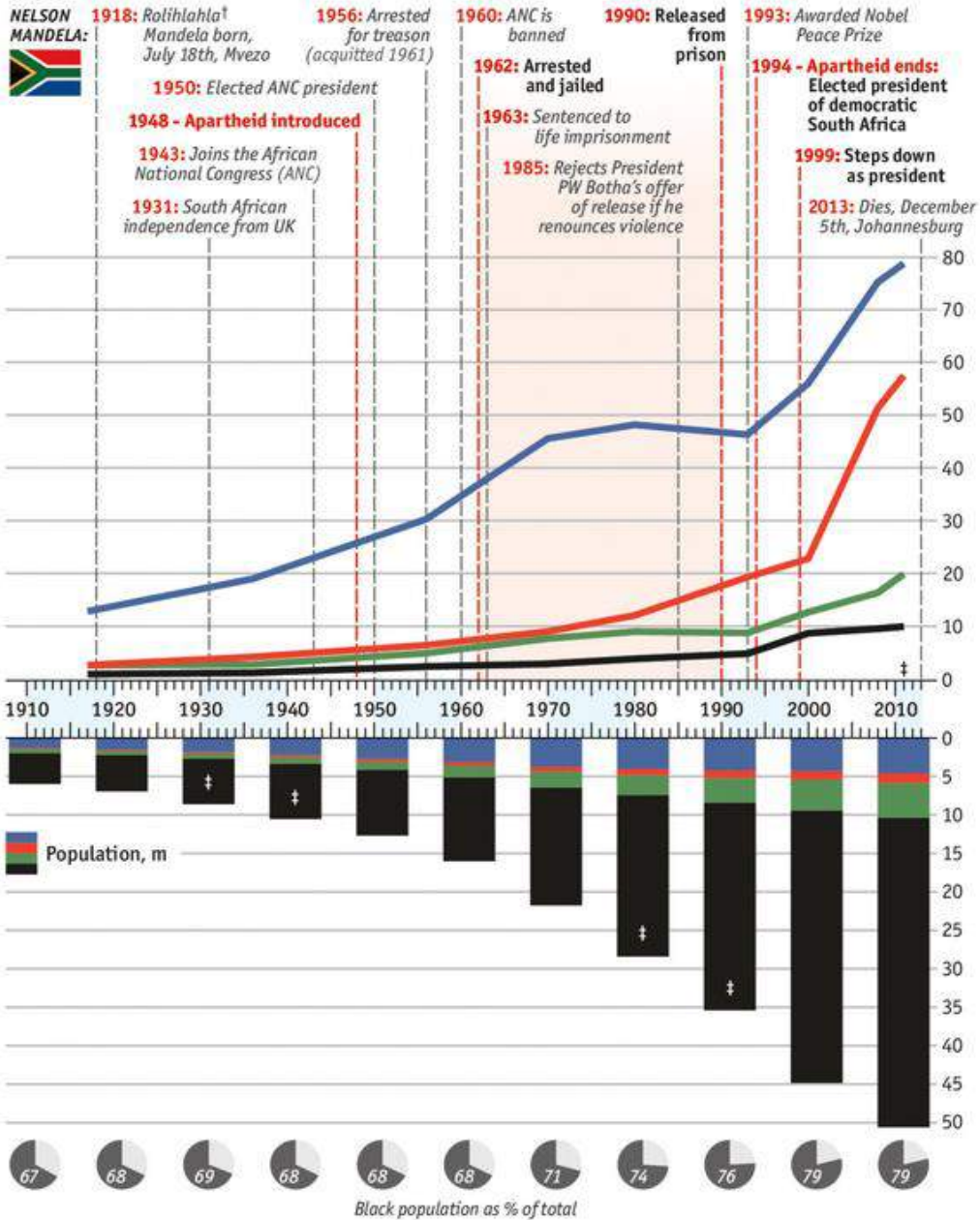
F4 and F5: South Africa is a country of huge socio-economic disparities, firmly established by the Apartheid and its legacy. Below two faces of South African financial capital Johannesburg, the hut houses of the Soweto Township and the skyline of Johannesburg city center. Photo credits: Wikipedia.

Mandela's South Africa

Average income and population by racial group

Rand per person*, '000
(% increase 1917–2011)

■ White (503) ■ Asian (1,892) ■ Mixed race (600) ■ Black (760)



Sources: nelsonmandela.org; SAIRR; Statistics South Africa; *The Economist*

* At constant 2000 prices
† Adopts the name "Nelson" at primary school ‡ Estimates

G5: South Africa during Mandela's lifetime. Source: *The Economist*, 6 Dec. 2013.

1.2 Islam in South Africa

This subsection outlines the main stages of Islamic development in South Africa. After introducing the principle waves of Muslim migration into South Africa, the subchapter provides a brief summary of the political history of Islam in the country. In addition to these, the most up-to-date demographic information and statistics about the historical and current Muslim communities and minorities are discussed in detail.

The majority of South Africa's Muslims dwell in urban areas. The main Muslim concentrations are in Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth, East London, Kimberley, Pretoria and Johannesburg. The Malays constitute the greatest number of Muslims of the Cape and as a result are often referred to as Cape Malays or Cape Muslims. A colorful, vibrant and extensive residential area, known as the Malay Quarter, in the city of Cape Town, is also home to the Malay Muslims. As Mandivenga highlights, this historical quarter is where much miscegenation has taken place, with approximately two million colored South Africans of Hottentot, Bantu, white, Malagasy, East and South Asian blood have mixed over the centuries (2000: 348). This is why the Cape Malays were (and still are) being officially categorized as "Coloreds," although being different from other constituents of the Colored Community in respect to their fundamentally Islamic identity and culture (Mandivenga 2000: 348). Unlike the Cape Malays, the Indian Muslim community is spread across urban and metropolitan areas of Kwa-Zulu Natal and Gauteng (a part of the Transvaal), especially in the cities of Johannesburg, where the first Indian mosque was established in 1870⁸ in Durban and Pretoria.

South African Islam can be examined in three phases and migratory movements. The first phase includes the involuntary migration of slaves (freed Malay slaves, also known as *Mardyckers*), political prisoners and exiles. The latter were also known as Orang Cayen, Indonesian Muslim men of wealth and influence banished to the Cape by the Dutch authorities who wished to establish unchallenged political and economic hegemony) from Indonesian Archipelago, Java, Bali, the Sunda Islands, and Madagascar. These Malay Muslim-slaves were brought by the Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie, VOC) to the Cape from 1652 to the mid-1800s. The VOC forbade these Muslims from practicing Islam, implementing severe punishments and enforced a death sentence upon those caught praying. Over time, religious freedom and religious rights came to be recognized for the Muslim population (Davids 1980: 63, Dangor 1992: 375).

In the 19th century when the second important wave of Muslims, indentured labors and traders from India, arrived in the country to work in the sugar-cane fields in Natal, they found a more accommodating and tolerant context towards their religious identity (Davids 1980: 46, Dangor 1992: 375). In this second phase, (from 1860-1868 and from 1874-1911), approximately 176,000 Indians were brought to the Natal province, and between 7-10% of these Indians were Muslims (Haghnava 2014: 125). Thus, as Baderoon argues "South Africa was built not only on colonial occupation and land

⁸ "Even among coloureds and Indians, Muslims are a minority, constituting a quarter of the Indian population and 8% of the coloured population. But as Tayob has observed, statistics do not reflect the qualitative experience of being Muslim in South Africa." (Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 252-53)

theft but on slavery and indentured labor. Islam is intricately connected to these deep beginnings because many enslaved and indentured people were Muslims and the long history of struggle during colonialism is part of the reason that Islam is an ordinary, organic and indigenised part of our present” (Khan: the *Huffington Post South Africa* 2017).

The third phase involves the wave of African Muslims (numbered app. 75,000-100,000) and a substantial number of Indo-Pakistani Muslims that migrated to South Africa for primarily economic reasons after 1994, following the collapse of the Apartheid regime (Haghnavaaz 2014: 125). A growing number of Black Africa converts marks this last phase. While the first African Muslims in South Africa can be traced back to the 19th century, especially to the arrival of the Zanzibari community to Durban in the 1870s, and Malawi migrant workers, “African Muslims from the indigenous sector entered Islam mainly through ‘conversion’ of mostly young Africans “who undertook a conscious journey into Islam” in the 1970s and 1980s (Sitoto 2002: 3-4).



F6: A mosque in Johannesburg, photo taken during the field study, by Servet Erdem.

In the post-apartheid era promulgating and promoting Islam in the Black townships has occupied a central place in a number of Muslim organizations’ agenda. Indeed, Islam is gaining a foothold in many squatter areas and black townships where Muslim organizations’ focus on social activism through charity and relief work. Islam’s emphasis on the integrity of lifestyle and social reform has attracted particular attention among black people of lower socio-economic standings.

As noted by Haghnavaaz, Islam is estimated to be the largest religion of conversion in South Africa, growing six fold in 13 years, from 1991 to 2004 (2014: 126). Organizations such as *IPCI*, the Islamic *Dawah* Movement of South Africa and the Africa Muslim Agency have been eager to proselytize in the region. However, there have been other civic organizations such as the *MYMSA* and the Call of Islam

who have considered other methods by which to weave Islam into the social fabric of the country (Haghnavaaz 2014: 126).

The most frequently mentioned reasons for the dramatic rise in conversion to Islam within the Black African community could be pinpointed as follows: The first, as maintained by the *Christian Science Monitor*, that Islam offers a refuge from drug and alcohol addiction, moral erosion and corruption. Secondly, that Muslims institutions and organizations are dedicated to *dawa*, the active preaching and spreading of the Muslim faith. Thirdly, Christianity's controversial association with Apartheid, as Charles Villa-Vicencio (1988) once put it (Goba 1995: 190), promoting through provision of a theological base for the doctrines of racial segregation and White supremacy which brought about a loss in confidence in Christianity among Black Africans (Haghnavaaz 2014: 126). Fourth, the exposure of exiled South African students in Malawi and Mozambique to Islam during the Apartheid struggle (Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 262-63). Finally, the role and contribution of certain Muslim activists and organizations in the struggle against Apartheid.

Undoubtedly, prosperity of Islam in South Africa largely down to the determination of Muslim individuals and organizations in maintaining their religious identity. As Haron puts it, as a growing community, South African Muslims have always been inspired by their "founding fathers" such as Sheikh Yusuf, Sheikh Madura (d.1754), Tuan Said (d.1760), Qadi 'Abdus-Salam (d.1807) and Sheikh Abu Bakr Effendi (d.1880) (Haron 2018: 2).⁹ In the resistance to assimilation and protection of their Islamic identity, the role of Islamic educational institutions has been of great importance for South African Muslims (Dangor 1992: 375, Mohamed 2002: 30). Thus, the contributions and guidance of Islamic scholars, *ulamas*, and sheikhs are critical in comprehending the success of Islam in South Africa. Although many eminent figures are commemorated and mentioned in the writings on South African Islam, the two most prominent are Abdullah Kadi Abdus Salaam (d. 1807), known as Tuan Guru, an exile from Indonesia, and Sheikh Abu Bakr Effendi (d. 1880), an Ottoman-Turkish scholar who was sent to the Cape by the Ottoman sultan Abdulmejid I at the request of Queen Victoria, in order to teach, assist, and resolve theological conflicts within the Muslim community of the Cape Malays.

Upon his release from the prison on Robben Island in 1793 and the ordinance of freedom of religion in 1804, Tuan Guru founded the first mosque and madrasa in Cape Town, which was followed by another 12 mosque-based schools in the following decades (Mohamed 2002: 30). The madrasa that Tuan Guru established played a critical role in introducing Islam to many slaves and later converting them. It was also here that Islamic teaching in Arabic-Afrikaans emerged (Haghnavaaz 2014: 126).

Higher Islamic learning in South Africa, conversely, began with Sheikh Abu Bakr Effendi, who settled in Cape Town, learnt Afrikaans and wrote one of the most influential works on Islamic theology in Arabic-Afrikaans, *Bayan al-Din* (The Elucidation of Religion). Under the guidance of Tuan Guru and Abu Bakr

⁹ For further details on historical figures and leaders that played a key role in the establishment of Islam in South Africa, e.g., Tuan Guru, Shaikh Yusuf, and Abu Bakr Effendi; or Muslim activists and political figures that became stalwarts of the liberation movement, e.g., Imam Haron, Yusuf Dadoo, Moulvi Cachalia, Fatima Meer, and Ahmed Kathrada, see (Dangor 2003: 203-220)

Effendi, Islamic learning, seminaries, and colleges gained a firm foothold in South Africa (Mohamed 2002: 30).



F7: Auwal Masjid, the first mosque in Cape Town and South Africa, photo taken during the field study by Servet Erdem.

Establishing these institutions and organizations, however, involved many challenges and required a long history of struggle. The VOC had an unchallengeable control over South Africa's religious space from the second half of the 17th century until the British occupation, and Muslims were not permitted to establish any organization or institution of their own for more than 150 years after their arrival. Thus, although the historical presence of Muslims in South Africa dates back to the mid-17th century, the institutionalization of Islam in South Africa only began in the 19th century (Dangor 2009: 108-109).¹⁰

Pre-apartheid restriction, pass laws, the apartheid regime, and anti-apartheid struggle characterized the 20th-century South Africa for Muslims. Until the 1970s, Muslim people and organizations remained dormant and had limited political involvement. Islamic revivalism or resurgence in post-1970 South Africa, according to Dangor, is largely due to certain developments in the country and the Islamic world: (i) the influence of revivalist and modernist Muslim thinkers and intellectuals from different parts of the immediate Muslim world, *e.g.*, Mawlana Mawdudi of Pakistan, Ali Shariati of Iran, Hasan al-Banna and Syed Qutb of Egypt; (ii) visits by prominent scholars of Islam to South Africa, such as Mawlana Fazlur Rahman and Ismail al-Faruqi; (iii) overseas Islamic education opportunities which provided South African Muslim students access to and opportunity to interact with Muslim students and intellectuals in Egypt and Saudi Arabia, thus helping them to broaden their Islamic vision and mission; (iv) the impact of the Iranian Revolution which inspired South

¹⁰ On the establishment of the first Muslim institutions and organizations, *e.g.*, mosques, madrasas, religious colleges, mission schools, political parties, religious councils, and media outlets, in different parts of South Africa see Dangor (2009: 108-109).

African Muslims to believe in the possibility of establishing an Islamic political regime; (v) the influence of the Muslim media and publications propagating a revivalist outlook; and (vi) the death of Imam Haron, an anti-Apartheid hero, in detention (Dangor 2009: 113-14).



These factors, according to Dangor, have resulted in a paradigm shift in Islamic identity among South African Muslims. Gravitating towards a global Islamic identity, the majority of South African Muslims began to identify themselves within the global *ummah* rather than with their country of origin (Indonesia and India), as they did prior to the late-1970s. This shift, besides being one of the key indicators of Islamic revivalism as Dangor argues (2009: 114), was also the driving power behind the development of a distinct and consolidative Islamization agenda by South African Muslim organizations.

F8: A photo picturing Abu Bakr Effendi (Ebubekir Efendi), seated in the middle. Source: Daily Sabah, April 12, 2017.

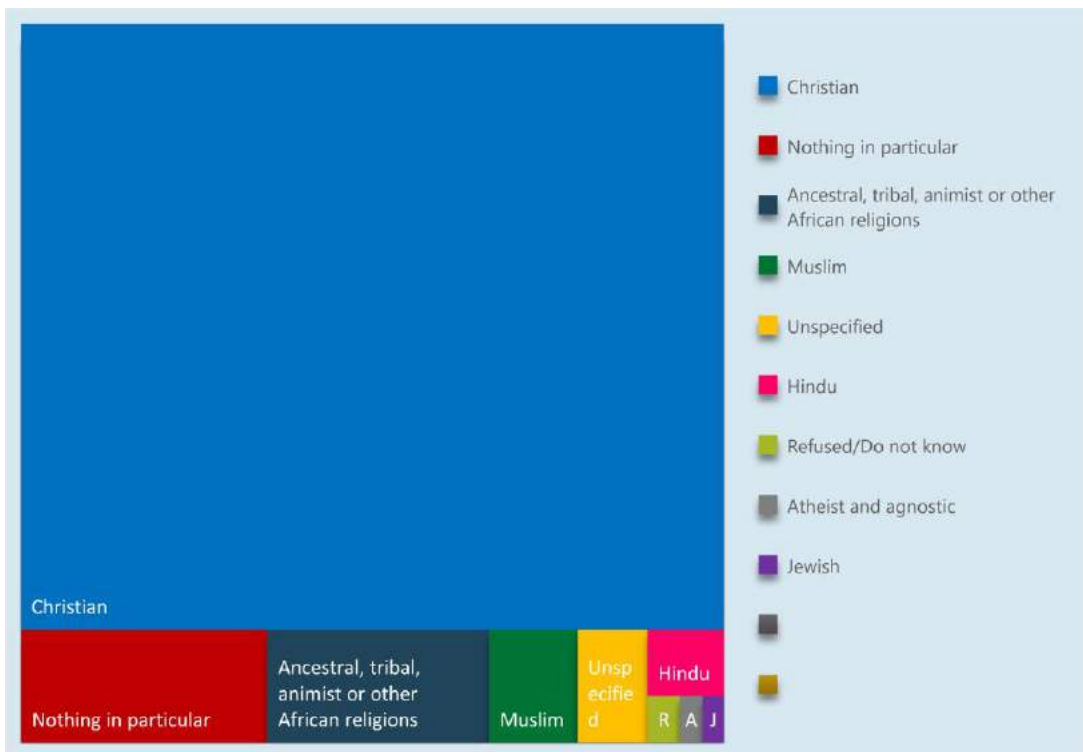
A Brief Chronology of Muslims in South Africa	
1652	The arrival of Malay Muslims to South Africa
1658	The advent of the first free Muslims, Mardykens
1660-1699	The arrival of political exiles known as Orang Cayen, among whom there was also Sheikh Yusuf
1700	A list by the Dutch East Company recorded the number of slaves at the Cape between 1658 and 1700 to be 1,296, the majority of whom were of Indian and Indonesian origin
1743	The emergence of De Vryezwarten (the free Black community) who played a key role in the spread of Islam in South Africa
1750-1780	The number of slaves at the Cape is estimated to be 8,628, of which 57.64% were Muslims
1780-1807	Tuan Guru, an influential Muslim instructor, leader, and pioneer in the Cape
1794	Auwal Masjid: the first masjid established in the Cape and in South Africa
1804	The attainment of freedom of worship from the Dutch
1805	The first Muslim cemetery, Tuan Baru
1807	Palm Tree Masjid, the establishment of the second masjid in the country

1834	Slavery Abolition Act takes effect freeing 800,000 slaves across the British Empire, including the Cape Colony
1840	Islam had 6,435 adherents in the Cape, one-third of the total population
1840	Muslims first settle in Port Elizabeth
1844	Nurul Islam Masjid, the establishment of the third masjid in the Cape and South Africa
1855	The second masjid in Port Elizabeth established with the financial help of the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Majid
1858	Arrival of first Muslim workers in Natal
1860	Arrival of first indentured Muslims in Durban
1862	Arrival of Abu Bakr Effendi, one of the most influential Islamic scholars in South Africa, sent to Cape Town by the Ottoman Sultan Abdulmejid I
1870	Juma Masjid, Johannesburg's first mosque was established
1873	Arrival of the Zanzibari Muslims
1875	Census reported the number of Muslims in the colony to be 13,930 [10,817 of them Malay]
1875-1886	The cemetery dispute and the cemetery riots
1876	Arrival of more freed slaves from Zanzibar
1890	Formation of the Indian Committee Durban
1891	Census, the number of Muslims in the colony reported to be 15,099
1894	Founding of the Natal Indian Congress
1903	Founding of South African Moslem Association in Cape Town
1904	Construction of the first (two) minarets on Grey Street Masjid
1906	Founding of Pretoria Mohammedan Congregation
1906	Census, the number of Muslims in the colony reported to be 22,575
1906	Founding of Hamidia Islamic Society in Johannesburg
1909	Founding of South African Malay Association
1913	Establishment of the Rahmaniyyeh Institution, a Muslim mission school
1923	Founding of Cape Malay Association
1923	Founding of Jami'atul Ulama, Transvaal
1934	Establishment of Muslim Darul Yatama Wal Masakan, Durban
1940	Founding of Waterval Islamic Institution
1942	Establishment of Young Men's Muslim Association, Durban
1943	Founding of Natal Muslim Council
1946	Founding of Muslim Judicial Council, Cape Town
1950	Founding of Jamiatul Ulama Natal, Durban
1950	Founding of Arabic Study Circle, Durban
1950	Publication of <i>The Muslim Digest</i>
1951	Census, the Indian Muslim population was reported to be 78,787 in 1951 [which rose to 125,987 in 1970, and 154,300 in 1980]
1952	Bo-Kaap was declared as the residential area for Malay Muslims in accordance with the Group Areas Act of 1950
1952	Founding of Central Islamic Trust, Johannesburg

1954-1969	Imam Abdullah Haron's inspiring works and activism
1956	'Die Heilige Qur'an: the first Afrikaans translation of the Qur'an
1957	Islamic Propagation Centre International
1958	Founding of Claremont Muslim Youth Association
1960	Census, the number of Muslims in South Africa was reported to be 196,372 [93,256 Coloreds, 98,490 Asians, 4,626 Blacks]
1960	Publication of <i>Muslim News</i>
1962	Founding of Lenasia Muslim Association
1963	Founding of Muslim Judicial Council, Natal
1970	Census, the number of Muslims in South Africa was reported to be 269,915 [134,087 Coloreds, 125,987 Asians, 8,896 Blacks]
1970	Establishment of Muslim Youth Movement of South Africa
1973	Founding of Darul Ulum Newcastle
1974	Establishment of Muslim Students' Association of South Africa
1975	Establishment of Islamic Council of South Africa
1977	Establishment of South African National Zakah Fund (SANZAF)
1981	Islamic Dawah Movement of South Africa
1981	Islamic Medical Association of South Africa
1981	<i>Ikhurani Eyingcwele</i> , the first translation of Qur'an into Zulu
1982	Census, the number of Muslims in South Africa was reported to be 328,440 [2,180 Whites, 163,700 Coloreds, 154,300 Asians, 8,260 Blacks]
1982	Muslim Charitable Foundation
1984	Construction of Soweto Mosque
1987	South Africa's first Islamic Bank, the Islamic Cooperation Limited
1989	Association of Islamic Schools formed
1990	Al Baraka Bank Limited South Africa established
1990	First Muslim National Conference
1990	Islamic Party formed
1994	First democratic national elections
1997	Radio Islam controversy
2002	Soweto Bombings, Soweto Mosque hit by terrorist attacks
2003	Family Eidgah Controversy
2004	Ebrahim Rasool appointed the Premier of the Western Cape province
2017	Ahmed Kathrada, one of the anti-Apartheid Muslim heroes and a close friend of Mandela, died at a medical center in Johannesburg, aged 87

2 Demographic Profile

This chapter provides an outline of the demographic profile of Muslim communities and minorities in South Africa, *i.e.*, available statistical data concerning their numbers, their ethnic and racial breakdown. According to the 2013 Household Survey, 84.2% of South Africans reported their religious affiliation as “Christian;” which pointed to a 4.4% increase from the figure reported in the 2001 census. The highest concentration of Christians being in the Northern Cape and Free State, where 97.9% and 95.5% of the population identified as Christian, respectively.



G6: South Africa religious affiliations

Of the rest, approximately 5%, according to the same survey, reported following ancestral or traditional African religions, while 5.5% of the population described their religious affiliation as “nothing in particular.” Muslims, on the other hand, were reported to comprise 2% of South African population, the majority of which resided in the Western Cape (7.3%), KwaZulu-Natal (2.6%), and Gauteng (1.5%). Those who identified as Hindu comprised approximately 1% of the total population, most of whom lived in KwaZulu-Natal, making up 3.9% of the population. Other religious affiliations in South Africa were reported as Jewish (0.2%), Atheist and agnostic (0.2%), Unspecified (1.6%), Refused to answer or Do not know (0.3%), and Something else (0.1%) (Schoeman 2017: 3).

During the field study, when asked about the numeric presence of Muslims, representatives, scholars, and NGO's of the South African Muslim community provided a variety of answers. Bashir, a member of a Muslim foundation of Indian origin, reported that the percentage of Muslims in South Africa, with new Muslims from Sub-Saharan African countries and Indian sub-continent and Pakistan, has now reached 3% (SA int.). Voicing similar numbers, Fadhil stated that with post-Apartheid influxes of Muslim immigrants into the country, the number of Muslims has now reached 3, or even, 4 million. "It is still a modest proportion at 4% but their visibility," Fadhil maintained, "goes well beyond that" (SA int.). Dadvar, on the other hand, while stressing that exact official numbers are not at hand, stated that the proportion of Muslims, as they have been told by Muslim organizations, should be around 2.5% (SA int.).

Religious Affiliation in 2013	Number	Percentage
Christian	44 602 155	84.2
Nothing in particular	2 916 049	5.5
Ancestral, tribal, animist or other African religions	2 626 015	5.0
Muslim	1 042 043	2.0
Unspecified	832 097	1.6
Hindu	529 471	1.0
Refused/Do not know	154 569	0.3
Atheist and agnostic	112 972	0.2
Jewish	101 544	0.2
Something else	48 084	0.1
Buddhist and Bahai	16 992	0.0
Total	52 981 990	100.0

G7: South Africa the number of observers for each religion. Source: Statistics South Africa 2014

The executive body of a Malay association in Cape Town voiced an approximate total of 4%, but with an exceedingly high volume of representation and visibility (Ghalib and others, int.). Ghalib explained the difference between the official numbers (just over 1 million) and unofficial numbers (between 2.5 million and 4 million) as follows:

What affects the Muslim communities' numbers is that we have an influx of Muslims from various places. From Malawi, Somalia, Nigeria in Africa and from the Arab world and other countries. They are not under the population register. That means the government does not have accurate figures. By their own fault, they don't recognize Muslim marriages. (Ghalib and others, int.)

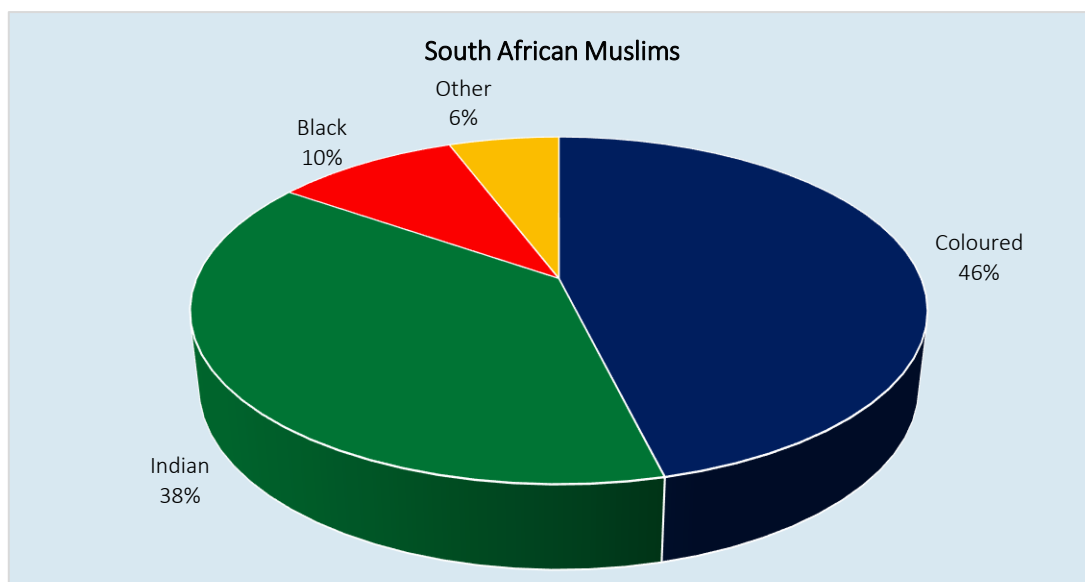
Resonating with this view, according to Khader, the CEO of a Muslim foundation, officially the proportion of Muslims is reported to be under 2% out of 55 million, but unofficially their number might be around 3 or 4 million (SA int.). In line with this, Miran, the head of a respected institution for Islamic education, stated that the number of South African Muslims is over 2 million, which estimates at around 4% of the country, adding that in the last 10 years, due to the constant influx of Muslims from

sub-Saharan African countries, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh into South Africa this number continues to rise(SA int.).

		Black African	Colored	Indian/Asian	White	Total
Census 2001	N	41 000 938	4 615 401	1 286 930	4 586 838	51 770 560
	%	79.19	8.91	2.48	8.85	
Community Survey 2016	N	44 891 603	4 869 526	1 375 834	4 516 691	55 653 654
	%	80.66	8.75	2.47	8.11	

G8: South Africa religious affiliation according to race groups. Source: Statistics South Africa, 2016 Community Survey Statistical Release 2016

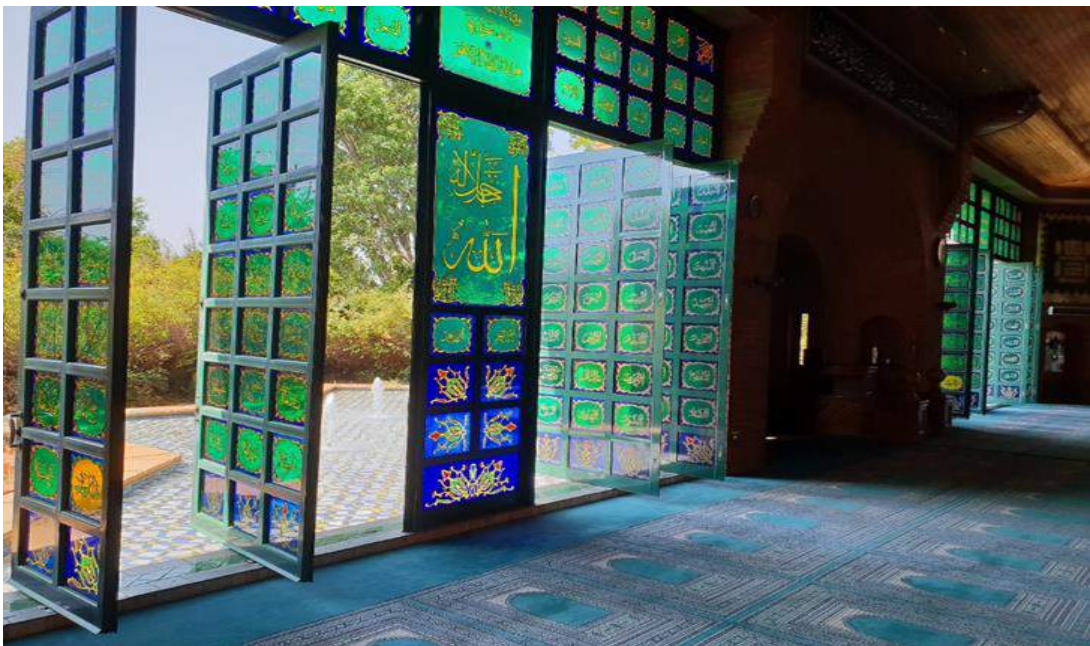
Aamil and Aadil, the president and vice-president of a Muslim foundation, maintained that their foundation runs a program called “New Muslims” where all activities and works focus on the introduction of Islam to non-Muslim Africans, and the aftercare of those who adopt Islam. The number of new Muslims that enjoy the facilities, services, and opportunities offered by their foundation’s New Muslim program alone, they reported, was around 5000 (SA int. with Aamil and Aadil). For them, statistics may be inaccurate, and in the case of the size of the Muslim community in South Africa, the figure might be just above 3%. “People turn to Islam and become Muslims every day. Our foundation is no older than 10 years and it is but one organization that focuses on *dawa* activism among many, and we alone have witnessed the journey of 5000 new Muslims” (Aadil, int.).



G9: South African Muslims’ racial breakdown, estimation based on the Household Survey 2013 figures and other relevant sources.

Given the varying accounts between official and unofficial numbers, the views of participants at the workshop and interviews, it could be deduced that an exact number and ethnic/national or racial breakdown of the South African Muslim community is difficult. Based on the knowledge that the percentage of Muslim Indians among the total Indian/Asian category is around 25-30% and the

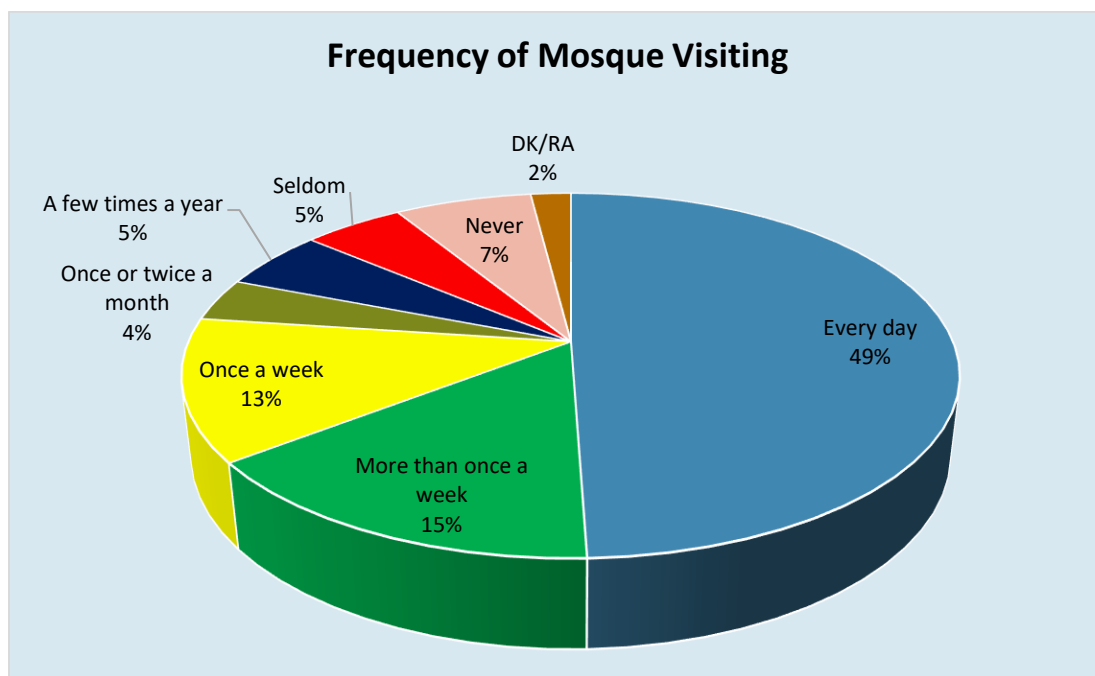
percentage of Colored Muslims, or Cape Malays is around 8-10% among Coloreds, it may be estimated that there are approximately 480,000 Colored Muslims and some 400,000 Indian Muslims in South Africa. To these, one should also add the population of another significant element of the South African Muslim sector which is the local or Black Muslims. According to Sitoto, an important scholar in the African Muslim community in South Africa, the number of African converts, or reverts, had increased from 9,048 to 74,701 by 2001 and made up 12% of Muslims in South Africa—indicating a fivefold increase from 2.5% in 1980 (2002: 44). Available literature and statistics indicate the total number of Black Muslims in South Africa to be around 84,000 in 2015. According to al-Tshatshu, this number could be extended to 100,000 as of 2018 (2018: np). To these figures, a small number of White and other Muslims could be added. When all added, the number of Muslims in South Africa could be estimated to be around 1.25 million, constituting approximately 2.5% of the total population.



F9: A beautiful mosque in Pretoria with glass panels opening to an outside fountain pool, the photo was taken by Servet Erdem during the field study

According to Khader, the number of mosques and *musallahs* in South Africa is around 1500, a figure that speaks for itself, the visibility and acceptance Islam that Muslims enjoy in this country (SA int.). Khader also reported that there are around 90 Islamic schools; all of which are funded privately. Islamic education and education centers established by Muslim communities appear from these findings as another face of Muslim success and integration. Fadhil, the director of a Muslim foundation, stated that the course materials they have designed sell more in the UK than they do in South Africa. He also noted the success of these books and syllabuses, which are also used in the United States, Canada, and other English speaking countries, have been translated into Thai and Spanish, and will be translated into Albanian (Fadhil int.). Such overseas influence, too, speaks volumes about how well established and strong the Muslim community in South Africa is.

Apart from being very visible and well represented, South African Muslims manifest a highly religious profile. In the South Africa Survey conducted during the field study, the question about the importance of religion revealed that a significant majority of respondents put a great importance on Islam in their lives with 93.7% stating that religion was “very important,” and only 0.6% saying that it was “unimportant” (SA Sur.). When asked, “On average, how often do you go to the mosque to pray?” more than 64.6% stated that they either went to the mosque “every day” (49.5%) or “more than once a week” (15.1%). A further 12.6% reported that they went to the mosque “once a week” for Friday prayer, while 3.8% responded with “once or twice a month” and 5.3% responded “a few times a year.” The percentage of those who answered “seldom” or “never” was notably low, at 5% and 6.8% respectively (SA Sur.).

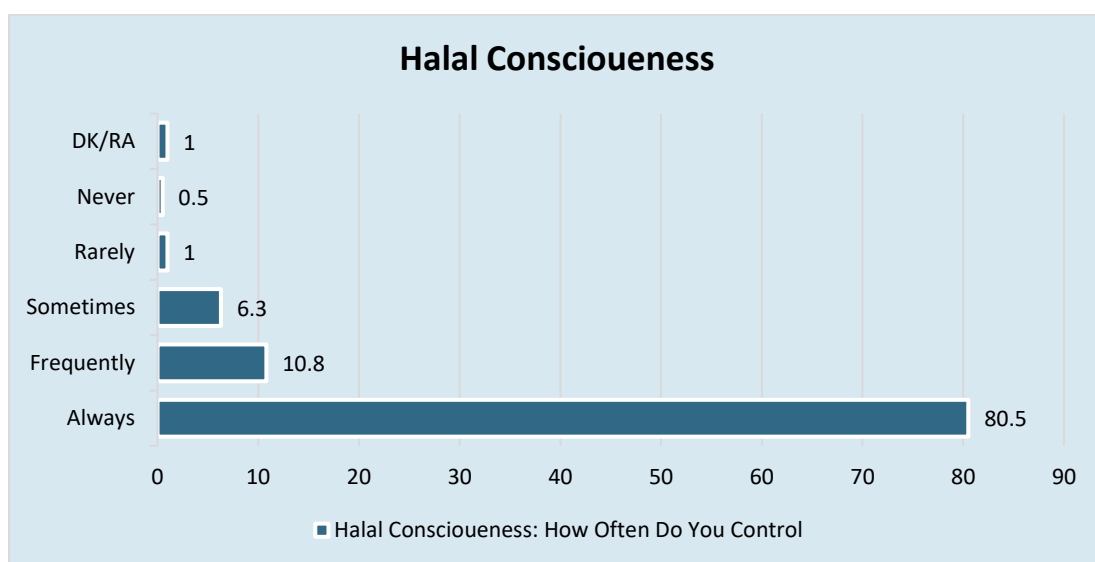


G10: South African Muslims' mosque visiting frequency, GMD SA Sur., 2018.

The survey also demonstrated a very high halal consciousness among South Africa's Muslims. The majority of respondents, 80.5%, reported that they “always” check that the food they purchase has a halal certificate. A further 10.8% said they “frequently” check for halal certification and 6.3% responded with “sometimes”. Only 0.5% stated that they “never” check for halal certification, and a 1% said they “rarely” looked (SA Sur.). When asked if they would continue to buy halal products if they were more expensive, 82.7% agreed with the statement “I am ready to buy halal food products even if they cost more” (SA Sur.). The percentage of those who would not buy overly priced halal food was notably low at 7.8% (SA Sur.).

The findings concerning halal consciousness, indeed, reflect the halal profile of South Africa. The provision and availability of halal products and services in South Africa is largely due to the efforts of

well-functioning and established Muslim organizations. Organizations that control the certification, and supervise and inspect the halal market are actively working on raising awareness about halal culture and promoting halal consumption. In fact, some groups and individuals have leveled criticism against those organizations that are actively promoting halal, claiming that their halal discourse reflects an Islamic version of “the moral grammar of capitalist consumer culture” rather than their commitment to the scriptural and theological principles of Islam (Varul 2008: 655). This discourse, according to some scholars, does not confirm and reassure the religious dietary necessities but rather serves to manipulate Muslim consumers. In short, a growing halal criticism accompanies existing halal consciousness in South Africa. The organizations and halal industry claim that they are advocating for and protecting Muslims dietary and religious rights and principles while many liberal and secular Muslims’ claim that the halal business is gaslighting committed believers into questioning their own food, producing what could be appropriately called *confirmed Muslims*.



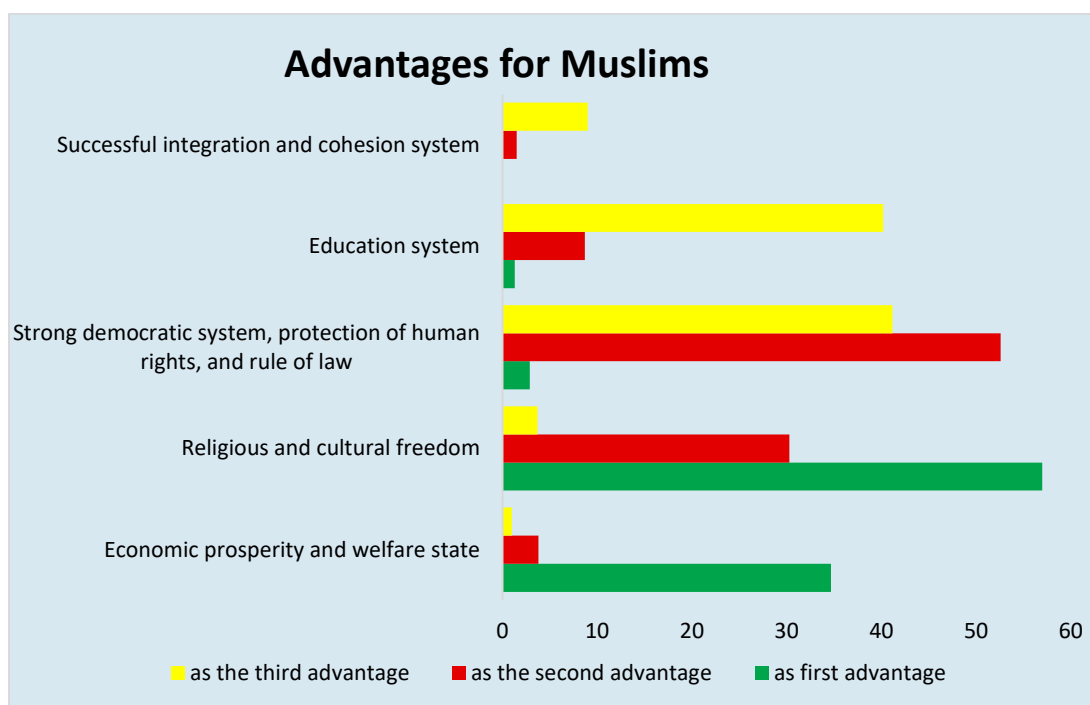
G11: South African Muslims’ halal consciousness. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

The main findings of the South Africa field study relating to the demographic profile of the Muslim community, then, could be pinpointed in four headings: (i) the South African Muslim sector continues to grow, mainly because of the continuing Muslim immigrant influx and the conversion of Africans in townships where Muslim organizations’ social activism through charity and relief work is appreciated and Islam’s emphasis on the integrity of lifestyle and social reform attracts particular attention. (ii) Largely because of these two factors, there is a discrepancy between the official and unofficial numbers of South African Muslims, and thus it is difficult to determine the exact number Muslims in the country. (iii) The visibility and representation of Muslims in South Africa, their public, social, and political significance, extends far beyond their sheer numeric size and proportion. Indeed, Muslims are visible everywhere and are well represented in South Africa. And (iv) South African Muslims are dedicated to their religion and exceptionally determinant in maintaining their Islamic identity and cultural and religious values.

3 Views on Migration and Integration

This chapter focuses on the topics of migration, integration, and the politico-legal context of South Africa in relation to its Muslim communities. In the scope of these issues, the chapter first discusses the Muslim perspective on the advantages and disadvantages that political and legal framework harbor for Muslim communities and individuals. This being done, the chapter attends to the subject of Muslim immigration and integration in the country. Here, the relations between the Muslim community and wider South African society and other non-African minority groups are also addressed. In the final part of the chapter, South African Muslims' perception of the concept of diaspora and the general attitude towards its employment for South African Muslims and other Muslim communities and minorities in non-OIC Member States are investigated.

During the fieldwork it was observed that South Africa offers one of the most emancipatory and accommodating contexts for Muslims. True, there are certain challenges such as the belated recognition of Muslim marriages and the adoption of Muslim Personal Law (MPL), but in general, unlike most European contexts where the legal and political rights and freedoms are mitigated and complicated in practice (and thus remained on the paper), in South Africa, religious rights and liberties are enjoyed by all groups equally.



G12: Advantages of South Africa according to South African Muslims. GMD SA Sur., 2018

This also found resonance in the South Africa Survey, (SA Sur.,) conducted during the field study. As shown above (G12), when asked to list the three main advantages that South Africa offers for Muslims, 57% of participants to the survey listed religious and cultural freedom as the first advantage while another 30.3% listed it as the second main advantage. Economic prosperity and the welfare state was listed as the first advantage by around 35% of the participants, although only around 5% listed this as the second or third choice. Around 52% listed the political and legal framework (strong democratic system, protection of human rights, and rule of law) as the second main advantage that South Africa offers for Muslims, while another 41% listed this as their third choice (SA sur.).

According to the majority of the participants to the workshop, South African Muslims have very good relations with the larger society, the government, and other non-Muslim minorities. More than half of the workshop participants stated that relations between Muslim communities and the larger society are either 'exceptionally good' or 'good'. A few reported that the larger society's knowledge of Islam and Muslims is limited and the legacy of Apartheid continues to affect inter-religious and communal relations. Based on the responses collected from the workshop relations between Muslim communities and the host society, other Muslim communities, and non-Muslim minorities in South Africa are still deeply influenced by the legacy of apartheid. The influences of the Apartheid on inter-communal relations and dialogue could be pinpointed with the following headings: (i) Inter-racial tension and socio-psychological segregation; (ii) socio-economic disparities and higher unemployment rates among certain racial groups; (iii) isolation, self-interest bias, communal nepotism, sectional loyalties, and the like; (iv) limited knowledge of the other, prejudices, and stereotypes; and (v) the illusion of peace and harmony in disengagement and dis-interaction.

According to Zahra, a female social activist, both the Apartheid and its after-effects are experienced differently in different regions and within different groups. The relations of Malay Muslims with their Christian neighbors and other groups are somewhat better when compared to the Indian Muslim community's relations with others. This is partly because the Apartheid operated in the North where Indian Muslims concentrated in a stricter manner than the South and Cape Town. Another point to take into account, according to Zahra, is that it is not so surprising that the Malay Muslims, as being a part of the Colored community, have better relations with Africans because they, too, were placed in the bottom of the Apartheid pyramid, only topping the Blacks (Zahra, work.). Despite these setbacks and problems, it could be argued that Muslims have managed to establish and maintain good relations with other non-Muslim groups and the larger society in South Africa and in this the role of the South African legal and political framework is immense.

One of the participants to the interviews, Miran, the head of an institution of Islamic education, of Indian background, summarized the legal and political context *vis-à-vis* Muslims as accommodating, supportive, and protective towards religious rights and expressions (SA int.). He believes, in as far as practicing the religion, South African Muslims have always had that freedom, even during the Apartheid regime. Within their own community, Muslims were free to practice; and when the regime was dismantled in 1994, they started to enjoy an even more encompassing freedom of religion. "Restrictions on practicing one's religion has never been a problem in this part of the world," he stated, "on condition that one does become involved in anything that is against the state and the law" (Miran,

int.). Still, there are some difficulties and problems Muslims encounter particularly in the registration processes, as happens when Muslims apply to register their educational institutions. This, however, as Miran highlights, is a technical problem rather than a difficulty or structural adversity caused by an exclusivist legal and political framework (Miran, int.).

Candan, a female Muslim attorney of Turkish-Malay-Indian background, stated that South Africa ensures and guarantees freedom of religion in the bill of rights. Thus, practicing religion and manifesting religious identity is protected by the constitutional law. This, however, does not mean that the legal and political framework is completely free of challenges, limitations, and complications. For instance, as Candan pointed, in certain areas in Cape Town the *adhan* is not allowed because of complaints about the noise. Apart from such limitations, Muslims cherish all religious and cultural liberties and rights. According to Candan, Muslims owe such advantages and privileges to the hard work and dedication of certain historical and religious leaders such as Tuan Guru and Abu Bakr Effendi (SA int.). The same point was raised by Khader, as well. In Johannesburg, since the *adhan* is not permitted, Muslims have developed a system of loudspeakers installed in their homes. Thus the *adhan* is called within the Muslim household simultaneously without causing any “noise” or “distress” to non-Muslims (Khader int.).

Compared to other non-OIC Member States, Muslims benefit from better organizational rights and freedoms in South Africa. The funding of Muslim organizations and foundations largely comes from the community and donations; very few organizations have income generating mechanisms and assets. Muslim organizations and foundations, like many others, are non-governmental trusts and are registered with the state as non-profit organizations, so they and their donors benefit from tax deductions and exemption (Khader int.). In South Africa, the law does not require religious groups and organizations to register; however, once registered, such groups and non-profit organizations can qualify as public benefit organizations (PBOs), which allows them to open bank accounts and exempts them from paying income tax (SAIRFR 2016). An important feature of Muslim organizations in South Africa is their multi-centered and multi-faceted character. In addition to relief and counseling services, most of them also involve themselves in, or offer, social conflict resolution services, Islamic education and Arabic courses, Muslim mediation and arbitration counseling, *hajj* and cemetery services, media outlets, and the like. As Ghalib, the president of a Muslim council stated, Muslim organizations are in very close touch with their respective communities; from the cradle to the grave (SA int.). In the maintenance of this close touch, as many have indicated, the truly transformative and emancipatory framework that South Africa offers to Muslim organizations and individuals should be noted.

Khader, a Muslim CEO of Indian origin, described South Africa as the most ideal country to lead an Islamic life. The rights and freedoms of Muslims, according to him, are recognized and accommodated in the political and legal framework. Thus, in terms of religious, educational, cultural, linguistic, and organizational rights Muslims enjoy and benefit from equal rights and liberties defined in and protected by the law. In the protection and maintenance of these rights Muslim awareness, activism, and conservation is also effective. Muslim communities are strong and vocal. They do not allow or accommodate any violation of religious and cultural rights, they are able to raise a unified voice when such violation happens, as seen when a mosque in Port Elizabeth was intended to be demolished for

highway construction. The demolition was objected to and prevented. Similarly, when, in a recent incident, a school banned the wearing of the *hijab* among female students, Islamic groups managed to channel sufficient pressure to have the case dropped in their favor (Khader int.).



F10: The campus of a very well-established Islamic education center, photo taken during the field study by Servet Erdem

According to the executive board of a Muslim council of Malay the community [including Ghalib (the president), Zain (the second deputy president), Vedad (the secretary general), and Taher (the former president)], based on their observations both inside (via the testimonies of international Muslims guests they hosted in South Africa) and outside (via their own observations overseas), the level of religious freedom South African Muslims enjoy is unmatched, “it is a model to behold” (Ghalib and others, int.). “The Muslim community in South Africa is one of the most vibrant Muslim communities in the world, with a very well recognized international portfolio” (Ghalib and others, int.). The board, Ghalib and others, attributed the success of this model to the activism and involvement of South African Muslims; past and present and socially, economically, and politically.

According to many participants, Muslims enjoy these rights and liberties thanks to (i) the hard work and dedication of early Muslim leaders in the country, (ii) the contribution of Muslims to the country and its economy, and (iii) Muslims’ social and political involvement. The volume of South African Muslims’ output goes beyond their modest numeric size and ratio (Ghalib and others int.). The South African governments and the state are aware of this and thus give Islam the same respect as other faiths. As the members of the board of a very important Muslim counsel stated, “the encouragement brings further involvement, activism, contribution, and output, and vice versa” (Ghalib and others, int.). According to the members of the board, the Muslim community and organizations are involved and will remain so, and not only in the matters that engage their specific attention but in the matters that interest and affect the society in general (Ghalib and others, int.). At this point, the members reported

many cases, *e.g.*, their negotiations with gangsters and drug dealers to address the issue of crime, in which the community has shown its countrywide and extensive social involvement and activism.

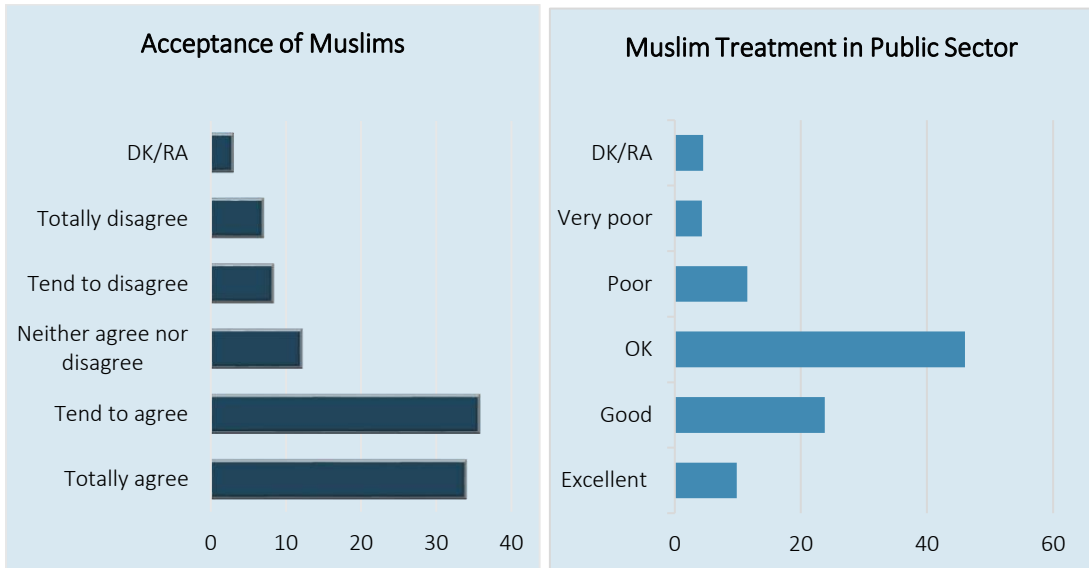
The ideal level of inclusivity of the South African politico-legal framework also makes it easier for Muslims to integrate. Salib noted that the laws allow and accommodate all religions, including Islam, in South Africa and this outlook makes it easier for communities to integrate. He added: “We have a harmonious coexistence with the South African society and the government. The legal and political framework is exceptionally inclusive and egalitarian *vis-à-vis* religions. Religious rights are enshrined in the Constitution, and the Constitution grants us considerable latitude to practice our religion” (Salib and others, int.).

Candan, a female Muslim attorney and human right activist, noted that the Muslim communities and minorities are very well integrated into the society and the majority of Africans are accustomed to their presence. African people have grown up with Muslims and most of them are already familiar with Islam, Muslims, and their culture. Although certain segments of the society, has no engagement with Muslims and are influenced by the global vibe of anti-Muslim sentiments and Islamophobia, the majority in South Africa has not credited this vibe and its public expressions as such (Candan int.). Fadhil stressed an important point in connection with this, that the legal and political framework operates in an effective way and this is why Islamophobia has not found any solid ground in South Africa (Fadhil, int.).

According to Ghalib, the president of a Muslim council in Cape Town, the Muslim communities’ achievement in high representation and visibility in politics and economy in South Africa is also owed to their successful and participant integration. “Islam is strong in South Africa because of this integration” (Ghalib and others, int.). In the attainment and maintenance of this integration and integrative outlook, according to many participants, once again, the role of Islamic education, the founding fathers who were the first Islamic instructors and leaders, such as Tuan Guru and Abu Bakr Effendi, is of great importance. During the fieldwork, it was, indeed, observed that Muslim imams and instructors put a great emphasis on the essentiality of integration and coexistence in their public speeches and *khutbas*. Dadvar, an imam and *maulana*, an instructor of Islamic teaching, of Indian and Malay origin stated that as imams it is their duty to consolidate inter-communal relationship and dialogue; and that is what he has been doing in the Friday *khutbas* and lectures (Dadvar int.).

This positive outlook towards the legal and political context, the religious and cultural rights and freedoms offered by South Africa and Muslim integration resonated in the SA Sur., as well. Accordingly, the participants were asked to grade treatment of members of the Muslim Community in the public sector South Africa (police, health system, judiciary, *etc.*), and 23.8% responded “good” while the majority, 46% stated that Muslims were treated “OK”. In the opinion of 9.8%, Muslim treatment in the public sector was “excellent.” Overall, it could be claimed that just below 80% of Muslims in South Africa found the treatment of Muslim community in public sector acceptable while only around 15% found the treatment poor (SA Sur.).

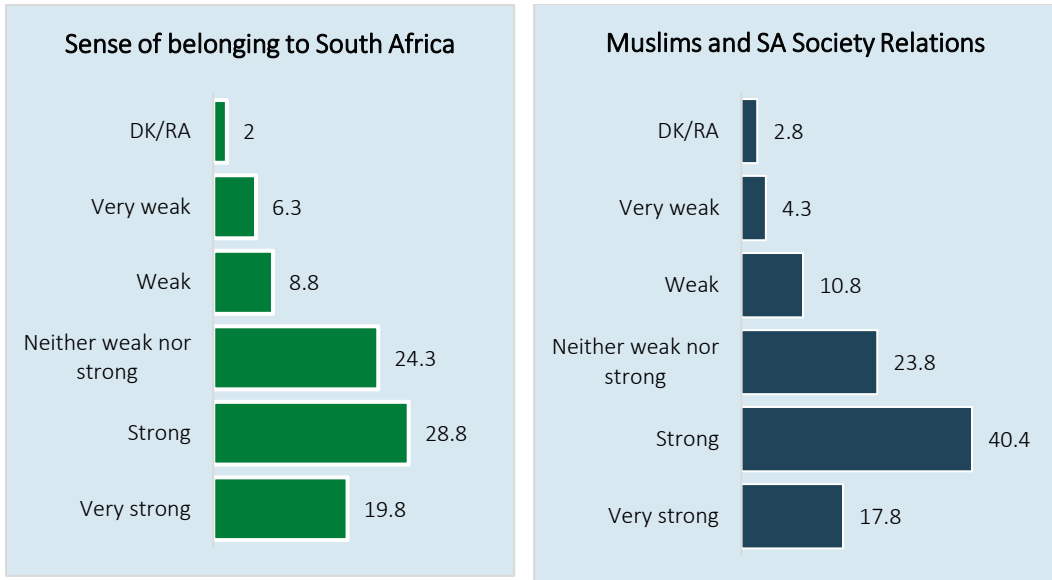
Similar responses were observed when asked “Do you agree with the statement that the members of the Muslim Community are accepted and treated as equal citizens with their own values and norms in South Africa?”. The majority of respondents, just below 70%, stated that they either “totally agree” (33.9%) or “tend to agree” (35.7%). While 12.1% remained neutral, a total of 12.3% said they “tend to disagree” (8.3%) or “totally disagree” (7%) (SA Sur.).



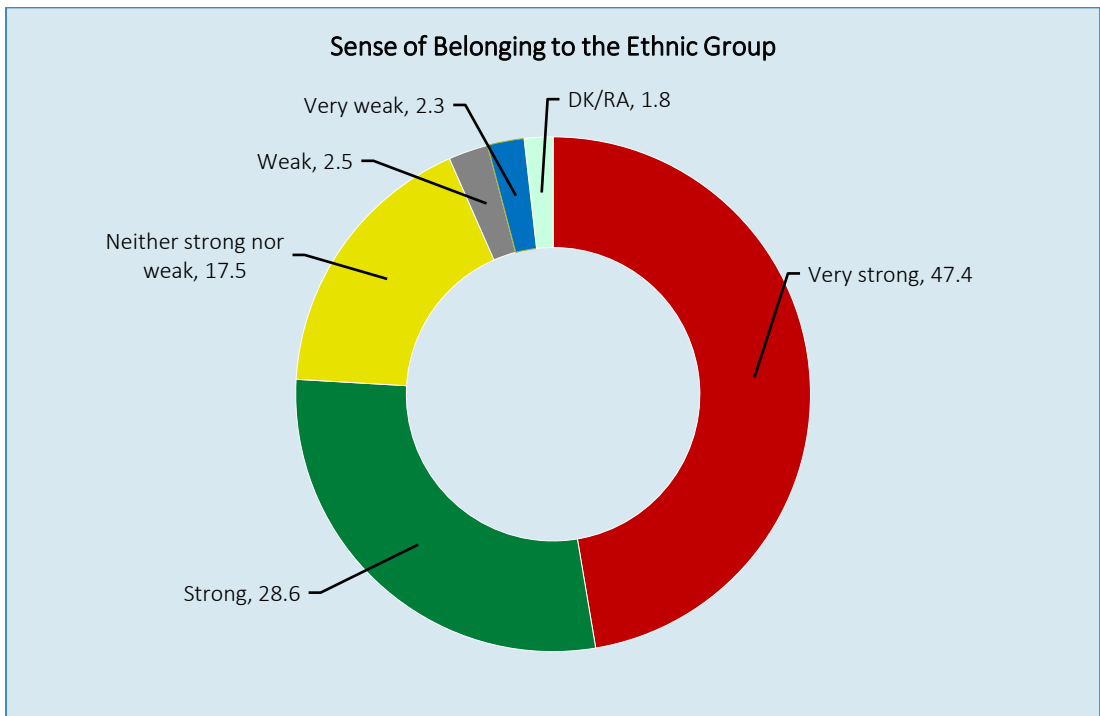
G13 and G14: Acceptance of Muslims and the public sector’s Muslim treatment in South Africa. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

The findings of the question “Would you advise another Muslim to immigrate to and live in this country,” were very similar, supporting the view that South African Muslims were, in general, satisfied with their country. Accordingly, more than 65% would advise another Muslim to immigrate to South Africa. Only 18.4% said they would not while 14.6% said they neither would nor would not (SA Sur.).

The responses to the questions on the Muslim community’s sense of belonging and the level of Muslim adaptation to the country and its customs also confirmed the findings of previous questions that tested Muslims’ general content with the country. Accordingly, when asked to describe their sense of belonging South Africa society, South African Muslims responded to having either a “very strong” or a “strong” sense of belonging, 19.8% and 38.8%, respectively. In comparison, the proportion of those who had either “weak” or “very weak” sense of belonging was observed to be significantly low at 8.8% and 6.3%, respectively. Another 24.3% reported to foster a “neither weak nor strong” sense of belonging to South African society (SA Sur.). When asked about the strength of relations between Muslims and South African society at large, 17.8% responded “very strong” while a majority of 40.4% described the relations as “strong”. A total of 23.8% adopted a neutral approach and gave the answer “neither weak nor strong,” while around 15% said that relations were either “weak” (1.8%) or “very weak” (4.3%) (SA Sur.).



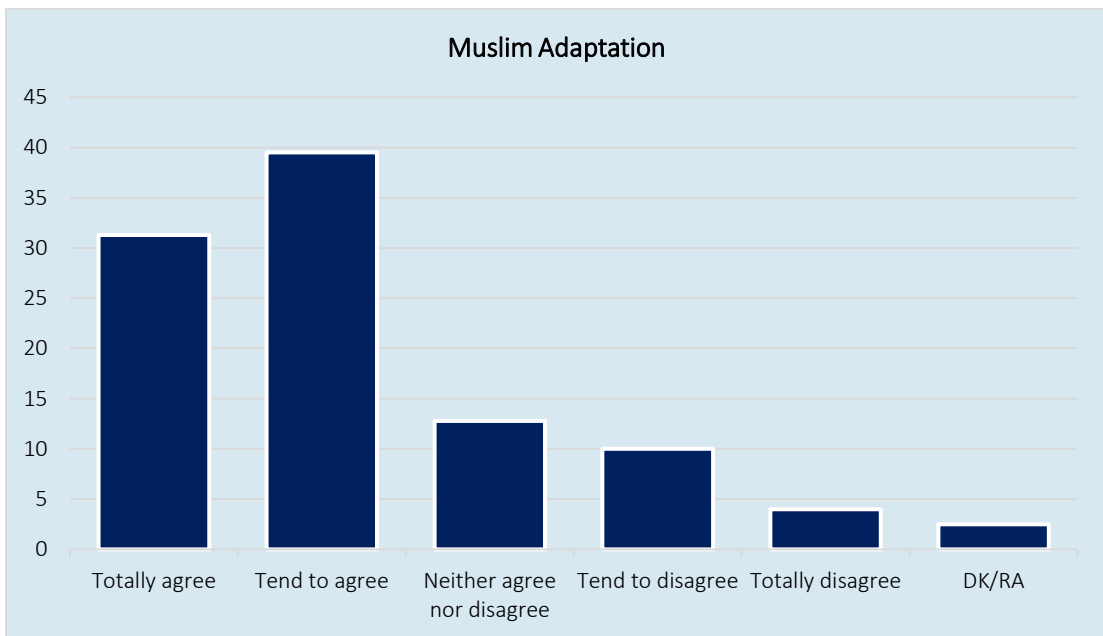
G15 and G16: Muslims' sense of belonging to South Africa and their relations with South African society. GMD SA Sur., 2018.



G17: South African Muslims' ethnonational sense of belonging. GMD SA Sur., 2018

One interesting finding of the survey was the strong ethnonational sense of belonging observed among respondents. When asked “How would you describe your sense of belonging to your ethnic group?” 75.9% of participants responded with either “very strong” (47.4%) or “strong” (28.6%). The percentage of those who said they had a “neither strong nor weak” sense of belonging to their ethnic group stood at 17.5% while of those who reported to have a “weak” or “very weak” sense of belonging remained significantly low at 2.5% and 2.3%, respectively. A remaining 1.8% either refused to answer or said they did not know. Based on the findings to the questions concerning the sense of belonging, it could be argued that South African Muslims have developed a strong sense of belonging to both South Africa and its society. At the same time, however, they continue to foster an equally strong sense of belonging to their own ethnic group, which points to a dual-attachment, loyalty, and identity.

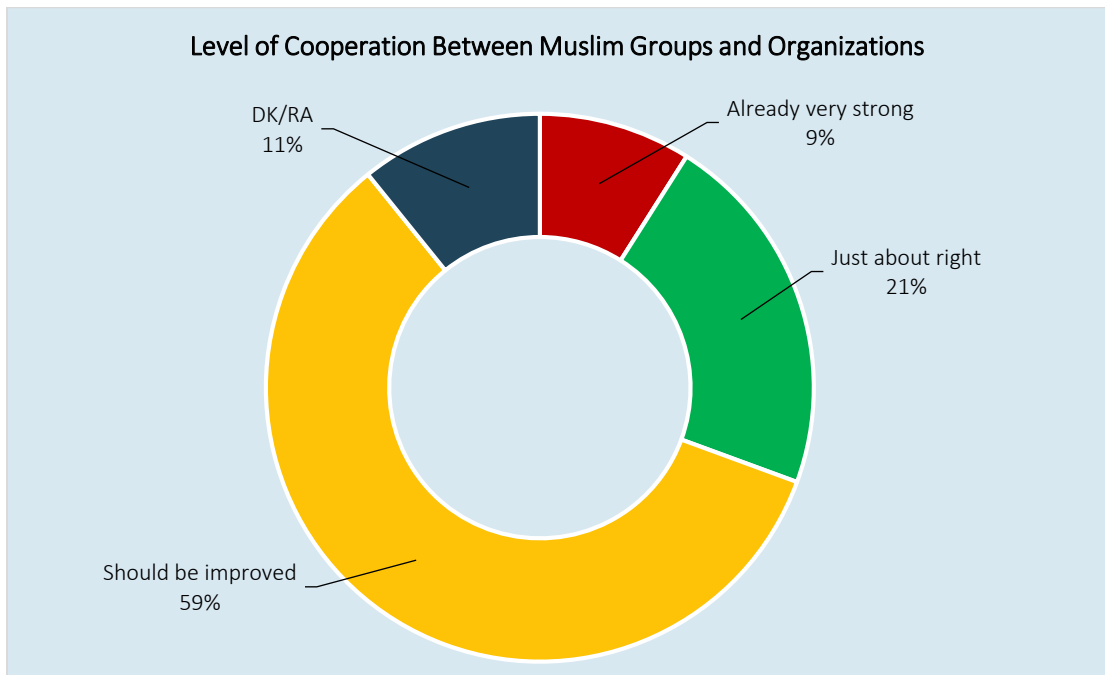
A further question that looked to determine South African Muslims’ level of social integration and cohesion revealed similar attitudes. When asked “Would you agree with the statement that most Muslims in this country have successfully adapted themselves to the customs and way of life here,” over 70% stated that they totally agree or tend to agree (31.3% totally agree and 39.5% tend to agree), with only 14% responded negatively (10% tend to disagree and 4% totally disagree). Another 12.8% remained neutral, saying that they would neither agree nor disagree with the statement (SA Sur.).



G18: South African Muslims’ self-assessment of adaptation. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

According to many respondents, however, relations and cooperation between Muslim organizations and official authorities and institutions still needed to be improved. When asked “How would you describe the level of cooperation between Muslim organizations and the state institutions in South Africa?” the majority (55.3%) stated that relations “should be improved.” The number of those who said the relations between Muslim organizations and South African state institutions were “just about

right” was also high at 28.1%. A total of 11.3% opted to not answer or stated that they had no idea while 5% claimed that relations are “very strong” (SA Sur.).



G19: Level of cooperation between South African Muslim organizations and groups. GMD SA Sur., 2018

Despite all the advantages and the positive outlook demonstrated during the field study and in the findings of the survey, the South African legal and political context is not entirely free of challenges. To summarize these, the first challenge relates to Islamic marriages, a long-standing negotiation between the state authorities and Muslim organizations. Eldar, one of the directors of a state institution in Cape Town, maintained that a major difficulty that South African Muslims face is that the Muslim marriages are still not officially recognized, which causes many problems in terms of inheritance and child registration (SA int.). Dadvar noted that although MPL has not been recognized in an official capacity yet, on an informal basis Muslims have been taking guidance and advice in issues concerning religious legislation, personal and marital issues for decades. Thus, in practice, MPL works, but it is advisory and not legally binding (Dadvar int.).

The problem lies in the lack of recognition of MPL by the state. Despite its unrecognized status, MPL is “accommodated through the constitutional protection of a free civil society and has been administered by Muslim community institutions” (Dangor 1992: 377). Muslims face major difficulties in the following matters as a result of conflicts between provisions of South African Law and Muslim Personal Law: (i) *al-zawaj* (marriage), (ii) *talaq* (divorce), (iii) *nafaqah* (maintenance), (iv) *al-tabanni* (adoption), and (v) *mirath* (succession). In the past, when the South African Law Commission offered to recognize MPL in 1987. The offer, however, received mixed responses from the Muslim communities and organizations, with a sector of Muslims lobbying in favor of the recognition and another sector viewing it as an attempt to ‘coopt’ Muslims, and thus opposed it (cited from al-Qalam in Dangor 1992: 377).

The difficulty is partly a result of inner-communal contestation and dispute. MPL is a contested issue among Muslims because not all groups, particularly the traditionalist and patriarchist Muslims and Muslim organizations are unhappy that way they perceive to be their God-given right is being interfered with by man-made laws. Feminist, liberal, leftist, or secular Muslims, on the other hand, favor its recognition and adoption because of its commitment to gender equality. Favoring the South African legal system, Candan, a female attorney, noted that there is a plural legal system in South Africa. The customary law happens alongside civil law in this system. Thus, many Muslims get married in terms of Islamic law and that is recognized as a marriage. They do not have to be married in terms of civil law. The challenge, however, rises when they get a divorce: Islamic law says your marriage is out of commonality of property; civil law, on the other hands, dictates the commonality of property and resources acquired through marriage (Candan int.).

To summarize, this discord, with two opposing approaches of denunciation and support, in the recognition of Muslim Personal Law as part of the South African legal system, remains prevalent to this day. The first group denunciate a separate law and set of rights for Muslims, arguing that “the constitutional guarantee of individual rights and the right to free association accord sufficient protection to minority groups.” According to this group, a uniform civil code should not grant any rights and distinctions to any race, ethnicity, or religious affiliation (cited from Cachalia in Dangor 1992: 377-79). The second group, on the other hand, support the offer arguing that their God-given rights should be recognized, and not challenged or opposed by man-made law. According to Cachalia MPL could be recognized in one of three ways: (i) *Legal Unity*, with the law being uniform, MPL would be administered autonomously; (ii) *Legal Integration*: with the integration of separate religio-cultural principles into the legal system, MPL would be available to all South Africans, not only Muslims; (iii) *Legal Pluralism*: with formal incorporation of different personal law systems within a single jurisdiction, MPL would also be allowed” (Dangor 1992: 377-79).

Another topic that was discussed during the field study was the South African Muslim outlook on the concept of diaspora and their self-perception in the center of the concept. Is it possible to discuss Muslim communities and minorities living in non-OIC Member States within the framework of diaspora? Theoretically and conceptually, is it possible to speak about a Muslim diaspora? What does it mean to be a member of a Global Muslim Diaspora? Or, does it not exist, even if it conceptually can? Furthermore, what are the social, psychological, cultural, and political factors that prevent different migrant and diasporic Muslim communities from forming a global Muslim diaspora as a part of the global *ummah*? As a means to starting a conversation centered around these questions, all individuals and groups interviewed, workshop participants, and survey respondents were asked whether they had ever heard of such a concept; what they thought about it; whether they identify themselves as a member of a Muslim diaspora; and if not, why not?

Accordingly, a marginal majority of the participants to the interviews favored the employment of the concept when discussing the Muslim communities in South Africa with similar non-Muslim majority contexts. The attitudes and reasons for them can be categorized as follows: (i) Yes, it is appropriate to adopt the concept because (a) Muslims are dispersed around the world for different reasons but they have similar ideals and values; and face similar challenges and have similar needs, (b) Muslim identity

and Islam are stigmatized and attacked in many non-OIC Member States and this pushes them towards developing a reactive diasporic consciousness. (ii) No, the employment of the concept relating to the presence and situation of Muslims in South Africa and beyond is not appropriate because (a) Muslims harbor many differences (sectional, sectarian, ethnic, national, racial, and cultural), (b) Muslims are integrated within a particular country and have adapted to the politico-legal, cultural, and social systems of the country in which they live; thus they do not maintain a distinctive diasporic identity.

For Dadvar, South African Muslims constitute a diasporic community that makes them a member of a global Muslim diaspora along with the Muslim communities and minorities in countries such as Canada, Italy, or Japan. Fadhil, too, took a similar stand and spoke very much in favor of the use of the concept. According to him, as a well-established Muslim organization, they have been invited to many other non-OIC Member States such as the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. In such transnational platforms where Muslim minority communities exchange their knowledge and experiences regarding the establishment of an Islamic life and presence, it is easy to observe the emergence of a global diasporic community. Muslims have similar problems and needs and they all try to protect and maintain their Islamic identity and values. The reason that South African organizations are invited to speak in such platforms, as Fadhil stresses, is because of their remarkable success in establishing strong infrastructures, institutions, and organizations for Islam in a non-Muslim context (SA int.). The reasons for leaving a particular country may be different, but the needs are similar, thus “it is a diaspora of people with similar needs” (Fadhil int.).

Miran, too, took a similar stance on the employment of the concept of diaspora, stating that there definitely is a Muslim diaspora in both South Africa and the world. “In order to make this diaspora a stronger and more efficient one,” he suggested, “Muslims need to come closer and learn about each other. Our main differences are coming from our different cultures so we need to introduce our culture to one another. That is the way forward” (Miran, int.). He maintained that Muslims share the same ideals and values, have similar needs, and are all blessed with a beautiful quality that is their *dinn* (Miran, int.).

As expected because of the complexity, historical connotations, and decidedly political nature of the concept, a wide variety of responses were elicited during the workshop, as well. Overall, about 50% of the participants to the workshop in South Africa expressed that the concept did not apply to their situation, although they believed that a Muslim diaspora existed. In other words, while acknowledging the relevance of the concept of diaspora for Muslim communities and minorities living across Europe and the USA, and other countries such as Australia and Canada, many thought that South African Muslims have no home but South Africa and thus they did not constitute a diaspora. Of those who participated in the workshop, nine participants responded in favor of the employment of the concept, suggesting that (i) it is an ideological one rather than a physical one; (ii) in a religious and cultural sense, it is a diaspora but not in a political sense; and, (iii) for certain communities, it does exist (as for some Indian groups who are still attached to the home country) but not for all. While three respondents remained neutral or stated that in the present state of affairs it is not possible to speak of such political set-up but it might be possible in the future.

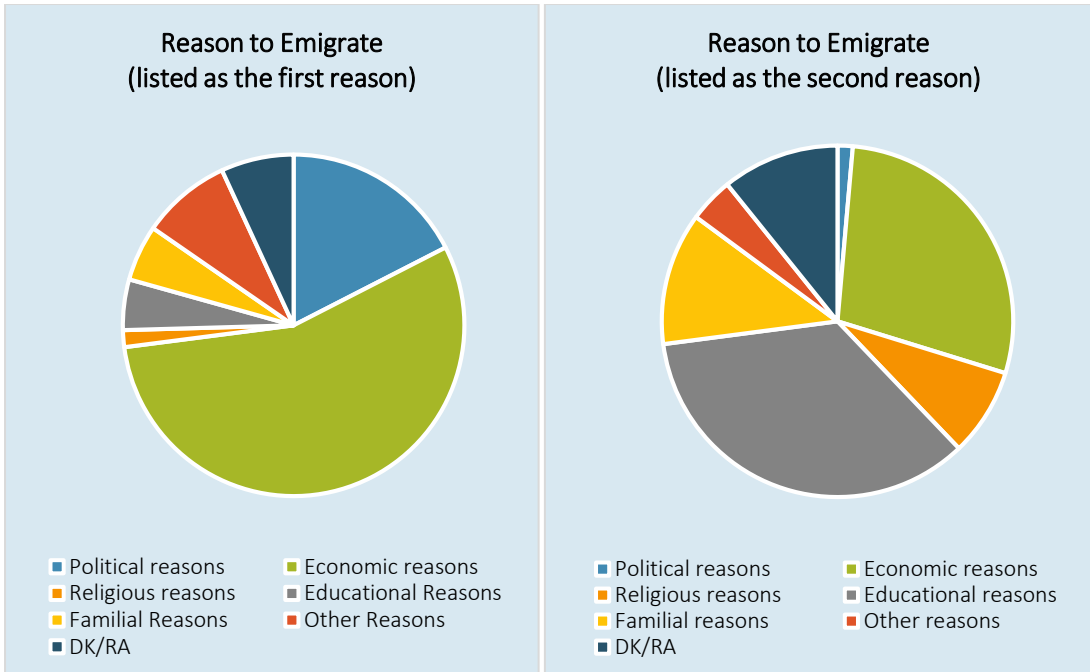
The remain eight participants disapproved of the use of the concept for South African Muslims basing their objections on the following: (i) the historical presence of Muslims in the country and the fact that the majority of them neither have any relationship with nor any sense of belonging to another country; (ii) the negative connotations of the concept of diaspora, such as being hosted only temporarily, having another home or dual sense of loyalty, being migrants or refugees, and the like; (iii) the super-diversity of the Muslim communities (SA work.).

A Muslim researcher and a social activist who participated in the workshop, Munir and Bakir, for instance, maintained that they found the terminology very problematic. One of them argued: “I don’t regard myself as belonging to any other place. I don’t regard South African society as my host society. I am a part of it. And I don’t regard my origin society anywhere other than here. So, while this kind of terminology might work, perhaps, in the UK or wherever else, I think it is a big problem in South Africa. There is no Muslim diaspora here” (Munir, work.).

Sirat, another participant to the workshop, who lived in the USA for some time, disagreed with Munir and Bakir, arguing that although Munir and Bakir had raised pertinent points it was essential to start to talk about the situation of Muslims in non-OIC Member States within the scope of diaspora. He argued that “maybe in the South African context it may not be as severe but the Muslim world as a whole would need that kind of a discussion.” According to him, with the stereotyping and the general push towards Islamophobia, South African Muslims, too, do find themselves in a situation where they might find some challenges, and these challenges are very similar to those experienced by diasporic Muslim communities elsewhere (Sirat, work.).

This attitude dominated the outlook of the participants to the South Africa Survey, as well. When asked, “Do you believe there is a Muslim diaspora in South Africa?” the majority, 61.9%, responded in the affirmative while 14.5% responded “No” and 23.6% said they did not know (SA Sur.). Similarly, a majority of the respondents voiced a global consciousness towards the *ummah* with 68.3% saying that they felt a strong bond with other Muslims around the world and 16.1% saying that they only felt that way about Muslims in some countries. At the same time 12.3% of respondents stated that they felt no such bond (SA Sur.). In line with this, 78.4% said that they felt a strong responsibility to support other Muslims around the world, 13.3% said they felt a responsibility to support people from some Muslim countries, and 5.3% said they did not feel a strong responsibility to support other Muslims around the world (SA Sur.).

According to many participants, what makes Muslim communities diasporic is not the reason for leaving their countries of origin but the life, community, and Islamic identity that they have established in South Africa. With respect to the reasons for migration to South Africa and emigrating from their country of origin, Muslims demonstrate a broad variety. When asked about their reasons for emigrating from their country of origin, over 60% of Muslims in Johannesburg voiced either economic or educational reasons. While more than 23% stated political reasons, while 20% stated they left their country for reasons related to family (SA sur.).



G20 and G21: South African Muslims’ reasons for emigrating from their countries of origin. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

When participants in Johannesburg were asked if they encountered any problem during and following their migration, around 37% responded “yes” while 51.2% stated that they faced no such problem. As a follow-up question, those who answered “yes,” were asked to state three major problems they faced during and after migrating to South Africa. Accordingly, more than 55% experienced some problems due to cultural reasons or reasons concerning the lifestyle. The problems most frequently noted, however, were financial and communicational or language related ones, both listed by over 65% of participants (named as either the first, second, or the third problem). Political and religious problems, on the other hand, were listed far less, only 25% and 13.3% respectively (SA sur.).



F11: The library of an Islamic education center in South Africa, photo taken during the field study by Servet Erdem

To sum up, one undisputed point of agreement among the participants of interviews, the workshop, and the survey is that South Africa has an ideal legal and political framework that accommodates and protects the religious rights and freedoms of all

faiths. There was no “but” on this subject as has appeared often in other non-Muslim majority contexts with similar liberal, inclusive, and accommodating frameworks. Constitutional protection and a guarantee of the high level of political, social, cultural, educational, linguistic, and religious rights in South Africa appear to be not complicated or challenged by the practice either, as seen in many other contexts.

In terms of religious, political, cultural, educational, and organizational rights and freedoms six principle issues of concern have been voiced during the workshop and interviews. These, however, should not be understood as the concerns and challenges caused by the legal and political framework but rather as issues that call for further and deeper consideration. Firstly, without socio-economic emancipation and equality no one is entirely free. Thus, Muslim individuals and organizations need to be more dedicated and determined in eradicating inequalities and consolidating social justice. Second, in order to continue to enjoy those rights and freedoms Muslims need to work more to introduce Islam to others, and develop effective mechanisms to fight against unfavorable representations, stereotypes, and misconceptions. Third, that Muslims have to renovate Islamic education, balance secular and religious education, and give weight to improving higher educational attainment (especially graduate and post-graduate degrees) for both genders. Fourth, that Muslim organizations and community leaders should address the increasing level of intra- and inter-communal tensions, sectarian divisions, and sectional loyalties and develop a truly egalitarian and inclusionist structure with both established and emerging communities. Fifth, that what was needed was an proactive role in the law propositions, legislations, and regulations that will affect both Muslims and society at large, as in the matter of Muslim Personal Law. Finally, that Muslim individuals should be encouraged to be more politically involved since widespread apathy among Muslims towards politics has caused a decline in the political representation and visibility of Muslims, and that this decline may lead to the loss of rights and freedoms.

Overall, it can be stated that the South African Muslim sector is in general content with their country and its political and legal framework. They have established a recognized and respected Muslim presence in South Africa and despite facing certain challenges continue enjoying the rights and liberties that they have earned and been granted. The felicitous remarks of one of the young respondents seem appropriate to close this chapter:

Muslim people always fought for their rightful place in this country, never allowed any government or regime to dictate to them how to practice their religion, or how they should live as Muslims. Under the Constitutional dispensation, Muslims have definitely entrenched that. People of other faiths are very respectful towards Muslims. There are mosques everywhere and this speaks a lot about the South African context and Muslims’ legal standing in South African society. (Pamir, int.)

4 Perceptions on Socio-Economic Status

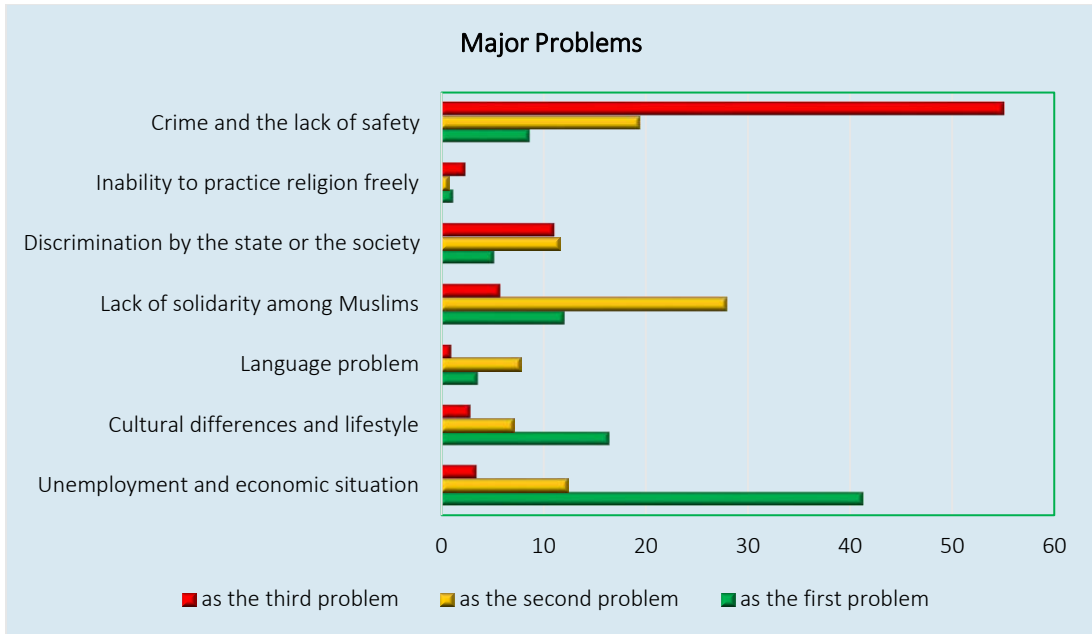
This chapter provides a brief overview of the socio-economic profile of South Africa specific to the Muslim communities. Towards this end, an introduction of the socio-economic profile of South African Muslims, the main occupations that tend to be favored by Muslim individuals and communities in the workplace, the Muslim contribution to the South African economy, and the main socio-economic challenges faced by South Africans and Muslims are discussed. Since education presents one of the key areas that is not only greatly opened to socio-economic influences but also influences socio-economic status through upward social mobility and the consolidation of disparities, this chapter also discusses the educational profile of Muslims in South Africa.

Undoubtedly, the most pressing issue and the greatest challenge for both Muslims and non-Muslims, with the exception of a majority of the White and Indian communities, in South Africa is increasing unemployment and worsening socio-economic disparities. In 2010, of the 24.4 million Africans of working-age (15–64 years) only around half of them, 12.5 million, were considered to be active economically, and among them 29.7% were listed as unemployed. Even more alarming, however, is that the remaining 11.9 million working-age Africans were defined as “not economically active (Clark and Worger 2013: 127). The unemployment rate stood at 21.8% for Coloreds, 9.2% for Asians, and 6.1% for Whites in the same year. The difference, as Clark and Worger emphasized, reflects “the racial stratification left by apartheid”. This sees “half of the African households still exist at or below the poverty line, and Africans, though 80 per cent of the population, constitute 93.3 per cent of the poor compared with the 0.1 per cent of whites comprising South Africa’s ‘poor individuals’” (Clark and Worger 2013:127).

According to a report published on 31 July 2018 by Statistics South Africa, the official unemployment rate reached 27.2% in the second quarter and 27.5% in the third quarter of 2018 (STATS SA, 2018). The unemployment rate in South Africa averaged 25.60 % between 2000 and 2018, and peaked at the highest rate of 31.20% in the 2003’s first quarter and saw a record low of 21.50% in the fourth quarter of 2008.¹¹

Many of the participants of the workshop and interviews voiced the problems brought on by socio-economic disparities and unemployment. In the findings of the survey, too, both the problem and its accompanying effects and outcomes were manifested. When asked to name three major problems Muslims have in South Africa, more than 41% listed unemployment and the economic environment as the first problem while almost 28% named the lack of solidarity among Muslims as the second problem. Crime and safety concerns were listed as the third problem by more than 51%, and by another 19.4% as the second, making it the most frequently listed issue.

¹¹ See <https://tradingeconomics.com/south-africa/unemployment-rate>



G22: Three major problems listed by South African Muslims. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

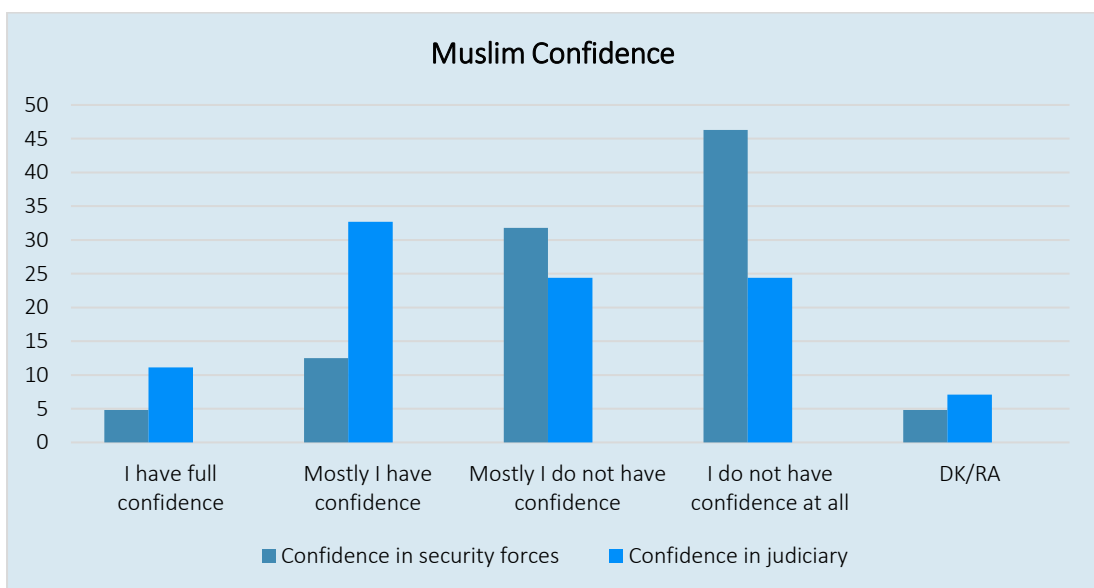
Unemployment rates reach overwhelming levels in city centers where the situation is only exacerbated by worryingly high levels of crime and violence. Indeed, the increasing influx of Africans into the urban area has resulted in a pressing demand and shortage of housing and employment (reaching as high as 40% in Johannesburg) and accounted for by many as the primary contributor to the high crime rate. The situation is worsened by a ready supply of guns inherited from Apartheid and the importation of weapons from former conflict zones of Sub-Saharan Africa, such as Angola and Mozambique (Clark and Worger 2013: 129). Although, Clark and Worger argue that overall crime and violence rate has been declining in post-Apartheid South Africa, as the attention of the police forces is no longer heavily concentrated on protection of whites but society in general (2013: 129).

Despite a slow general decline in violence, unemployment-driven xenophobia against African migrants and job seekers is on the rise; and African Muslims, needless to say, on both sides, are not immune to this. One reason behind this is the misguidance and manipulation of the masses by the right-wing populist and nationalist media which look to reinforce the anti-immigrant discourse through “the association of foreigners with a series of accusations that has now become clichés of such xenophobic imagery worldwide, being the main cause and source of organised and petty crimes, drugs, disease, escalating unemployment, even stealing ‘our’ women” (Klotz 2-3).

According to many participants of the workshop and interviews, the country’s major problem is crime and safety. In terms of the prevention of crime and violence, and safety improvement the government has failed so far (Aadil and Aamil). Fadhil, too, stated that crime and corruption is the major problem in South Africa (SA int.). According to Salib certain Muslim organizations are not immune to corruption. He stated that nepotistic corruption, fraud, and embezzlement became the normative order and framework for many such organizations. Claiming to raise funds for those in need, such organizations

accumulated astronomical amounts of money in their accounts but these funds were rarely used for the community and those in need (SA int.).

The low level of confidence in security forces supported this argument. Accordingly, only 4.8% of Muslims in South Africa expressed full confidence in the country's security forces. A further 12/5% said that they "mostly have confidence" whereas a dramatically high proportion reported that they either "mostly have no confidence" (31.8%), or "do not have confidence at all" (46.3%) (SA Sur.). In comparison, Muslims voiced a marginally higher level of confidence in South African judiciary with 11.1% saying they "have full confidence," and 32.7% saying they "mostly have confidence." To the same question, 48.8% stated that they have either low ("mostly do not have confidence", 24.4%) or very low ("have no confidence at all", 24.4%). Those who responded with "do not know" or refused to answer amounted to 7.1% (SA Sur.).



G23: South African Muslims' confidence in security forces and judiciary. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

When observed in relation to their socio-economic status, Muslim individuals and communities demonstrate a broad diversity. The Malay Muslims, traditionally are more artisans and working class, highly trained in carpentry, plumbing, and electrical installation services and similar skills. Nowadays, young generations of Malay people tend to go into IT services, academia, and business as well. South African Muslims of Indian origin, on the other hand, have two main sectors: laborers and traders. Particularly the latter, businessmen and business families, are more prominent and visible. Yet, there is also a notable change with younger Indian Muslims. More and more Indian youth are opting to go into professional fields, especially medicine and law. Many have gone into civil service as well (Dadvar int.).

Still, in the opinion of the many Muslim NGO representatives, activists, and scholars, the Muslim contribution to the South African economy and the country's financial strength is impressive. According

to Miran, the Muslim contribution to economy is immense when the size of the community is considered, while their proportion stands at around 2% or 2.5% of the general population, their contribution to the GDP of South Africa is perhaps 14% to 15% (Miran, int.). Jahan, too, agreed that the Muslim contribution to the South African economy is significant. Muslim businesspersons and companies have a significant share; a share that belies size, in the total GDP (SA int.).

Demonstrating some reservations concerning this optimistic outlook, Pamir stated that although Muslims do well in general, the high socio-economic status and great economic contribution that many leaders and spokespersons mention, in fact, do not apply to all groups. He maintained that “at the top, there is a cluster of affluent Muslims, the majority are workers, laborers, and unemployed. The economic disparity and differences between the big extensive base and small head are immense in the pyramid of welfare” (Pamir, int.). According to Pamir and others, in relation with the socio-economic profile of South African Muslims, one thing is certain and that is their high socio-economic status does not find an equally high resonance in their educational profile.

Khader, on the other hand, stated that in terms of socio-economic status there are three main categories: working class, business class, and professional class. The first two classes are more traditional, while the professional class has been growing recently because of a new focus on education (SA int.). This is a belated progress, since despite the significance of Muslims in different branches of the economy, the output of Ph.D. graduates and Muslim attendance to university and post-graduate studies are still very low (Khader int.). This progress, however, Khader underlined, has some undesirable outcomes; with the Muslim youth going for professional careers and education, the traditional business community and business capacity is shrinking. The gap is partially filled by immigrant Muslims but the reality is that the Muslim financial base is shrinking (Khader int.).

Still, in terms of socio-economic and educational status, South African Muslims, in general, are doing considerably better than African people. In this, the role of Apartheid and its politico-historical influences and repercussions is overwhelming. Although the Muslim sectors, particularly the Malays, were also affected by the racial restrictions and segregations in education, the Black community suffered overwhelmingly more. Dadvar, also noted that when comparing the average educational attainment levels of Muslims with Africans, one should consider the impact of the Apartheid system, in which Blacks were denied many of educational rights allowed to Muslims (SA int.). Without putting Apartheid and its legacy into perspective, the socio-economic and educational differences and comparisons cannot be properly understood.

In order to overcome the disparities established by the Apartheid system and maintained by its legacy, South African governments have been adopting a positive discriminatory response that implements a reverse-hierarchical job placement scheme from that of the Apartheid. Certain Muslim communities, however, see this as unequalitarian and counterproductive. According to Idress, there is an effective order of job precedence that places Black females on the top, followed by Black males, Colored females, Colored males, Indian females, and Indian males. Almost all sectors, including academia, operates under this structure of employment (SA int.). Haroon and others expressed their and the Indian community’s disappointment in this precedential order and the preferential treatment list,

where Indians are again placed near the bottom, just above whites (Haroon and others, int.). In the views of the Indian and Malay Muslims, as Haroon put it, “before the Apartheid we were not white enough, now we are found not black enough” (Haroon and others, int.).

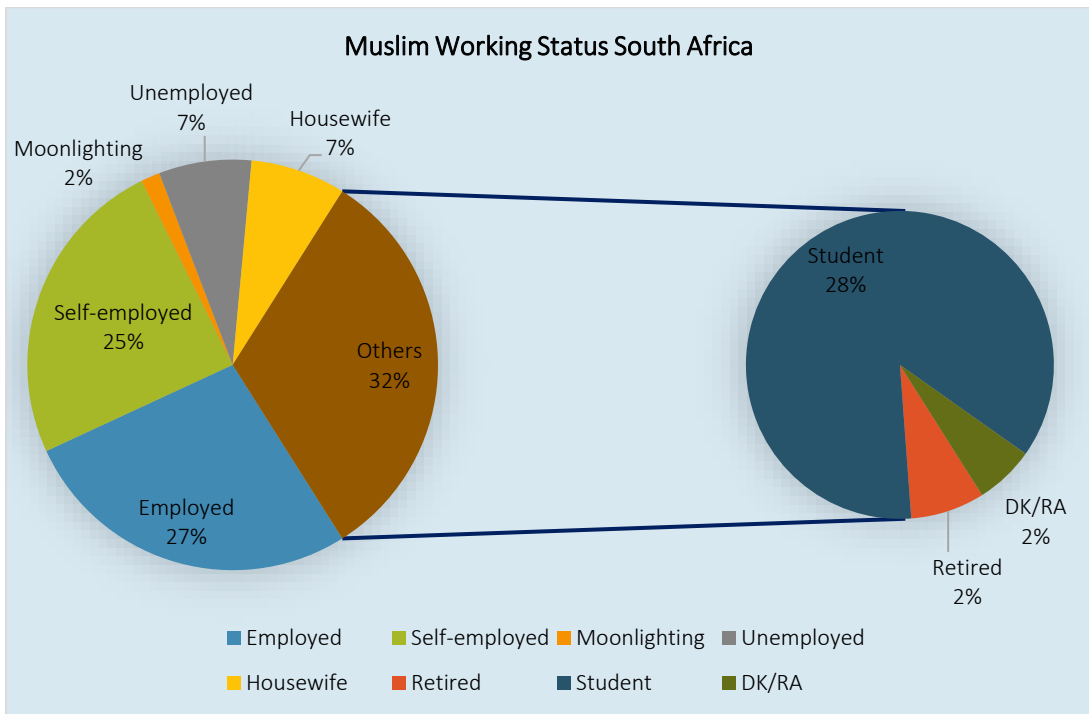
Despite expressing their disapproval for such an unequal regulation, many Muslims voiced that the indigenous South Africans and Black Muslims have suffered from socio-economic disparities more than any other community has. What is even more concerning is the fact that socio-economic disparities between different segments of the Muslim sector, particularly the affluent Indian Muslim community and the deprived Black Muslim community, is posing one of the biggest challenges for the Muslim space, Muslim unity and solidarity, and the future of Islam in South Africa.

Salib, a representative of the African Muslim community in one of the most iconic Black townships, reported, “All socio-economic problems that are inherent to the South African context are our problems; in becoming Muslim, we are not divorced from the wider community. The biggest problem is that the African community still see us as like a tool of the Indian community because at a manifest level, it would appear that the Indian Muslims are the caretakers of all Muslims” (Salib and others, int.). According to Salib and other representatives of the community, there is no parity between the Indian Muslim and the African Muslim. The interaction between the two only occurs through charity work and Indian Muslims only perceive African Muslims through the lens of charity. For Indian Muslims, Black Muslims are charity cases (Salib and others, int.).

“It does not mean that we do not need charity. No that is not my point. My point is that this outlook is not elevating. Coming to a mosque during a Friday prayer and feeding 40 or so men with *biryani* and not caring what are they going to eat that evening is not charity” stated Salib. To him and other representatives, sporadic philanthropy and charity is doomed to defeat in the fight against poverty because the influx of material help coming from outside and dispersed inside is not sufficient. What this means is that the issue needs to be addressed from inside via a more strategic activism. In order to achieve this, according to Salib, African Muslims need opportunities to enhance and further their academic and intellectual capacity. Such opportunities will allow the youth to pursue higher education in South Africa and overseas and return to positively contribute to their own community and address the pressing issues and problems from inside. What Salib and others were trying to voice was a fact that “charity has no memory, it forgets” and the long-term solutions to nationwide problems require long-term investments and an insider’s perspective.

The findings of the South Africa Survey conducted during the field study confirmed the majority of arguments and discussions outlined so far. According to the survey, the unemployment level among Muslims was considerably lower than society. The majority of participants, when asked about their working status, responded as employed (27.1%), self-employed (24.6%), or student (27.6%). With regards to the rest, 7.3% stated that they were unemployed and another 7.5% stated that they were housewives (SA Sur.). Those who were employed or self-employed when asked “How confident are you that you will keep your job in the coming 12 months?” in general replied “very confident” (49.1%) or “fairly confident.” Another 12.6% responded that they were “neither confident nor not-confident”

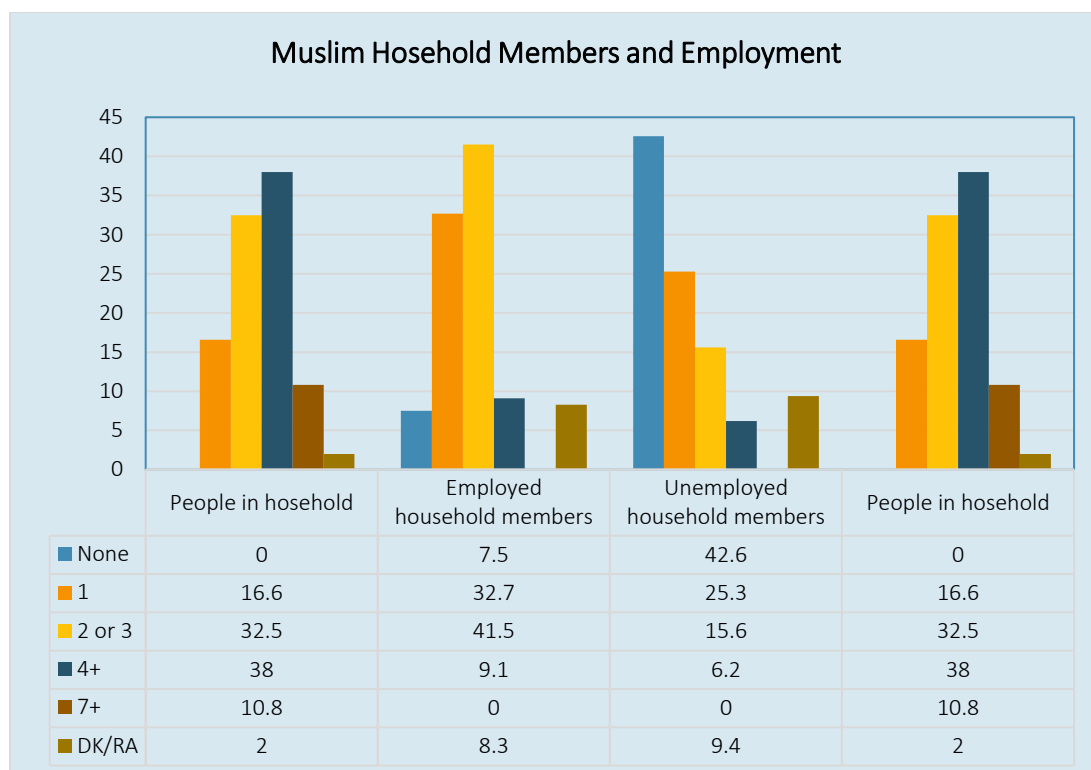
whereas just over 10% stated that they were either “fairly not-confident” (5.4%) or “not confident at all” (6%) (SA Sur.).



G24: South African Muslims’ working status. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

The responses to the question regarding the number of household members (including the respondent), revealed that Muslim households, in general, have more than two (2-3 persons, 32.5%) and less than seven (4-6 persons, 38%) members at just above 70%, in total. Another 10% stated there were more than seven persons in the household while 16.3% said “only me” (SA Sur.). When asked about the number of employed family members, the majority responded either one member (32,7%) or two members (26,8%). Less than 25% reported that their households have more than three employed family members (14.7% for 3 members and 9.1% for 4+ members). The figure for those who had no employed family members stood at 7.5% (SA Sur.).

As a follow-up question, respondents were asked about the number of unemployed family members. The findings confirmed those of similar or relevant questions with 42.6% saying there were no unemployed family members and 25.3% saying there was only one unemployed family member in their household. The percentage for Muslim households with two and more unemployed family members was observed to be over 20%, which is still significantly lower than the nationwide unemployment rates (10.5% for two unemployed family members; 5.1% for three members; and 6.2% for 4+ members) (SA Sur.).



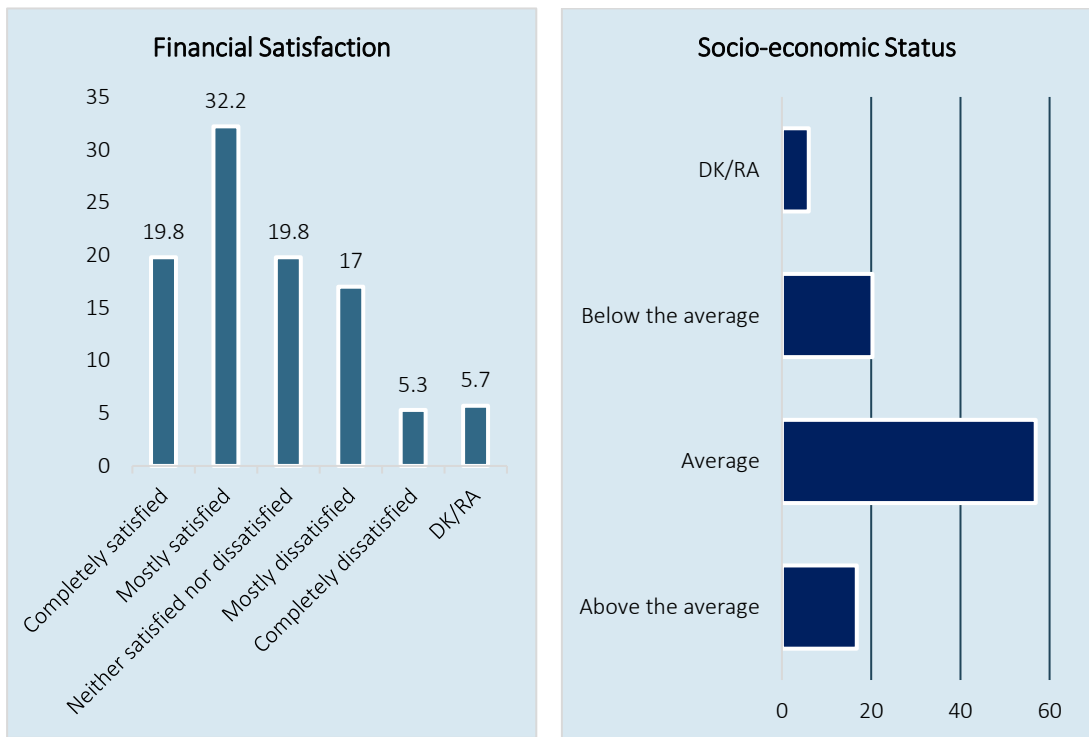
G25: Household member numbers, and employment and unemployment rates among South African Muslims. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

When asked to report two main obstacles for Muslims in obtaining a job in South Africa, around 45% pointed to the lack of jobs (24% as the first obstacle and another 21% as the second obstacle). A further 20.2% believed the residency and working permit and 16.9% inadequate or irrelevant education as the first obstacle. Among the second obstacle expressed by the respondents, not knowing the right people (23.8%), age discrimination (18.1%), insufficient work experience (13.3%), and disability (7.6%) were the most frequently given answers (SA Sur.).

Only 5.7% reported discrimination against Muslims an obstacle in obtaining a job—2.8% expressed it as the first and another 2.9% as the second obstacle (SA Sur.). The survey also revealed that the majority of South African Muslims believe that there is no discrimination in the employment of Muslim individuals in public offices. More than 60% of respondents stated that they either “totally agree” (30.2%) or “tend to agree” (32.2%) with the statement “Muslim individuals have the same opportunities and access in seeking or achieving employment in public offices.” The rate of those who adopt a neutral stance, saying they neither agreed nor disagreed, stood at 15.1% whereas those who thought there was discrimination against Muslims employment in public offices constituted around 21% with 13.8% saying they “tend to disagree” and 7.5% saying they “totally disagree” with the statement (SA Sur.).

Regarding participants’ satisfaction with household income, more than 50% expressed that they were satisfied with the financial situation of their household (19.8% stated that they were “completely

satisfied” and 32.3% stated that they were “mostly satisfied). The percentage of those who were “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied” was 19.8%. Another 17% reported that they were “mostly dissatisfied” while 5.3% said that they were “completely dissatisfied” (SA Sur.). These observations were supported by the responses to the question regarding socio-economic status. Accordingly, the majority of respondents stated that they believe their socio-economic status to be “average” (56.9%) or “above the average” (16.8%) while 20.3% believed their socio-economic status was “below the average” (20.3%) (SA Sur.).

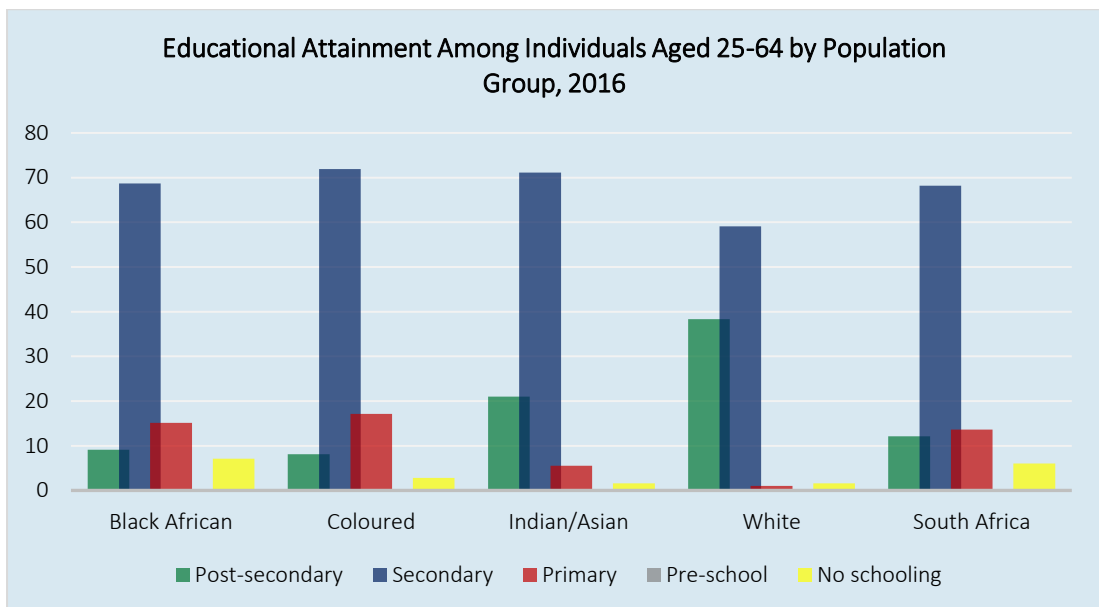


G26 and G27: South African Muslims’ level of financial satisfaction and socio-economic status. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

Educational profile of the Muslim community is also essential to outline in order to attain a comprehensive outlook at their socio-economic profile. In terms of their education profile, South African Muslims have three main issues: (i) the continuing low educational attainment level among Muslims of African origin, (ii) the low number of Muslims, even among affluent communities, who attain higher education (iii) the gender inequalities and the low attainment level among female Muslims, particularly among those of Indian background.

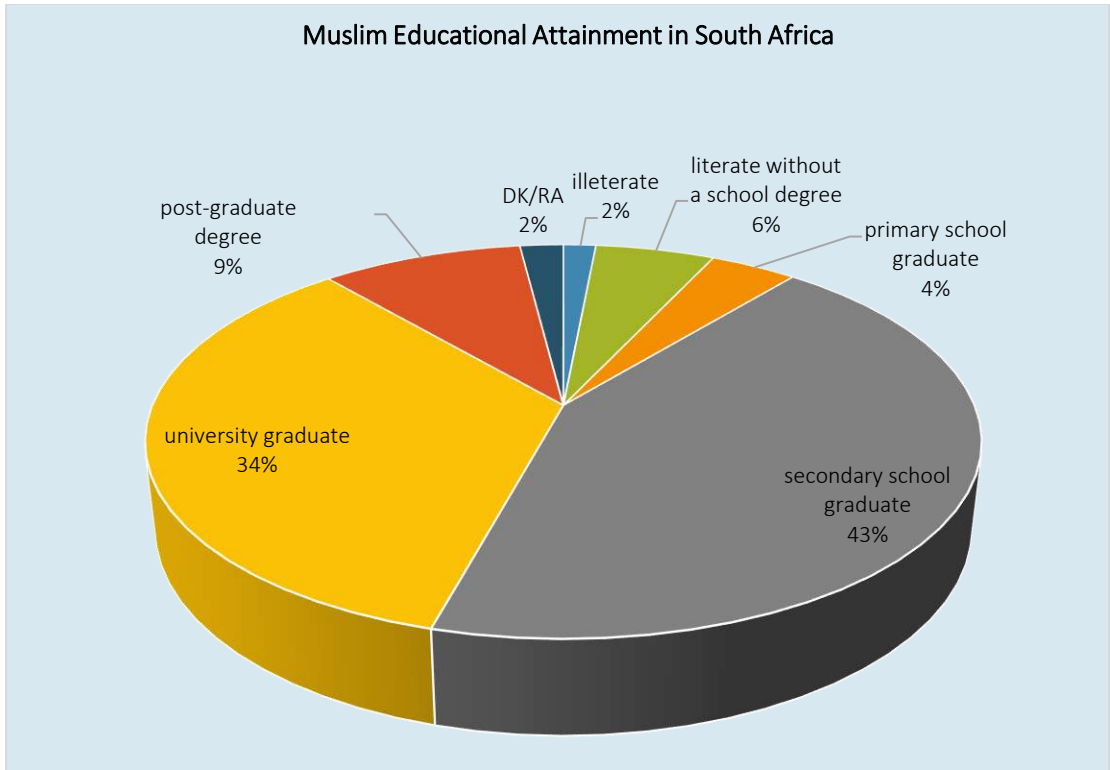
The educational attainment level among South African Muslims, as demonstrated in Figure below, is higher than the native African community and the national average, although below the white community. According to 2016 Statistics South Africa, educational attainment was the highest among South African whites with 38.3% of them holding a postsecondary degree. While the Indian community, in which the Indian Muslims constitute a considerable share, share similarities with white South

Africans, the post-secondary attainment among black Africans and coloreds remained below the national average with 9.1% and 8.1%, respectively (2017: 31).

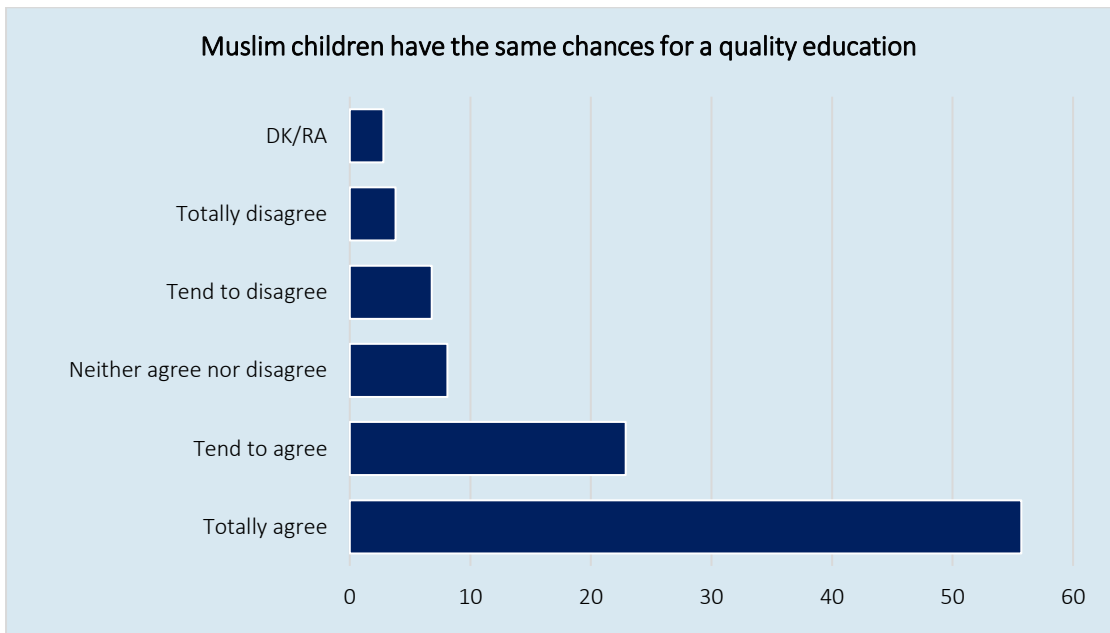


G28: Educational attainment levels for race categories in South Africa. Source: Statistics South Africa, Education Series Volume III: Educational Enrolment and Achievement, 2016 (2017: 31)

The responses to the question concerning educational attainment in South Africa revealed that Muslims in South Africa, in general, are comparatively well educated. Accordingly, 43.2% of respondents stated that they completed their secondary education and 34.4% stated that they held a university degree. Another 9.3% reported that they had a graduate degree (Masters' or a Ph.D.). In comparison, the number of those who finished primary school (4%), were literate without finishing school (5.5%) and illiterate (1.5%) was observed to be considerably low (SA Sur.).

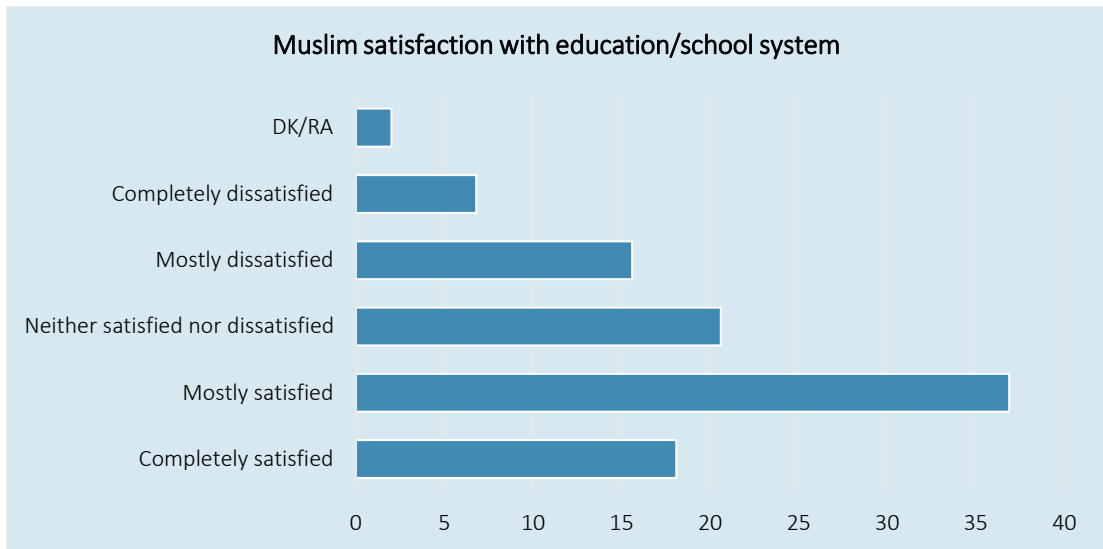


G29: South African Muslims' educational attainment level. GMD SA Sur., 2018.



G30: Muslims' satisfaction with equality in educational opportunities in South Africa. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

When asked if they agreed with the statement that “Muslim children have the same chances and opportunities for a quality education in South Africa”, the majority of participants responded positively; 78.6% of them stating that they either “totally agree” (55.7%) or “tend to agree” (22.9%). In contrast, the number of those who did not agree with the statement was conspicuously low at 6.8% (tend to disagree) and 3.8% (totally disagree). Another 8.1%, on the other hand, remained neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing (SA Sur.).



G31: Muslims' satisfaction with the school system in South Africa. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

Similar findings can be seen concerning Muslim satisfaction with the educational system in South Africa. According to the responses, 55% of Muslims were either “completely” (18.1%) or “mostly” (36.9%) satisfied with the education system in South Africa. While 20.6% stated that they were “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied”, the figures for those who are mostly or completely dissatisfied stood at 15.6% and 6.8%, respectively (SA Sur.).

An important issue regarding Muslim educational attainment and the access of Muslims to higher education comes to the fore regarding female education. As Vahed and Jeppe point out patriarchal and paternalistic outlook towards female education, particularly within the Indian Muslim community of Kwa-Zulu Natal and Gauteng, marks one of the main challenges in the education of Muslims in South Africa. Many parents adopt a reluctant and conservative attitude towards young Muslim girls' attaining secular education, which in their mind harbors a propensity to corrupt the “purity” of the Muslim woman by exposing her to the dangers and temptations that arise from the “morally bankrupt” social secularism and its educational hazards. Consequently, many girls are denied education beyond primary level while others are sent to Muslim schools that provide both a secular and religious education, or Islamic schools that focus on teaching Islam and Arabic, supplemented by English and mathematics (Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 271).

This point was also raised by Pamir, the president of a Muslim student association: “On the whole, when compared to non-Muslim African communities, Muslims are well-educated and school attainment level is higher among them. But this is not for both genders,” he stated. According to him, “women are marginalized particularly among the Indian Muslim community. And this is a cultural phenomenon. Female students are often not allowed to complete their secondary education; they are married off at very young ages. “This is now changing but in those conservative subgroups in Indian communities the gender imbalance is still common,” he added (Pamir, int.).

Nevertheless, education comes to the fore as the most common, central and emphasized department in all Muslim organizations throughout South Africa. This, no doubt, has some historical basis that could be traced back to the time of Tuan Guru and Abu Bakr Effendi, and the key role that education has played in the protection and maintenance of Islamic identity in South Africa. The majority of these organizations are involved and offer a religious education because the South African constitution dictates a secular education. Religions are all treated on an equal footing but the law does not involve itself in religious education and organizations. A “No support, no control” paradigm regulates the affairs between the state and Muslim organizations. In such a context, in order to protect, maintain, and consolidate their religious identity Muslim organizations have placed specific emphasis on establishing their own educational institutions and maintaining their financial independence largely through funds and donations collected from the community.



F12: Charity collection boxes with different causes, placed in a mosque in Pretoria, the photo taken during the field study by Servet Erdem.

Islamic finance, investment, and economic involvement in the country mark a great achievement of South African Muslims. Providing a *Shariah*-compliant finance and investment model for Muslims, opposed to the interest-related economic system of fund investments and banking principles, the Albaraka Bank (est. 1989) and its Cape Town-based competitor Oasis Group Holdings (est. 1997)

marked a significant growth of Islamic finance in South Africa. Reaching an exceptional growth's growth, at the end of 2003, Albaraka's its assets stood at R700 million (Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 268).

Islamic education, too, both in terms of institutional expansion and demand has seen a steady increase post-Apartheid. Particularly, the more affluent Indian community and to a lesser degree the Malay community have a score of Islamic education centers, schools, and institutions for higher education. While some of these institutions offer both Islamic and secular education, some focus solely on religious education, such as imam and hafiz training. Among these, the following are worth mentioning: *Darul Uloom Zakariyya* (formerly *Madrasah Zakariyya*, est. 1983), which teaches around 650 students from more than 60 countries; the Pretoria Muslim Educational Trust Sunni School (est. ?); the *Darul Uloom Pretoria*, which imparts a Islamic and secular education; the *Cape Town Islamic Educational Centre* (CTIEC, est. 2011); the Pretoria Muslim School (known also as the *Tshwane Muslim School*, est. 1990), which aims to provide a sound Islamic and secular education; the *Madrasah Arabia Islamia*, also known as *Darul Ulum of Azaadville* (est. 1981); the *Al-Huda School* (est. 2012) which was established by the Al-Huda Muslim Society, followers of the Shi'a Ithna-Asheri Ja'fari school; *As-Salaam Educational Institute*, an educational center in a rural settlement adjacent to Braemar, 90 km from Durban and on the South Cost of Kwazulu-Natal; the *Johannesburg Muslim School* which was established in 1990; *Darul Uloom Nu'maniyyah* (est. 2001), an institution that provide opportunities to the underprivileged youth of Chatsworth and the surrounding areas and has a specific rehabilitation program for unprivileged youth; the *Madrasah In'aamiyyah Camperdown*, an institute of higher Islamic learning and teaching based in Durban.

In summary, South African Muslims come from a mixed socio-economic background and demonstrate a broad variety of socio-economic and educational status. While a relatively large section of the Indian and a small portion of the Malay population have managed to accumulate a large financial and educational capital, the greater majority of African Muslims still suffer from the legacy of Apartheid and live in poverty. Socio-economic disparities and unemployment among Africans in general, and among Black Muslims, in specific, cause some inter-racial and inter-communal tensions. Numerous Muslim charity and relief organizations and individuals are taking a proactive role in order to overcome the socio-economic disparities and challenges, however, the problem is enormous and history is reluctant to leave the scene.

5 Attitudes on Visibility and Representation of Muslims

This chapter investigates the visibility and representation of South African Muslims with a specific focus on their political and social involvement, participation, and representation. To this end, the chapter first provides a brief historical account of Muslim representation in post-Apartheid South Africa. Following this, the reasons behind the recent decline in political representation and active participation is explored. After some discussion regarding Muslims' media and social representation and visibility, the chapter concludes with the findings of the South African Survey relating to Muslim attitudes on visibility and representation.

During the struggle against Apartheid Muslims were deeply involved in South African politics Nelson Mandela illustrated this in a speech given in 1998 as follows: "Our country can proudly claim Muslims as brothers and sisters, compatriots, freedom fighters and leaders, revered by our nation. They have written their names on the wall of honor with blood, sweat, and tears." Although certain Muslim circles believe that the legacy of Muslim anti-Apartheid struggle activists, such as Ahmed Kathrada, Yusuf Dadoo, Ahmed Timol, Ismail Cachalia, and Fathima Meer, is not sufficiently appreciated and promoted today, former presidents and governments of the country have frequently honored, commemorated, and credited Muslim comrades and their contribution. It was because of this activism and contribution that Muslims were credited with immense visibility and political representation in the first post-Apartheid governments.



F13: Ahmed Kathrada, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, Nelson Mandela, and Walter Sisulu, Copyright: Ahmed Kathrada Foundation.

"Ahmed Kathrada has been so much part of my life over such a long period that it is inconceivable that I could allow him to write his memoirs without me contributing something, even if only through a brief foreword. Our stories have become so interwoven that the telling of one without the voice of the other being heard somewhere would have led to an incomplete narration." Nelson Mandela, "Foreword to the *Memoirs of Ahmed Kathrada*"

In fact, as many scholars have pointed out Muslim representation in the first and second post-Apartheid governments far outweighed their proportional vote share and their numbers. In 2007, for instance, as Tayob indicates, while the size of the Muslim community stood at around 1.5% of the total population, “18 out of 490 members of parliament from both houses were Muslim (3.7%); 2 out of 26 ministers (7.6%); 2 out of 22 deputy ministers (9%); 15 out of 210 Cape Town city councillors (7%); 4 out of 173 councillors in Johannesburg (2.3%)” (2011: 21). Muslims were also more than sufficiently represented among the most vocal and influential public leaders and cabinet ministers, including Ahmad Kathrada who was imprisoned on Robben Island with Nelson Mandela; the late Professor Kader Asmal, who became highly critical of the ANC during his last years; Ebrahim Rasool, who served as the Premier of the Western Cape and was a key figure in the ANC; Essop Pahad, who was a key member of President Thabo Mbeki’s office; and Naledi Pandor, the former Speaker of the Council of Provinces who replaced Kader Asmal as Minister of Education in 2004 (Tayob 2011: 21, Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 277-79).

Muslim politicians and representatives, too, often voiced their content in the encouraging level of visibility and representation achieved by Muslims in post-Apartheid South Africa. It is true that the Muslim contribution to the democratic system (as fellow opponents of anti-Apartheid resistance, and voters and supporters of the democratic regime) was great, but their representational share was greater. Delighted by such victories, after the 1999 national elections, Shuaib Manjra stated that, “if one engages at the level of head-counting Muslims in Parliament we find a percentage that is approximately five to seven percent in the National Assembly and National Council of Provinces. The vast majority of these belong to the African National Congress...” (cited in Omar 2004: 4). Becoming the first Muslim provincial head, when he was appointed Western Cape Premier by President Thabo Mbeki, Ebrahim Rassool claimed in a victory speech that, “the fact that the President of this country could elect a Muslim as Premier even though most people in South Africa are not Muslims, says a lot for the respect Islam has in this country” (*Al Qalam* April 2004). These statements, apart from being clear illustrations of the great level of political representation once achieved by Muslims, speak volumes about the mutual confidence and credibility once enjoyed by both the Muslim community and South African government (Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 277-79).

Muslim organizations and groups’ attempts to achieve parliamentary representation at party level have proved to be less successful in South Africa. Pursuing direct Islamic representation in the 1994 elections, the Cape-based Islamic Party and the national Africa Muslim Party joined forces and formed the *Africa Muslim Party*. The *AMP* achieved only very moderate success in Cape Town. The party attracted notable controversy and came into disrepute due to its leaders’ double political engagement, making coalition deals with both the *ANC* and the *DA* (Democratic Alliance), along with its alleged corrupt in past business dealings. No standing Islamic party has gained the confidence and support of a majority Muslim voters so far; the vast majority of Muslims vote for one of the major parties, especially the *ANC* (Dangor 2003: 218).



F14: Flag and minaret, Islam's visibility in South Africa. Photo taken during the field study by Servet Erdem

Islamic media outlets have proliferated in the late 1990s and 2000s with radio, newspapers, magazines, websites, and books. South African Muslims, particularly in the Indian and Malay communities, have the capacity and communication infrastructures to promote Islam and respond to Islamophobic discourse and narratives. Reflecting different and somewhat contested understandings and outlooks, monthly newspapers such *Al-Ummah*, *Majlis*, *Al-Haq*, *Muslim Views*, *Al-Jamiat*, and *Al-Qalam*; radio stations like *Radio Islam* and *Radio Mubarak*; magazines like *KZN Islam* and *The Muslim Woman* and TV channel *ITV Network*, along with many other media outlets dominate the South African Muslim space.

Still, as Vahed and Jeppe emphasize, the Muslim media outlets in South Africa, to a

great extent, are controlled by affluent and conservative groups often quite vociferous in promoting a traditionalist, monolithic and normative outlook (Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 269-70). According to, Fadhil, the director of a Muslim foundation, a very small percentage of extremely insular Muslims invest in and pushes for sectional loyalties rather than solidarity and interactional and transactional harmony between Muslim groups, the larger society, and other non-Muslim minority groups (SA int.). Fadhil called supporters of such a sectional and racist vision *myopic* Muslims.

Many participants of the interviews and workshop have mentioned three points pertaining to Muslim visibility and representation: (i) the good level of political representation that exceeds the numeric share; (ii) the declining level of political representation and involvement among Muslims in the past decade; (iii) and the acknowledged and “un-surveilled” visibility of Muslims in South Africa. As many participants have underlined, the high level of political representation and visibility is a key to the

maintenance of the rights, liberties, and the positive image that Muslims have been enjoying in South Africa. According to Jahan, with greater political visibility and representation in South Africa, Muslims can exert their perspective into the master narrative about them and thus negate the discourse of Islamophobia and the pejorative images of Muslims that are produced by certain anti-Muslim power circles (SA int.).

According to Fadhil, Muslims are visible in every sector of social, political, cultural, and economic life. They play in cricket and rugby teams and are very visible in the entertainment industry and business sector. There was a time when two of the biggest networks' had Muslim CEOs. In the political arena, Muslim deputies, ministers, politicians quite common. They are everywhere, and, wherever they are, they carry their Islamic identity with pride.

Aamil and Aadil stressed that Muslim visibility and representation in South Africa far extends the numbers of Muslims. Muslims owe this particularly to their dedication and perseverance in protecting their Islamic identity and values. They maintained that in South Africa today, wherever Muslims travel, in malls, in airports, and in state buildings, they can find masjids and they do not feel alienated or forced to explain themselves because of their hijab, beard, or attire" (Aamil and Aadil, int.) For them, however, despite the level of freedoms and rights, and their visibility in the public sphere, Muslims have failed to protect a considerable political representation at the party level. As individuals, true, there are some representatives and councils, but at the organizational level, such political visibility is still not attained (Aamil and Aadil, int.).

According to Eldar, in certain regions, such as Cape Town or Durban, Muslim visibility is considerably greater. Eldar, too, reported a lesser level of political representation in comparison to social and public visibility but only at the party and organizational level. Muslim individuals, according to him, are holding many key positions at the provincial, municipal, legislative, and federal levels thus their absence and invisibility at party level should not be overemphasized. He also pointed out the contribution of two factors to the recent decline in political representation and engagement among Muslims: (i) the apathy towards politics among the Muslim youth which is due to the fact that they now enjoy many political rights and liberties, and are concentrated more on education; (ii) and the fact that in such a contested and complicated context, politics require much sacrifice and courage. These two factors were also raised by Haroon, Behnam, and Danish, when they suggested that the low local electoral turnout among the Muslim community is a clear sign of increasing apathy towards active and formal political involvement, although for different reasons. Muslim people, according to Haroon, now ask themselves "What does national politics have to do with me? I am only a minority; how can it help me?" (Haroon and others, int.).

Representation has gradually declined, according to Dadvar, largely due to the illusion that there is less need for community mobilization and political engagement in post-Apartheid South Africa. Active Muslim participation in politics should be re-encouraged (SA int.). In the eyes of Pamir, a very promising young social activist of a Malay and Indian background, and president of a student association, Muslims, particularly the more affluent ones, became too comfortable in their spaces and believed that issues of politics do not affect them. This nonchalance and illusion, according to Pamir, was an

important reason for the decline in Muslim political involvement and representation. Finding a link between two issues, the decreasing involvement, and inter-racial tension, and adopting a self-critical standing, Pamir stated that “it is very difficult to come to terms with this thinking because we have a lot of black Muslims in South Africa who still face the consequences of the Apartheid today.” Turning a blind eye towards the problems of disadvantaged Africans and remaining politically and socially disengaged and uninvolved will only lead to the marginalization of Muslims and double-marginalization of Africans Muslim (Pamir, int.).

Khader, too, made a similar point regarding the reasons for the decline in Muslim political representation and involvement, arguing that Muslim individuals and organizations have fallen back in political representation because they returned to their comfort zone. In the post-Apartheid era, people began to focus on their own lives, resettling and focusing on their children’s education. They took the democratic governance and the high Muslim representation in politics for granted (Khader int.). Another reason is that the governments in post-Mandela South Africa have limited contact with Muslims and their organizations. There is less focus upon the solidarity of the anti-Apartheid struggle. This point was also emphasized by the members of the executive body of a Malay association (Ghalib and others, int.).

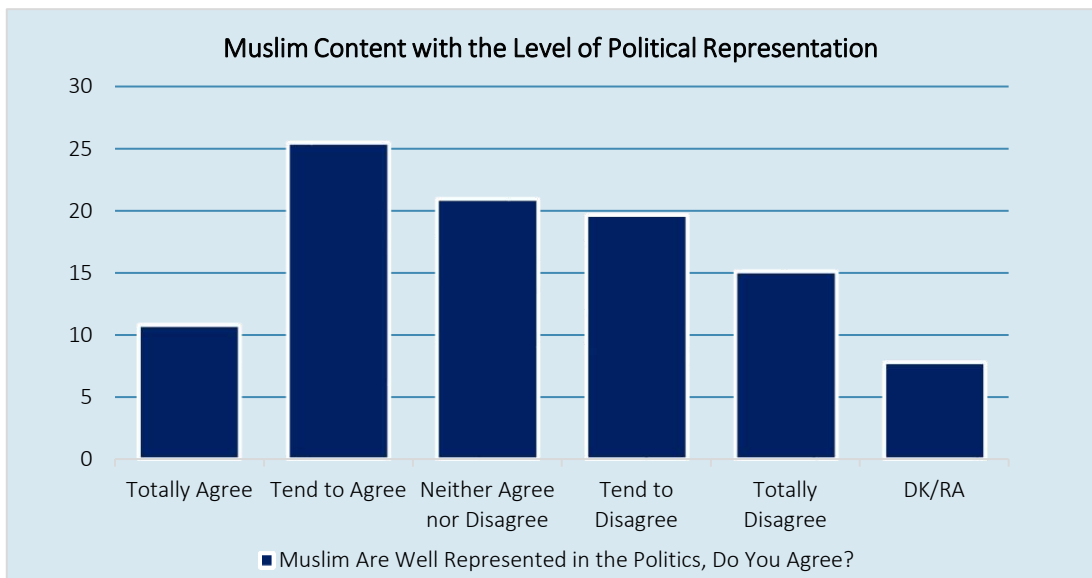
Furthermore, new governments and ruling parties are more and more African-oriented and racially inclined, according to Khader. The rise in African and Black Nationalism is one cause for this, and the reality that African people suffered more than any other groups and so require more attention. Other groups, such as Malay and larger colored community, feel marginalized because of this new priority-in-reverse regime of post-Apartheid South Africa. The Malay and larger colored community believe “they were not white enough under the white regime, and now they are not black enough under the Black regime” (Khader int.). Khader argued that yet another reason for the decline is the overt-fragmentation of the Muslim sector, with so many diverse and irreconcilable voices and leaders, and with divisions along religious and sectarian lines, it is difficult to build a strong political presence, representation, and visibility (SA int.).

Concerning in the lack of Muslim involvement and representation in politics, Miran, too, emphasized the influence of the upsurge in black consciousness and nationalism among the local Africans. He claimed that many authorities in the government and official bodies are corrupt and Muslim administrative portfolios stand against corruption. This, however, has not been agreed upon by certain corrupt circles, thus working together has proved to be disadvantageous for both parties, for Muslim politicians and local Africans, alike. For this reason, Miran continued, Muslim individuals have begun to withdraw from politics despite their contribution to the set-up of the country. Although on a percentage-wise basis, more Muslims involved in the fight for true democracy than local Africans, he noted (Miran, int.).

He further stated that “when President Mandela had gone into hiding he was hiding in Muslim houses. Mandela knew and appreciated Muslim support” (Miran, int.). The same point was raised during other interviews, with some interviewees claiming that when the history of anti-Apartheid struggle has been written the communities that contributed far less to the resistance constructed a narrative that

attributed a great influence and importance to their role, and they turned a blind eye to Muslim contribution. “But that is a shortcoming for our side. We should have taken a responsible and active role in writing the history and our role in that history,” maintained Miran (SA int.).

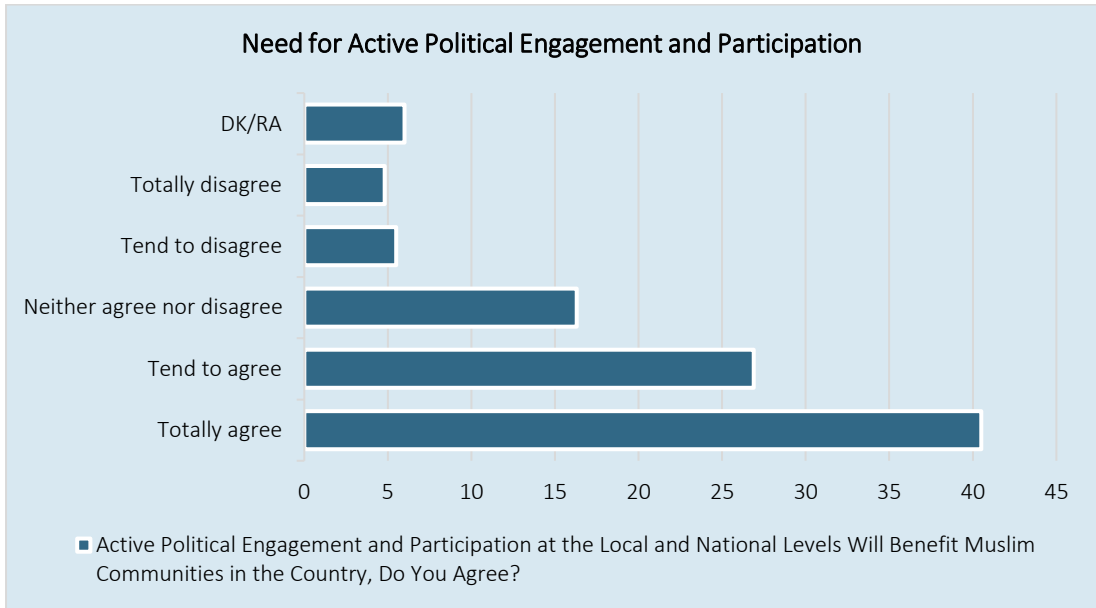
Pamir, however, took a more self-critical stance in this issue: “I do not think Muslims appreciate enough the works of those activists. They worked for democracy, for racial and social justice. It is an element of our history we need to remember and analyze to see where we come from as a community.” She further added that those who were active in the African National Congress movement appreciate Muslim contribution more than Muslims do. “They, the ANC and the Communist Party always honors and commemorate those Muslim leaders and activists, but we do not” (Pamir, int.). To Pamir, the intergenerational conflicts, misunderstandings, lack of conversation and understanding also cause a sort of apathy towards political involvement among the younger generations. She pointed to another reason for the general apathy towards political involvement and activism: “A huge difficulty is that older generations still believe that politics is *haram* and Islam forbids Muslims to become involved in politics. But Islam was a political movement, our Prophet (SAW) was a revolutionary leader, Islam covers and embraces all aspects of life and politics is an essential element” (Pamir, int.).



G32: Muslims’ content with their level of political representation and visibility. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

The findings of the field study confirmed the views of the interviewees and participants of the workshop. When asked “Do you agree with the statement that the Muslim community is well represented in the politics of South Africa?” the participants expressed quite diverse opinions. The percentage of those who said that they “totally agree” with the statement remained at 10.8% while another 25.4% stated that they “tend to agree.” Of the respondents, 20.9% reported that they “neither agree nor disagree,” 19.6% that they “tend to disagree,” and 15.1% that they “totally disagree” with the statement (SA Sur.).

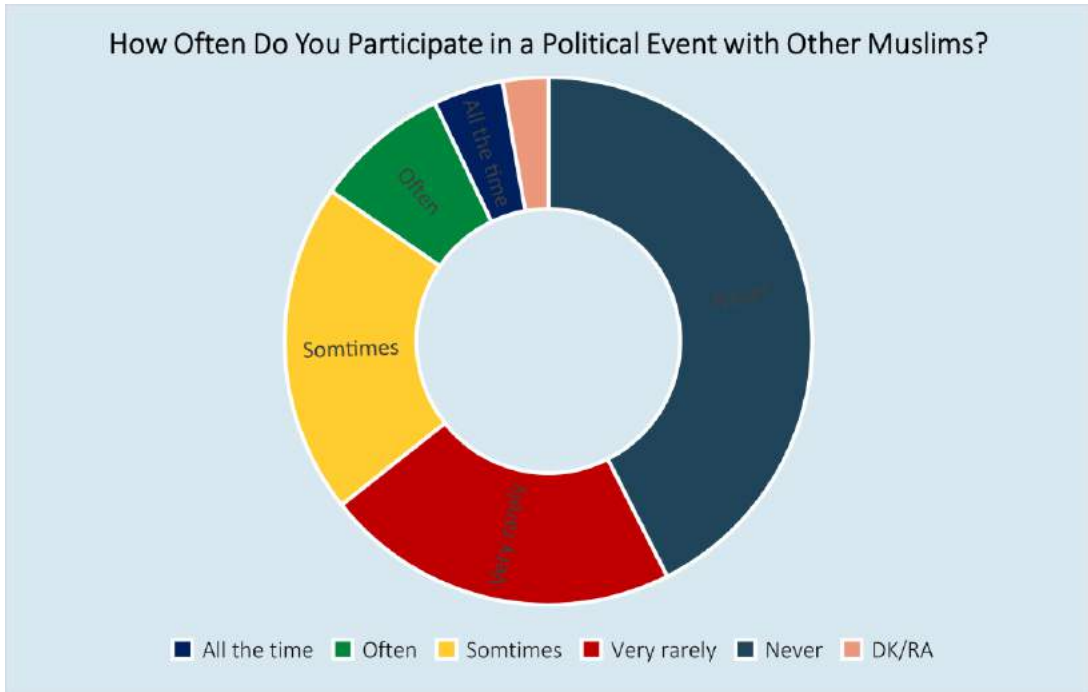
To the question “Do you think Muslims’ active political engagement and participation at the local and national level will benefit Muslim communities in the country,” 40.5% said that they “totally agree” and another 26.9% that they “tend to agree.” In comparison, the number of those who thought active political engagement would bring no such benefits remained disproportionately low, 5.5% said that they “tend to disagree” and 4.8% that they “totally disagree” (SA Sur.).



G33: Need for political engagement and participation according to South African Muslims. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

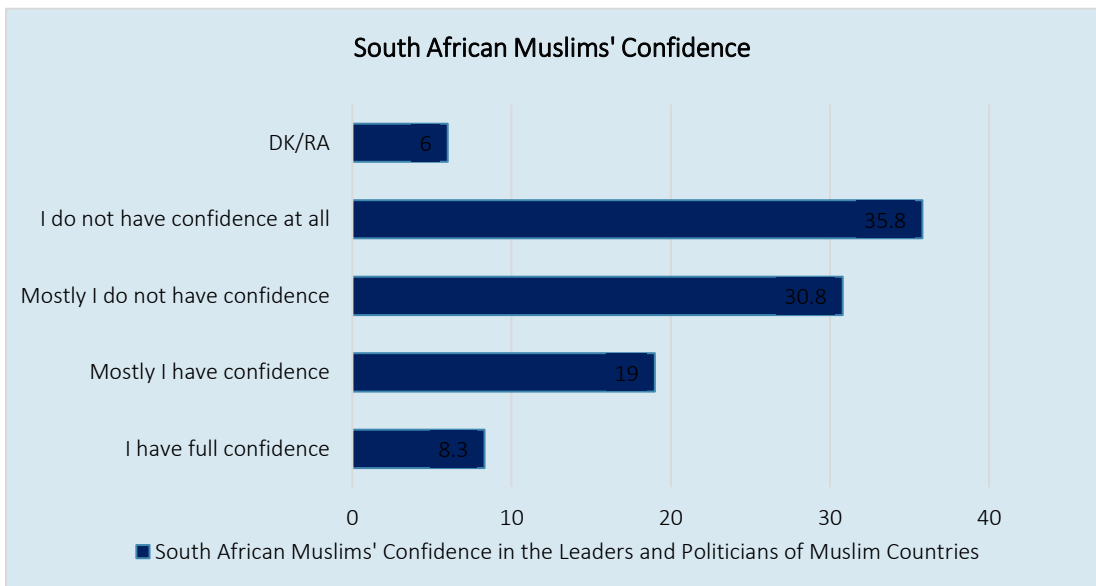
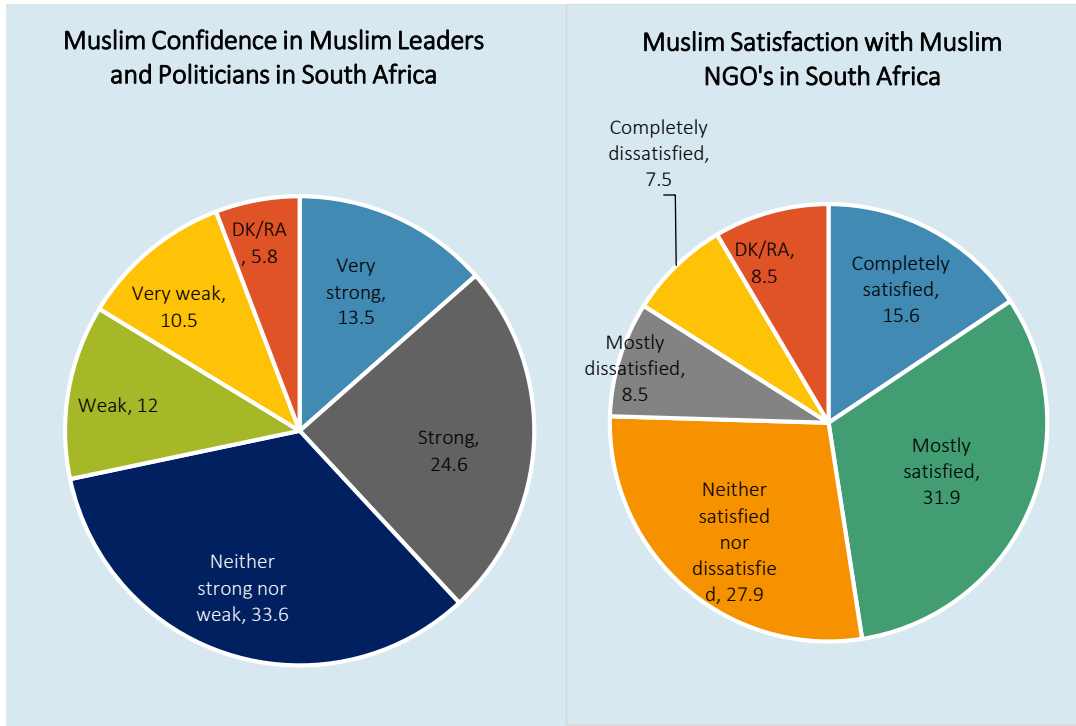
When asked about the extent of their participation in political events with other Muslims, the respondents revealed a considerably low attendance rate with 42.6% saying that they “never” attend any such event and 21.8% saying that they “very rarely” participate. Moreover, 20.3% stated that they “sometimes” participated in political events with other Muslims, while only 8.3% said that they “often” participate and 4.3% that they participate “all the time” (SA Sur.).

The responses given to another question revealed reservation about the confidence and trust in Muslim leaders and politicians among South African Muslims. Accordingly, 13.4% of participants claimed they have a “very strong” trust in the political leaders of the Muslim community and 24.3% said they have a “strong” trust. Those who stated that their trust in Muslim leaders and politicians was neither weak nor strong” stood at 33.6%, while 22.5% said their trust was either “weak” (12%) or “very weak” (10.%) (SA Sur.). The respondents expressed a low level of confidence in Muslim leaders of other countries, as well. The sizeable majority, 66.6%, either stated “mostly I do not have confidence” (30.8%) or “I do not have confidence at all” (35.8%). The percentage of those who had full confidence or were mostly confident with Muslim leaders and politicians of Muslim majority countries was observed to be very low, at 27.3% (SA Sur.).



G34: Frequency of Muslims' attendance at political events with other Muslims. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

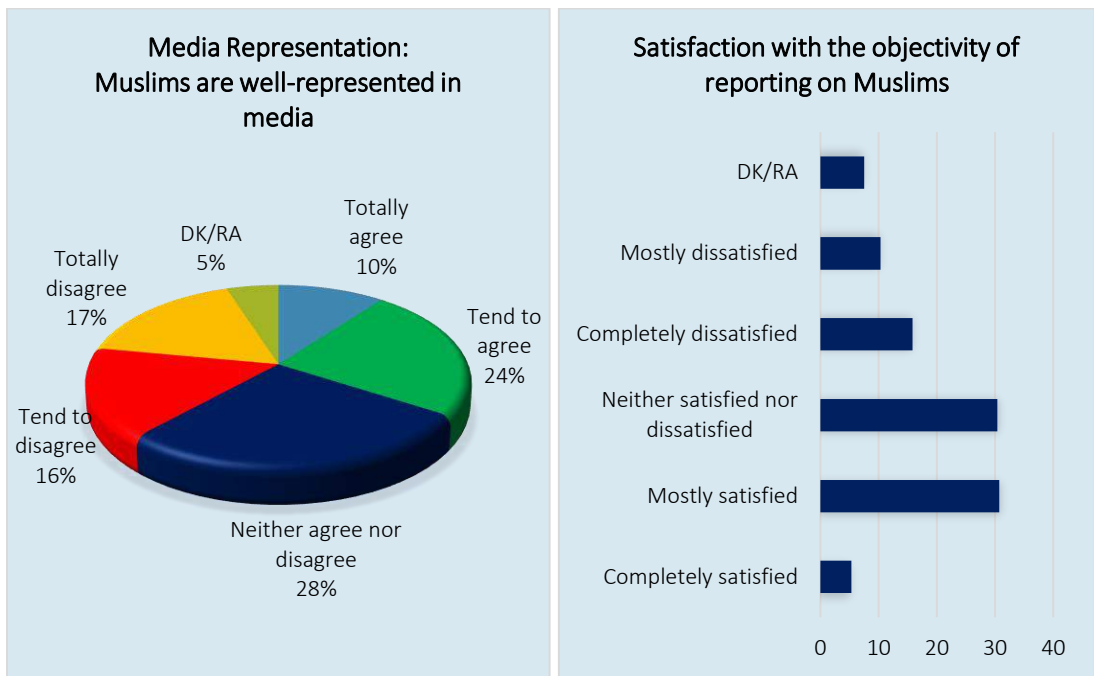
In comparison with these findings, responses to a question concerning Muslim NGO's demonstrated a higher confidence and trust in Muslim organizations. Accordingly, when asked, "Are you satisfied with Muslim civil society organizations in South Africa?" 47.5% said they were either "completely" (15.6%) or "mostly" (31.9%) satisfied. The figure for those who were dissatisfied with Muslim NGO's, on the other hand, recorded comparatively low at 16% (8.5% "mostly dissatisfied" and 7.5% "completely dissatisfied"). The percentage of those who were "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" was relatively high, at 27.9% (SA Sur.).



G35, G36, and G37: Muslims' satisfaction with South African Muslim leaders, Muslim NGO's, and Muslim leaders and politicians of other Muslim countries. GMD SA sur., 2018.

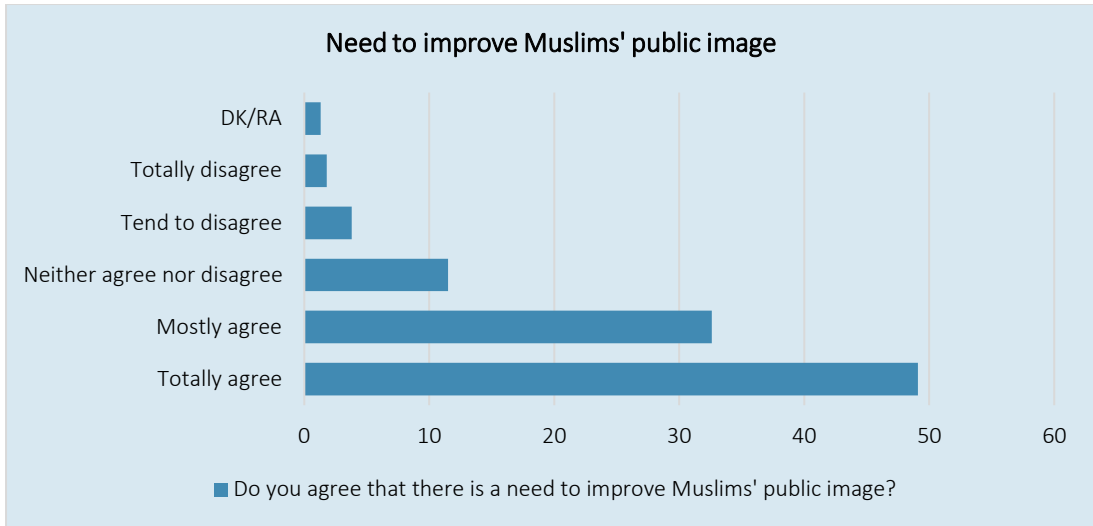
When asked if they agreed with the statement that the Muslim community is well represented in the media in South Africa, participants demonstrated a diverse yet balanced response. Less than 34% stated that they either “totally agree” (10.1%) or “tend to agree” (23.6%) with the statement while

27.5% stated that they “neither agree nor disagree.” Those who thought media does not represent Muslim well stood at 33% (with 17% saying that they “totally disagree” and 16% saying that they “tend to disagree”). In line with this, when asked if they were satisfied with the objectivity of reporting on Muslims in the media, 35.9% respondents said they either were “completely” (5.2%) or “mostly” (30.7%) satisfied. While 30.4% stated that they were “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied”, the figures for those who were “mostly dissatisfied” or “completely dissatisfied” stood at 15,8% and 10,3%, respectively (SA Sur.).



G38 and G39: Muslims’ satisfaction with their representation in media and the objectivity of reporting on Muslims in South Africa. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

To the question “Do you agree that there is a need to improve the public image of Muslims in South Africa?” an overwhelming majority answered in the affirmative. Of the respondents, 49.1% responded they did “totally agree” and a further 32.6% responded they “tend to agree” with the statement. The percentage of those who did not agree was considerably low at 5.6% in total while 11.5% adopted a neutral stance (SA Sur.).



G40: Need to improve the public image of Muslims. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

In summary, it was observed both during the workshop and interviews and in the findings of the survey that Muslim political representation and involvement in South Africa has been declining over the last two decades. Despite the general concerns caused by this decrease, it was observed that South African Muslims are becoming less and less involved in politics. Various reasons for this apathy towards politics were put forward by the representatives of the Muslim organizations. Among them, the followings were the most voiced: (i) a new emphasis on education, (ii) a rise in Black nationalism, (iii) the recognition of minority status and the effects of learned helplessness, (iv) changing attitudes among the Muslim youth, and (v) less need for political participation and involvement in the post-Apartheid era. Despite all, Muslims still enjoy a higher level of political visibility and representation in South Africa in comparison to other non-OIC Member States. The image of Muslims in the media and the public sphere and their visibility is largely positive. Muslim organizations and communities, it appears, have managed to develop a capacity to fight against Islamophobic discourses and negative representations that are constructed and mobilized by certain power circles and media outlets in the West. From this perspective, South Africa is a marginal success story that could serve as a model for other countries.

6 Confidence in Relations among Muslim Communities

This chapter explores the intra- and inter-communal Muslim relations in South Africa. Within this scope, following an outline of the principle patterns of Muslim interaction, the main problems and contestations that affect relations among Muslim groups and the ways and strategies towards addressing these problems and contestations are discussed. The issues that divide the South African Muslim sector and those that unite different Muslim groups are also discussed here.

It could be argued that despite the success and achievements of Muslims in the country, three types of contestation and tension are accumulating in the South African Islamic space: inter-genderal, inter-generational, and inter-racial contestation and tension. Starting with the first, two incidents in the past two decades, namely the Radio Islam and the Family Eidgah controversies, revealed a growing inter-genderal contestation in South Africa. The former took place in 1997 when the radio station, Radio Islam, which is affiliated with the conservative *Deobandi* organization *Jamiatul Ulama*, declared on-air that women's voices are *'awrah* (intimate gender parts that must be concealed) and thus forbade women's voice on its airwaves (Ingram 2015: 73). An array of Muslim feminists and progressive activists, along with government figures expressed outrage, arguing that not only was it against the constitutional guarantee of gender and religious equality but also no normative basis in Islamic law could be found for such discrimination (Ingram 2015: 73).

The Family Eidgah controversy came to the fore in 2003 when the *Kwa-Zulu Natal Jamiat* informed the organizer of the *Eid* celebration and convention that since the complete separation of women and men would be too difficult (they believed the excessive use of perfume by Muslim women rendered the separation impossible), no woman should be permitted to attend the open-field convention. The *ulama* of the *Jamiat* further argued that had the Prophet (SAS) "seen the condition of women today, he would have prevented them from attending" (Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 271-72). Muslim women groups and the organizers responded to this and invited the *Jamiat* to attend "public debate once and for all on this issue" (Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 271-72). Citing Islamic sources to argue that women were permitted to participate in prayer at mosques, the organizer accused the *Jamiat* and its *ulama* of "attempting to enforce [their] oppressive Indo-Pakistani, male-dominated, cultural norms on the Muslim community under the guise of theological legality!" (Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 271-72).

Both cases concluded with a Muslim women victory, however, the controversies revealed that the discourse of religious freedom and gender equality in the South African Islamic space is (and will continue to be) contested by overt-paternalistic and patriarchist outlooks and discourses. The controversies further revealed that Muslim men's (and women's) commitment to gender equality will play an important role in establishing a prosperous, fulfilling, inclusivist, and participatory Islamic space for both genders in South Africa.

The inter-generational contestation is largely voiced by Muslims of the older generations, particularly by those inclined towards a more traditionalist, ethno-nationalist, and purist interpretation of Islamic

identity. It was observed that older generations find the Muslim youth open to external influences that often cause cultural, religious, ethical erosion and the loss of ethno-religious identity.

Many Muslims of the younger generations and part of the older generation, from a more self-critical and optimistic line, however, have leveled criticism against this outlook. They see the younger Muslims as free from the old negative socio-psychological and ideological influences and underpinnings of the Apartheid and its legacy. Thus, they are socially more involved and open-minded towards diversity and equality. They are determined to protect and maintain their Islamic identity and in comparison to the older generations, are free of sectional ethnonational loyalties and more conscious of global Islam and the *ummah* (Pamir, int.).

According to Aamil and Aadil the generational change in this respect,, is a positive one. Younger generations are well educated and diversity-aware. “The boundaries and competition between different sectors and organizations of the Muslim community, thus, hopefully, will fade and disappear with younger generations of Muslims” (Aadil and Aamil, int.). In line with this outlook, Candan stated that the prevalence of inter-racial tension and racism across the country is now being challenged by inter-racial couples of younger generation Muslims in Johannesburg, Durban, and Cape Town but the number is still low and stereotypes and racist prejudices still rule the space (SA int.). Complementing someone on the fairness of his or her skin and straightness of his or her hair is still widespread. This is a legacy of the Apartheid, and has nothing to do with Islamic values and principles, she expressed (Candan, int.). According to Candan, this type of discrimination is becoming less and less influential among younger generations.

The last and the most prevalent type of tension that of the inter-racial has been growing in settled Muslim communities, especially the Indian Muslim community, and the emerging Black African Muslim community. With the end of Apartheid, the influx of African refugees –political exiles from Burundi, Rwanda, Malawi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo– led to an increase in the African Muslim population in Johannesburg and Durban. Kathrada reported in 2001 that 94% of these refugees in Durban, who were receiving help from local Asian Muslims, felt well treated by local Indian Muslims; “their major complaint was that they were not considered ‘true Muslims’ despite the fact that they were fluent in Arabic and several had trained as *Imams*” (Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 263).

Race relations in general remain a major challenge for the integrity and harmony of the Muslim community. The problem surfaced in the aftermath of the collapse of Apartheid. Accusing Asian Muslims of double-standards in their treatment of Black Muslims (in their view Asian Muslims treat Black Muslims and reverts like second class members of the Muslim community, *almost Muslim but not quite*), African Muslims began to voice their discomfort in the late 1990s. They have often expressed their desire to develop an indigenous South African form of Islam, which is not blind to the socio-economic and political realities. Towards this end, and with the aim of simplifying Islam, achieving a broader cross sectional appeal in the African society, and a greater African Muslim involvement they established the Organization of African Muslim Unity in 1997 (Dangor 2003: 218).

Based on the observations during the conduction of the field study and the available literature on the issue, it could be argued that there are six principle contributors and factors that bring about this tension and feed it:

(i) An exclusionary and segregationist outlook is embedded in the Indian culture. Social and ethno-racial prejudice, discrimination and colorism are nowhere more entangled than in the Indian politico-historical and cultural context. As Khan pertinently indicates: “India has one of the largest skin whitening industries in the world—worth more than \$450 million (about R6.1 billion). With a history of fair Gods and dark demons, an upper class made up of light-skinned Brahmins and a colonial history of white British power, India has transformed into a massive, colour-obsessed monster that consumes more than 233 tonnes of skin-whitening products a year” (Feb 2017).

(ii) Local people’s limited knowledge of Islam is also affecting the relations, predominantly through the expression of the rancor and antagonism of Christian Afrikaners who blame Black Muslims for their Indian craze and mimicry. In Soweto, where right-wing Christian extremists bombed a mosque on October 29, 2002, the negative association between Islam and Indians is quite tangible. Salama Motsoatose, a Sotho convert who embraced Islam in 1971, for instance, told a reporter that “there was a perception that Islam was an exclusively ‘coolie thing... It is difficult to be a Muslim because people think we have been colonized by Indians’. Her son Abdulazeez added that [...] ‘Blacks wonder why we are following an Indian church’ (*Mail & Guardian* 5.03.99)” (cited in Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 263-64). This illustrates the lack of knowledge about Islam among Afrikaners and how the privation and lack of knowledge create social pressure on Muslim Blacks.

(iii) Economic disparities hold great sway in inter-communal conversation and relations. A clear illustration of this was the objection of Black Muslims’ to the construction of the King Fahd Grand Mosque in an affluent suburb of Johannesburg by the Indian community at a total cost of \$15 million. ‘Uncle Sid’ Sadrudeen of Soweto, the campaign leader against the construction in 1999, named this profligacy as “financial apartheid,” since the resources that should be used in underprivileged and underdeveloped townships (where believers have to take busses to go to a mosque) were spent to build extravagant facilities for the rich (Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 265). “The project was put on hold even though the foundation stone had been laid by Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdel-Aziz during a state visit to South Africa in 1999 (*Mail & Guardian* 8.10.99)” (cited in Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 265). Trans-national and inter-national relief programs developed by the established Muslim community and organizations also cause discontent among Muslims in the townships. For them, charity starts at home and the needs of the home should not be subordinated to the plight of Muslims elsewhere in the world.

(iv) Different schools and understanding of Islam, particularly the contestation between the more traditionalist Islam of the established community (the Indian community) and the developing or modern Islam of the emerging community (the Afrikaners or indigenous Muslims and younger generations of the Indian, Malay, and other communities) also influence the tension. In this proliferation, the impact of Islamic revivalism in the 1970s, the continuing trans-nationalist attachments and the dependence of South African Islamic scholarship on the Indian subcontinent and the Middle East, the influences of new Jamaats, such as Tablighi and Shia, and the coexistence of

traditional *ulamas* and democratic/modern theologians are important factors. The result may be described as a veritable Islamic market that vies for clients as it continuously produces new offerings” (Tayob 2011: 22). The Islamic sector, in other words, is becoming more contested and diverse. Nonetheless, the traditionalist Indian and Malay *ulamas* are determined to hold onto their monopoly of the Islamic space. Their sectional loyalty, however, inspires and enforces further sectional loyalties and inter-sectional tensions and frictions.



F15: Soweto Mosque, photo taken during the field study by Servet Erdem.

In line with the thoughts of Imam Essa Al-Seppe, Sitoto argues that despite the numeric power and historic presence of the established community the ongoing rate of conversion and African migration will lead to a reversal of positions (2002: 7). This means that “the emblem of the Muslim identity” is going to “shift away from the traditionally ‘established Communities’ to the ‘emerging’ one as new markers of Muslim identity, that is, an identity that was more at home in Africa rather than one that sought shelter in a misplaced pan-Islamic rhetoric” (Sitoto 2002: 7).

(v) Afrikaner Muslims’ claim ownership and agency in the Islamification of South Africa, the *dawa* activism, and share of control over the religious space are also reasons for the tension. Many Islamic organizations, among them Indian ones, such as the Islamic Dawah Movement, IPCI, African Muslim Agency, Al-Ansaar Foundation, developed programs for and advanced their organizational activism in the townships. Despite good intensions and investments, however, the Afrikaner Muslim community still feel left-out in the decision-making processes (Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 265-66). According to them, established organizations continue to approach Afrikaner Muslims and townships within the narrow boundaries of sectional loyalties and dichotomies. For them, Afrikaners are will never be entirely Muslim; conversion remains a constant rehearsal never final. An African Muslim described how dependency and sectional loyalty-centric charity forced them to constantly change their Islamic identity:

We are the have-nots. They are the haves, they support us with food yearly, pay our electricity, and all that...On Tuesdays, you have to be a Tablighi and wear a long kurta and speak about the Hadith. Why? Because you need something from that guy. Then the following day you have to change from Tablighism to Sunnism because they are giving something. On Sunday, then you have to go to Soofie Sahib to ask for dholl and other things. If you are not a Soofie, he won’t give you...It’s a push. (Vawda 1994: 546)

(vi) Yet by far, the most important root cause for this dichotomy and hegemonic discourse, according to many Black African Muslims, is the legacy of Apartheid and the long history of exploitation they have been subjected to. This legacy not only continues to shape South Africans’ outlook to others but also make them hypersensitive in race interaction. Ahmad abu Abdalhakim al-Tshatshu argues that the history of African Muslims in the townships has been shaped by centuries of debasement and disappointment by the British colonizers and then the Boers. The freedom they were made to believe they gained is an illusion, they are not emancipated from the bondage of unemployment, poverty, and economic disparity. Thus, they “cannot afford domination in Islam, especially after the promise of freedom by the Qur’an” (al-Tshatshu 2018: np).

The Apartheid legacy is an outcome of what Goba conceptualizes as “Apartheid theology,” or Loubser’s (1987) earlier concept of “racial theology,” *i.e.*, “a foundational theological presupposition which has promoted the view that black people in general are innately inferior,” (Goba 1995: 191). What certain Muslim individuals and organizations of the settled community, particularly the Indian Muslims, often fail to consider is that this theology of Apartheid not only played a critical role in the construction of a denigratory outlook towards the Afrikaners but also consolidated exclusivist racial boundaries and promoted the politics of self/national-interest among South Africans (Goba 1995: 191). As Nicolson

puts it, Apartheid has left South Africans “with sectional group loyalties, rather than a common loyalty encompassing the whole national community. Sectional loyalties have collapsed even further into selfish interests” (1995: 169).

Religion’s particular role and importance in racial segregation, through the misuse of Christian theology and the promotion of the ideology of self-interest (an identitarian love, a corrupt form of love that sympathizes only with those who are religiously, racially, ethnically akin to you), was not completely in the negative. In fact, as Khan (2017) underlies whereas segregation by race formed deep chasms between communities, faith’s role as intra-communal social cement and as a means to fight against racial segregation became more eminent. True, the Apartheid theology propagated Christian theology to base and impose racial segregation and white supremacy but the majority of victims of this religious misappropriation were Christian Afrikaners, not Muslims, Jews, or Hindus.

This is most obvious in certain paradoxical consequences of the Apartheid policies of the NP. Despite the intensification of segregative politics, in 1961 Indians were granted permanent citizenship and began to benefit from free and compulsory education which brought about a transformation within Indian community thanks to a new generation of well-educated modernist Muslims and further economic mobility (Vahed and Jeppe 2005: 261). The contribution of these well-educated Indian Muslims to the anti-Apartheid struggle was important. Apartheid’s disbarment was not motivated by religion; this is why at the bottom of the pyramid were Blacks who were largely co-religionists to those that constructed the pyramid. Despite its misuse, religion did not greatly influence racial segregation during the Apartheid, which is why post-Apartheid South Africa inter-religious harmony suffers less tension than other parts of the world (Khan 2017). It is the legacy of Apartheid that inter-racial tensions have been always far more conspicuous and vociferous in comparison with inter-faith tensions in South Africa.

The problems and tensions that surfaced in the South African Muslim space were also mentioned by many Black African Muslims at the workshop and interviews. The main emphasis, apart from the inter-racial tension and conflict was that interaction between different Muslim communities is not at the level that it should be. Some participants also argued that an illusion of the comfort and peace was also to blame for the low level of interaction. In the opinion of these participants, at times, different communities find peace in disengagement and less dialogue possible and so begin to confuse disengagement and dis-interaction with peace and harmony. The majority, however, voiced similar reasons to the above-listed ones, for the low level of interaction and increasing contestation in among Muslim communities. Here, too, the Apartheid and its legacy were viewed as the principle culprit.

The main cause for this racism and the lack of dialogue is believed to be historical; the Apartheid and the Group Areas Act that by law segregated South Africans, restricted and prevented racial mix, controlled their mobility. This whole setup became so endemic in the community that different race groups started to conceive themselves and others through isolationist and estranging lens. Indians were favored as the second most advantageous class in the racial hierarchy with Africans at the bottom. This ethnic hierarchical structure existed for decades and it became difficult to see the world outside of one’s ethnic group. The Job Reservation Act controlled and dictated which racial group could

work in and apply for specific jobs. Indians became employers while Africans became workers in this system (Salib and others, int.) This, as many interviewees have pointed out, had continued for so long that it is still difficult for people to see one another as equal. The younger generations, however, are amenable to the politico-historical underpinnings and causes that led to this environment and will overcome it (Salib and others, int.).

Speaking about the tension between the Indian and African Muslim communities, Miran stated that the Apartheid maintained communities in absolute confinement for so long. Moreover, for centuries public presence of Islam and Muslims had been outlawed in South Africa. So reaching out to the local Africans had been legislatively, administratively, socially, and executively difficult, if not impossible, for well-established Muslim communities and organizations. “But, I think, referring to this as a failure, as some people do, is not just. Maintaining their Islamic identity in such a hostile and challenging environment is a success in itself” (Miran, int.).

Reflecting a more optimistic outlook, Aadil, a revert of African origin, reported that their principle focus is on their role in the improvement and advancement of the community and this role requires them to adopt a positive attitude, towards both their Muslim brothers and Africans. “There are serious assistance and services provided by well-established Muslim organizations and affluent individuals. Rather than concentrating on contestations we need to see how we can raise the number such organizations and individuals” (Aamil and Aadil int.). Nevertheless, they, too, maintained that it is imperative that Muslims all work together to bridge the gap between Muslim converts, established Muslims, and the wider African society. The construction of such solidarity requires cooperation between organizations; individuals as Aamil and Aadil reported, are already interacting and frequently collaborating effectively. Pursuant to this end, the Muslim organizations in the country should stop duplicating one another’s projects and programs and focus on their own competences and experiences.

One criticism that established Muslim organizations attract from the emerging Muslim community is the established organizations overseas charity and relief works. Bashir, a young Muslim activist and a member of a relief organization that helps Muslims beyond South Africa, maintained that there is no place for selection in the relief work and activism. He claims that relief work does not choose color, sect, school, or ethnicity. Thus, the need of a sector of the *ummah* should not be subordinated to or ignored because of the Muslim community here at home is also in need of help. “We better work towards developing more effective and interconnected national and transnational relief organizations, and grow in numbers and in financial power and influence so that we can help and support those in need both inside and outside, without neglecting or prioritizing one or another” (SA int.).

Idrees, a Muslim academician of Indian origin, noted that Indian Muslims of the affluent Gujarati group that control the Muslim space continue to interact with African society through the segregative vocabulary of the Apartheid. Money talks louder than personal merits and capacity: “A Black Muslim, in the mosques of those Indian groups, can be a muezzin but not an imam. The mentality is that since Bilal al-Habashi, a black Muslim who was a companion of the Prophet (SAWS) and the first Muslim who was assigned to perform *adhan* (the call to prayer), was a muezzin Black Muslims can only be

muezzins” (Idress int.). It takes time to change that mentality which has been constructed to divide, discriminate, and dominate. Unfortunately, the Indo-Pak Islam that dominates the Muslim space still cultivates and generates racial hierarchy and hegemony. Wealth and power are used as a means through which to control the space and others, to impose sectional loyalties, protect individual benefits and interests, and exert privileges and boundaries. National identities, loyalties, and attachments still dominate the space.

Miran made a similar point, underlying the link between individual ambitions and interests, the lack of an effective leadership mechanism, and the low level of inter-communal conversation. He stated thus: “One problem that the whole *ummah* has is that everyone wants to be a chief. We have too many leaders, in fact, more leaders than followers. A part of the problem is that our allegiance to the *deen* is weak. If everyone was sincere and loyal there would be no problem.” He further added that the problem of leadership is a worldwide phenomenon: “The intentions should be corrected; one’s objective should be only to please Allah. Then, 90% of the problems would be solved. To work for that and not for your personal gain or the benefits of your community but to please Allah” (Miran, int.).

Haroon, along with Behnam and Danish, the director of an Indian-Muslim cultural and educational center in Pretoria, pointed to another aspect of the Apartheid and its legacy. According to Haroon, despite all its inhumane, discriminative, and destructive structures and objectives, the Apartheid unintentionally encouraged communities to become more tightly knit. Although the aim was impoverishing, isolating, and destructive, the Apartheid brought about closer intra-communal relations, solidarity, and unity within non-white groups. This helped communities to protect and maintain their cultural, religious, and social identity (Haroon and others, int.). Others raised this point in the interviews and at the workshops, which can be conceptualized as “Apartheid’s positive collateral damage”. It should be emphasized, however, this “positive collateral damage” which brought communities closer together, also made them more reluctant to integrate and engage.

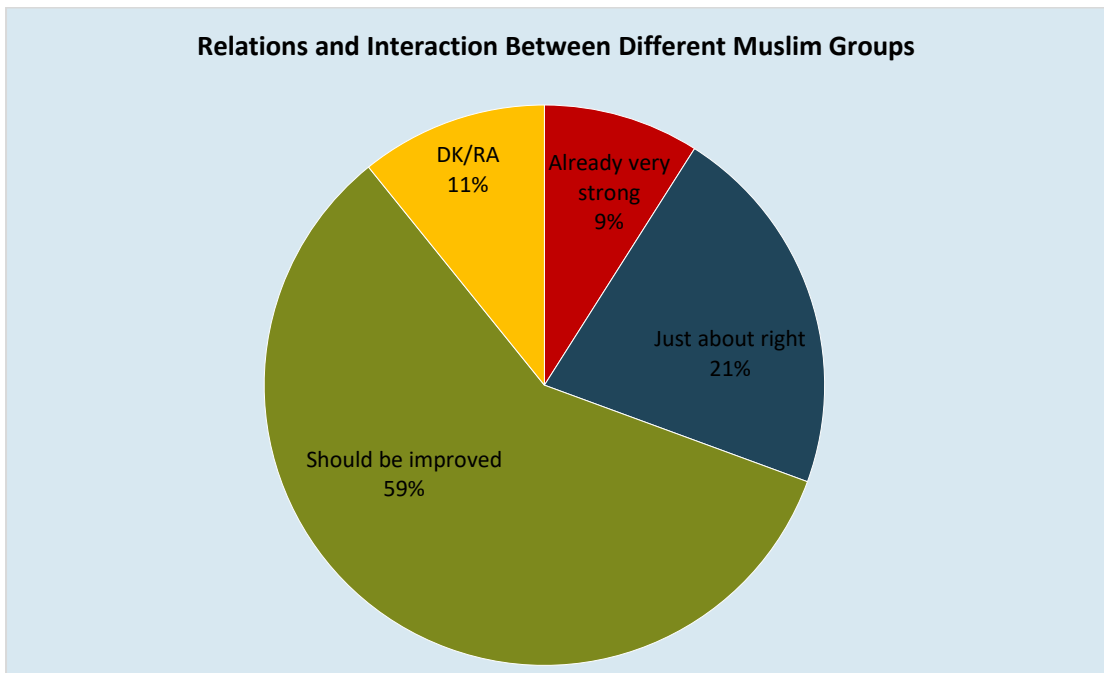
There were some different views on the inter-racial tension in the Muslim space. According to Khader, some political parties utilize the race card, accusing Indian Muslims of being racist. There is a prevailing belief that Indian Muslims are racist, predominantly among poorer Africans. In their opinion, the Apartheid favored Indians and they accumulated more socio-economical and educational capital than any other non-white group. This belief is consolidated, in particular, the Indian propensity to be competitive and self-reliant. In Khader’s opinion, such a competitive culture and ethics are not widespread among African people, due to the Apartheid and its impoverishing impact. With the end of Apartheid, African people began to consider themselves “entitled culturally, politically, and economically.” Yet, the damage was enormous and the recovery from its effects will take a considerable amount of time. Economic disparities, the visibility of Indian affluence and upward mobility, and a belief held by many Africans that they are entitled to better socio-economic conditions sets the ground for racial tension and discontent.

Fadhil, on the other hand, maintained from a self-critical position that established Muslim organizations have not done enough to reach out to Black communities and explain Islam to them: “At least not to a desirable extent, and that is one weakness.” Yet, the main culprit in inter-racial tension,

according to him is the legacy of Apartheid. In his view, the rise of African nationalism is also of importance. Black Nationalist politicians downplay the Indian contribution and so contribute to this narrative. It is important to note that Black Nationalism and xenophobia targets immigrant African Muslims more than established ones. Another reason is a lack of interest in social and political engagement among the Muslim youth. They are very much in pursuit of self-interest and material gain rather than social activism (Fadhil int.).

One important point to register at this stage is that the Black community is very diverse (Haroon and others, int.). There are a great deal of intra- and inter-communal conflict and tension within the African groups as in any other community. Thus it could be argued that the tension between the Indian and Black communities has certain organic, subsistent and immanent roots and causes, as well.

Two recently converted African police officers, Renas and Sejad, adopted a slightly different outlook than that of African Muslims'. They argued that between and within different groups of South African Muslims, there exist favoritism, nepotism, rivalry, and collaboration and solidarity. They also see the level of interaction between African Muslim communities and settled Muslim communities of Indians and Malays as sufficient. At the individual level, there is no problem but at the organizational level, interaction is limited. In order for some improvement it is necessary to enhance the capacity for cultural, social, and racial tolerance (Renas and Sejad, int.).

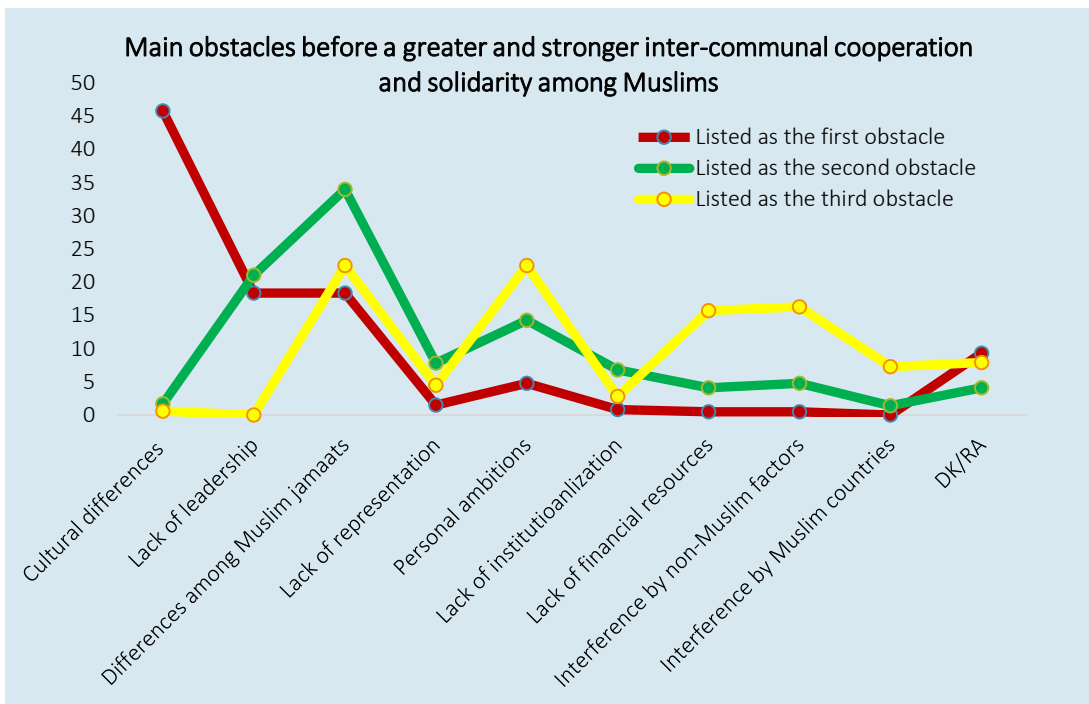


G41: The level of interaction and relations between Muslim groups in South Africa. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

The attitudes and views of Muslim respondents to the South African Survey were similar to those of the representatives and spokespersons of the Muslim organizations and scholars who participated in the workshop and interviews. When asked “How would you describe the level of cooperation between

different organizations and groups of Muslim Community in South Africa?” 58.6%, responded that relations and cooperation “should be improved” while 21.6% believed them to be “just about right.” More than 10% refused to answer or said they did not know and 9% stated that the inter-communal cooperation was already very strong among different Muslim groups and organizations (SA Sur.). In line with this, 74.9% of participants stated that it was better that South African Muslim community had ethnic, national, and cultural diversity while 15.3% took a negative stance towards such diversity and further 9.5% refused to answer or said they did not know (SA Sur.).

Participants were also asked to name three obstacles to greater inter-communal Muslim cooperation and solidarity in South Africa. Accordingly, “cultural differences” (45,8% listed it as the first obstacle), “differences and dividedness among Muslim jamaats” (34% listed it as the second obstacle), “lack of leadership” (18,1% listed it as the first and 21,1% as the second), “personal ambitions” (14,3% listed it as the second and 22,5% as the third), and “interference by non-Muslim factors” (16,3% listed it as the third) were observed to be the most popular obstacles in respondents’ view (SA Sur.).



G42: Three reasons listed as the main obstacle before Muslim solidarity and cooperation. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

The survey also indicated a very low level of OIC familiarity. When asked if they had heard about the Organization of Islamic Cooperation before, only 14.8% responded in the affirmative while 81.7% stated that they had not (SA Sur.). Of those who said who knew about the OIC, when asked about the need for a greater OIC role in representing the rights of Muslims and promoting cooperation and security among them, 79.2% responded they felt that a greater role was necessary while 11.7% believed it was unnecessary (SA Sur.).

A point that was less raised but voiced by some was the leadership issue. This issue, although voiced by many, particularly in the European context, appear to be less relevant in South Africa. Of those who participated in the workshop only two persons believed that an active leadership mechanism was important both in the protection of the rights and for more effective and influential Muslim representation and involvement. One of the participants to the workshop, Kamal, a journalist and a researcher, stated that a single body of representation goes against what post-Apartheid South Africa represents: “We have many Muslim leaderships and I think that it’s a good thing. It means that we are able to and allowed to have a diversity of thought. I do not believe we must have some kind of absolute unity. I don’t think that’s necessarily good. I think the call for unity is often a call for uniformity, which is a problem and fortunately, we don’t have that problem” (Kamal, work.). Thus, the capacity of Muslim individuals, communities, organizations, leaderships to accommodate and embrace that diversity will have a great impact on the kind of future that Muslims will have in South Africa.

During the workshop and the interviews, the most frequently voiced issues that participants believed that unite Muslims and bring them together were: (i) Islamic identity, the fundamentals of Islam, Islamic belief and mosques, the Qur’an and hadiths; (ii) halal; (iii) the Palestinian cause; (iv) Muslim media and charity organizations; (v) Islamic education. The issues that divide them and cause conflict, on the other hand, could be listed as follows: (i) Racism and sectional loyalties; (ii) economic disparity and inequality; (iii) sectarianism; (iv) the lack of dialogue among traditionalist/established/older *ulama* and Muslims and modernist/emerging/younger *ulama* and Muslims.

According to Davod, an activist from a Muslim foundation, in addressing these issues and problems, Muslim organizations are doing what they can but the real responsibility and work lies with individuals (SA work.). Laila stated that the majority of issues, at individual, organizational and communal level, stemmed from a lack of interaction and conversation. She claims that the project’s workshop fills an important gap, providing different groups with a platform to engage in a meaningful and constructive conversation of their problems and the future (Laila, work.). Other problems mentioned in the interviews and workshops included the need for transparency at organizational level, the adoption of a longer-term development perspective and greater organizational and institutional growth.

During the workshop and the interviews, participants highlighted four issues of concern that may cause further damage to unity, inter-communal relations and Muslim dialogue: (i) the lack of unity and representation, (ii) discrimination and the violation of rights, (iii) rising Islamophobia, racism, and negative media coverage, and (iv) educational challenges. Many respondents also mentioned a lack of organization, the low-level of political representation, a lack of financial resources, and personal ambitions as issues that were concerning.

In summary, three types of contestation and conflict (inter-racial, inter-generational, and inter-genderal) govern the South African Muslim space. Among these contestations, the impact and repercussions of inter-racial conflict is the most prominent. This issue is largely the result of segregation and exclusionary cultural traits, sectional groups loyalties and socio-economic disparities established by the Apartheid, different schools and understandings of Islam, the lack of knowledge

about Muslims and Islam, and the African Muslims' claim to agency and control over their own sector. Individuals and representatives of Muslim organizations have adopted a diverse outlook both to the issues of inter-racial tension and to the reasons for it. One thing is certain, however, as many voiced, the future of Islam in South Africa is intrinsically linked with the future of this tension.

According to those who expressed their concern regarding racism and discrimination among Muslims, to overcome this challenge and build a more equalitarian Islamic space in South Africa, the settled Muslim communities should reach out to both Muslims and non-Muslim Africans and bridge the gap between the two communities. Many Muslim individuals and organizations are already proactively involved and attempting to reach out through charity and relief work. However, it was observed during the field study that the emotional and psychological understanding and provision of moral and spiritual care and support, sympathy and empathy are more important, and will prove more effective than mere material help and relief. What black people of South Africa need, after decades of social and psychological abuse and impoverishment, is to be embraced. A brighter, equalitarian, and prosperous future for Islam and Muslims is heavily dependent on Muslims capacity to embrace their diversity and share not only material and economic power but also spiritual power. Charity work is not enough to heal the wounds. Sporadic philanthropic acts are not sufficient to bring about change. This is a process and requires a great deal of work and effort.

7 Future Projections and Final Remarks

This chapter outlines the main findings of the South Africa field study. However, a brief discussion on the future projections is first necessary as a substantial extent of the main findings concern the future of Islam and Muslims in South Africa. In addition, the chapter also comments upon the lessons that South Africa and South African Muslims provide to the *ummah*. The chapter concludes with some recommendations and suggestions of great importance for achieving a better future for South Africa and South African Muslims.

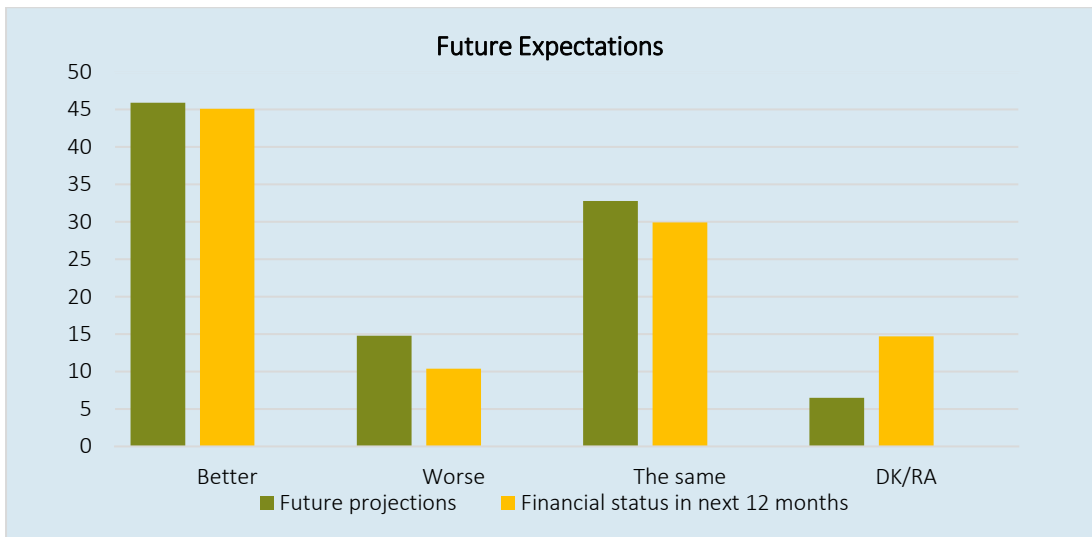
7.1 Future Projections

A prognosis of the future course of Muslim development in South Africa was also observed through direct questions in the workshop, the interviews, and the survey. Regarding projections for the future of Muslim communities and minorities in South Africa, the responses given by both those interviewed and the participants of the workshops demonstrated two overarching outlooks: The first was a fairly hopeful and confident outlook and thus will be termed as *optimistic*, the second a reservedly positive outlook and thus will be termed as *cautious*. It should be noted, however, that many of the participants adopted multiple perspectives, approaching certain issues in a more optimistic and positive manner while remaining more critical and cautious in some other. Those who projected a bright future for Muslims based their optimistic prediction on three main factors: (i) faith in Muslim potential, (ii) the trust and belief in the South African legal and political framework and democracy, (iii) and improvements in inter-communal conversation and dialogue, and the socio-economic and educational profile.

Those who adopted a more concerned and cautious, yet optimistic perspective, claimed that the future might be positive depending on internal factors (particularly if the Muslim communities resolved their internal conflicts, hostilities, and rivalries) and external factors (largely dependent on the Muslim communities' response to external challenges). In the opinion of many who expressed a concerned outlook, the Muslim communities' response to super-diversity, their efforts to meet the needs, problems, and demands of the elements that constitute this diversity, will greatly affect the future for South African Muslims.

On the one hand, the generally optimistic outlook of community leaders, experts, spokespersons, and activists resonated among survey participants with 45.9% of them projecting a better future for Muslims in South Africa with only 14.8% believing that the future would be "worse" than it is at present. The proportion of those who expected no significant change was also quite high, at 32.8%. On the other hand, 6.5% either refused to answer or said they did not know what the future holds for South Africa (SA Sur.). Participants adopted a very similar outlook when asked how they projected their financial situation in the next 12 months. Similarly to their projections on the long term future of Muslims in the country, 45.1% stated that they expect their financial situation in the coming 12 months

to be better than the present while 29.9% stated that they foresee no change. At the same time, a further 10.4% said that they expect their financial situation will change for the worse (SA Sur.).



G43: Future projections of Muslims in South Africa. GMD SA Sur., 2018.

A largely optimistic outlook found its resonance among the participants to the workshop and interviews. Many however, maintained that Muslim capacity and hard work will determine the trajectory and direction of the future. Fadhil, for instance, stated that the future might be bright if Muslim organizations and leaders manage to incorporate the emergent Muslims into the *ummah* and accommodate their needs and demands (SA int.). Another optimist, Miran argued: “The world is a global village now and anti-Islamic sentiments are on the rise. So, we have to work harder to protect our *deen*. I am optimistic about that; Islam has no room for pessimism. The ground is fertile for Islam here. All communities are very respectful and receptive to Islamic values” (SA int.).

The members of the executive board of a Muslim council in Cape Town stated that the integration of newly arriving Muslims is essential in order to protect the harmonious coexistence that South African Muslims have achieved. They also noted that in aiming to improve and consolidate inter-communal dialogue and cooperation, an umbrella body, the United Ulama Council of South Africa has been created and Muslim communities and organizations have now started to hold an annual national Muslim conference to evaluate their own performance and political achievements and contributions (Ghalib and others, int.). The members of the board reported that the next conference was going to be held in March 2019, and one of the key topics of the conference is likely to be Muslim Personal Law (Ghalib and others, int.).

According to Salib and others from the Soweto Muslim community, the future of Islam and Muslims in South Africa is very much linked to their effectiveness in *dawa* activism. Salib stated that *dawa* works need to be conducted in a more professional way and in a broader sense, “We need to collect numbers, we need statistics on the cost of *dawa* activities per person, and we need to develop statistics on how many people do not follow Islam after conversion or simply re-convert to his/her old faith” (Salib and

others, int.). “How many people became Muslims in the last 6 months, how much did that cost, how many of them are practicing Muslims, and the like, should be known and this sort of information should be at our fingertips” (Salib and others, int.). He continued as follows:

When a Black person becomes a Muslim in South Africa his/her whole world changes. All of a sudden in a predominantly Christian environment they have to pray five times a day, do dietary rearrangements and adopt an Islamic lifestyle, which causes a lot of commotion within families. There is a lot of pressure on new Muslims. What is lacking in *dawa* activism is, then, what I would call “after-care services” for new Muslims. True, it is important to bring them into the *deen*, which is the whole focus of the *dawa* work at the moment, but what is even more important is keeping them in the *deen*, so that they can grow in the *deen*. (Salib and others, int.)

Salib’s point on the lack of “aftercare services” for new Muslims is a relevant one and voiced by many other African Muslims. Certain organizations organize events that are called “*shahada* festivals” in the Black townships, where they bring together thousands of people in large venues and invite them into the *deen*. Hundreds of Black people are brought to Islam through these events, but after care programs and services are either very limited or not available at all (Salib and others, int.). Salib emphasized the importance of aftercare activities for new Muslims: “Islam is about the knowledge; you need to understand and grow intellectually. You must know what is meant when someone talks about *tawhid*; it is not a faith that you sing on Sundays and forget about it for the rest of the week. It encompasses all your life” (SA int.). For representatives of the Soweto Muslim community, it is imperative that after-care services and programs become a focal point in *dawa* work (Salib and others, int.).

Despite all the self-criticism and gloom caused by inter-racial tension and other issues that cause disunity and conflict between Muslim communities, however, many participants to the workshop, interviews, and survey expressed their optimism and faith in the Muslim capacity to overcome the challenges. Salib and others from a Black township, for instance, projected a brighter future:

We do not have equality but we have at least equity now. The silos are still here. New dispensation did not manage to abolish them. The law has changed but the frames and structures are still predominating. Inshallah, education will bring an end to this. And there are many Indians that think beyond all those racial categories, many good individuals that help us to grow and flourish as a community with all good intentions and as brothers and sisters. (SA int.)

Candan, too, adopted a more optimistic outlook regarding the future of inter-racial dialogue. She spoke thus: “Nelson Mandela once said that South Africa will never truly be free until Palestine is free. I don’t know if you heard about Ubuntu. Ubuntu is a concept in South Africa which we recognize in our constitution. It means ‘I am because you are.’ So Ubuntu recognizes Muslims, Christians, Jews, Rastafarians, everybody. I think we will continue to live together.” With growth there are challenges, she asserts. To overcome such challenges, communication and a sense of togetherness is essential (Candan int.).

To recapitulate on the discussions over the future of Islam and Muslims in South Africa, it was observed that South African Muslims tend to adopt two primal perspectives regarding their future: (I) an optimistic-confident one and (II) a cautious-reservedly positive one. Overall, it was deduced that

Muslim individuals and groups are optimistic and confident about their future in South Africa, providing that: (i) Muslims become more involved politically and socially; (ii) take a proactive role and contribute towards the solution of the problems that affect the wider society, such as crime and safety, unemployment and inequality; (iii) manage to enhance inter-communal dialogue and conversation; (iv) incorporate new elements of the Muslim community and include emerging communities and newcomers into the decision-making processes; (v) focus on the youth and education; (vi) involve in *dawa* and social activism more and raise public awareness about Islam; (vii) find a fine-tuned balance between sectarian, general, traditional, modernist, Indian, and African influences and elements; (viii) and curb their egos, and share the political, financial, and social power (SA work.).

7.2 Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

An inspiring success story: As Khan (2017) and many others have pointed out despite their modest share in the total population, Muslims have a strong historical presence and positive social and political involvement in South Africa. Thanks to the country's truly accommodating legal and political framework, their positive contribution to the struggle for true democracy and their organizational power and voice, South African Muslims enjoy untrammelled and unmitigated freedom of religious and cultural rights. They are visible, active and strong. Unlike in many other non-OIC Member States, their capacity and potential is not weakened by discriminative outlooks, Muslim-specific control measures, and surveillance mechanisms. The truly harmonious religious co-existence between Muslims, Hindus, Jews, and the Christian majority in South Africa is proof that a genuinely emancipatory and transformative political framework is beneficial to all. Moreover, in such a framework, Muslims will thrive and contribute greatly to their ("host") country and society.

Challenges yet to be overcome: Despite their powerful and well-organized presence in the country, South African Muslims face certain difficulties. In fact, as many voiced repeatedly and in unanimity, the future of Islam in South Africa will be determined by the capacity of Muslim individuals and organizations to overcome the challenges and difficulties caused by the legacy of Apartheid. Muslim individuals, organizations, and communities' dedication to accommodate and balance diverse and contested ethnonational, general, generational, denominational, and racial identities, positions, attachments, and visions, thus, will have a great impact on the trajectory and direction of Islam and Muslims in South Africa. If they wish to maintain the success story that they have created they have to accommodate and embrace the claims, needs, and rights of all general, generational, ethnonational, and racial elements in the South African Muslim community.

History is still the dominant story: The toxic history of the country, and its legacy, still dominates the social, economic, and political space and structures in South Africa. Issa, the protagonist of South African Muslim author Ishtiyaq Shukri's novel, *The Silent Minaret* puts this in a very captivating way: "The past is eternally with us." It is essential that Muslim organizations and communities develop efficient ways and strategies to respond and fight against the Apartheid's legacy. Promoting and protecting democratic values, especially in a political context that has been shaped by

disempowerment, alienation, and exploitation, requires a transformative politics. As Goba once felicitously put it “the legacy of Apartheid is not going to disappear just because we are moving to a new political dispensation. South Africans as a whole have been socialised in a context of intense political conflict producing abnormal levels of intolerance. How do we speak about democratic values of equal dignity when we are confronted by horrendous forms of human carnage?” (1995: 196). Muslims are not immune to the social, economic, and psychological maladies of the Apartheid and its legacy. They also, therefore, develop a transformative politics that is committed to equality, diversity, and social justice. Otherwise, history will remain the dominant story for Muslims too.

Accumulating and pressing inter-racial tensions and contestations: The threat of rising religious conservatism as a response to certain crises at national and international level may cause Muslims to construct new socio-economic, politico-cultural, racial and genderal regimes of Apartheid. Alternatively, established Muslims could potentially use liberated zones with their accommodating frameworks to the best advantage and welcome the emergent Muslims’ claims and contributions as equals and recognize their agency in re-imagining and constructing an indigenous Islam. Muslim communities and organizations should realize and acknowledge that the gulfs between races, ethnic communities, genders, and generations are all caused by similar patriarchal, paternalistic, hegemonic, and monolithic outlooks, construction, and configurations. Again, the main challenge for the established Muslim communities is to develop sensible strategies and empathetic engagement and to express a true Islamic response to class, gender and race divide. Toward this end, it is essential that Muslim organizations and communities invest in long-term rehabilitation and develop educational infrastructure rather than engage solely in immediate relief and charity.

Many lessons for the ummah, Muslim diaspora, and the global family: South Africa is a success story of Muslim communities. From the untrammled cultural and religious rights and liberties to an impressive level of visibility and representation, the South African case could serve as a model for other Muslim communities and minorities in non-OIC Member States. The fact that South African Muslims, despite historical and political challenges, remained true to their Islamic, cultural, and ethnic identity while developing an exemplary sense of belonging to South Africa and its society, is itself a success story that needs to be promoted globally. It needs to be promoted to prove that when accepted and not stigmatized, promoted and not merely tolerated, embraced and not simply hired, Muslims can positively contribute to their society. It also needs to be promoted to demonstrate that integration, multiculturalism, multiple loyalties and identities, harmonious coexistence, inclusive legal and political frameworks, and transformative politics are all the key elements of this story and many other similar success stories. A commitment to these will benefit all.

Annex: The List of Participants to the Interviews

	Pseudonym	Affiliation	Gender
1	Aamil and Aadil	President and Vice-president of a Muslim NGO, Egyptian and South African origin	Male
2	Bashir	A staff of a Muslim Foundation, of Indian origin	Male
3	Candan	An attorney and human rights activist of Turkish, Indian, and Malay origin	Female
4	Dadvar	An imam and <i>maulana</i> (teacher of Islamic education) of Indian and Malay origin	Male
5	Miran	Director of an Islamic education center, of Indian origin	Male
6	Fadhil	Director of a Muslim NGO, of Indian origin	Male
7	Ghalib, Zain, Vedad, and Taher	Representatives and coordinators of a Muslim NGO in Cape Town, of Malay origin	Male
8	Haroon, Behnam, and Danish	Co-directors of an Islamic education and cultural center in Pretoria, of Indian and Pakistani origin	Male
9	Idress	Academician in Pretoria, of Indian origin	Male
10	Jahan	Non-Muslim NGO and activist, of African origin	Female
11	Khader	President of a Muslim NGO, of Indian origin	Male
12	Lilan	A Muslim activist and student, of African origin	Female
13	Eldar	A director in a state institution, of Indian origin	Male
14	Salib and others	A Muslim NGO, activist, and businessman and a group of Muslim reverts in Soweto, of African origin	Male
15	Pamir	President of the Muslim Student Association and activist, of Malay and Indian origin	Male
16	Renas and Sejad	Two recently converted police officers, of African origin	Male

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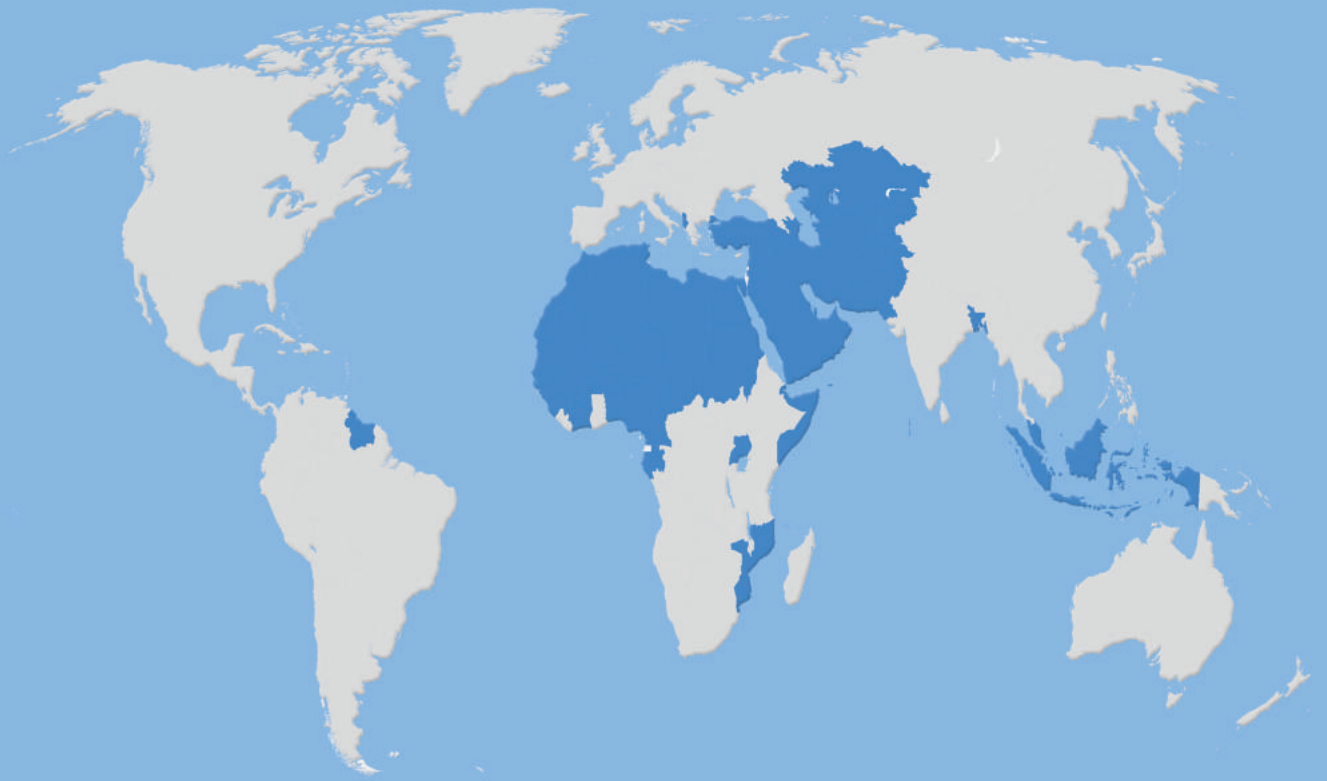
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