MUSLIM PERSPECTIVES ON THE PRACTICE OF UNVEILING AND ITS EFFECTS IN KILIFI TOWNSHIP, KILIFI COUNTY

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Religious Studies of Pwani University

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for award of degree in any other university or any other award

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family and the late Mr. Abdallah Mwambao from Majaoni secondary school for their support during my research period.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank Almighty Allah (S.W.) for granting good health and enabling me complete this work. I am indebted to my supervisors; Professor Dr. Hassan Mwakimako and Dr. Ali Hemed Awadh for their outstanding guidance towards writing my dissertation. I appreciate the efforts of members of the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Pwani University for their contribution towards the success of my studies at Pwani University.
ABSTRACT

Veiling as a practice has sparked a lot of debates among Muslims and non-Muslims alike. There are Muslim perspectives that exist on the practice of veiling. The pro-veiling and anti-veiling. The latter had a backing of the feminists and other people, some of whom started associating veiling with a form of slavery, backwardness and oppression to a woman.

The instruments for data collection comprised of questionnaires, oral interviews and focus group discussions. A total of 80 questionnaires were distributed to gather information. Three questionnaires were not returned. This represented a 3.75% of those who did not return the questionnaires. Respondents were ulamas, community elders, women who previously unveiled, women currently veiling, the Muslims and the non-Muslims. The data collected was analyzed and presented to form the basis of this dissertation.

The study found that fifty percent (50%) of the respondents believed that Muslim women were wearing the veil. They do so because it is a religious obligation. However, due to the influence of Secularization, desire to expose latest fashionable dresses and attracting men sexually, this situation has impacted the practice of veiling negatively among Muslim women. Based on the findings, it was suggested that Muslim organizations should play a vital role in sensitizing Muslim women to veil. This research seeks to establish Muslim perspectives on the practice of unveiling and its effects in Kilifi township, Kilifi County. Studies should be conducted to find out if Secularization, influx of women who do not veil or growth of higher learning institutions are responsible for influencing Muslim women to unveil. These are the gaps the study should address.
This research will enable the public and academic domain in general to understand the importance of adhering to the practice of veiling since a greater percentage of the respondents were of the view that veiling was a religious obligation.
ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

KEDA - Kilifi Education Development Association

KICOMA- Kilifi County Muslim Association

NUKEM- National Union of Kenya Muslims

P.B.U.H. - Peace Be Upon Him. This follows after the mention of Prophet Muhammad

S. W. - Sub’hanahu-wa- ta’ala, meaning, “May He Be Glorified”. This follows the mention of Allah.

SUPKEM- Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims
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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

*Aalim* - Muslim scholar

*Adhan* - Call for prayer

*Asbab-nuzul al-Quran* - Reasons for the revelation of the Quran

*Bid’a* - Innovation in the religion of Islam

*Bodaboda* - Public service motor-bike rider.

*Boshiya* - Veil that may be worn over a headscarf.

*Buibui* - Veil worn by Muslim women covering the head and body in a modest and respectful manner such that it prevents them from the lustful eyes of the public.

*Darsas* - Public Islamic speeches normally given in the mosque

*Dhul-hijja* - 12th month in the Muslim lunar calendar

*Eid al-Adh’ha* - Detonates Muslim celebrations being observed on the 10th *Dhul-hijja* according to the lunar calendar

*Eid-Al-Fitr* - The first day of the Islamic calendar month of Shawwal.

*Hajj* - Fifth pillar of Islam

*Hafla* - Muslim school graduation ceremony

*Iftar* - Evening meal after observing fasting

*Ikhwanul-Muslimin* - Muslim brotherhood (a Muslim Movement in Egypt)

*Imam* - A Muslim leader

*Isha* - Prayer conducted after sunset

*Itikif* - Seclusion or taking refuge in the mosque for the sake of Allah in anticipating reward from him.

*Jalabib* - Cloaks (veils)
Jamiat-Ansar ad-Din-Naijiriya- Group of Helpers of the Religion (A Nigerian Muslim Movement)

Juma prayer- Friday Muslim congregational prayer observed shortly after noon.

Kadhi- Muslim magistrate

Khimar- Headscarf

Khitma- Prayer/supplication performed upon a dead Muslim.

Madrassa- Muslim School operating on the basis of Islamic curriculum.

Maghrib- Prayer conducted during sunset

Mahaji-The Kauma tribesmen who converted to Islam and adopted a Swahili way of life

Mahema- A fish trap made from small wooden sticks

Mahram- A close relative whom a person cannot get married to e.g. mother, father, sister, and the like.

Masjid- Mosque

Maulid- Celebrations marking the birth of Prophet Muhammad

Mijikenda- Nine closely related but distinct peoples who live along the coast of Kenya and share a common linguistic and cultural heritage.

Muadhin- One who calls out Muslims to attend prayers in the mosque.

Niqab and burqa- Two kinds of dress that cover most of the face except for a slit or hole for the eyes.

Pilau- A local spicy food made from rice

Qasida- Songs in praise of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Ramadhan- Nineth month in the Muslim calendar

Sadaqa-Charity

Shirk- Unbelief
Sufism- Islamic mysticism

Tafsir- A branch of knowledge related to the translation of the Quran

Ulama- Muslim elites or scholar

Ustadh- Muslim teacher

Ziara- Going to the graveyard to pray for the dead

Zina- Infidelity; whose punishment is prescribed in the Quran as stoning to death.
CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

It has been argued that the veil more than any other Islamic practice, has become the symbol and evidence of violence Islam has inflicted on women.¹ For many people, the veiled woman symbolizes the oppression of women in Muslim cultures and provides proof that these cultures need to be saved.² Images of covered women have often been used to illustrate the “backwardness” of Muslims and subordination of women in Muslim societies.³ It has been observed that the impact of gendered Islamophobia have shown that Muslim women who wear hijab suffer discrimination in the work.⁴ Recent studies have identified significant barriers to veiled Muslim women accessing jobs.⁵ However, some Muslim women have continued veiling; leading many non-Muslims to question their motives for doing so. In fact, since September 11, 2001, it has been observed that the number of Muslim women who wear the veil has increased significantly⁶; in spite of facing greater scrutiny and suspicion due to a generalized fear of Muslims.⁷ The word veil literary means covering or concealing something.

It can be defined as a symbol or dress worn by Muslim women to offer them cover or protection from injury or lustful eyes of the public.\(^8\) It is an article of clothing, worn exclusively by Muslim women, which is intended to cover the body, head or face.\(^9\) In the Islamic context, it is a dress worn by Muslim women which accords them respect, modesty and morality.

Various forms of the veil have been adopted from the Arab culture in which Islam arose. Many of these garments cover the hair, ears and throat, but do not cover the face. For example, the Afghan \textit{burqa} covers the entire body, obscuring the face completely except for a grille or netting over the eyes to allow the wearer to see. The \textit{boshiya} is a veil that may be worn over a headscarf. It covers the entire face and is made of a sheet fabric, so the wearer is able to see through it. The \textit{niqab} and \textit{burqa} are also two veils of dress that cover the head except for a slit or hole for the eyes. This study focuses on \textit{buibui} as an aspect of the veil. It considers it as a dress that is not tight-fitting which accords a Muslim woman her modesty, decency and morality. It gives her dignity by hiding which men might find sexually attractive. A Muslim woman, by so doing, tends to fulfill an Islamic obligation. In this study, the word veil or \textit{hijab} shall be used repeatedly to represent \textit{buibuibi}.

It has been suggested that the practice of wearing a veil-uncommon among the Arabs prior to the rise of Islam-originated in the Byzantine Empire.\(^10\)

The veil is a symbol of Islamic piety, but it has been a cause of controversy. For example in 1989, a public school in Creil, a town in northern France, expelled three Muslim schoolgirls for refusing to remove the Islamic headscarves they wore to school. The expulsions were widely reported in France and in international media and were followed by other expulsions of other Muslim girls in towns and cities across the country, accompanied by growing community protests.\footnote{Paul Babie, Neville Rochow (2012): \textit{Freedom of Religion under the Bills of Rights, Religious Freedom in a Secular Society}: The Case of the Islamic Headscarf in France, University of Adelaide Press, pp. 216.}

The increasing common practice of veiling among Muslim women has stimulated a great deal of scholarly investigation and debate. The practice of veiling in this study is used to discuss the social standing of Muslim women. On one hand, some scholars contend that Muslim women occupy a subordinate status because of the veiling. Some empirical evidence lends support to this view, as many scholars in general have highlighted the traditional and gendered customs prescribed by Islam, most notably, the veiling and shrouding of Muslim women. The different interpretations of the Quranic laws suggest that it is not the oppressed ideological framework or religious belief system, but ideologies which are located at the level of social relations of gender which determine the subordination of women. On the other hand, a growing number of scholars disagree and propose that oppression and subjugation of veiled Muslim women may, in many regards, be overstated.\footnote{Brenner, S. (1996) “\textit{Reconstructing self and Society: Javanese Muslim Women and the Veil.}” American Ethnologist, vol. 23, pp. 673-697.} Scholars who have generated insider portraits of Islamic gender relations explain those Muslim women’s motivations for veiling can vary dramatically. Some Muslim women veil to express their strongly held convictions about gender difference, others are motivated to do so more as a means of critiquing Western cultures. It is this complexity surrounding the veil that leads to conclude that
the veil (or niqab) means different perspectives to different people among Muslims in
the society.

The study takes at its point of departure, the conflicting meanings of the veil. It also
takes to study the manifestations of these differences among Muslims, youth, men,
women and the religious scholars (ulama). Although the dominant gender discourse
among Muslim scholars strongly favours cultural practice, an anti-veiling discourse
promulgated by Islamic feminists has gained ground within recent years. This study
shall examine how these discursive disputes manifest themselves in the Muslim
community living in Kilifi Township.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Kilifi Township is known to be the home of variety of religions. There are Christians
of various denominations and Muslims who prescribe to Islamic law. Different
Muslims have different perspectives on the practice of veiling. This situation has led to
various discourses and debates among Muslim scholars on the practice of veiling. The
prevailing fraternity holds the view that veiling by Muslim women is obligatory while
on the other hand the anti-veiling, which is promulgated by the feminists, are of the
view that it is a matter of personal choice and individual sense of religiosity.\textsuperscript{13} The pro-
veiling Muslims further argue that unveiling leads to negative effects in the society.
Despite most Muslim leaders and parents insisting on Muslim women to wear the veil-
which they consider as most modest form of dress- and despite the message of
immorality on unveiling being constantly addressed in mosques and madrassas, it has
been observed that a number of young Muslim women from Charo wa Mae have
abandoned the strict adherence to the Muslim practice of veiling. This study was

\textsuperscript{13} Yildiz Atasoy (May 2003): Muslim Organisations in Canada: Gender Ideology and Women’s Veiling.
Source: Sociological Focus, Vol. 36, No. 2, pp. 143-158. Publisher: Taylor and Francis Ltd.
conducted at Kwa Charo wa Mae because it was this neighborhood in which these Muslim ladies resided. This study therefore seeks to investigate the factors that led to the abandonment of veiling to unveiling by these Muslim women in Kilifi Township.

1.2 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were:

i) To determine the different perspectives of Muslims on the practice of unveiling and its effects in Kilifi Township

ii) To establish the history of the spread of Islam in Kilifi town

iii) To discuss the discourse leading to some Muslim women’s preference to unveil

iv) To analyze the effects of the practice of unveiling in society as observed by some Muslim women in Kilifi

v) To determine the contribution of Muslim leaders, young women and men on countering the practice of unveiling as evident in Kilifi Township

1.3 Research questions

i) What are the different perspectives of Muslim women on the practice of veiling in Kilifi Township, Kilifi County?

ii) What is the history of the spread of Islam in Kilifi town?

iii) What is the discourse that led some Muslim women’s preference to unveil?

iv) What effects does the practice of unveiling have on society as observed by some Muslim women in Kilifi?

v) What role do the Muslim leaders, young women and men contribute towards countering the practice of unveiling in Kilifi Township?
1.4 Scope and limitations of the study

Apart from unveiling, there are other non-Islamic practices prevalent in Kilifi Township such as drinking of alcohol, prostitution, drug abuse, among other acts affecting Muslim women. However, this study intended to focus on Muslim perspectives on the veil and its effects in Kilifi Township, Kilifi County. This study was conducted in Kilifi Township specifically at Kwa Charo wa Mae locality because it is a place at which Muslim women who unveiled came from. It interrogated Muslim women involved in the practice of unveiling.

It is evident that that the concept of veil has sparked criticism and debates from among Muslims on its obligation; as this study will explain. Although there are a few people whose approach on the veil is influenced by the feministic ideas, majority of the Muslims contend that veiling is obligatory. The pro-veiling fraternity has expressed its perspective by giving justification that veiling is obligatory. This research focuses on the Muslim perspectives on the veil in Kilifi Township.

Since the research was carried out in Kilifi to get Muslim perspectives on the veil, the area in question appeared limited. Therefore, the study was confined within Kilifi town. This was because the group of Muslim ladies who abandoned strict adherence of veiling resided in Kilifi town. This implies that other areas of the County were not considered or affected by this research. This was due to the fact that covering such areas could have attracted more cost to the study such as travelling expenses, printing cost, internet cost, among other unforeseeable expenses. Therefore, this study concentrated in the area of Kilifi Township only.
1.5 Rationale for the study

It is significant to note that the practice of veiling is profoundly advocated for in Islam. Muslim women are encouraged to wear the veil as a way of showing modesty, morality and piety. This practice has to be explicitly understood by all Muslims as their rightful religious practice to be observed. Although the practice was encouraged, some Muslim women in Kilifi Township seemed to have abandoned this strict Muslim practice. The study provides an insight to the Muslims on the concept of veiling in the sense that it enables them to know the factors that make Muslim women to veil or unveil. This is important because it will enable them to prepare and come up with modalities that will help prevent unveiling among Muslim women in future in Kilifi. Besides, this study will enable other people interested in Islamic culture to know what factors have contributed to women to unveil in the society. It will also assist them to know various perspectives of the Muslims on the practice of the veil. No study in this topic had been conducted to investigate Muslim perspectives on the veil and its effects specifically at Kwa Charo wa Mae in Kilifi Township, Kilifi County. This will be an eye-opener to other studies of this nature.

1.6 Literature review

There is a view that the aftermath of September 11 has further intensified the West’s scrutiny of the Muslim female subjects in terms of veiling and dress codes, which have spurred intense Islamophobia in what it is portrayed as a “post-cold war reality of the demonization of Islam, and by implication, Muslims.”14 However, for Muslim women who adhere to Islamic dress codes, such as the hijab or headscarf, that visibly mark them as Muslims, issues of ethno-religious oppression in the form of

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Islamophobia are particularly salient. Muslim women construct their identities in opposition to the stereotypes they encounter in the media and in their public school experiences that portray them as “oppressed,” “backward,” and uneducated.¹⁵

Abu Lughod found that women’s oppression in Afghanistan was a justification for US bombing and intervention to make a case for the war on “terrorism”¹⁶ She further argued that because of the recent military gains in much of Afghanistan, women are no longer imprisoned at home. They can listen to music and teach their daughters without fear of punishment; and that the fight against terrorism is also a fight for the rights and dignity of women.

Haddad found that aftermath of September 11, the hijab has become ‘a signifier of an identity that defies Western demonization of Islam and the debasement of its women’.¹⁷ More so, it has become a symbol of resistance and solidarity, and in many cases an expression and affirmation of an American Muslim identity. An easily discernible marker, the hijab for Muslims serves as a means to assert visibility of a growing Muslim community.

The question of whether Muslim school girls should be allowed to wear veils to school has become a heated political controversy in most secular education institutions of Western European countries. In France, three North African Muslim teen-ager girls were not allowed to attend high a secular school in Creil, a suburb of Paris, if they insisted on wearing the veil which was associated with the most conservative Muslim societies. This does not exclude the fact that veiling was also being practiced by women

in other non-Muslim societies. This state of affairs raised questions concerning the veil's meaning for Muslim women.\textsuperscript{18} The confrontation set off a furious debate over civil rights and the separation of church and state in France. For the first generation of Muslim feminists, the veil was the most powerful symbol of women's belittling. Consequently, giving up the veil became the most visible symbol of their rejection of patriarchy and their assertion of their rights as full participants in society.

Although some generation of Muslim feminists used the veil as the most powerful symbol of women's belittling and ultimately becoming the most visible symbol of their rejection of patriarchy and assertion of their rights as full participants in society, this scenario was not applicable to the Muslim women who unveiled at Kwa Charo wa Mae. Their unveiling may have been triggered by other factors revealed in this study.

El Saadawi found that women’s power is the power of seduction, of a sexuality which is seen as irresistible and disruptive. As a source of corruption and jeopardy to the social order, women's sexuality must be held in check, and women confined in a separate sphere, excluded from the world of men.\textsuperscript{19} Mule noted that identity of the good Muslim woman translated for the educated Senegalese woman as the bonne traditionaliste. Assuming this identity became one means of asserting a careful measure of autonomy, as in having a career, while still accepting traditional obligations of religion and family.\textsuperscript{20}

There is resemblance in what happened to the Senegalese women and what happened to the women at Kwa Charo wa Mae. This is so because Muslim women who unveiled at

\textsuperscript{18} John A. Williams (1979): \textit{A Return to the Veil in Egypt}, in \textit{Middle East Review}, vol. 11, pp. 49.


Kwa Charo wa *Mae* would be seen accepting traditional obligations of religion and family. This implies that when it came to celebrating *Eid Al-Fitr*\(^{21}\), they would be seen wearing the *buibui* as they engaged other Muslims in social interactions.

When applying this distinction between autonomy and esteem as two sources of social status to the literature on Egyptian women, the study found out that wearing the veil represents neither women's independent action nor patriarchal coercion *tout simple*. Rather, it reflects women's efforts to gain or maintain esteem within a patriarchal society in which possibilities for autonomy are exceptionally and increasingly limited. Rejecting the negative image of women's "pseudo liberation" associated with Westernization, young women find in the veil a powerful alternative: a positive identity and source of esteem sanctioned by Islam. The dramatic symbol of the veil thus serves to refocus discussion of women's status, which, we argue, is more complex and contradictory than has theretofore been recognized.\(^{22}\)

According to a study on Egyptian women reflecting women's efforts to gain or maintain esteem within a patriarchal society, there seemed to be no competition to gain such an esteem when compared to the situation at Kwa Charo wa Mae. This was because the environment in which the Muslim ladies at Kwa Charo wa Mae were living had not reached the level or capacity of thinking along the feministic lines. Rather, their unveiling must have been triggered by other factors. It is these hitherto unknown factors that this study established to explain what made these ladies to unveil at Kwa Charo wa Mae. For example, it is argued by people that because men define the public world as their own space, women are considered intruders in it. They therefore had to

\(^{21}\) Muslim celebration observed on the first day of the month of *Shawwal*. It marks the end of *Ramadan*, which is a month of fasting.

veil because harassment of women in the street exemplifies men's attempt to reaffirm their own boundaries of space and identity.

The suggestion that the veil empowers women to invade public space "with full force" is an overstatement. It is more realistic to see the veil as offering women a practical solution to the problem of men's harassment. It allows them to cross gender boundaries without being penalized as intruders. At the same time, however, it legitimizes and strengthens those very boundaries. In the invisibility it purports to give women in men's public sphere, it symbolically reaffirms that women's proper space is in the home. Abdel-Kader found that the new veil, so proponents argue, is intended to minimize social and economic differences among its wearers. She reiterates, in this respect it is consistent with the egalitarian spirit of the Islamic movement.\textsuperscript{23} Mervet points out that the wearing of veil overcomes feelings of inferiority in an urban world of fashion.\textsuperscript{24}

Jastrow argues that the spirit of justice is not absent, but it shows itself in a crude way in punishments that seem to be arbitrary and that are dictated from a desire to humiliate offenders and to impose bodily tortures. They impress one as survivals of earlier laws of pure vengeance. It is evident from this law that the covering of the head and the veiling of the face was originally designed to mark a woman as the property of a man: and the veiling of the bride for which we also have in Assyrian as additional evidence the metaphor « veiled bride » is therefore, another illustration of the same motive. Wives and daughters-as a man's chattels which is the prevailing view throughout this


\textsuperscript{24} Mervet Hatem (1986) : \textit{The enduring Alliance of Nationalism and patriarchy in Muslim personal status laws: The case of Modern Egypt}, in Feminist Issue, Vol. 6, pp. 19.
Code- are to be distinguished by the head covering or veil, when they appear in public as a warning to all to keep their hands off.  

Although this tradition existed in ancient Assyria, this illustration does not match with what people think or consider when a woman has veiled. When she veils, she normally sends a message to the public that she does so because it is a religious requirement.

In September 7, 1994, a 12-year-old girl, Emilie Ouimet, a recent convert to Islam, was sent home from a secular school for not complying with the request to remove her hijab. Since then, the hijab has attracted much attention in the Canadian media, galvanizing around an incident involving the suspension of a student from a public high school in the Montreal area. This incident raised discussion among the public and was framed by the larger question of tolerance, which often sets the context for reading media images as either positive or negative forms of representation. It should be noted that this incident was different from the one that took place in Creil, France in which three North African teenage girls were also expelled from school because of wearing the veil. The difference is that in Creil, this incident gained national attention and caused a storm of controversy among politicians, the press, and the public where as in Montreal the principal of the school was reported as saying, "the wearing of a distinctive sign, like the hijab or neo-Nazi insignias could polarize the aggressivity of students". In all reports of the incident, the principal's decision was supported fully by the parents' committee, which agreed that to allow the hijab to be worn in school would be to favour the rights of one individual-or group of individuals-over all other students.

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who had to abide by the dress code in effect. As reported in the media, this incident raised two major concerns. First, right to public education was denied to a student on the basis of her religious dress. Second, the question of what is to be "tolerated" in a multicultural society became a crucial issue. The discourse of individual rights, community responsibility, and the relation of religion to the state were deeply embedded in Canadian reports of the incident.

Reflecting the situation at Kwa Charo wa Mae in Kilifi and what happened in Canada and France (Creil), the matter at Kwa Charo wa Mae, did not attract attention of the politicians, press or school committee for that matter. It took a domestic approach whereby members of the public, especially Muslims, were shocked to see Muslim ladies abandoning their strict adherence to veil. People were also shocked to find that most of such ladies had attained madrassa education and were familiar with what should be observed by Muslim ladies in relation to veiling.

According to Jackson, Kenneth E. and Monk-Turner, Elizabeth, when asked what the hijab means, Egyptian women focus on religious reasons and Yemeni women emphasize a cultural or modesty understanding. When probed further about their understanding of hijab, Egyptian women split between religious and gendered explanations. Significant numbers of Egyptian women report the hijab to be a symbol of oppression. On the other hand, Yemeni women rarely offer a gendered understanding of the hijab; instead, they focus on religious, domestic, and psychological reasons for wearing the head scarf.27

This study investigated if Kilifi Muslim women decided to unveil themselves due to the above reasons or not.

1.7 Theoretical framework

This study bases its theoretical framework on the concept of a functionalist theory which is interested in how society remains stable. In addition, it also bases its theoretical framework on the theory of Radcliffe-Brown which is concerned with social structures. The study begins discussing the functionalist theory before discussing Radcliffe-Brown’s theory.

Functionalist theory is a field of sociology which is based on the assumption that social systems such as society and the family actually exist, that culture, social structure, statuses and roles are real.28 The society contributes to the formulation of social policies which required certain amount of knowledge about that society.29 Society being the largest organization of the individuals has its problems in every field. It is through the study of sociology that the scientific study of society has been possible.30

According to the functionalist theory, there are factors whose existence in the society contributes to the stability of that society. Society is like a body in which component plays a necessary part for its functionality and survival. None of the components can function alone. There must be inter-dependency of such components in order for stability and survival of that organism to be possible. Examples of such components include liver, heart, kidney, among others.

29 http://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/the-importance-of-sociology-to-society-1219-words/8490
30 https://www.thoughtco.cm
Likewise, in the society, certain factors must exist in order for it to remain orderly and stable. For example, education cannot be pursued if there is no society or people to pursue it. Economy cannot be felt if society does not exist. It is the society that contributes to the growth of economy or its downfall. Likewise, religion is another factor that contributes to the stability of society. It plays a significant role in encouraging its followers to uphold love, peace, harmony and co-existence among people in the society. This makes the society stable. It is the same religion that encourages its faithful i.e. women to put on the veil; though there are different perspectives regarding the practice of veiling. It is therefore in the light of the functionalist theory that this research chooses to base its theoretical framework on.

Islam strongly emphasizes on decency and modesty among the Muslims. Dress code is part of the teachings of Islam. On this issue, there are two verses in the Qur’an which address mankind about decency and hijab:

The first verse instructs the Prophet Muhammad [P.B.U.H.] that Muslim men should not lustfully look at women other than their own wives; and in order to prevent any possibility of temptation, they are required to cast their glances downwards. The verse states:

Say to the believing men that: they should cast down their glances and guard their private parts (by being chaste). This is better for them.31 This is known as “hijab or veil of the eyes”.32

When you see a Muslim casting his/her eyes downwards when he/she is talking to a member of opposite sex, this should not be considered as rude or an indication of lack of confidence-he/she is just abiding by the Qur’anic teaching.

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31 Cloaks (veils)
32 Quran 24:31
After “hijab or veil of the eyes” came the order describing the dress code for women:

...and not to display their beauty except what is apparent, and they should place their *khumur* i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms, etc, over their bosoms...\(^{33}\)

The verse goes on to give the list of the *mahram*\(^{34}\):

Forbidden to you (for marriage) are your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your father’s sisters, your mother’s sisters, your brother’s daughters’ your sister’s daughters, your foster mother who gave you suck, your foster milk-sucking sisters, your wives’ mothers, your step-daughters under your guardianship, born of your wives to whom you have gone in- but there is no sin on you if you have not gone in them (to marry their daughters), -the wives of your sons who (spring) from your own loins, and two sisters in wedlock at the same time, except for what has already passed; verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.\(^{35}\)

Alfred Radcliffe Brown saw institutions as key to maintaining the global social order of a society, analogous to the organs of a body. His studies of social function examine how customs aid in maintaining the overall stability of a society. He argues that natural science is the systematic investigation of the structure of the universe as it is revealed to us through our senses. This implies that there are certain important separate branches of science, each of which deals with a certain class or kind of structures, the aim being to discover the characteristics of all structures of that kind. For example, atomic physics deals with the structure of atoms, chemistry with the structure of molecules,

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\(^{33}\) Quran 24:31

\(^{34}\) A person to whom is not permissible to marry.

\(^{35}\) Quran 4:23
crystallography and colloidal chemistry with the structure of crystals and colloids, and anatomy and physiology with the structures of organisms. Therefore, there is place for a branch of natural science which will have for its task the discovery of the general characteristics of those social structures of which the component units are human beings.36

Religion is therefore among the social systems or structures whose existence in the society helps to bring order, sanity and righteousness; due to what it advocates for. When properly adhered to, the behaviour of human kind is expected to change significantly towards morality. Religion therefore highly considers the practice of veiling as a factor that contributes towards morality in the society. This in turn will make the society stable and peaceful. Therefore, it should be encouraged to be followed in order to advocate its followers to practice veiling.

1.8 Hypothesis

Although there are divergent views expressed by Muslims on the concept of veiling as regards to its obligation and practice, this research sought to test the hypothesis that veiling is a religious requirement which must be observed by Muslim women, a concealment (stara) for Muslim women, a shield (kinga) against immorality and a fashionable dress.

1.9 Methodology

Data for this study was collected through oral interviews with different categories of respondents which included females who veiled and those who did not veil, madrassa

teachers and mosques imams. Focus Group Discussion was also held and their views were also collected.

1.9.1 Questionnaires

Data collection was done by use of questionnaires to gather information from the target group. This instrument was used because it was flexible, quite easy to tabulate and was easily administered within a short period of time. The questionnaires were designed to gather information on whether majority of the Muslim women were wearing the veil, sought their opinion on Muslim women putting on the veil i.e. whether the veil is a cover/concealment (stara), a “fashionable dress”, a shield (kinga), a religious requirement/obligation, reasons why some Muslim women abandoned wearing the veil, and vice versa. It also sought what best describes their view about women who wear the buibui and those who do not wear it. The questionnaires were distributed in neighbourhood namely Kasarani, Mtaani, Mnarani, Kwa -mwango, Kibaoni, Kisumu-ndogo and Kwa Charo wa Mae. The respondents were asked to fill the questionnaires that were collected and used for analysis and interpretation of the responses. A total of eighty questionnaires were distributed. Three questionnaires were not returned. This represented about 3.75% of those who did not return the questionnaires. Random sampling was used to gather information.

1.9.2 Oral Interviews

Interviews with key informants was conducted and included Islamic consultants of ten (10) ulama, ten (10) community elders, twenty (20) women previously unveiling and twenty (20) women currently veiling. The ulamas were interviewed because they had knowledge of Islam, hence they would give their perspectives on the practice of veiling. The community elders were interviewed because they were expected to give
their views on what people feel on the ground about the practice of veiling. Women who were previously unveiling were also interviewed because it was expected that they would share their experiences about the period they were unveiling. These narrations would highly reflect on their emotions and feelings during the time they were unveiling. During interviews, observation was conducted from amongst women participants in order to get the feelings on the issues. Some of the respondents that were interviewed were recorded using a mobile phone recording system and their responses were gathered for further analysis and interpretation.

1.9.3 Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

Data was also collected by using group interviewing technique of FGDs. They comprised of ten (10) old Muslim women of forty years and above. They were important because it was anticipated that they would have seen a lot in their advanced ages in terms of veiling, hence in a better position to give their insight. Ten (10) madrassa teachers were also interviewed through FGD. This was because they were considered to be versed in the Islamic knowledge regarding the issue of the veil. They were asked to describe their attitude and views about veiling. I recorded their narratives as they were articulating their views. Here, the researcher interviewed the mudir i.e. headteacher of the institution and other asaatidhatul-madrassa (teachers). This specific method of interview was used because it was anticipated to be the most suitable way of collecting data from the population under study.

1.9.4 Sampling procedure and technique

The study employed the above technique. Informants were recruited through purposive and snowball sampling technique. Purposive sampling allowed researcher pick study subjects because they are information rich and possess required characteristics with
respect to the study objectives. The informants picked made representation of the larger informants or target population. In this study, interviews with key informants were conducted. It targeted Islamic consultants of ten (10) ulama, ten (10) community elders, twenty (20) women previously unveiling and twenty (20) women currently veiling. FGDs were comprised of ten (10) old Muslim women of forty years and above and ten (10) madrassa teachers; including their mudir i.e. headteacher. In order to find other informants with similar characteristics, snowball strategy was employed with the initial informants recommending to the researcher others having similar characteristics and willing to participate in the study.

**Table 1:** categories of sampled respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of sampled respondents</th>
<th>Total (N)</th>
<th>Sample (N)</th>
<th>Percentage of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Ulama</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 community elders</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 women previously unveiling</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 women previously veiling</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 FGDs</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 madrassa teachers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**1.10 Conclusion**

The study of veiling practices and dress styles adopted by Muslims in different parts of the world gives us important insights into how religion is lived and translated into everyday practices. It has become apparent that there are many different and contested perspectives on veiling practices among Muslims. There are different perspectives why Muslim women adopt veiling practices. This study sought to establish why some
Muslim women at Kwa Charo wa Mae who were known to have come from an Islamic religious background decided to unveil.
CHAPTER TWO
HISTORY OF ISLAM IN KILIFI TOWN

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the origin and existence of Islam in Kilifi town. It approaches the discussion along three angles, firstly, a discussion of the earliest settlement of Muslims in the areas of Mtsanganyiko, Kilifi, Mnarani and Takaungu, Secondly, a discussion on the biographical sketches of some earliest individuals who settled in Kilifi and the earliest Madrassa teachers. Thirdly, a discussion based on the existence of Islamic institutions including religious organizations which played an important role of Islamization of the communities in Kilifi. The study compares it with the role played by both Ikhwanul-Muslimin (Muslim Brotherhood) and Ansar-Ud-Deen Naijiriya in the Islamization of Muslim communities of Egypt and Nigeria respectively.

2.1 Islam in Mtsanganyiko

Mtsanganyiko is a significant area that contributed to the spread of Islam in Kilifi. The word Mtsanganyiko is a local term derived from the Giriama tribe which literary means a mixture. In this context of Mtsanganyiko, it can have several meanings:

i) a mixture of various tribes from different places that used to converge there for trade.

ii) a mixture of waters from two rivers namely river Njora and river Ndzovuni,

iii) a mixture of goods that were brought from different areas and exchanged for trade.

iv) a mixture of two types of soils, the loam and sand soils.37

37 Verbal interview with Abdallah Tsuma Mwambao in Kilifi on 14th November, 2015.
The area is situated on the western side of Kilifi where the Kilifi Creek ends. It is approximately ten kilometers from Kilifi town. The area was a potential trading centre for many tribes who were living in Kenya and those from outside Kenya. The Giriama, the Chonyi, the Kauma, the Arabs, the Indians, among others used to trade at Mtsangayiko. Goods from Arabia such as clothes, daggers, dates, and others were being exchanged for goods from the local area. When Mombasa developed its own grain plantations during the 1840’s, it continued to be dependent on Mijikenda supplies, and all of the Mtsanganyiko’s considerable exports were from Mijikenda, principally the Giriama. This shows how significant the area was in regards to the trade activities that were taking place among various communities. In this area, trade in grain was reciprocal. In years of surplus, Mijikenda exported grain, and in famine years they imported it, purchasing it in exchange for ivory, copal or rubber. Other agricultural produce were also traded, although none in major quantities. Beans, castor oil, sesame seeds and tobacco were some of these lesser crops. Slave trade also used to take place at Mtsanganyiko. Slaves were being captured and taken to Mnarani (presently Mnarani ruins) where they were imprisoned. From Mnarani, they were ferried to the slave market in Zanzibar and ultimately shipped to other parts of the globe.

In addition to the trade activities, the Kauma also found it necessary to come and trade at Mtsanganyiko. They left the kaya and moved there to participate in the growth of trade. They were converted to Islam and adopted the Swahili way of life. They became known as the mahaji.

38 Verbal interview with Boniface Chivatsi Ngala at Mtsanganyiko on 3rd January, 2016
41 The term was derived from Arabic word, hajja, implying one who has made the journey to Mecca for
The spread of Islam at Mtsanganyiko was attributed to, among other factors, the conversion to Islam by the *Kauma* tribe. They embraced Islam through interaction with Arabs in trade relations and intermarriage. Their ancestors’ tombs still lie there today. Sacrifices were offered at this place as *sadaqa* (charity) to the people who attended this ceremony known as *ziara* (ceremonious visit to the graveyard). A famous family known to conduct the ceremony was the *Matari* family. They used to visit the sacred grooves. The ceremony is still being observed today annually. However, it is only a few people and friends of the *Matari* family who still attend it. This is because there emerged a group of Muslims who denounced it; citing it as *shirk* (polytheism) in Islam. However, in spite of the above denouncement, the ceremony contributed to the Islamization of the community in Kilifi. This was because people related to each other in different ways during this function. They also got a chance to feast from the sacrificed animals during this ceremony. Hence, they became attracted to it and ultimately joined Islam.

There were a number of factors that contributed to the end of this trade at Mtsanganyiko. They include the abolishment of the slave trade in 1833.\(^{42}\) As a result of this development, the market for the slaves became non-existent. This state of affairs posed a big blow to the trade since some of the highly valuable commodities were slaves. No one ever thought for a moment that such a booming trade was going to end. Another factor that led to the collapse of the above trade was that, the area experienced a heavy downpour which eroded most parts of the area. The natural physical set up of

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\(^{42}\) Verbal interview with Boniface Chivatsi Ngala at Mtsanganyiko on 3\(^{rd}\) January, 2016.
the land became deformed. As a result, this made the area undockable for the dhows that used to come there.\textsuperscript{43}

With the collapse of the trade at Mtsanganyiko, some local people moved to other areas of the region in pursuit of new life. Some people went to Kilifi town with their families. It is difficult to get the names of the first lot of these people who settled permanently in Kilifi. This is because such movements took place long time ago. Nevertheless, some biographical sketches of their generations that came later were obtained through oral interviews with some people who knew their whereabouts. One of them was Amani Rubea Amani. Rubea earns a living through fishing. He used to go for fishing with other fishermen like Hamad Mzee Hamad\textsuperscript{44} who would use mahema to trap the fish where as Rubea would use a fishing net.

2.2 Islam in Kilifi town

Having explained the history of Islamization of Mtsangayiko, it is equally important to know how Islam spread in Kilifi. It should be noted that the significant factor that led to the institutionalization of Islam in Kilifi was intermarriage. This is because those people who got married to the Muslim families earlier on started procreating children who were born as Muslims. For example, those people who came to Kilifi from Mtsanganyiko after the demise of the trade were predominantly Muslims. In addition, the people who left Mtsanganyiko and settled in Takaungu were Muslims. These two groups of Muslims later came to live in Kilifi.

Other factors include building of mosques, good relations that prevailed between the Arabs and the local people, the power of Islam itself, to mention but a few. On

\textsuperscript{43}Verbal interview with Boniface Chivatsi Ngala at Mtsanganyiko on 9\textsuperscript{th} February, 2016.
\textsuperscript{44}Verbal interview with his son, Zaid Hamad Mzee in Kilifi on 2\textsuperscript{nd} November, 2016.
conversion to Islam, the Mijikenda abandoned their traditional beliefs that were against the teachings of Islam. The local people of Kilifi adopted the Islamic etiquettes. The Arabs culture of veiling readily influenced the local people to embrace and practice it due to the mutual interactive activities that existed between them and the local people like trade and in marriage relations. When they intermarried, the generations that emerged afterwards were Muslims by birth and adopted Muslim names. This is the reason why some names of the local people living at Kwa Charo wa Mae have names that are mixed with Arabic, local names like, Ali Kahindi, Suleiman Chitole, Said Unda, Mohammed Katana, among others.

2.3 Some important personalities who spread Islam in Kilifi

There are also important personalities who came to Kilifi and contributed to the spread of Islam. These personalities include Abdulatif Mohammed Basharahil, Ali Mohammed Shallo, e Bakari Salim Ngao, and Mwango Rajab Mwango. Their brief biographical sketches and how they contributed to the Islamization are as follows:

2.3.1 Sheikh Abdulatif Mohammed Basharahil

Abdulatif Mohammed Basharahil (1920-1997) was among personalities who contributed in the Islamization of communities in Kilifi. He settled in Kilifi; having relocated from Mnarani in the 1960s. He used to perform his daily prayers at Masjid Khairat e in Kilifi. He operated a hotel business in town near the main bus terminus till when he passed on in 1997. He was a resident of mtaani (neighbourhood), Kilifi. He propagated Islam by influencing some of employees working in his hotel to embrace Islam. One of the employees who converted to Islam was called Tabu Ndundi Chula. After his
conversion, he adopted a Muslim name as Khamis Ndundi Chula. He embraced Islam in 1996 in Kilifi.\(^{45}\) Currently he is employed at Masjid Khairat as a general cleaner.

### 2.3.2 Ali Mohammed Shallo

Ali Mohammed Shallo (1910-1975) also influenced some local people to join Islam.\(^{46}\) His contribution was due to the interaction in trade relations with the Kilifians when he moved from Roka and settled in Kilifi in the 1950s. When he arrived, Shallo started a transport industry. He supplied building-sand, coral blocks, among other building materials to the local people. He also contributed towards the spread of Islam in Kilifi by donating sand-ballast towards construction of the first mosque in Kilifi namely *Masjid-Khairat*. Besides the above, he supported some local Muslims by offering them jobs. These people include Juma Siwatu Ali (1923-1989) and Shaban Siwatu Ali (1928-1991) who both were employed as supervisors in his company. The fact that he employed them implied that he was the cause for their sustenance in life. The employment further empowered them economically and ultimately motivated them to remain strong Muslims.

### 2.3.3 Bakari Salim Ngao

Bakari Salim Ngao (1885-1995) was another person who settled in Kilifi. Before relocating to Kilifi, he used to reside at Mtsanganyiko. Ngao was among the army-men of the British colonial government. He fought alongside the British during the First World War.\(^{47}\) After the war, he came to Kilifi and settled at Kibarani area. He lived with his family and grew food crops on self-subsistence basis for his upkeep. Before he

\(^{45}\) Verbal interview with Khamis Ndundi Chula, formerly known as Tabu Nduni Chula in Kilifi on 14th November, 2016.

\(^{46}\) Among them Mzee Khamis Ali (1929-1988) and Brashi Rashid Kupato (1933-1993), a *Kauma* by tribe were among those who embraced Islam by securing a driver’s job at Shallo’s business.

\(^{47}\) 1914 to 1918
died, Ngao donated seven acres of his land at Kibarani as Waqf. However, he died without seeing his wasiyah fulfilled. After his death, his son Said Bakari Salim Ngao took over the custody of this property.

2.3.4 Said Bakari Salim Ngao

After the death of his father, his son Said Bakari Salim Ngao became the custodian of his father’s property. The major role that he played towards spreading Islam was the fact that he fulfilled the wasiyah of his late father. This became evident when he honoured his father wasiyah by donating such a piece of land to a Muslim organization called Africa Muslims Agency. The Agency constructed an integrated educational institution in that piece of land called Africa Muslim Agency (AMA) primary school, which offered free education to the needy orphans till today. Some of the families of these orphans were not Muslims. However, as a result of this institution, a good number of locals, especially from the Giriama community embraced Islam. Examples of these families include Said Muhammed Mwagandi and Abdallah Chai Mluo. The former is a food crops farmer in Kibarani neighbourhood while the latter is a fisherman.

2.3.5 Mwango Rajab Mwango

Mwango Rajab Mwango (1948-2010) was born and grew up in Kilifi. During his youth, he became a driver. He owned a vehicle for hire which transported various goods to different locations. Later on, he changed his business from transport to a charcoal business industry in which he would transport the charcoal from Kilifi to Mombasa for

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48 To be used for the sake of Allah.
49 A will
51 This is an international non-governmental Muslim organization whose donors come from Kuwait in Middle-East.
sale; a job which he undertook for a better part of his life. Besides driving, he was also a farmer. As a result of his enormous efforts and hard work in operating his business, he became prosperous and succeeded in building his first house in Kilifi in which he lived with his family. Later on, he moved to Kwa-Mwango neighbourhood where he became a farmer, keeping domestic animals for dairy. Apart from keeping animals, he also grew food crops for his upkeep as well as his family’s. He died in 2010 and was buried at his farm in Kilifi. During his lifetime, Mwango managed to influence a few individuals to embrace Islam. These individuals include Ramadhan Chengo Ndoro who works in the masonry industry. He moves from one place to another in search of job opportunities and still lives in Kilifi at present. Shebani Chengo Ndoro was also influenced by Mwango to convert to Islam. He still lives in Kilifi and works as a security man in one of the security firms in Kilifi. Lastly, Jumaa Said Kashaha was another Mwango’s influencee to Islam. He is employed in one of the butcheries in Kilifi.\(^{53}\)

The opening of the Kenya Cashewnuts in 1978 also contributed to the Islamization in Kilifi. This opened doors for economic growth in this area. People who got employment at this factory came from different areas in the region. Good relations were established among these diverse ethnic groups. This led to the intermarriage; as a result of which it led to a strong blood bond among these people. Because of this, some families embraced Islam. Example is the family of Said Salim Kitunguu, a Digo by tribe. He was a famous footballer in town playing for the factory football team. During his courtship days, he got married to a non-Muslim lady who converted to Islam. She

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was also an employee of the factory. Her name is Halima Ngowa Chivatsi. She comes from Giriama tribe. The family still lives in Kilifi to date.54

2.4 The earliest Madrassa teachers in Kilifi

Kilifi is one of the towns that managed to establish madrassa education as early as 1960’s. Various madrsassa teachers came to teach in Kilifi town. These include the first teachers from Riyadh mosque in Lamu. They imparted the Islamic knowledge to the local students who in return had a good understanding of their religious background. Some pioneer teachers from Riyadh madrassa in Lamu which was and still being considered as a centre of Islamic excellence in the East African region managed to teach in Kilifi in a madrassa called Madrasatul-Khairat. Later, teachers from other places like Hola (Tana-River), Kipini and Gede taught at Madrasatul-Khairat.

The first teacher to have taught at madrassatul-Khairat, in Kilifi was ustadh Mahmoud Swaleh Abdulrahman; a brother to the renowned Muslim scholar ustadh Harith Swaleh Abdulrahman. He started teaching in the madrassa in the early 1960’s. He was a classmate of ustadh Muhammad Sharif Said al-Beidh of Mambrui (died in 2013) and Ustadh Ahmed Ahmed Badawy popularly known as mwenyebaba of Markaz-Najah al-Islamiya in Malindi; both of whom were considered to be brilliant scholars in the region. Other teachers that followed suit included; Ahmed Muhammad Musallem (popularly known as Kitendi ) from Kizingitini, the late ustadh Malim Matari Aynein Ulimwengu (1931-1993), ustadh Alwy Deen from Lamu, ustadh Muhammad Famau Shally from Kipini(1952-1986), ustadh Abdallah Said Ali al-Ahdaly also from Kipini, the late ustadh Malim Khamis bin Suleiman, a local Quran teacher(1918-1979), ustadh

Habshy Said Omar, among others. All these teachers were profoundly significant and pillars of strength for this madrassa. They imparted Islamic knowledge to the local residents.

All the teachers mentioned above played a significant role in the Islamization of people of Kilifi. They did not only spread Islam through offering knowledge to the children at madrassa but they also held propagatory programmes by giving sermons in the mosques.

2.5 Islam in Mnarani

Mnarani is situated on the cliffs of Kilifi, where the creek meets and merges with the Indian Ocean. Mnarani is a Swahili word derived from the word “mnara”, minerate or a pillar. Archeological findings indicate that Mnarani was an ancient city occupied by the Arabs till the 16th century. Slaves who were captured from Mtsanganyiko were kept there before they were ultimately shipped to the main slave market in Zanzibar. The existence of the early Arabs at this place did not guarantee that Islam spread in Mnarani at that time. However, there were other factors, including existence of certain personalities in that area that contributed to the Islamization in Mnarani. Such factors are explained below:

2.5.1 Presence of Masjid Taqwa in Mnarani

Masjid Taqwa in Mnarani was constructed and completed in the year 1961. Its construction enabled the local community to perform the daily prayers in congregation in the mosque. Its existence contributed a great deal to the Islamization of communities in the area. Its official opening and operation attracted quite a number of locals to

56 Verbal interview with Mohammed Amin Mohammed in Kilifi on 20th September, 2016.
embrace Islam. Just before explaining how the above mosque contributed to the spread of Islam in Mnarani, the study will first of all briefly explain how it was built.

_Masjid Taqwa_ was constructed by certain personalities who were resident of Mnarani. They include Ali Mohammed Shaush; a businessman at Mnarani. He operated a shop which he sold foodstuff to the locals. He died in 2000’s and was buried in Mnarani cemetery. Others include Mzee Ndamungu Mungapawa and his brother Bakari Ndamungu Mungapawa. They were both fishermen. They died in 1950’s. _Sheikh Abdulatif Mohammed Basharahil_ (1920-1997) was also one of those who contributed to the construction of this mosque. _Sheikh_ came to Mnarani in the 1950’s before relocating to Kilifi. He was a coordinator of the construction of the mosque. While living in Mnarani, _Sheikh_ was known for his profound commitment to Islam. He would devote most of his time in prayers and in _itikaf_ (seclusion) in the mosque. He was a highly advocate for _duas_. He would be seen staying in the mosque every day from _maghrib_ i.e. sunset prayer to _isha_ i.e. 8.00 p.m. prayer; engaging in the supplication.

2.5.2 **Maulid (celebrations marking the birth of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H))**

When _Masjid Taqwa_ was completed, _Maulid_ celebrations would be celebrated at the mosque annually. The mosque played a significant role for _Maulid_ celebrations since its climax is done right inside the mosque. When the _Maulid_ was over, some food called _pilau_ would be shared to the _Maulid_ attendants for free. Due to this state of affairs, a good number of non-Muslims whose close friends were Muslims would accompany them to attend the _Maulid_ celebrations and in turn those intimate friends ultimately embraced Islam. Examples of these people include a lady called Bahati Kea Katana. She adopted a Muslim name of Sauda. Currently, she earns a living by working in a

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57 Verbal interview with Said Mzee Ndamungu in Mnarani on 12th September, 2016
58 Verbal interview with his son, Mohammed Abdulatif Basharahil in Mnarani on 17th September, 2016
local hotel in Mnarani. Mramba Thoya Katana is another convert who adopted the name Hamza after his conversion to Islam. He currently works as a bodaboda rider. Another example is that of ustadh Ali Karis N’gozi. He was influenced to convert to Islam through Maulid celebrations. Currently, he is a Madrassa teacher at Madrassatul-Taqwa, Mnarani. The conversion of ustadh Ali Karisa N’gozi to Islam however took place in Mambrui. This therefore shows how formidable the maulid (celebrations marking the birth of prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.)) was in the Islamization of people.

2.5.3 Intermarriage

Intermarriage is another factor that played a significant role in the Islamization in Mnarani. There are families which got intermarried and became Muslims. These families include Mwakilu, Kwa Bomu, Kitimbwanga and Karisa wa Bongo.59

2.6 Islam in Takaungu

Takaungu is a town situated on the southern side of Kilifi. It is about fifteen kilometers from Kilifi town. This town developed steadily especially when some Muslims from Mtsanganyiko went and settle there. This happened after the collapse of the trade at Mtsangayiko.

2.6.1 Factors that facilitated the spread of Islam in Takaungu

2.6.1.1 Intermarriage

Intermarriage was a significant factor that facilitated the spread of Islam in Takaungu. The area was majorly occupied by the people from the Giriama and Chonyi tribes. The Arabs started living together and interacted with them in various economic activities. As a result of this social life, they got intermarried. Most of the locals therefore embraced Islam. Takaungu became a Muslim populated area; with Islam being the

59 Verbal interview with Said Mzee Ndamungu in Mnarani on 29th September, 2016
main religion. A family that is famously known for this is Bafadhil family which is still living in Takaungu. Ahmed Abdallah Mohammed Bafadhil whose father, sheikh Abdallah Ahmed Mohammed was a Kadhi of Takaungu, got married to a Chonyi lady called Mpunga Kibwanga. After conversion, she adopted the name Hafswa Mpunga Kibwanga. They were blessed with three children namely Shafika Ahmed Mohammed, Abdulrahman Ahmed Mohammed, popularly known as Bafadhil, and Salim Ahmed Mohammed. Abdulrahman Ahmed Mohammed currently lives in Nairobi while his siblings live in Mombasa

2.6.1.2 *Maulid* (celebrations marking the birth of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H))

*Maulid* celebrations played a significant role in the Islamization of communities in Takaungu. *Maulid* is a celebration that marks the birth of Prophet Muhammad [P.B.U.H]. It is a common ceremony that is still being practiced in Takaungu today. Muslims from different places attend the *Maulid*. The former Chief Kadhi of Kenya sheikh Abdallah Saleh al-Farsy also used to attend it annually. Due to this state of affairs, the celebrations gained enormous popularity because it attracted a huge crowd of Muslims who to attended it. Similarly, the social interactions that existed during *Maulid* caused people to admire Islam and ultimately join it. For Example, Charo Karisa Kaitsi was one of them. He is currently employed at Mombasa Cement factory in the outskirts of Takaungu as a driver. His family also embraced Islam. Halima Saro Mae is another lady who converted to Islam because of *Maulid*. House helping is what she does for a living now.61

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61 Verbal interview with Mohammed Mustafa Mohammed in Takaungu on 17th September, 2016
2.6.1.3 Mosques

Mosques, apart from being mere places for worship of Allah (SW), have played a significant role in the Islamization of communities in Takaungu. The Arabs started constructing mosques for the conduction of the prayers. Establishment of such mosques has been the root cause for some people to embrace Islam. This was so because people in Takaungu, whether Muslims or non-Muslims, live like brothers and sisters. This kind of social interaction was significant in the sense that it led to the spread of Islam in Takaungu. Both Muslims and non-Muslims would feel free to engage each other in social interactions as well as in religious associated functions such as attending *khitma* (prayer for the dead Muslim but not *salat*\(^2\)), going for sports together, etc. When *adhan* i.e. call prayer was made, the non-Muslims would accompany their Muslim friends to the mosque for prayers. Progressively, they became induced to enter the mosque and ultimately they felt part and parcel of the Muslim fraternity and they converted to Islam. For example, Mishi Charo Dhahabu and Salama Nyale Chamanga are ladies who were attracted by mosques.\(^3\)

Takaungu started growing when the British colonial government identified it as a strategic place for running their administration. It was declared the headquarters for the then Kilifi district.

As time went on, the colonial government realized that Takaungu was no more strategic for their administration than Kilifi. This was due to the fact that majority of the residents of Takaungu were Muslims.\(^4\) Due to this situation, it could be difficult for them to implement any administrative laws that could easily be embraced by the people.

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\(^2\) Five daily prayers

\(^3\) Verbal interview with Mohammed Amin Mohammed in Takaungu on 7\(^{th}\) August, 2016.

\(^4\) Verbal interview with Mohammed Amin Mohammed, *at mtuani*, Kilifi, on 17\(^{th}\) September, 2016
of Takaungu since the British were conventionally Christians. As a result of this, they moved their headquarters to Kilifi. Due to this development, a group of people opted to relocate to Kilifi. This was because they anticipated better prospects in Kilifi. They attributed this activity to the fact that when a provincial administration was initiated somewhere, that place is bound to develop and grow steadily due to the services being offered by that administration. Assets like land, housing, etc are likely to gain value.

2.6.1.4 Trade

Trade also contributed to the Islamization of people in Takaungu. Arabs, Indians and Africans interacted with each other in trade activities. As a result of this, some locals embraced Islam. Examples are Charo Mwenengo Kaingu who adopted the name Said Mwenengo Kaingu. Another convert is Furaha Shida Kazungu who became called Mohammed Shida Kazungu; to mention but a few.

2.7 Roles played by Muslim organizations in the Islamization of communities and their effects in Kilifi

2.7.1 Introduction

To trace the history of Muslim organizations in Kilifi, firstly, this thesis discusses the first Muslim organization that was formed in 1960s, the Khairat Muslim Association. Secondly, this section discusses two other Muslim organizations that were formed in 2006 and 2007, that is, Kilifi County Muslim Association (KICOMA) and Kilifi Education Development Association (KEDA) respectively. Lastly, this thesis discusses roles played by National Union of Kenya Muslims (NUKEM) and The Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) which is an umbrella body of other Muslim organizations. First, I argue that organizations play an important role in the community. They are considered as entities which people use to enable them realize their set aims.

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65 Verbal interview with Mohammed Amin Mohammed at Khairat mosque Kilifi on 3rd December, 2016.
and objectives. Some play crucial roles in politics. Others encourage their members to emancipate themselves by seeking education which would empower them politically and economically. In Nigeria, for example, the Council of City awards, *Ilu Committee* performed important functions of self-government and social welfare. Through this community, which stood between the local hierarchy and the popular Wards associations, it saw some members play a crucial role in Lagos politics. Muslim leaders and Ward heads joined this Council and became members of the Central Native Council which was setup in 1900.66 This example from Nigeria Muslims forming organizations to further their interest was also replicated by local Muslims in Kilifi. This section will focus on Muslim local organizations and see what roles they played in the Islamization of the people of Kilifi.

2.7.2 *Khairat Muslim Association (Majmuatul-Khairat)*

*Khairat* Muslim Association was formed in 1960s. The founders were *Malim* Matari Aynein Ulimwengu(1931-1993), Hemed Awadh Abeid (1918-2003) and Wali Mohamed Essak Jiwa (1932-1987). The late popular *Sheikh* in Kilifi, Abdulatif Muhammad Basharahil (1920-1997) joined the association later when he relocated to Kilifi from Mambrui in the 1950s. All these people were strict adherents to Islam and were accorded with enormous respect by the local community.

The name *Khairat* Muslim Association changed to *Majmuatul-Khairat* in 1990s. The reason behind formation of this organization was to make it more transparent especially in the appointment of leadership positions. Its role was to make sure that Muslims were encouraged to pursue education especially religious knowledge. This implied that the

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Association would outsource *Madrassa* teachers from areas which were then believed to be rich in producing quality *madrassa* teachers to teach in the Quran schools. Such areas were Lamu and Mambrui where students from outside Kenya like Uganda, would go there to seek Islamic education. *Khairat* Muslim Association also championed the calling of Muslims to the fold of Islam by encouraging one another to do good and avoid evil. It advocated for unity of Muslims in whatever they were doing and discouraged them from indulging into worldly desires. In so doing, the association came up with *da’awah* programmes which purely aimed at bringing Muslims together and closer to Allah.

Apart from the *da’awah* efforts, *Majmuatul-Khairat* also owns some assets in Kilifi. One of the popular assets is the two storey-building which generates income to the kitty of *Majmuatul-Khairat*. The two storey-building is situated along Biashara Street. The rent obtained from this project is used to meet its daily operations cost; not limited to the payment of salaries of the *Madrassa teachers*. The *Majmuatul-Khairat* employs eleven *madrassa* teachers and pays the through proceeds from their property. So far, those teachers who are in the payroll are eleven; three of whom are deployed to Mitangoni, Majajani and Mkomani villages while the remaining eight are teachers at *Hudaa* academy and *Hudaa* Muslim school in Kilifi. *Majmuatul-Khairat* also sponsors two educational institutions, the *Hudaa* academy and *Hudaa* Muslim School. ⁶⁷

The founders of the association are also the pioneers who established *Madrassatul-Khairat*, Kilifi. They did not only establish this *madrassa* for children to learn, but they also foresaw the need to form organizations that would stand up for the affairs of the Muslims. All the organizations that were formed set their goals and objectives clearly.

⁶⁷Verbal interview with Ahmed Kunyuga Abula, a member of *Majmuatul-Khairat*, held in Kilifi on ⁴ᵗʰ November, 2016.
It was anticipated by Muslims that these organizations would be formed so as to have proper presentation to the government for easy bargaining of Muslim issues.

When this organization was being established, it had no formal structure at its top-most leadership. It was initially owned by a few members who were charged with the operation of its activities, but Madrassatul-Khairat successfully ran the Muslim affairs in Kilifi without a hitch.

2.7.3 Kilifi County Muslim Association (KICOMA)

Kilifi County Muslim Association (KICOMA) was officially formed in 20th February, 2006. The first members of this association included Assad Shembwana Sheyumbe Chairman, Mohamed N. Piko Secretary, Salim Mohammed Suleiman Treasurer and Saumu Mwinyi Haji Coordinator. Other members included Abdallah Tsuma Mwambao, Zena Mohamed Ali, Hassan Abdulrahman Abdullatif, Hashim Ali Abdullah, among others. The motto of this association is to enhance Islam and its ideals into the youth. The mission was to cultivate and enjoy a harmonious life both in this world and in the Hereafter. The vision is to be the leading students’ association in the promotion of Islamic religious education as a foundation towards a better life. It should be noted that the chief motive of this association was the same as the motto initiated by the former chief Kadhi of Kenya, namely al-Amin Ali Mazrui in his advocacy for introduction of Islamic religious education in Kenya schools.

In the early 1980s the association used to exist informally and had a few members. By then it was called Kilifi District Muslim Association (KIDMA). However, with the new political dispensation and the promulgation of the new Constitution of Kenya 2010 which saw Counties coming on board, the name KIDMA changed to KICOMA.
An analysis of the roles played by KICOMA, one would be convinced that they relate to the roles played by Ansar-Ud-Deen Society of Nigeria (Jamiyyat Ansar ad-Din Naijiriya). In other words, they have some similarity in their set goals and objectives in the sense that they both lay much emphasis on the pursuit of Islamic education.

When the Muslim of Nigeria realized they were lagging behind in occupying the government and being left out of important positions of the state because of lack of secular education; as opposed to their counterparts, the Christians, they started encouraging their own to go to school in order to offer a democratic solution to the problem of religious organizations. It stands out as an important type of Muslim response to the colonial and post-colonial state, especially in a multi-religious environment. If anything, it shows the “concern, not just to react to, but to engage with external forces,” which had been so typical for Yoruba society since the colonial period.68

The Yoruba strongly felt that only education would set them free by elevating them to occupying leadership or elite positions in their society. Ansar-Ud-Deen was founded in Lagos in 1923. It comprised of the egbe (age-grade) and professional associations among the Yoruba tradition of Nigeria in West Africa before the colonial era. It was one of the oldest and largest educational associations of the Yoruba Muslims. It grew from a small group of educated young men in Lagos to a large national body which aimed at taking elite positions of the state. It had several branches in most parts of the country. This shows how the Yoruba Muslims tried to solve their educational dilemma

in combining ‘western ‘and Islamic forms of learning, how they gained access to elite positions.

Taking the example from amongst the Yoruba Muslims, the main aim behind forming this association was to solve problems of moral deterioration of the youth and lack of sufficient knowledge of Islam. In addition, it aimed at encouraging the youth in schools to register for Islamic Religious Education as a subject in their final Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) which will enable the youth understand their religion which will in turn inculcate elements of virtues in them. Ultimately, they would become good citizens of this country. Apart from the above, it also saw the need to instill brotherhood among the Muslims and motivate students to struggle to acquire the knowledge of not only of Islam but also the secular knowledge.

Other activities included starting income generating projects to help the association realize sustainability; organize IRE symposiums for the member madrasas or schools.

2.7.4 Kilifi Education Development Association (KEDA)

Kilifi Education Development Association (KEDA) was formed in 2007. The founders of this association were Azideen Sharif Amin chairman, Mwinyi Athman Ali secretary and Jamal Athman Omar treasurer. Other members include Mohammed Abdallah Said, Sharif Salim Hussein, Omar Hemed Awadh, Mohammed Mwalim Mzee, among others. Activities of KEDA include:-

(a) To improve community participation and ownership in education and enhance quality education at all levels.

(b) To facilitate community awareness on child rights, protection, knowledge and support among pupils, youths, parents and teachers.
(c) To facilitate acquisition of knowledge by purchase, lease or otherwise any movable or immovable property or other assets and to sell, let, charge or otherwise deal or dispose of

(d) To establish and maintain funds by means of voluntary contributions and fundraisings as may from time to time be arranged by the management committee.

(e) To seek and obtain legal advice or assistance and or any other assistance affecting the operations or running of the association which may be in need.

KEDA contributed to the welfare of Muslims in Kilifi by acquiring a plot in Kilifi in which it has constructed a house for commercial purposes. Besides, they organize fundraising annually in the month of Ramadhan to raise funds, used to assist students who are bright and come from poor family background to pursue further studies. Due to this, some students who were not Muslims and who benefitted from this kitty embraced Islam. KEDA assisted them in securing a teacher training vacancy at Mikindani Teachers Training College in Mombasa. It worked very closely with the administration of the college so as to solicit personnel to be trained as teachers in order to reduce the gap of IRE shortage in the Kenya primary schools sector. Example of the beneficiaries is Samini Charo Ngala. He converted to Islam and underwent a full teacher training course at Mikindani Islamic teachers training college. He is currently an IRE teacher. He hails from Kibarani neighbourhood in Kilifi.  

2.7.5 National Union of Kenya Muslims (NUKEM)

National Union of Kenya Muslims (NUKEM) was established in 1968. It was formed with a desire to guide and protect the rights of its members and express their demands.

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to the government of the day for consideration. It played a role in safeguarding Muslims’ rights in particular the status law of marriage, divorce and inheritance.

The formation of NUKEM was also prompted by the concern that the government of independent Kenya would accede to the demands of some parliamentarians and public figures and repeal customary laws and religious laws and in turn impose one secular law on all citizens. Knowing that they were a minority i.e. the Muslims and, the law making organ of the government will be responsible in making new laws or repealing the existing laws with their democratic power. It is therefore undoubtedly clear that NUKEM majorly focused on safeguarding the interest of the Muslims in Kenya. It played the role of a watchdog to check any attempt by other religions to interfere with Islam. All these efforts were a clear demonstration that NUKEM wanted to safeguard the interest of the Muslims in general. For example, the researcher of this thesis was one of the NUKEM beneficiaries. He was employed to teach IRE (Islamic Religious Education) at Takaungu secondary school from 1993 to 2004. As a result of this, he rendered services of imparting knowledge to students. During that time, there was an acute shortage of IRE teachers. This situation facilitated in instilling spiritual nourishment to the students which in turn strengthened their faith towards Islam. If students were left alone without being taught or reminded about Islam, they could have opted to denounce Islam and join other religions like Christianity. In addition to what NUKEM contributed, one student became impressed with Islam. She converted to Islam. Her name is Mablo Kadzo Charo. Upon conversion to Islam, she adopted the name Kawthar. She started wearing hijab afterwards.
2.7.6 The Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM)

The Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) was established in 1973, ten years after independence. The goal of the council since its inception was to carry out and discharge in every way possible the obligations, duties and responsibilities that Muslims owe as a Community to Islam and bring about the spirit of brotherhood, and unity among Muslims in Kenya. It is the umbrella body of all the Muslim organizations, societies, mosques committees and groups in Kenya. The members of the council are its affiliate member organizations, societies, committees and groups and not individual Muslims. The Council is viewed as the main and official voice of the Muslim community by the Kenyan government and international organizations. The Council aims at promoting Muslims’ interests and to have closer ties with the government. It was formed with a clear vision of establishing a united and therefore, strong Muslim community in the country.\(^7^0\)

The Council activities are run from its secretariat in Nairobi with staff who implement the decisions of the National Executive Committee that is elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Executive Committee exercises its mandate and nominates some deserving Muslims to run several directorates and sit on the Executive Committee. SUPKEM has voluntary members in its Executive Committee. These members do most of the work during their spare time and serve on voluntary basis. The fulltime employed Secretariat is very small due to the financial constraints in SUPKEM. However most of the key decisions and activities are overseen by members of the Executive Committee. Through collaboration and cooperation with its member Organizations and with the assistance from international donors and well-wishers especially the Islamic

\(^7^0\) Verbal interview with ustadh Rashid Muhammad Mukwana, SUPKEM Executive Officer in Kilifi County on 23\(^{rd}\) November, 2016
Development Bank (IDB), the Council has initiated development projects on behalf of the Muslim.\textsuperscript{71}

Leaders in SUPKEM encouraged the Muslim community to obey the Authority. SUPKEM organized meetings yearly. In the beginning the meetings were attended by leaders only, but, after two years, the leaders decided to ask for legal advice in the preparation of their constitution. This led to improved representation of Muslims. Women had their place in the running of the affairs of the organization. They organized occasional meetings between the people and the president. This was an occasion to express the needs of the people to the head of state. SUPKEM, playing their cards well with the government, took care of their subjects, “obtaining scholarships from Arab-Muslim countries such as Egypt, Kuwait, Libya, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan as well as Islamic organization such as the Islamic Development Bank, the Arab league, and the organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC).”

SUPKEM has been active in the field of education for its members. They implemented education policies, by recruiting teachers from Arab countries. They also organized fund raisings called \textit{harambee} for the construction of learning institutions. As a result of the above efforts by SUPKEM it became practically clear that the element of bringing together Muslims from all walks of life in Kenya through engaging their various organizations subjected the Muslims to a stable position in the Kenyan Government. It should be noted that this kind of stability that existed enabled Muslims to have a conducive environment to pursue Islam freely without interruption of their religion. Muslims were able to engage other people in \textit{da’awa} programmes in order to call them to accept Islam which ultimately resulted to the spread of Islam not only in

\textsuperscript{71}Omari Hassan Kinyua (2014): \textit{Islamic Leadership In Kenya, a Case Study of the Supreme Council Of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM)}, University of Nairobi, Faculty of Arts, pp. 79.
Kilifi alone but also countrywide. Without this kind of environment it could have been difficult for Muslims to achieve what they have been able to achieve today in terms of diversifying and spreading Islam to the humanity.

SUPKEM has played a significant role in the Islamization of people in Kilifi. The growing religious revivalism in personal and public Islamic life, created awareness on Islamic beliefs, culminating in increased religious observance, prayer and fasting, proliferation of religious programming, publications, and emphasis on Islamic dress and values. The Qur’an and Hadith are fundamental, in responding to the demands and challenges of modernity, revival movements are crucial in spreading and restoring true Islam. Prolonged Muslim awareness has led to attraction to Islam, giving the converted Muslim a sense of pride.\(^\text{72}\)

### 2.8 Conclusion

This research found it significant to study the history of Islam in Kilifi. This was because it enables people to understand what type of family background the Muslim women who unveiled came from. It enables to know how important Muslim personalities, directly or indirectly, influenced some locals to embrace Islam. It also enables to know whether the formation of Muslim organizations inside Kilifi, had any bearing in shaping their behaviour or not, as far as the practice of veiling is concerned.

\(^\text{72}\)Omari Hassan Kinyua (2014) :*Islamic Leadership In Kenya, a Case Study of the Supreme Council Of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM)*, University of Nairobi, Faculty of Arts, pp. 61-62.
CHAPTER THREE

THE SPREAD OF ISLAM AT KWA CHARO WA MAE

3.0  Introduction

This chapter discusses the spread of Islam in Kwa Charo wa Mae. In the discussion of the spread of Islam, concentration will be on mosques and madrassas found there, but also highlight biographical sketches of some of the earliest Muslim families to live at Kwa Charo wa Mae and their activities of Islamization. First, the discussion begins by explaining the origin of the name of the neighbourhood Kwa Charo wa Mae. Second, the study explains how maulid at Sakina and Taqwa mosques helped in the Islamization at Kwa Charo wa Mae. Before discussing Islamization at Kwa Charo wa Mae neighbourhood, the study first discusses the name and origin of the neighbourhood itself.

3.1  History/origin of the name of Kwa Charo wa Mae neighbourhood

Kwa Charo wa Mae neighbourhood is situated on the northern side of Kilifi town. It is a cosmopolitan area inhabited by people of diverse cultures from across various ethnic groups of Kenyan. This was as a result of the huge influx of the people to this place which was experienced in the early 1970s. Some local residents from Kilifi mtaani, which was the first trading centre in town, started relocating to KwaCharo wa Mae to establish permanent settlement. Other ethnic groups from outside Kilifi followed suit. Examples, the Digo, the Meru the Kamba, the Kikuyu, etc.

Historically, there was a man called Charo wa Mae. He settled in this area in 1940’s. During this time, the area was so remote that some elephants from the neighbouring Arabuko forest would be seen coming to graze in that area. As a result of his

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73 Verbal interview with mzee Kombo Matano Mwinyi at Kwa Charo wa Mae, Kilifi on 3rd March,
settlement, other people followed suit. That is how the name Kwa Charo wa Mae became adopted, which means the place of Charo wa Mae.

Kwa Charo wa Mae neighbourhood is an area with an active economic activities of a small scale basis. Due to these activities, the area experienced an economic growth locally especially when people from various ethnic groups settled there. This was before Pwani University was opened in 2007 which saw a shift of vending activities from Charo wa Mae to Kibaoni.

Figure 1: graph map showing the global position (GPS) of Kilifi

2016.
The black spot shows the location of Kwa Charo wa Mae. This graph map was obtained from Mombasa; courtesy of lands department, County Government of Mombasa.

Figure 2: map of Kenya showing the location of Mtsanganyiko
The above shows the map of Kenya. The black spot shows the location of Mtsanganyiko

3.2 Some earliest Muslim families at Kwa Charo wa Mae

3.2.1 Abdallah Mbarak Bukheit, 1914-1993

Islam was introduced to Kwa Charo wa Mae in the early 1940s by the families of Arab traders from Yemen who came and settled within the vicinity of Kwa Charo wa Mae. Abdallah Mbarak Bukheit (1914 -1993) is one of the earliest Muslims who is believed to have settled at Kwa Charo wa Mae and was responsible for the institutionalization of Islam there. He came to Mombasa in 1940 from Sewun, Hadhramout, Yemen; aboard a dhow through the Indian Ocean and docked in Mombasa. He lived in Mombasa for a few years before relocating to Kilifi in 1967. By then, he was already a family man; having married a lady from Mambrui called Fatma Jum’aan Ahmed in 1942. He was blessed with fifteen children; ten males and five females. This is a clear indication that there was intermarriage between the foreigners who came to the coast region from Arabia with the local residents. In Kilifi, Bukheit settled at Kibaoni; a neighbourhood that is bordering Kwa Charo wa Mae. He opened a wholesale shop in which he sold household provisions to the local residents. Sometimes, a few merchants from Mombasa would come to his shop to buy copra and cashewnuts and sell them in Mombasa. Through this mode of transaction, his business expanded steadily and he became one of the few local rich men in town. Abdallah Mbarak Bukheit built a four-storey building at Kibaoni in which he lived with his family. He died in 1993, aged 79 years and was buried in Kilifi old cemetery. The role he played to the Islamization of people was the effort which he made to request Mohammed bin Ali Al-Amoud to construct a mosque at Kwa Charo wa Mae. This was achieved.

74 Verbal interview with his son, Abdulkhaliq Abdallah Bukheit in Kilifi on 12th November, 2016.
3.2.2 Hadi Awadh Abeid, 1925-1993

Hadi Awadh Abeid (1925 - 1993) is another Arab who contributed to the Islamization of Kwa Charo wa Mae residents. He arrived in Mombasa from Sewun, Hadhramout in 1940. He was accompanied by his nephew and father-in-law Abdallah Mbarak Bukheit with whom they arrived together in Mombasa in the same year i.e.1940. After his arrival, he stayed in Mombasa first then later moved to Kitui in Ukambani to search for a living. He was employed as a shopkeeper who specialized in selling household provisions. However, the business did not pick well and as a result of this, he relocated to Kilifi. He arrived in 1967 and rejoined his uncle Abdallah Mbarak Bukheit. The two gentlemen, apart from being close relatives, were also close friends. They were said to be pious and strict adherents to Islam.75 Besides, they were generous to the local people; donating funds to projects that were related to Islamic affairs such as rewarding madrassa students who performed well in their examinations during hafla. This motivated students to pursue further madrass education. Besides, During Eid, they used to donate foodstuffs as charity to both the local poor Muslims and non-Muslims. Socially, this trend created an atmosphere of cohesion and good relations among the people of that neighbourhood regardless of their creed, faith or ethnic background differences. They would visit the sick and wished them quick recovery. During the month of Ramadhan, the two Arabs used to share their iftar (evening meal after breaking the fast) with their neighbours.76 As a result of their strong faith, they attracted a significant number of the local people, particularly those from the Giriama community, to join Islam. Recalling the name of his father in spreading Islam in the neighbourhood, one of his sons said, “mzazi wangu alikuwa akisaidaia sana mambo

75This was manifested by their disposition when they used to walk quite a long distance from Kibaoni and Kwa Charo wa Mae neighbourhood to Kilifi town near the main bus terminus to attend the Friday congregational Prayer (salatul-jumu’ah) at Masjidul-Khairat; in spite of their advanced ages.
76Verbal interview with Abdulrahman Hadi Awadh in Kilifi on 3rd September, 2016
mengi ya kidini ya ki-Islamu” — my father used to generously contribute enormously towards the Islamic issues.

3.2.3 Sergeant Ali Salim Ali, 1880-1970

Apart from the two Arabs mentioned earlier on, there are other people who were also involved in the spread of Islam at Kwa Charo wa Mae, among them were Sergeant Ali Salim Ali (1880 -1970) who was one of those people who is said to have played a significant role in influencing people to embrace Islam at Kwa Charo wa Mae. He was a former police officer of the British colonial government.

Sergeant Ali Salim Ali was born in 1880 in Kilifi. During his teenage years, he went to Uganda where he was recruited by the British colonial regime in the police force as a sergeant. He spent a couple of years working in Uganda. Eventually, he came back to his native town, Kilifi in the 1950s. He resettled in Kilifi. His house is situated at Kwa Charo wa Mae. He obtained a piece of land and started growing food crops on a small-scale basis. Sergeant Ali was a polygamist and had three wives.  

As far as the role of Islamization of people is concerned, Sergeant Ali donated a piece of land for construction of a mosque. The area in which Masjidul-Khairat is built in Kilifi belonged to him.

3.3 The mosques at Kwa Charo wa Mae

Mosques also played an important role in the Islamization of people. This is because they can be the cause for some people to embrace Islam. The fact that there are non-Muslims whose friends are Muslims, this kind of friendship can influence them to join Islam. This normally happens when some mosques play host to such functions like

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77 Verbal interview with his son, Abdulkhaliq Abdallah Mbarak in Kilifi on 1st September, 2016.
78 Verbal interview with Abdulrahman Hadi Awadh Abeid in Kilifi on 5th August, 2016.
79 Verbal interview with his daughter, Amina Ali Salim in Kilifi on 16th October, 2016.
\textit{Maulid} celebrations, \textit{khitma}\textsuperscript{80} and the like; in which some food is distributed to the attendants for free. The free food and other activities that take place in that gathering is bound to attract non-Muslims to convert to Islam.\textsuperscript{81}

In Kwa Charo wa Mae neighbourhood, there are three mosques namely \textit{Masjid Sakina}, \textit{Masjid Taqwa} and \textit{Masjid Nur}. \textit{Nur} is situated on the northern side of Kwa Charo wa Mae. It was built after \textit{Khairat} mosque in Kilifi town. \textit{Sakina} is on the southern side while \textit{Taqwa} is on the North-western side. I am going to discuss these mosques beginning with the earliest one.

\textbf{3.3.1 \textit{Masjid Nur}}

\textit{Masjido-Nur} at Kibaoni near KwaCharo wa Mae neighbourhood was built in 1980’s by Abdallah Mbarak Bukheit in association with Hadi Awadh Abeid. A significant financial support also came from Mohammed bin Ali al-Amoud to complete the mosque. Al-Amoud was a business man based in Malindi. A significant number of Muslims that were living at Kwa Charo wa Mae highly welcomed this initiative with a lot of appreciation. This is because they had to walk all the way from such areas like Kwa-Mwango neighbourhood (currently Green Estate) to Kilifi town to attend prayers at \textit{Khairat} or \textit{Hudaa} mosques; especially during \textsl{juma} prayers. They would leave their places of work early enough in order to catch up for the \textsl{Juma} prayer; which must be performed at its set time.

Through the efforts of the late Hadi Awadh Abeid (1925-1993) and the late Abdallah Mbarak Bukheit (1914-1993); both of whom were residents at Kwa Charo wa Mae and Kibaoni respectively, a site was obtained in which to build a mosque. Wali Mohammed

\textsuperscript{80} Prayer performed upon a dead Muslim after or before his/her burial.

\textsuperscript{81} More of this is explained previously on how is Islam spread in Mnarani and Takaungu.
Essak Jiwa (1932-1987), a business man in Kilifi, was profoundly instrumental in obtaining the site. Ultimately, a site was obtained and the mosque was completed in 1980’s. The sponsorship for this mosque came from a Malindi based wealthy merchant, the late sheikh Muhammad bin Ali (passed on in 2013).

The number of Muslims attending prayers in that mosque has so far increased significantly. Because of this, the mosque was expanded by Ali Islam Ali of Taifa Maize Millers and refurbished it. The work was completed in 2005.

From that time to date, the mosque posed great relief to the Muslims especially those who used to walk long distances to attend prayers at distant mosques. Even the salatul-Jum’a; which is a weekly Muslim congregational Friday Prayer, started to be observed in this mosque. The completion of the mosques was profoundly instrumental in attracting and bringing people together. Considering that Muslims must pray five times a day, and the fact that it is recommended that men pray five times a day in the mosque, the construction of the Nur mosque at Kwa Charo wa Mae meant that Muslims were now able to observe this requirement without any hindrances. Because the prayer is recommended to be conducted in congregation, this congregational prayer helps to bring together Muslims from all walks of life. As a result of this, the Muslims are able to interact, share their views and create bonds of brotherhood and Kwa Charo wa Mae, Masjid Nur played this role effectively.

The mosques at Kwa Charo wa Mae have been advantageous in attracting non-Muslims who are impressed by the brotherly attitude developed by the Muslims. They viewed Muslims as people of high discipline and order by drawing themselves closer to Allah five times a day. It is not easy to do this without a high sense of determination and
discipline. They see them closing their shops and other businesses whenever a call for prayer is made. This kind of behaviour makes people feel that Muslims are truly Allah-fearing people, a factor that greatly influenced some locals to embrace Islam.

Apart from the acts of worship being observed by the Muslims, some mosques do offer some additional services to the community. For example, when a child has gone missing, they offer assistance by announcing to the public about the missing. This has, for many years, helped many families to recover their lost family members. At Masjid Nur mosque, Kwa Charo wa Mae, this kind of assistance is normally offered when a victim has reported the matter to the police station and has obtained permission from the same.

During calamities such as drought or breakdown of machines that pump or supply water to Kilifi, mosques at Kwa Charo wa Mae have been playing a vital humanitarian role in giving out water to the general public for free. In such situations, even boarding schools like Kilifi Mixed secondary school at Kwa Charo wa Mae has, on a number of occasions, benefitted from this kind of assistance.

As a result of the construction of the above three mosques within Kwa Charo wa Mae/Kibaoni localities, these institutions brought services closer to the people. Muslims were seen starting attending prayers in the mosque. It became a relief to many Muslims who were living in that locality because they could now afford to perform congregational prayers. Apart from the building, the mosques also attracted a number of people who were Muslims but failed to perform prayers out of ignorance. This was because the mosques were built closer to their houses which made them easily accessible to the mosque, hence they could perform prayers. In addition, there was also
a segment of the Somali people who came and settled at Kwa Charo wa Mae. Their presence increased the number of Muslims in the area.

3.3.2 Masjid Sakina

*Masjid Sakina* is situated on the south-eastern side of Kwa Charo wa Mae in Kilifi town. It was built in 1996. The founder of this mosque is a lady called *mama* Fatuma Juma Ismail. She was a resident of that area in which the mosque was built; before relocating to Mombasa afterwards.

What inspired *mama* Fatuma Juma Ismail to construct a mosque at Kwa Charo waMae was due to lack of a mosque in that area. There was no place to perform congregational prayers; in spite of quite a good number of Muslims living in that area. She had the desire to see a mosque built in the area one day. Fortunately, her dream came true. Salama Simba Msoma of Kilifi *mtaani* supported this cause enormously. The two were close friends and used to share ideas with each other on how to develop this issue.

Fatuma Juma Ismail started looking for a piece of land on which to build the mosque. Eventually she got one. Although she was poor, her poverty could not stop her from realizing her dream. She was highly determined to achieving her goal. She worked hard for this project and went to collect funds from the public for this purpose. She printed books and circulated them to the public to solicit funds. With the little money she had managed to raise, she decided to start the project. Work started. At some level, it stalled due to lack of funds. She then reached out to the well-wishers for assistance. They responded positively and the mosque was ultimately completed in the 1990s.82

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82, 82 Verbal interview with mama Salama Simba Msoma in Kilifi on 27th November, 2016
Since its establishment, the mosque has been instrumental in the conversion of people to Islam. Example of these persons include Salim Bakari Chibagu; a business man selling clothes to the local people, Juma Juma Mwapinda; operating a grocery at Kwa-Monica area. Mohammed Beja Wadho is a hassler; implying he would engage into any casual economic activity that would earn him a living, such as construction of houses, etc. Omari Yawa Mtundo and Idris Wadho Beja run a motorcycles company called bodaboda for which they have employed some youth in that business.\textsuperscript{83}

Recently the number of attendants of the daily prayers at the Masjid-Sakina mosque has increased significantly i.e. sixty attendants per prayer approximately; as opposed to the times of its establishment. Very few people then used to attend the congregational prayers.

3.3.3 Masjid Taqwa

Masjid Taqwa is situated on the south-western side of Kwa Charo wa Mae. It was built in 1998. The sponsor for this mosque was late sheikh Abdullatif Muhammad Bashrahil (1920 -1997), who owned a plot in that area which he donated for construction of the mosque. The sheikh was simultaneously the custodian of Masjid-Khairat. During his last days, he felt that there was need to build a mosque in that area. His wish was that the mosque would be run using a Sufism\textsuperscript{84} ideology as the one being observed at the Masjid Khairat\textsuperscript{85} in which he was also the custodian. His idea was that the new mosque was going to be a tawi i.e. branch or annex of the Masjid Khairat. At its initial construction stage, the mosque was merely roofed with coconut-palm thatches, its walls

\textsuperscript{83} Verbal interview with Ali Barra Hussin, Imam of Sakina mosque on 5\textsuperscript{th} April, 2016.
\textsuperscript{84} Islamic misticism
\textsuperscript{85} Sheikh advocated for maulid and sufism ideology
made up of clay soil. It didn’t look modern. However, in 2008, a renowned local Muslim scholar called Sharif Salim Hussein came on board and completed the mosque.

The existence of this mosque was the cause of some people converting to Islam. It was like there existed some potential of some people wanting to get Islamized; only that the opportunity had not presented itself. Muhammad Nur Njoroge, formerly known as Mwangi Nur Njoroge was among those influenced to join Islam. Njoroge is nowadays a constructor of houses in Kilifi.

The existence of the three mosques at Kwa Charo wa Mae has been of great help to the Muslims resident in that area. They have enabled them access the congregational prayers at ease. A good number of them can now be able to observe the five daily prayers in congregation in these mosques.

3.4 The earliest Muslim religious rituals at Kwa Charo wa Mae

The dhikr or supplication, maulid, feast of sacrifice i.e. Eid ul-Adh’ha, are among the common rituals being observed in some areas in the coast region. Of the above mentioned rituals, maulid celebrations are popular at Kwa Charo wa Mae. Two mosques are popular with maulid. These are Masjid Sakina and Masjid-Taqwa. The Maulid helped in the Islamization of people at Kwa Charo wa Mae. First, I will explain the maulid.

The literal meaning of maulid is birthday. In the broader context, it refers to the celebrations that are done to mark the birth of Prophet Muhammad [P.B.U.H.]. There is a specific month in which the maulid is celebrated. This occurs in the month of Rabiul-Awal which is a third month in the Islamic calendar. These celebrations do not only take place in Kilifi town but they also take place widely across many towns both inside
and outside Kenya. People hold *maulid* and maintain that they do so to show their love for the prophet Muhammad [P.B.U.H.]. They believe that the prophet was born in that month and hence deserves to be celebrated for. However, *maulid* has generated controversy amongst the Muslims. Generally, many Muslims attend *maulid* but the percentage of those who oppose it is equally significant.

*Maulid* is said to have been introduced in Kilifi from as early as 1960’s when the first teachers who were pro-*maulid* came to Kilifi to teach Islam. These teachers include *ustadh* Alwy Deen from Lamu, *ustadh* Muhammad Famau Shally from Kipini (1952-1986), *ustadh* Abdallah Said Ali al-Ahdaly also from Kipini, *ustadh* Habshy Said Omar, among others. Sheikh Abdulatif Mohammed Bashrahil is argued to be the man who imitated *maulid* at *Masjid Taqwa*.

Although a significant number of Muslims were influenced by *maulid* to embrace Islam, the number is purported to be on the decline due to the emergency of the *bid’da* wave in the coast region and beyond.

### 3.4.1 How *maulid* celebrations helped in the Islamization of people at *Masjid Sakina*

At *Masjid Sakina*, *maulid* is observed annually. It has been one of the earliest rituals ever celebrated in that mosque. It is normally manifested by processions that march round the streets of Kilifi before they ultimately hold climax celebrations at the *Sakina* mosque at night.

With its introduction at the *Sakina* mosque, *Maulid has* played an important role in the Islamization of communities at Kwa Charo wa Mae. Quite a number of non-Muslims

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have converted to Islam through *Maulid*. Some of the factors that have contributed to the Islamization of people in the *Maulid* include the *qasida* which are songs sung in praise of prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) that come out of *Maulid* during its celebration. Due to its rhythmic melody that comes out of it, it has served as an attraction for people to embrace Islam. As the non-Muslims accompany their Muslim friends to the *Maulid*, they become attracted to this melodious voice. As a result, they decide to embrace Islam.

The feeding aspect is also another factor contributing to Islamization of people. Since most families are poor, when they get a chance to attend *Maulid* celebrations with their friends, they find it as an opportunity for them to get free food. This attracts them to join Islam.

The solidarity portrayed by Muslims during *Maulid* celebration is another factor that led to Islamization of people. During *Maulid*, Muslims look organized, dressed in white gown called *kanzu* and dance together in praise of Prophet Muhammad [P.B.U.H.]. This scenario gives non-Muslims a picture that they love their prophet so much. This situation also induces some people to embrace Islam.\(^8^7\) Examples of some persons who embraced Islam because of *Maulid* celebrations include Hatari Yaa Kombe. He is a fisherman. After conversion to Islam, he embraced the name Mohammed. Katana Joseph Kombe is another person who converted to Islam. He adopted the name Issa. He is a roasted-maize-vendor.

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\(^8^7\)Verbal interview with Said Mzee Ndamungu in Kilifi on 1\(^{st}\) November, 2016.
3.4.2 How maulid celebrations helped in the Islamization of people at Masjid Taqwa

*Maulid* celebrations do take place at *Masjid-Taqwa* annually. Since its establishment, it has attracted quite a big crowd of Muslims who attend it. The situation here is not like that of *Sakina* where *maulid* is preceded by procession, Muslims gather at night alone for the *maulid*. Although it takes place for a short period of time at night, it has created an impact for some people to embrace Islam. For example, *Hassan Lewa Tsuma* is one of those who became a Muslims because of *maulid*. This *mzee* has remained a *muadhin* i.e. one who calls out Muslims to attend prayers in the mosque at *Masjid Taqwa* since its establishment to date.\(^{88}\)

3.5 Conclusion

Settling down of Muslim families, establishment of mosques and the practice of Muslim religious rituals such as *maulid* were significant in the Islamization of Kilifi. This state of affairs could in turn have provided a platform in which it shaped the behavior some of Muslim women towards veiling in Kilifi.

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\(^{88}\)Verbal interview with Abdallah Tsuma Mwambao in Kilifi on 7\textsuperscript{th} October, 2016.
CHAPTER FOUR

EFFECTS OF THE PRACTICE OF UNVEILING AT KWA CHARO WA MAE

4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the different perspectives on the practice of veiling and unveiling and its effects on Islamic morals at Kwa Charo wa Mae. The chapter discusses such effects in four categories namely:

i) Immorality in which it will throw some light on seduction, adultery and intoxicants.

ii) Alienation

iii) Disobedience against the teachings of the Quran

iv) Secularization as a factor that has contributed to the unveiling.

The above aspects are used to assess the Muslim perspectives on the veil at Kwa Charo wa Mae. The chapter analyzes the views of the respondents, their feelings and experiences in regards to the action of unveiling by some Muslim women. The views were collected from people of diverse walks of life. These include men, women, elderly, young, Muslims, non-Muslims, those who veil and those who do not veil themselves.

Amongst many Muslims, the veil is being considered as a dress of modesty. In as much as there are two groups which attach different importance to the veil i.e. the pro-veil and the anti-veil, a good number of Muslims contend that wearing the veil is obligatory. It is argued that the body of a female Muslim should not be exposed to the preying eyes of strange men. There are some people who have even used the veil as a tool to reach
out to their political agenda. For example, in Iran, they have used the veil to present the
image of an Iranian woman to symbolize the country.⁸⁹

4.1 Social message sent by veiling:

In some societies, veiling sends a social message that it is a significant dress code to be
adhered to by women in such societies. This dress code is synonymous with a way of
life of those people in that society. The general public i.e. Muslims and non-Muslims
attach great importance to it, in that if a Muslim woman does not veil, the society poses
many questions that become unanswered about that particular woman. They feel that
she has gone against the established norms and ideals of that society, others consider
her as merely struggling to completely eradicate such norms and ideals that have been
prevalent for so long which have been observed by its members for decades. Others feel
that she wants to impose a new form of culture upon the society, and so on and so forth.
This is the reason why some people have rooted their minds onto this kind of societal
attitude upon those women who have unveiled.

The veil has diverse interpretations in the world. Many people associate the veil with
Islam and with Arabic culture. However, research indicates that Islam did not invent the
veil; indeed the veil is inauthentic to Islam.⁹⁰ The “first known reference to veiling” is
believed to be in an “Assyrian legal text of the thirteenth century B.C.”. In the
Assyrian, Byzantine and Persian Sasanian empires, the veil was a marker of prestige
and a status symbol.⁹¹ Urban upper –class women, whose wealth afforded them the
luxury of not working, led lives in seclusion. In public, they wore a veil that served as a

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shield to protect them from the ‘impure’ gaze of commoners. The veil signified class distinction. Assyrian law prohibited peasant women, slaves and prostitutes from wearing the veil, and violators were punished.\textsuperscript{92} Punishment served as a deterrent for women who would choose an identity different from that assigned to them by the authorities.\textsuperscript{93} Now I want to turn to a discussion of some of the factors that have been identified as contributing to women removing the veil at Kwa Charo wa Mae. These factors include:

- Immorality
- Alienation
- Disobedience
- Secularization

### 4.2 Immorality

When discussing the above, there emerges an obvious question to it. Does unveiling send a social message that an individual is immoral? According to the findings, majority of the respondents were of the view that unveiling sends a social message that an individual is immoral. They explained this practice as being against the teachings of Islam. This is explained in the following Quranic verse:

> And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things) and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc) and not to show off/display their beauty except what is apparent, and they should place their *khumur* (cloaks)\textsuperscript{94} over their bosoms...\textsuperscript{95}

The study showed that a significant number of the respondents were of the view that unveiling portrayed an image that an individual was immoral. These respondents who

\textsuperscript{92} Fadwa El Guindi (1999): *Modesty, Privacy and Resistance*.


\textsuperscript{94} Quran 24:30

\textsuperscript{95} Quran 24:31
were interviewed were general and not the ones who unveiled at Kwa Charo wa Mae alone. It was general. It should, however, be noted that these views were based on their own feelings, and did not in away guarantee or warrant a Muslim woman who unveils to be immoral. They are merely based on third party opinion. This applies to all the factors that are mentioned above i.e. immorality, alienation, disobedience and secularization.

Fifty three percent (53%) were of the opinion that unveiling showed that an individual was immoral, forty point five percent (40.5%) had a contrary opinion while six point five percent (6.5%) were not sure.

![Pie chart](image)

**Figure 3:** Unveiling portrays an image that an individual is immoral

Respondents justified this perspective by saying that according to Islam, man has been endowed with the capacity to admire and distinguish what is good and what is evil. The Holy Quran says:
Verily, We have created man from *Nutfah* (sperm) drops of mixed semen (discharge of man and woman), in order to try him, so We made him hearer, seer.\(^{96}\)

At a glance, anybody can generally figure out or prejudge what kind of a character a person is by merely observing him. If a woman does not dress herself properly according to the teachings of Islam in a society that is dominated by Muslims, she makes herself suspected to be among those who commit acts that are not permissible in Islam.

Secondly, a person is able to plan for his own pattern of behaviour. He has freedom to choose or follow the right path or the wrong one. A person can tell through mere observation that there are a lot more evils that are associated with unveiling than there are in veiling. In other words, unveiling causes more harm to the society than good. The evil side is characterized by an individual having a feeling of plunging into evil acts while the good side will make a person obedient to the teachings of Islam. At the end of it all, Quran says that each individual shall submit an account of his entire life.

So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small aunt), shall see it. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom (or a small aunt), shall see it.\(^{97}\)

The following narrative was given by a respondent who thought that unveiling sent a social message that an individual was immoral. This is what she said:

“When a woman has unveiled and not modestly dressed, she may make people sexually attracted to her. If this happens, she may in turn reciprocate by offending those who

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\(^{96}\) Quran 76:3  
\(^{97}\) Quran 99:7-8
have seduced her by abusing or rebuking at them. This scenario could ultimately lead to conflicts and confrontations between the two parties”.

The Quran says:

And those who guard their chastity (i.e. private parts, from illegal sexual acts).

From the above explanation, it is also likely that if a woman was seduced by a man, she may give in and commit adultery. All this may suggest that it was caused by a woman not veiling. A person can therefore see how serious it may become if a woman did not veil.

According to the above Quranic verse, he who commits adultery stands to get a severe punishment from Allah (S.W). This kind of punishment would be administered against those who committed zina in this world and went unpunished. For those who would have been found committing zina in this world, they stand to be punishment once sufficient evidence is obtained. This is normally practiced in the Islamic countries that uphold the sheria law. If the earthly punishment is administered, it could render someone an orphan or widow since it calls for one to be stoned to death. In the case of fornication, one would be flogged one hundred lashes upon obtaining sufficient evidence. These two kinds of punishments i.e. zina and fornication, are supposed to be administered publicly; an act which poses a huge humiliation to the parties involved.

Having mentioned both the earthly and the heavenly punishments, there are other effects that can be associated with this vice; one of which is a possibility of being infected with H.I.V/AIDS. This situation can lead to stigmatization to the victim for the better part of his life; since there is no cure for this disease yet. This situation therefore

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98 Verbal interview with Saadie Ibrahim Amin in Kilifi on 11th May, 2016.  
99 Quran 23:5
implies that if a person is infected with this virus, he stands a greater chance of leading a short life; a state that is majorly attributed to a psychological disturbance.

4.2.1 Other forms of immorality

Immorality is a general term which covers other forms of vices. These vices include seduction, adultery and intoxication, among others. This section briefly discusses vices that are also considered immoral.

4.2.1.1 Seduction

Unveiling is viewed as immoral because it can lead to seduction. This is because if a woman unveils, she stands a chance to be seduced. This is because her body is not covered up as required by Islam. Quran warns people against indulging themselves into the acts of *zina* which are normally preceded by seduction. When adultery occurs in a marriage, it could result to hatred, gossip and ill-talk of each other. Allah (S.W) says in the Quran:

> Woe to every slanderer and backbiter, Who has gathered wealth and counted it, He thinks his wealth will make him last forever! Nay Verily he will be thrown into the crushing fire.  

\[100\]  

In light of the above Quranic verse, it is evident that Islam does not condone any act that would lead to a state of unrest or malice in the society. It advocates towards seeing all humanity co-existing and living together harmoniously.

During the interview, the respondents who gave their views in regards to unveiling said that unveiling was the root cause that led to seduction. Forty nine percent (49%) were of the view that unveiling led to seduction, forty five point five percent (45.5%) argued that it did not lead to seduction while five point five percent (5.5%) were not sure.

\[100\] Quran 104:1-4
4.2.1.2 Adultery

In relation to the above act, Quran says:

The woman and man guilty of illegal sexual intercourse, flog each of them with a hundred stripes. Let not pity withhold you in their case, in a punishment prescribed by Allah, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. And let a party of the believers witness their punishment. (This punishment is for unmarried persons guilty of the above crime, but if married persons commit it, the punishment is to stone them to death, according to Allah’s Law).

The findings revealed that, “When a woman has unveiled, she is considered as having committed immorality. This is so because unveiling exposes a woman’s body in the public which can make people tempted and ultimately commit adultery. When the act of adultery occurs, it can lead to the breakage of homes. There is a unique kind of jealousy that is manifested in infidelity which can make someone overreact by dissolving his or her marriage which could have lasted for so long. It is known that the power of love is so formidable to some people. It is so strong that an individual may act irrationally towards doing certain injurious incidences. To many people, it is not easy to

101 Quran 24:2
control themselves when they are disturbed by lust. To some couple, instead of dissolving the marriage soberly and in a peacefully manner, they can resort to committing suicide or even murder. This state of affairs is in most cases brought about by huge irresistible psychological unrest which they undergo”\textsuperscript{102}.

During oral interview with women who unveil, they gave varied views whether unveiling would lead to adultery or not. Fifty two point three percent (52.3\%) were of the view that unveiling could lead to adultery while thirty eight point eight percent (38.8\%) held that it depended on oneself will to do it or not. Eight point nine percent (8.9\%) were not sure.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{unveiling_adultery.png}
\caption{Veiling and adultery}
\end{figure}

\textit{4.2.1.3 Intoxication}

All kinds of intoxicants are not permissible in accordance with the teachings of Islam. She who unveils sends a social message that she has become immoral. The above is attributed by the fact that when a woman unveils; she normally finds it easy to have an

\footnote{\textsuperscript{102} Verbal interview with Saumu Shauri Amin in Kilifi on 2\textsuperscript{nd} September, 2016.}
access to places that are associated with intoxicants, such as bars, etc. The Quran forbade the use of all intoxicants due to their enormous negative consequences. This is confirmed in the following *ayah*:

O you who believe! Intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic drinks), gambling, idol worship and *al-azlam* (arrows for seeking luck or decision) are an abomination of satan handwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful.\(^{103}\) Satan wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants (alcoholic drinks) and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah and from a- *Salat* (the Prayer). So you will not then abstain?\(^{104}\)

Another message which unveiling sends to the society as immoral is that, “Unveiling can breed pride and vanity to an individual. The above elements are considered as serious evils in the society. This is so because when a woman unveils, the fact that her body is not decently covered could tempt her to start walking boastfully and majestically in front of the public (opposite sex) in order to attract their attention towards her. When this scenario develops, it can ultimately lead to vanity and belittling other people”.\(^{105}\)

The study found that fifty two percent (52%) of the respondents were of the opinion that unveiling led to intoxication while forty eight percent (48%) argued that unveiling did not lead to intoxication.

\(^{103}\) Quran 5:90

\(^{104}\) Quran 5:91

\(^{105}\) Salama Dickson Murima, personal communication in Kilifi on 12th June, 2016.
This section discusses three aspects that can lead to unveiling. They include alienation, disobedience and secularization.

4.3 Alienation

Twenty women currently veiling expressed their views whether veiling was leading to alienation or not. Fifty three percent (53.5%) were of the view that unveiling leads to alienation while forty two percent (42%) said that unveiling did not lead to alienation. Four point five percent (4.5%) were not sure.

The findings at Kwa Charo wa Mae also revealed that women who have unveiled tend to be looked down upon by other people; more so in Muslim predominant areas. This is because many Muslims attach respect and modesty to the veil. If she has not veiled, some people could start branding her with such offending titles like wicked, irreligious, outcast, etc.
The study has found out that when a woman, has unveiled, she could make herself prone to visiting places that are associated with gambling, prostitution, hooliganism and drug abuse. This is because under normal circumstances, a woman who has veiled finds it extremely difficult to enter places such as bars, nightclubs, casinos and the like. But when she has unveiled, she finds it much easier to have access to such places without any fear of contradiction in which she can spend much time having fun.\footnote{Verbal interview with Amos Tsenga Mbura in Kilifi on 13\textsuperscript{th} June, 2016.}

It also emerged from the findings that, “Buibui refrained the wearer, to a great extent; from indulging in zina (adultery). It has also been argued that it is difficult to admire a woman for sex if she has properly put on the veil. Besides that, it is also equally difficult to seduce her if she has veiled as required by Islam”.\footnote{Verbal interview with Bonge Chengo Kenga in Kilifi on 18\textsuperscript{th} July, 2016.} The respondent further reiterated that majority of the women who unveil could easily be influenced towards indulging into sexual perversion such as prostitution and the like. This is because prostitution is normally practiced by those women who are typically dressed to attract men sexually. If a woman has concealed her body properly inside the veil, she will not be able to attract males’ attention.

“When a woman is dressed in attire that is sexually attractive, she is bound to risk herself to rape. This is because such sexual attire can provoke a well-embodied healthy man to commit rape spontaneously. On the contrary, since the buibui provides the cover to the wearer, it becomes extremely difficult for someone to admire a woman and ultimately indulge into rape”.\footnote{Verbal interview with Abdulrahman Hadi Abeid in Kilifi on 22\textsuperscript{nd} July, 2016.}

The study further revealed that a woman who has not veiled, in most cases she becomes as a centre of sexual attraction. This is so because when she has unveiled, she is bound
to make people stare at her. Men would raise their gaze towards her body. This could result to unforeseeable provocative behavior such as jeering, clapping, use of offensive sexual jokes and even abuse.\textsuperscript{109}

A woman who does not veil is bound to be despised and belittled by other people in the Muslim community. This could make her vulnerable to social discrimination and be forsaken in the society in which she lives.\textsuperscript{110}

The study further showed that when a woman unveils, she could be the cause of state of unrest in her family. The interviewee said that, “If there is a daughter whose father is too strict on the adherence to veiling, the moment his daughter starts to unveil, she could make her father so furious that he even could decide to throw her out of his home; for being considered as a source of bringing shame to his family. In some places like Mombasa and Malindi, women who unveil themselves tend to distance themselves away from the general affairs of the Muslims such as weddings and the like. They construct an image of Muslims who have shown themselves to be influenced by the Western culture. This image leads them to be marginalized and being considered as violators of the ideals of Islam”.\textsuperscript{111}

Another respondent added that the practice of unveiling deprived a woman of a Muslim identity. This was because when she unveils, she publicly conveys a message that she belongs to a certain category of certain people who are not proponents of veiling; which many people consider as immoral. She may appear to have affiliated herself to the non-Muslims. If this behavior develops, other people could pose sanction upon her like

\textsuperscript{109}Verbal interview with Mohammed Amin Mohammed in Kilifi on 19\textsuperscript{th} August, 2016.
\textsuperscript{110}Verbal interview with Rashid Khamis Rashid in Kilifi on 19\textsuperscript{th} August, 2016.
\textsuperscript{111}Verbal interview with Abdulrahman Hadi Awadh in Kilifi on 18\textsuperscript{th} July, 2016
treating her with discrimination and alienation.\(^{112}\) This kind of behaviour is however considered barbaric, primitive and strictly forbidden in Islam. Islam calls and advocates for tolerance of members of other faith or creed”. She quoted the following Quranic verse,

Allah does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion and did not drive you out of your homes. Verily, Allah loves those who deal with equity.\(^{113}\)

She added,” in areas where Muslims are majority, it is normally found that those women who have unveiled tend to be accorded with lesser respect in the society than those who have veiled themselves. More so, they hardly stand a chance to be honoured nor regarded as significant by the people with whom they live in the society with. In addition, when a wedding ceremony has been organized in a given locality, the priority on whom to be invited to attend such a function is normally focused on those people who veil themselves. They become considered as modesty, religious and chaste; due to their mode of dress which majority of people profoundly associate it with Islam”.\(^{114}\)

According to the findings, “the veil is conventionally considered as a dress of Muslims. When a woman puts on clothes that are not compatible to the teachings of Islam, she is considered as having deviated from the fundamental teachings of Islam”.\(^{115}\)

The study found out that fifty three percent (53.5%) were of the view that unveiling leads to alienation while forty two percent (42%) said that unveiling did not lead to alienation. Four point five percent (4.5%) were not sure.

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\(^{112}\)Verbal interview with Amina Khamis Hassan in Kilifi on 14\textsuperscript{th} July, 2016.
\(^{113}\)Quran:60:8
\(^{114}\)Verbal interview with Amos Tsenga Mbura in Kilifi on 9\textsuperscript{th} July, 2016.
\(^{115}\)Verbal interview with Dogo Ibrahim Omar in Kilifi on 15\textsuperscript{th} June, 2016.
Figure 7: Unveiling and alienation

4.4 Disobedience

Disobedience against any of the teachings of Islam sends a message that a person is immoral. In this regard, when a woman does not veil, she is considered as having gone against the teachings of the Quran.

According to the teachings of Islam, a lot of emphasis has been laid down on the moral behavior of a man. Islam teaches man to cultivate noble qualities such as being kind to fellow human beings, doing good to the parents, orphans, kinsfolk, companion by your side, the wayfarer, among other virtues. The Holy Quran says:

> Worship Allah and join none with Him in worship, and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, , the poor, the neighbor who is near of kin, the neighbor who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and those slaves whom your right hands possess. Verily, Allah does not like such as are proud and boastful.\(^{116}\)

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\(^{116}\) Quran 4:37
On the contrary, such habits like greed, cruelty, theft and dishonesty are highly discouraged in Islam. Those people who will promote and indulge themselves into the latter forms are considered as going against the teachings of the Quran.

Great emphasis is laid on a person who abides by the teachings of the Quran. He should have faith in the teachings of the Quran. When a person lives up to this kind of behavior, he or she stands to abide by the rules of the Quran.\textsuperscript{117}

In the Quran, mankind has been warned about the punishment that those people who disobey teachings of the Quran. It says,

Do then those who devise evil plots feel secure that Allah will not sink them into the earth, or that the torment will not seize them from directions they perceive not?, or that He may catch them in the minds of their going (in their jobs), so that there is no escape for them (from the punishment)?\textsuperscript{118}

This is an example of what is forbidden in the Quran that women who unveil and expose their bodies by wearing tight fitting clothes stand to face divine punishment in the next world, according to the Quran.\textsuperscript{119} Islam forbids any efforts that are meant to tempt the opposite sex towards sexual admiration. Allah (S.W.) says:

And come not near to the unlawful sexual intercourse. Verily, it is a fahisha (i.e. anything that transgresses its limits) and an evil way (that leads to Hell unless Allah forgives him).\textsuperscript{120}

The Quran warns people against drawing themselves closer to zina.\textsuperscript{121} It so explains by telling the believers to lower their gaze i.e. not to look at things that are forbidden, and

\textsuperscript{117} Quran 8:29, 49:13, 3:102.
\textsuperscript{118} Quran 16. 45-46.
\textsuperscript{119} Quran 17:32.
\textsuperscript{120} Quran17:32
\textsuperscript{121} Quran 17:32.
protect their private parts from illicit sexual affairs. By doing so is pure for them. Verily, Allah (S.W.) is all-Aware of what they do. In the light of the above verse, the practice of unveiling is immoral and could be one of the factors that can attract males’ attention towards infidelity.

Sometimes during the lifetime of the prophet [P.B.U.H], some persons from Banu Hisham entered the house of Asma’a, daughter of Umar when Abubakar had also entered (and she was at that time his wife). He (Abubakar) saw it and disapproved of it, and he made a mention of that to the prophet and said, “I did not see but good only (in my wife).” Thereupon the prophet [P.B.U.H] said, “Verily Allah has made her immune from all this.” Then the prophet stood on the pulpit and said: “After this day no man should enter the house of another person in his absence, but only when he is accompanied by one person or two persons.”

According to the headteacher of Madrassatul Khairat who said that unveiling may convey a message upon an individual i.e. woman, as immoral. This was because those women who unveil do not show their love for Islam. Veil is considered as a shield against a myriad of sexual temptations. As a matter of fact, the veil accords modesty and chastity to the wearer. When a woman has veiled, she is likely not to violate the limits that are set by the Quran in terms of indulging into sexual relationships “outside the wedlock” or going against the teachings of the Quran”. He further added that, “When a woman veils, she finds it difficult to indulge herself into shameful acts like

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121 Quran 17:32
122 Quran 24-30
123 One of the Arab clans in Madina
124 Al-Bukhari Book 25, hadith No.5403.
eating during the broad day light of the holy month of Ramadhan. This is because the act of fasting goes hand in hand with the veiling”.

Another interviewee said, “Unveiling may deprive a woman of employment which practice is common in the Muslim predominant areas. They consider Muslim women who put on the veil as people belonging to the Muslim society. Veiling gives a person a first glance identity as a Muslim even without wanting to make much inquiry about that person”.

An oral interview was conducted with ten community elders who expressed their opinion whether unveiling showed disobedience against the teachings of the Quran or not. According to the findings, forty three percent (53%) expressed their view that unveiling showed disobedience against the teachings of Quran while forty seven percent (47%) reiterated that unveiling did not lead to disobedience against the teachings of the Quran.

**Figure 8:** Unveiling as the disobedience against the teachings of Quran

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125 Verbal interview with *ustadh* Khamis Kassim Mwakaroyo, principal of *Madrassatul Khairat*, Kilifi on 8th June, 2016

4.5 Seculariation

Secularization can be said to be disassociation or separation from religious or spiritual concerns. It is action or process of converting something from religious to secular possession or use.\(^{127}\) It is the social process whereby functions formerly filled by religious institutions are subsequently assumed by non-religious institutions. More positively, we might say that the secularization is the passage of man from the stage of myth to that of reason.\(^{128}\) It can further be said that it is the transformation of a society from close identification and affiliation with religious values and institutions toward nonreligious values and secular institutions.\(^{129}\)

In this study, we can say that there were some Muslim women who were influenced by secularization such that they decided to unveil. When they unveiled, this scenario sent some feelings to some people that, by so doing, they had become immoral. Although this may not be the outright case that these women had become immoral. Its only bring some suspicion to some people that their behavior had turned towards immoral.

Because of this development therefore, a respondent was of the opinion that, “If a person was influenced by secularization, the practice of veiling becomes extremely difficult to observe since she would want to be easily identified with the secular manifestations or culture of which, according to her, renders her pride and modernization”.\(^{130}\) This is in spite of the fact that there are Catholic nuns in the Western world who also veil.

\(^{127}\) Oxford Dictionary-Cortana-Bing Translator.
\(^{129}\) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secularization
\(^{130}\) Verbal communication with Salama Simba Msoma in Kilifi on 5th June, 2016
In light of all of the above therefore, unveiling conveys a message that a person is immoral if she becomes influenced by secularization. Such a woman tends to think that religion and worldly issues are two different things altogether. Therefore, she can choose to engage herself into either of them without any guilt feelings.

The current Western nations have for so long never wanted to emulate the culture of veiling; in spite of the fact that veiling was already being practiced by the non-Arabs way back even before the Arabs adopted it. In Christianity today, veiling is being practiced by a few people like the nuns in the Catholic Church. Majority of the Christian faithfuls do not adhere to this practice. This therefore implies that since the Western nations are economically strong and possess a powerful mainstream media, it is easy for them to air or broadcast T.V. programmes whose actors and anchors are characterized by unveiling. When this happens, this could easily influence masses who watch such programmes in a given area to appear like them in terms of dressing. Hence, unveiling could spread far and wide easily. I conducted oral interview with 20 women who were previously unveiling in order to get their feelings if unveiling was influenced or caused by Secularization or not. Forty six percent (46%) held that unveiling was influenced by secularization while forty four percent (44%) argued that there was no connection between the two. Ten percent (10%) were not sure.
Figure 9: Veiling as influenced by Secularization

4.6 Perspectives of ulama (Muslim scholars) on the practice of veiling

This section discusses perspectives of the veil on the practice of unveiling. The perspectives include the veil is a religious requirement, a concealment (*stara*), a shield (*kinga*) or a fashionable dress. Their views were collected and analyzed.

A category of ten *ulama* were interviewed in Kilifi. The study aimed at getting their views if women were wearing the veil because it was a religious requirement, concealment (*stara*), a fashionable dress or a shield (*kinga*). Five *ulama* expressed their views that the veil was a religious requirement, two *ulama* expressed that the veil was concealment (*stara*), two *ulama* maintained that the veil at was a shield (*kinga*) while one *aalim* argued that the veil was a fashionable dress. They gave varied opinions as follows:
4.6.1 The veil is a religious requirement

An interview with five ulama revealed that women were wearing the veil because it was a religious requirement. The following were their perspectives:

“It is obvious that the veil is predominantly worn by Muslim women. One could find that right inside the veil, a woman has also put on certain dresses that are not supposed to be seen in public. The veil is the only one that conceals that kind of inner dress properly. This implies that the intension of the wearer of that the veil was merely to abide by the commandment of Allah (S.W.) on veiling. Besides, it beats the logic for A Muslim woman to cover up inside her veil something which she knows the public would wish to see, laud and admire; only for it to be covered up by the veil. There must some element of Allah-fearing in her.” The veil is a religious dress since it is easily and explicitly distinguishable from other forms of dresses. Through veiling, a woman gives herself a Muslim identity. According to the teachings of the Quran, Muslims believe that they have divinely been ordained to wear the veil. The aalim justified his statement by quoting a Qur’anic verse which goes:

And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things) and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.) and not to show their adornment except only that which is apparent (like palms of hands or one eye or both eyes for necessity to see the way, or outer dress like veil, gloves, head-cover, apron, etc), and to draw their veils all over Juyubihinna (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms, etc) and not to reveal their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husband’s fathers, their sons, their brothers or their brother’ sons, or their sister’s sons, or their (Muslim) women (their their sisters in Islam), or the (female) slaves whom their right hands possess, or old male servants who lack vigour, or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex,. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal
what they hide of their adornment. And all of you beg Allah to forgive you, O believers, that you may be successful.”\(^{131}\)

The *aalim* (Muslim scholar) expressed that the veil was a religious requirement. Therefore, when you see women wearing the veil, they do so solely for the sake of obeying the commandment of Allah (S.W.). He further stressed, “Veiling therefore is not an option but it is a religious obligation.”\(^{132}\)

Another *aalim* said that although some women consider the veil as a fashionable dress, a dress of modesty, or whatever the case it may be, the major reason as to why they do so is to comply with the commandment Allah (S.W.).\(^{133}\)

Another *aalim* expressed his opinions, “Many Muslim women would have wanted to be free to wear dresses of their choices. But they have decided to keep that aside and wear the veil anytime they moved out of their homes; whether it is hot or cold. This shows that they consider wearing the veil as a religious obligation”.\(^{134}\)

An opinion from another *aalim* held, “Women put on the veil today because they don’t want to expose their adornments to the public. This is because Islam forbids women from exposing their adornments publicly: except to a certain category of people. The Holy Quran specifies this category of people as follows:

Forbidden to you (for marriage) are: your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your father’s sisters, your mother’s sisters, your brother’s daughters, your sister’s daughters, your foster mother who gave you suck, your foster milk suckling sisters, your wives’ mothers, your step daughters under your guardianship, born of your wives to whom you have gone in—but there is no sin on you if you have not gone in them, (to marry their daughters)-the wives of

\(^{131}\) Q. : 24:31
\(^{132}\) Verbal interview with *Ustadh* Jamal Shuaib Abdallah in Kilifi on 16\(^{th}\) July, 2016.
\(^{133}\) Verbal interview with *Ustadh* Yusuf Ali Athman in Kilifi on 3\(^{rd}\) July, 2016.
\(^{134}\) Verbal interview with *ustadh* Said Habshy Said in Kilifi on 23\(^{rd}\) July, 2016.
your sons who(spring) from your own loins and two sisters in wedlock at the same time, except for what has already passed; Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.\textsuperscript{135}

Therefore, women wear the veil because it is a religious obligation”.\textsuperscript{136}

View from another aalim held, “Women wear the veil not for any purpose but to hide what they are wearing inside the veil so that they don’t expose them to the public and end up being sinful. This shows that they behave in this manner so as to adhere to the laws of Islam”.\textsuperscript{137}

“Wearing buibui must be observed by all Muslim women; failure to which it will lead to the disobedience against the teachings of Islam”. The veil, he added, is a dress of modesty and women are supposed to be modest all the time in their life. Therefore, wearing the veil is mandatory, and there is no short-cut to that”.\textsuperscript{138}

\textbf{4.6.2 The veil is a concealment (stara)}

Two ulama expressed their opinion that women were wearing the veil as concealment (stara). One of them expressed, “The veil conceals what is not supposed to be seen publicly by the world of men which is full of sexual temptations. The veil is not supposed to expose to the public how one’s bosoms, for instance, truly look like”.\textsuperscript{139}

Another aalim added, “There are some people who do misuse the veil. This is done when they use the veil to cover their indecent and funny dresses that are not compatible to the teachings of Islam. Such women re-veil when they have finished doing their own

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{135} Quran 4:23
\textsuperscript{136} Verbal interview with ustadh Khamis Kabwere Kupatika in Kilifi on 13\textsuperscript{th} July, 2016.
\textsuperscript{137} Verbal interview with ustadh Abdi Is’hak Abdillah in Kilifi on 29\textsuperscript{th} June, 2016
\textsuperscript{138} Verbal interview with sheikh Famau Mohammed Famau in Kilifi on 4\textsuperscript{th} July, 2016
\textsuperscript{139} Verbal interview with Soud Yahya Shafi in Kilifi on 17\textsuperscript{th} July, 2016
\end{flushleft}
private affairs, like attending discos at night clubs, among other acts that are forbidden by Islam.”

4.6.3 The veil is a shield (*kinga*)

Two *ulama* that were interviewed said that the veil was a shield (*kinga*). One gave his perspective as follows:

“When a woman has put on the veil, she is bound to shield herself against possible sexual temptations. These temptations, if not careful, can drive her towards indulging into infidelity or other forms of illicitly sexual behavior”.

He added, “Naturally, a woman’s body is considered by many as a centre of sexual attraction to the opposite sex. Under normal circumstances, this kind of behavior is also displayed by such animals like peacock; which spreads its beautiful coloured wings in order to attract male attention”.

He further added, “Wearing of the veil protects a woman body against public curiosity. In other words, the veil does not only shield the wearer against evils, but it also shields women from lustful eyes”.

He reiterated, “Wearing the veil does not only provide shield (*kinga*) to the wearer, but it is indeed a commandment which has been ordained in the Holy Quran”. He quoted a verse from the Holy Quran as:

And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things) and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc) and not to show off/display their beauty except what is apparent, and they should place their *khumur* over their bosoms...”

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140 Verbal interview with Abdallah Ali Mbwana in Kilifi on 29th June, 2016.
141 Verbal interview with *Ustadh* Mohammed Abrar Mohammed in Kilifi on 11th November, 2016.
142 Quran 24:30
He concluded, “When a Muslim woman wears the veil, she does not expose her body figure. The veil provides as a shield because it instills fear of Allah (S.W.) into the heart of the wearer”. 143

Another aalim expressed, “Muslim women wear the veil because they consider it as a shield “kinga”. They believe that by wearing the veil they become easily identifiable by people as Muslims. When this happens, especially in an area that is dominated by Muslims, they will be accorded with respect which in turn will shield them against any unforeseeable insult or harm for that matter. This is because the veil is considered as a dress of modesty”. 144

4.6.4 The veil is a fashionable dress

In the opinion that the veil is a fashionable dress, an aalim explained his perspective as follows:

“All some women wear the veil today as fashion. This is so because most of the veils in the Market today are designed in such a way that they tighten and expose the body of the wearer i.e. woman, revealing what should not be revealed to the public. Islam condemns this behavior.”

He added, “Most of the contemporary veils in the market today are made of different shapes and designs. It has become difficult to distinguish the traditional and the conventional veil from the rest of dresses that people put one today. This implies that the level of respect which people used to accord to the veil has now been diluted. The real meaning of the veil has been lost. Women therefore go for the fashion of the day and not the dignity or modesty which the veil offers to the wearer. Unlike before, the

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143 Verbal interview with Ustadh Mohammed Abrar Mohammed in Kilifi on 17th November, 2016.
practice of wearing the veil has now been adopted by people belonging to other religious affiliations in Kilifi. Although they are not obliged to do so by their faith, some have found appealing to them and they wear it. They said that they felt good and comfortable when they wear it due to the nice fashion and beauty it portrays”.

The respondent added, “The material which is used to make the veil is a fashion by itself. It can be transparent. Even the old traditional the veil, black in colour, has now been modified to different designs. The colours, which range from chuichui i.e. leopard colour, to others, give the veil a completely different outlook from the old one.”

The respondent further explained, “the veil is a fashionable dress because when you compare a modern one with the old one, and the ones that are being worn by general women in the Coast region today, the modern ones have been given narratives as mabuibui ya kizazi kipwa or buibuila kidot.com-veil for the modern generation, whereas the old one has been dubbed as buibui la Kiswahili or shuga la kamba -veil for the Swahili people living at the Coast of Kenya or veil with a small rope”. He further stated, “The old veils have become so scarce that they are nowadays hardly found in the shopping places. One is required to place a purchase order in advance before she could get it”.

He continued, “Muslim women nowadays are competitive in wearing the veil. Everyone struggles to make sure that she obtains the first veil that arrives in the market and the first one to wear it in a gathering. They even don’t consider certain regulations that must be met by Islam. To them, whether it is tight or exposes their body shapes it wouldn’t matter. What matters is who will own it and wear it first”.

145 Verbal interview with ustadh Hemed Swaleh Omar in Kilifi on 29th July, 2016
He further lamented that the veil is of the day are made in such a way that they look like the night gown. This is so because some of them bear one button on the upper side that is used to attach to the other side of the veil; hence making the rest of a woman’s body exposed publicly as she walks along the streets especially when it is windy”.

Opinion from another aalim maintained, “Nowadays women treat the veil to be an object of attraction to the opposite sex. They wear it deliberately for this purpose. They decide to choose the best fashion of the day in order to attract men and cause temptation. They behave in this manner because some of them have their own hidden agenda i.e. engaging in sexual relationships”.

4.7. Ulamas’ “Muslim scholars” opinions on the veil

From the interview with the ulama, it was held that fifty percent (50%) of the ulama said that veil was a religious requirement; twenty percent (20%) held that the veil was a concealment (stara), another twenty percent (20%) argued that the veil was a shield (Kinga) while ten percent (10%) maintained that the veil was a fashionable dress.

![Figure 10: Perspectives of the ulama on the veil](image-url)
4.8 Conclusion

Although Muslim women and men across the world have found different perspectives of negotiating and reconciling contested interpretations of veiling and its effects, most Muslims lend support that it is a religious obligation which must be practiced by Muslim women.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides the summary of the findings, conclusion recommendations and suggestions for further study.

5.1 Summary of findings

In analyzing the different perspectives of Muslims on the practice of unveiling in Kilifi Township, Kilifi County, the study highlighted major findings of the research. The study found that there were various perspectives of the Muslims on the practice of unveiling in Kilifi Township, Kilifi County. The study sought to find out if wearing the veil was as a result of being a religious requirement, a concealment (stara) to the woman, a fashion or a shield (kinga). The study has revealed that first; most Muslims were of the opinion that wearing the veil was a religious requirement, secondly that the veil was a garment of concealment (stara), thirdly, that the veil was fashionable, lastly, perspective was the veil was a shield (kinga).

The study explained how Islam spread in Kilifi town. It highlighted how significant/instrumental Mtsanganyiko was in the spread of Islam in Kilifi town. This was because there was a movement of Muslims who came from Mtsanganyiko and settled in Kilifi permanently. As a result of their interaction with the local people, Islam spread in Kilifi town.

According to the discourse that led some Muslim women preferring to unveil, the study found out that women preferred unveiling because they wanted to look attractive to the opposite sex so as to draw their attention sexually. Similarly, the study found out some women unveiled because they were influenced by the Secularization, as a result of most
countries in Africa having been colonized by the west. During that time, Secularization influenced the Africans. Because of this scenario, even those countries that were under the influence of the Arab-Muslims after the arrival of the westerners were also influenced by unveiling.

Mass media also influenced Muslim women to unveil by virtue of the invention of modern technology like the internet or social media which have greatly influenced some Muslim women’s preference to unveil.

The study further revealed that unveiling was also caused by sociolization. A few Muslim women whose neighbours were non-Muslims were bound to be influenced to unveil. This was because they would not feel comfortable to see their immediate neighbours (non-Muslims), whom they interacted with on daily basis, not veiling yet they themselves were veiling.

To understand the effects of the practice of unveiling on society as observed by some Muslim women in Kilifi Township Kilifi County, the study further found out that there were a number of effects of the practice of unveiling on society as observed by some Muslim women in Kilifi.

It has emerged that if a woman unveiled she found it much easier to have access to places that are associated with intoxication or drinking. But if she veiled, it saved her from the curious eyes of onlookers who found it unusual for a woman to wear the veil and then enter such a place.

Other effects are as follows:

If a woman did not veil, she becomes prone to seduction. This was because she exposed her body in public, which makes the opposite sex become attracted to her.
Ultimately this leads to seduction. When seduction occurs, it may lead to sexual intercourse which may in turn lead to contraction of HIV/AIDS which has no cure so far.

Unveiling can also lead to breakage of a home or a family. In the event that unveiling leads to seduction, adultery or HIV/AIDS, the husband or wife can demand divorce if he or she discovers that his or her partner is not faithful.

The study has established that unveiling makes a woman walk boastfully and majestically in public. This makes her prone to catcalls and whistles from males as she walks along in town. This ultimately leads to vanity.

Unveiling is also responsible for rape. It has been observed that if a woman did not wear the veil and she dressed attractively in public, she was bound to attract and provoke the opposite sex to commit rape. This can further lead to such consequences as having a child born outside wedlock, etc.

In addition, the study also found out that unveiling deprived a woman of her religious identity as a Muslim. A woman becomes easily identifiable as a Muslim if she dresses the veil. When she was not done, she made people confused as to whether she was a Muslim or a non-Muslim.

To establish what contribution the Muslim leaders, both men and women can do to enforce the practice of veiling as evident in Kilifi Township, the study found out that Muslims leaders ought to make enormous contribution towards the sensitization of Muslim women for them to embrace veiling as a religious practice. Intensive awareness campaigns ought to be organized to bring women who have unveiled to the fold of veiling.
Muslim media frame should televise programmes which show that women have decently dressed in the veil. This will influence other women to wear the veil.

5.2 Conclusions

It can be conclusively said that despite the fact that there has been discursive discussions and conflicting meanings on the practice of veiling, many scholars lend support to it and contend that it is a religious requirement. Besides, it accords a Muslim woman her respect, modesty, morality and piety. Therefore, it should be encouraged to be practiced by Muslim women in the society.

5.3 Recommendations

The following are the recommendations for this thesis:

1. There is need for Muslim organizations to help in the propagation and creating awareness on the importance of the veil.

Muslim organizations should take the lead in organizing/conducting seminars, workshops, publishing news bulletin, among other ways. This implies that when the above functions are organized, representatives from the Muslim organizations should take that chance to enlighten the Muslims on the importance of wearing the veil.

Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims is the umbrella body of all the Muslims organizations, societies, Mosques Committees and Groups in Kenya. There is need for SUPKEM to play a vital role in sensitizing the Muslim community on the importance of wearing the veil. In so doing, they should be quoting various Qur’anic verses that emphasize on women putting on the veil. SUPKEM is a Non-Governmental organization with many branches across major towns in Kenya. It represents the Muslims of Kenya to the Government and therefore, any views expressed by it stand to
reach-out thousands of Muslims at the grass-root levels. This will influence a considerable number of women to wear the veil.

2. There is need for Ulamas to be proponents of veiling

There is need for ulamas’ intervention to this matter. They should embark on the campaign to scrap the notion or mentality that wearing of veil is a form of oppression, enslavement or belittling a woman. They should come out clearly to air their views towards encouraging women to wear the veil. The ulamas, as it is universally known, are mentioned in the Quran as Allah’s-fearing people.\textsuperscript{146} In the Quran, Allah compares those who know with those who do not know.\textsuperscript{147} This implies that their recognition and impact in the society is enormous. They have the ability to influence Muslims to behave in a certain way. Besides, have the authority to decree on something provided it is not against the teachings of the Quran. Therefore, the ulama should utilize this advantage to call on Muslims to adhere to the code of dress that is considered by Muslims as decent and modest, which is veiling. In executing this, they can use mass media to publicize this matter especially via social networks. The ulama should join social media groups like watsapp and put their comments on veiling. Such comments would reach out to members of the group and the message of veiling would spread very fast.

3. There is need to educate women on the negative effects caused by unveiling

Conduction of Darsas or Islamic lectures can be the best tool for Muslims to use to convey the message of veiling to the women. The madrassa teachers can use such platforms to enlighten the community on the importance of wearing the veil. The darsas should be conducted both inside and outside the mosques. They should invite various speakers from different places so as to give talks that advocate women to stick

\textsuperscript{146} Quran 35:28
\textsuperscript{147} Quran 39:9
to the practice of veiling. When it is heard from the masses that renowned speakers from different places advocate and read from the same script on veiling, this would definitely have enormous positive impact on the members of the society to embrace veiling.

4. There is need for Muslim elite/professionals to use media houses to stress on veiling

Muslim professionals/elites should use media to advocate for veiling by Muslim women. This should be done by airing programmes through such media houses like Peace television, Quran television, local television stations and local radios e.g. Radio-Salam and Radio-Rahma.

5.4 Suggestions for further studies

Several gaps exist for future research from this study. For instance it will be interesting to find out whether the learned, the rich and the independent Muslim women advocate for veiling or not. Moreover, the idea of veiling needs to be understood much more deeply in different societal contexts so as to know its effects on the society. It is an issue of class war i.e. is it that educated women are more exposed and therefore more likely to challenge several views on veiling or not. It will be interesting to know how the learned Muslim women vis a vis the unlearned ones will take completely divergent views on the religious matter of veiling. Research needs to be done to ascertain if it is true that introduction of institutions of higher learning e.g. universities in areas occupied by Muslims is responsible for the deterioration and non-compliance to the wearing of the veil among Muslim women.
While our study focused on the Muslim perspectives on the veil, Studies should also be conducted to find out if Muslim occupied towns like Mombasa, Malindi and Lamu are falling victims to the western culture which induces her inhabitants to abandon their strict adherence to the veiling. Is it the influx of people or growth of higher learning institutions in those places that bring about paradigm shift to the society? These are the questions we would be interested to see answered.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear respondents,

I am a student of Pwani University in Kenya carrying out an academic research on the topic, “Muslim perspectives on the veil in Kilifi Township, Kilifi County. You have been randomly selected to participate in the study and are therefore to provide an appropriate answer by either ticking the best option or give explanation where applicable. The answers provided will only be used for academic purposes and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

N.B: Do not write your name anywhere on this paper.

Instructions: Please tick [ ] OR write accordingly or appropriately.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Section A:-

(i) Gender:

Male [ ] Female [ ]

(ii) Religion:

Islam [ ] Christianity [ ]
Hinduism [ ] others, please specify …………………

(iii) Age:

15-19 [ ] 20-35 [ ]
36-45 [ ] 46 and above [ ]
Tick the most appropriate level of education:-

What is the level of your Madrassa education?

Ibdit’ai (primary) [ ] I’dadiy (secondary) [ ]
Th’anawy (A-level) [ ] Ja’mia (University) [ ]

What is the level of your secular education?

Primary level [ ] Secondary [ ]
Postsecondary [ ] University [ ]

What is your profession?

=Teacher
= Doctor
= Engineer
= Imam

Others, please specify………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
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SECTION B:-

UNVEILING:

1. What is your opinion on Muslim women putting on buibui?

• Veil is a cover “stara” [ ]
• Veil is a fashion [ ]
• Veil is a religious requirement [ ]
• Veil is a shield “kinga” [ ]
2. Did you at any moment of your life consider wearing the *veil*?

3. Did you at any moment of your life consider NOT wearing the *veil*?

4. Do you know a friend who used to wear the *veil* but does NOT do so anymore?
   
   Yes [ ]  No [ ]

   If yes, explain the reason for this behaviour

5. Do you know someone who used NOT to wear the *veil* but is doing so now?
   
   Yes [ ]  No [ ]

   If yes, what reasons made your friend change from NOT wearing the *veil* to wearing it now?
6. What changes did you notice after your friend stopped wearing the *veil*?

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7. What best describes your view about women who wear the *veil*?

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8. What best describes your view about women who do NOT wear the *veil*?

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9. Do you think unveiling portrays an image that an individual as immoral?

   Yes [   ]       No [   ]       Not sure [   ]

9. Does unveiling have any effects on of adultery?

   Yes [   ]       No [   ]       Not sure [   ]

10. Do you think unveiling has any effects on immorality (seduction, adultery and intoxication)?

    -seduction:     Yes [   ]       No [   ]
- Adultery: Yes [ ]  No [ ]
- Intoxication: Yes [ ]  No [ ]

11. In your opinion, does unveiling lead to alienation?
   Yes [ ]  No [ ]  Not sure [ ]

12. Does unveiling make an individual disobey the teachings of the Quran?
   Yes [ ]  No [ ]

13. Are women who unveil influenced by westernization?
   Yes [ ]  No [ ]  Not sure [ ]

Thank you for your cooperation

Yours faithfully

Assad Shembwana Sheyumbe