

MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN BUSAN, SOUTH KOREA:
ITS DEVELOPMENT, CHALLENGES AND FUTURE
PROSPECTS

BY

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ABSTRACT

Islam began to spread in South Korea, particularly after the Korean War (1950-53), especially at Seoul, the main metropolitan city in the country. Since most literature on Islam and Muslims centred on Seoul, there is limited work, especially in English, on Islam and Muslim community in Busan. Even the actual number of Muslims residing there remains inconclusive despite their existence since 1976. Similarly, not much information is available on the condition of the Muslims, including the negative perception held or treatment shown towards the group by the non-Muslim population in the city. Thus, this research aims to introduce the Muslim community in the south tip of South Korea called Busan, which is not known to many, by focusing on the role and contributions of local and foreign Muslim individuals and organisations in developing the Muslim community in the city. With the establishment of Al-Fatah Busan Mosque in 1980, the Muslim community in Busan started to flourish slowly, which saw an increasing number of Muslims, local and foreign, as well as of mosques and Islamic centres. Known as the south gate to South Korea that is famous for its booming seaport activities and various modern industries, Busan has attracted many foreign workers from all around the world, including Muslims from Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Uzbekistan, and others, which consequently contributed to the development of Muslim community there. Hence, the research would like to examine the relationship development between Korean and foreign Muslims in Busan and discover the problems and challenges faced by the community as well as future prospects. Using qualitative approach i.e., interviews, observation, and secondary sources, the study provides information on the under-studied topic gathered from different figures and individuals directly involved with establishing and developing the Muslim community in Busan. Information was also derived from non-Muslim South Koreans' views of Islam and Muslims in South Korea. The findings demonstrated close cooperation between local and foreign Muslims in Busan, best exemplified in various Islamic organisations that exist and are run by both groups in the city. That said, Muslims in Busan are not exempted from problems that make their lives difficult and serve as obstacles for da'wah activities towards non-Muslims. Finally, the study highlights the prospect of the Muslim community in Busan, hoping that with certain incentives and greater efforts, the community will thrive in the future.

خلاصة البحث

بدأ الإسلام ينتشر في كوريا الجنوبية خاصة بعد الحرب الكورية (1950-1953) وخاصة في سيول، المدينة الحضرية الرئيسية في البلاد. وبما أن معظم المؤلفات المتعلقة بالإسلام والمسلمين تركزت في سيول، فإن هناك عمل محدود خاصة باللغة الإنجليزية حول الإسلام والمجتمع المسلم في مدينة بوسان، حتى أن العدد الفعلي للمسلمين المقيمين هناك لا يزال غير حاسم على الرغم من وجودهم منذ عام 1976. وبالمثل، لا تتوفر الكثير من المعلومات. على حالة المسلمين بما في ذلك التصور السلبي أو المعاملة التي يظهرها تجاه المجموعة من قبل السكان غير المسلمين في المدينة. ومن ثم، يهدف هذا البحث إلى التعريف بالمجتمع المسلم في الطرف الجنوبي من كوريا الجنوبية والذي يسمى بوسان والذي لا يعرفه الكثيرون، مع التركيز على دور ومساهمات الأفراد والمنظمات الإسلامية المحلية والأجنبية في تنمية المجتمع المسلم في المدينة. مع إنشاء مسجد الفتح في بوسان عام 1980، بدأ المجتمع المسلم في بوسان في الازدهار ببطء مما أدى إلى زيادة عدد المسلمين المحليين والأجانب، وكذلك المساجد والمراكز الإسلامية. تُعرف مدينة بوسان بالبوابة الجنوبية لكوريا الجنوبية وتشتهر بازدهار أنشطة الموانئ البحرية والصناعات الحديثة المختلفة، وقد استقطبت مدينة بوسان العديد من العمال الأجانب من جميع أنحاء العالم بما في ذلك المسلمين من إندونيسيا وباكستان وبنغلاديش وأوزبكستان وغيرها مما ساهم بالتالي في ازدهارها وتنمية المجتمع المسلم هناك. ومن هنا يرغب البحث في دراسة تطور العلاقة بين المسلمين الكوريين والأجانب في مدينة بوسان واكتشاف المشكلات والتحديات التي يواجهها المجتمع، وكذلك الآفاق المستقبلية. باستخدام المنهج النوعي، أي المقابلات والملاحظة والمصادر الثانوية، توفر الدراسة معلومات حول الموضوع قيد الدراسة التي تم جمعها من مختلف

الشخصيات والأفراد الذين يشاركون بشكل مباشر في إنشاء وتطوير المجتمع المسلم في مدينة بوسان. كما تم الحصول على معلومات من الكوريين الجنوبيين غير المسلمين حول وجهات نظرهم حول الإسلام والمسلمين في كوريا الجنوبية. لقد أظهرت النتائج أن هناك تعاونًا وثيقًا بين المسلمين المحليين والأجانب في مدينة بوسان، وهو ما يتجسد بشكل أفضل في المنظمات الإسلامية المختلفة التي كانت موجودة وتديرها كلا المجموعتين في المدينة. ومع ذلك، فإن المسلمين في مدينة بوسان ليسوا معفيين من المشاكل التي تجعل حياتهم صعبة في بعض الأحيان وتكون بمثابة عقبات أمام أنشطة الدعوة تجاه غير المسلمين. أخيرًا، تسلط الدراسة الضوء على آفاق المجتمع المسلم في مدينة بوسان، على أمل أن يتمكن المجتمع من الازدهار في المستقبل من خلال حوافز معينة وجهود أكبر.

APPROVAL PAGE

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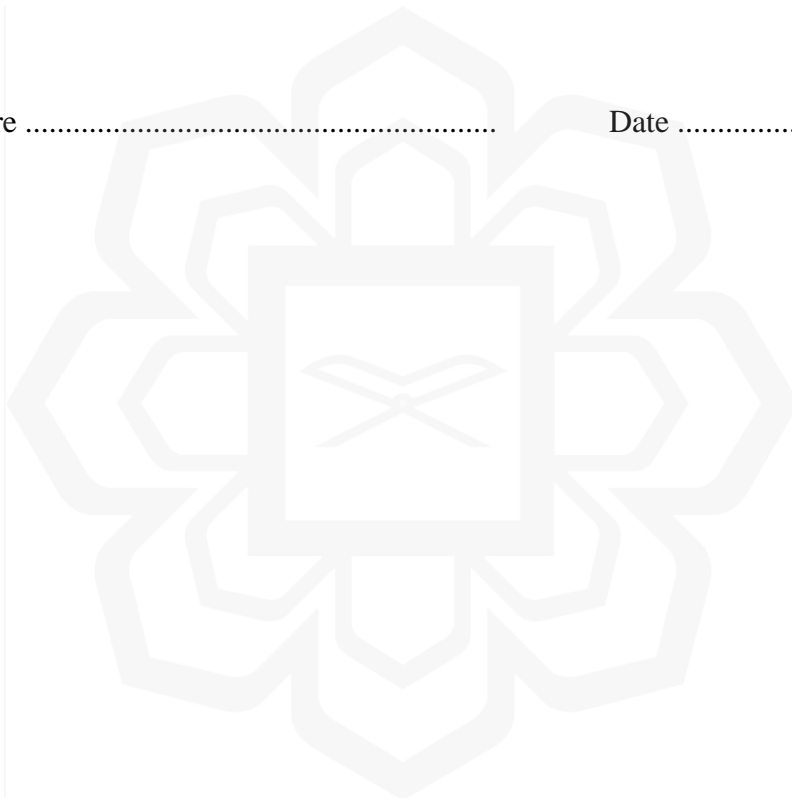
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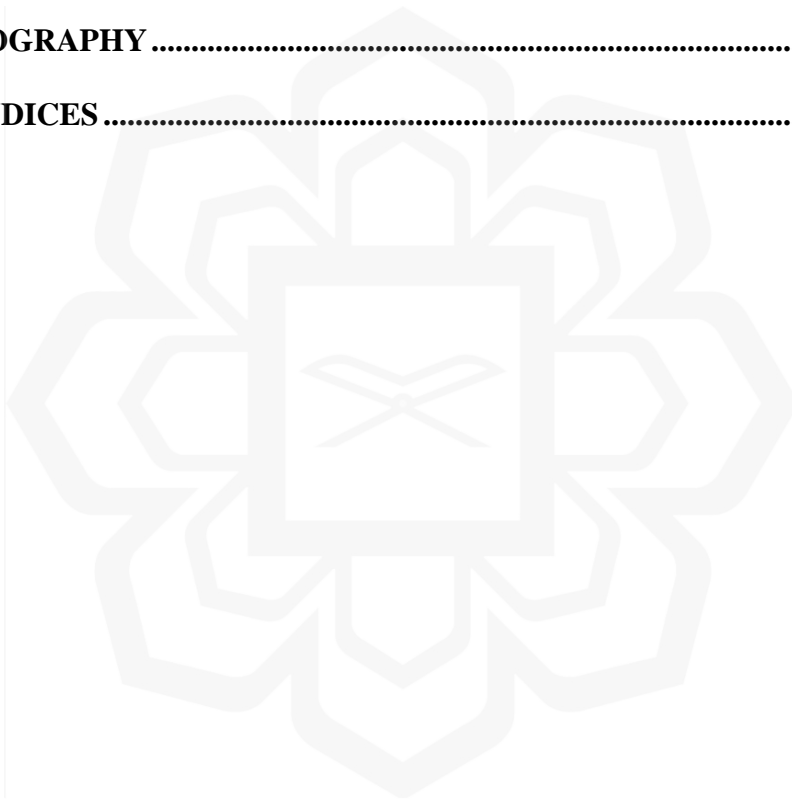
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.D.	Annon Domini
B.C.	Before Christ
B.C.E.	Before Common Era
C.E.	Common Era
BFIA	Busan Foundation for International Activities
BMSA	Busan Muslim Student Association
BPJPH	Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Produk Halal
CTS TV	Christian Television System
GSFC	<i>Geumsaem</i> Foreign Centre
HDC	Halal Development Corporation
iERA	Islamic Education and research Academy
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JAKIM	Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia
K-Pop	Korean Popular Culture
KCC	Korean Christian Council
KIHI	Korean Institute of Halal Industry
KMF	Korean Muslim Federation
Koslims	Korean Muslims
KOSIS	Korean Statistical Information Service
KTO	Korea Tourism Organisation
MBC	Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGOs	Non-governmental Organisations

P.B.U.H.	Peace Be Upon Him
PUMITA	Persaudaraan Umat Muslim Indonesia Al-Fatah
RTM	Radio Televisyen Malaysia
S.A.W.	Salla Allahu Aleyhi Wassalam (Peace Be Upon Him)
SBS	Seoul Broadway Station
SOP	Standard Operation Procedure
SR	Saudi Riyal
S.W.T.	Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala (Glory to Him, the Exalted)
THIDA	Taiwan Halal Integrity Development Association
UN	United Nation
USD	U.S. Dollar
WAMY	World Assembly of Muslim Youth

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

South Korea is a homogenous country with a population consisting mostly of Korean descendants, imbuing the South Koreans with a strong sense of pride and loyalty towards their country.¹ This strong belief in ethnic homogeneity resulted in the South Koreans' strong opposition to multiculturalism ideology.² However, in reality the country is already a multicultural society which consists of small groups of races living and building their own community since decades ago. Since the majority are made up of the Korean community, the non-Korean communities, such as ethnic Chinese, Japanese, and North Koreans, as well as religious minorities like Muslims, are small; hence, their existence in the country is not much noticed by the people of South Korea.³ As the existence of these communities is overlooked, it is proper to propose a study that can shed light on the existence of these non-Korean communities, which the researcher is called to do. Hence, the researcher studied the establishment of the Muslim community in Busan, which began when Turkey, a Muslim country, joined the Korean War (1950-1953).

When the Korean War started in 1950, the stability in the region was completely disrupted by the conflict between the North and South. This war had also involved many other countries; for example, China, the United States, and several other countries under

¹ Han Kyung Koo, "The Archaeology of the Ethnically Homogeneous Nation-State and Multiculturalism in Korea", *Korea Journal*, vol. 47, no. 4 (Winter, 2007): 8-31.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

the command of the United Nations, including Turkey.⁴ The war, which ended in 1953 with the declaration of the Armistice Treaty, had brought devastating results as millions of people were estimated to have died during the war; two million civilians and two million members of the armies from both sides.⁵ The war has been etched as one of the most gruesome wars in history because of its high fatality rate of Korean civilian compared to World War Two and the Vietnam War.⁶ As the war ended, both South and North Korea declared independence from each other and this separation continues until today.

In the aftermath of the war, some members of the Turkish army who had fought in the war decided to stay in South Korea and through them, Islam began to be spread in the country.⁷ In the early period of this propagation of Islam, the Imam of the Turkish army brigade, Adul Gafur Karaismailoglu, acted as the religious leader to the Turkish army, giving lectures and leading prayers as he felt obligated to spread the teaching of Islam in the country. His lectures attracted several Koreans, which resulted in the conversion of Kim Jin Gyu and Yoon Du Young to Islam. Kim and Yoon adopted Umar and Muhammad, respectively, as their Muslim names and later became the backbone of da'wah⁸ work in South Korea.⁹ The Korean Islamic Society was then established in 1955 with the aim to spread the teaching of Islam in the country; it successfully converted 39 more Koreans.¹⁰ A year later, an Imam from Turkey, named Zubeyr Koch,

⁴ Bruce Cumings, *The Korean War: A History*. (New York: Modern Library, 2010), pp. 32-36

⁵ Ibid, 36.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Abdul Haq, *Gerakan Islam di Korea dan Indonesia*. (Yogyakarta: Bagian Penerbitan Dua Dimensi, 1985), 109-110.

⁸ According to Izzati: "Da'wah meaning preaching, spreading, inviting, asking, leading, encouraging and enjoining good and forbidden evil" Izzati Abu Al-Fazl. *The spread of Islam: the contributing factors*. London: Islamic College for Advanced Studies Press, 2002. P. 76.

⁹ Sohn Joo Young, *Organisations and Activities of the Muslim Minority in Korea*. (n.d.). Retrieved August 3, 2016. 1-2. www.world-dialogue.org/MWL/minority/C1430-M08-1.pdf.

¹⁰ Hee Soo Lee, "Historical Survey on Islam in East Asia - II", *The Muslim World League Journal*, vol. 32, no. 6 (August, 2004): 32.

arrived in Seoul and further hastened the da'wah work there, which led to the successful conversion of more than 200 Koreans to Islam.¹¹

This development of the Muslim community initially happened in Dong Daemun, Seoul, as it is the place where the remnants of the Turkish army resided after the end of the Korean War. Islamic teachings later reached other parts of South Korea. Currently, there are several existing Muslim communities in South Korea; for instance, in Busan, Anyang, Ansan, Gwangju, Daejeon, and others. Since the Muslim community of Busan has been selected as the topic of study, lengthy discussions on the establishment of the Muslim community in the metropolitan city of Busan will therefore be further discussed in the following chapters.

Before looking further into the Muslim community in Busan, it is important to know the number of Muslims in South Korea. Houssain Kettani did a survey that calculated the number of local and foreign Muslims residing in the country from 1950 to 2009. He stated that “estimates for the Muslim population increased from few hundred or less than 0.01 percent in 1950, to few thousands or around 0.02 percent in 1971, to 235,000 or 0.50 percent in 2009”.¹² From this number, 45,000 Korean Muslims have been accounted for, while foreign Muslims are three times that number, with an estimation of as many as 190,000 people. As stated in an article posted by *The Korean Herald* about the population of foreign Muslims who had migrated to South Korea, this migrant population mainly originated from countries such as Indonesia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, who came to South Korea for work, while some came from Uzbekistan, Malaysia, and the Middle East.¹³ Since this research revolves around the community's

¹¹ Sohn Joo Young, “Organisations and...”, 1.

¹² Houssain Kettani, “Muslim Population in Asia: 1950-2020”, *International Journal of Environmental Sciences and Development*, vol. 1, no. 2 (2010): 151.

¹³ Ben Jhoty, “Muslim community finds refuge in religion,” *The Korean Herald*, 21 September, 2001, Muslim Population,

development in Busan, it is important to understand the definition of ‘community development’, which is:

“A process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. Community wellbeing (economic, social, environmental, and cultural) often evolves from this type of collective action being taken at a grassroots level.”¹⁴

The above process is applied to the study in understanding the dynamic relationship between local and foreign Muslims in the city and how this contributes to the development of Muslim community in Busan.

Busan is located at the tip of south-east Korean Peninsula and known as the second largest metropolitan city in South Korea after Seoul. It has been separated from the South Gyeongsang Province, having its self-governing authority led by an elected mayor.¹⁵ As of 2011, the population reached up to 3.6 million people and the metropolitan city is the largest industrial city in the country resulting from seaport trading activities, which makes it the fifth busiest seaport in the world.¹⁶ A deeper elaboration on Busan’s history and the Muslim community will be done in Chapter 3.

The choice of Busan’s Muslim community as a subject of study comes with several reasons. Firstly, since most scholarly writings focused on the Muslim community in Seoul, information on other areas such as Busan, Ansan, and Jeju is lacking and scarce. Therefore, this research aims to provide more comprehensive details on the Muslim community of Busan. Secondly, as Busan is the second largest metropolitan city in South Korea and the main industrial area of the country, it attracts many foreign workers

<<http://www.muslimpopulation.com/asia/Korea%20South/Muslim%20community%20finds%20refuge%20in%20religion.php>> (accessed 20 August, 2016).

¹⁴ Flo Frank and Anne Smith, *The Community Development Handbook: A Tool to Build Community Capacity*. (Quebec, Human Resources Development Canada, 1999), 6.

¹⁵ Kim Jong Hae, *Life in Busan: A Guide for Foreign Residents*, (Busan, Busan Foundation for International Activities, 2013), 21.

¹⁶ Martin Robinson, Ray Bartlett and Rob Whyte, *Korea*, (London, Lonely Planet, 2007), 227.

to work there, including Muslims from countries such as Indonesia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Thus, a foreign Muslim community has emerged in Busan and their relationship with the local Muslim community in the city is worth studying. Another reason is that with Busan being known as the southern gate to South Korea, this attracts many Muslim tourists to the city. Several famous attractions are the Gamcheon Culture Village, Haeundae Beach, Dongbaeksom Island, and many historical and beautiful places that set Busan as one of the great tourism destinations. It is hoped that this study will provide more information pertaining to the Muslim community, halal premises, and the Islamic organisations and institutions available in the city to ease their stay in Busan. Lastly, the Muslim community in Busan is very active in da'wah activities, community services, and community developments, hence, it is also hoped that this study will shed light on these activities and garner attention from Muslims all over the world to come to Busan to help their mission in spreading the teaching of Islam, either financially, physically, or through other possible contributions.

In conclusion, this research focuses on the establishment of Muslim community in Busan, which began in the 1970s and has continued until the 21st century. The timeline proposed by the researcher starts in the 1970s because the Muslim community in Busan began to root there during the period mentioned. This research investigates the community until the 21st century to further understand its development, either its progress or regress. General information on other Muslim communities that have existed in South Korea is also included in this study. Furthermore, this research highlights the cooperation (economic, social, education, da'wah works and others) between local and foreign Muslims in Busan and proceeds to highlight the challenges faced by the community that have made them a strong community in a non-Muslim country. It is also important to recognise the roles played by local and foreign prominent

figures and organisations in developing the Muslim community in Busan. Several organisations are actively involved in the establishment and development of the community: for example, local Muslim organisations such as the Korean Muslim Federation (KMF) and *Geumsaem*, as well as foreign Muslim organisations such as Persaudaraan Umat Muslim Indonesia Al-Fatah (PUMITA). Lastly, the study discusses the future prospects of Busan's Muslim community.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study is essentially to examine and bring forth information about the Muslim community in the metropolitan city of Busan, South Korea, which is currently scanty due to the lack of interest in investigating this community and compiling information for future reference. While South Korea is currently acknowledged by the world community thanks to the spread of its popular culture via dramas, Korean pop (K-Pop), and cuisine, knowledge about the Muslim community in the country is still hard to find. In fact, most Muslims in other countries are still unaware of their existence. It is quite motivating for the researcher to introduce the Korean Muslim community, which has existed from as early as the mid-20th century to the world.

Although there have been articles or studies published by scholars on the community, these have only provided a general background and history of the communities or have only focused on one Muslim community; for example, Sohn Joo Young, a former KMF president, gave an account of the Muslim community in South Korea with much discussion on the building of mosques and Islamic centres,¹⁷ while

¹⁷ Sohn Joo Young, "Organisations and...", 5-9.

Jiyun Camilla Nam described only the life of Muslims who live in the Itaewon district, Seoul, in her article.¹⁸ Hence, further study is important and necessary, and the researcher feels responsible to uncover the history of the Muslim community in South Korea, particularly pertaining to its development and cooperation between local and foreign Muslims, especially in Busan.

Despite having several active organisations in Busan, there are no accurate statistics on the number of Muslims residing in Busan. Even though a survey was done by these organisations, most of the respondents were not interested to fill it in, which resulted in the failure of calculating the number of local and foreign Muslims in Busan. Moreover, some foreign Muslims were busy with their labour and had a lack of free time since they work in construction areas which negated them from joining social activities held by Muslim organisations.¹⁹ A field study was done in the hope that the researcher will acquire the number of Muslims, local and foreign, in Busan from 1970 and the latest statistics.

The researcher observed a dearth of interest when conducting a literature search on the Muslim community in Busan. It was evident that there was limited information available in both English and Korean. In contrast, sources and information related to the Muslim community in Seoul Metropolitan City are readily accessible in various forms, such as articles, newspapers, theses, and other publications. Therefore, being the second-largest city in South Korea and a significant home for the Muslim community, it is crucial to have detailed information about Islam and Muslims there. This information can facilitate global Muslims, particularly *du'at*²⁰, in recognising their

¹⁸ Jiyun Camilla Nam, "Itaewon, Muslims and Koslms: Inter-cultural Dynamics in the Muslim Neighborhood of Seoul", *Situations*, Vol. 6 (winter, 2012): 52-54.

¹⁹ PUMITA Busan interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi via Facebook Messenger on 30 September 2016.

²⁰ *Du'at* is the plural form of *da'i*. It is used to refer to a group of Muslim preachers or missionaries.

presence and assisting them with their needs, as well as supporting the development of the community, including da'wah activities.

Furthermore, there is a need for constructive writing elaborating the establishment of the Muslim community in the country, as Islam and Muslims are being perceived as threats to the world and have been mislabelled as terrorists in many non-Muslim countries. These negative perceptions towards Islam and Muslims have been blindly accepted by many, including South Koreans, which has led to the Muslims in South Korea receiving bad treatment from the local community. Moreover, the rivalry of Christianity has also posed a threat to the South Korean Muslim community as they have spread propaganda about Islam and Muslims in South Korea through the media, either in newspapers or television; for instance, CTS TV in 2008 degraded Islam and Muslims in its programme when they claimed that if Islam were to be successfully propagated in the country, so would the terrorist ideology.²¹ These accusations towards Islam and Muslims have swayed the views of South Koreans as discontentment and mistrust towards Muslims continue to increase over the years. This study, therefore, investigated the root of the problem and how the Muslim community in Busan has dealt with the situation. In fact, this situation calls for Muslims, both local and foreign, to stand together to refute the allegations. Hence, it is worth to look further into the relationships forged between local and foreign Muslims in understanding their significance towards each other.

²¹ Hee Soo Lee, "Two Contradictory Trends in Recent Korean Society: Understanding Islam and Islamophobia," Muslim World League, (2011): 3-4. <www.world-dialogue.org/MWL/taiwan/TW-C-4-4.pdf> (accessed 24 August, 2016).

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In identifying the underlying issues pertaining to the establishment of the Muslim community in Busan and the relationship between local and foreign Muslims, the following questions are listed:

1. How have the Muslims in Busan established and developed a community in the metropolitan city since the 1970s?
2. What is the nature of the relationship that has been established between local and foreign Muslims in Busan?
3. Which prominent figures and institutions have been involved in the building of the community in Busan?
4. What are the problems and challenges faced by the Muslim community in Busan since its establishment and what are the future prospects of the community's growth and developments?

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study was proposed to gain insight into the Muslim community in Busan, South Korea, and the community development and its situation since the 1970s. The study proceeds with an examination of the relationship between Korean and foreign Muslims, as well as their dependency towards each other, which would signify the unity and strength of the Muslim brotherhood, making it possible for Islam to thrive for more than 60 years in this metropolitan city. Moreover, the study also aims to discover the problems and challenges faced by the community, as well as the future prospects of the Muslim community in Busan, which will be critically assessed.

Therefore, four objectives of the study can be concluded from the main research questions that had been mentioned earlier:

1. To highlight the existence and development of the Muslim community in Busan, South Korea since the 1970s.
2. To understand the relationships between local and foreign Muslims residing in Busan.
3. To identify the role played by prominent figures and institutions in developing the Muslim community in Busan.
4. To cross-examine the problems and challenges faced by the Muslim community and its future prospects.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is significant in uncovering the truth about the existence of the Muslim community in South Korea and to introduce them to the world, especially to Muslims in other places who are still unaware of their existence. This research also fills in the existing gaps in literature of the study subject since there is a lack of in-depth discussion on the Muslim community in South Korea. This study, therefore, provides comprehensive information on the Muslim community, especially in Busan, regarding their education, politics, social and economic situation. Furthermore, there is a language barrier that has hampered the dissemination of information about Islam and the Muslim community in South Korea to a wider audience. It is hoped that this research will reduce this barrier and contribute to the increase of English literature on the study subject.

Consequently, Muslims, especially *da'i*²² and generous individuals, will be able to come to the country for da'wah works as well as helping the Muslims there financially. Furthermore, a majority of Muslim tourists are reluctant to visit non-Muslim countries

²² *Da'i* is a term that refers to a Muslim preacher or a Muslim who invites people to the Truth. Izzati Abu Al-Fazl. *The spread of Islam: the contributing factors*. London: Islamic College for Advanced Studies Press, 2002. P. 76.

as they worry that their basic necessities as Muslims will be hard to get. For example, some religious Muslims would require accessible prayer places and halal food as basic necessities, which are greatly lacking in non-Muslim countries. This study provides information on halal stores and mosques that Muslims can visit while staying in South Korea; thus, boosting the visit of foreign Muslims to the country.

Moreover, it is hoped that the study will uplift any misunderstanding and prejudice towards the Muslim community; for instance, to educate non-Muslims on the truth about Islam and Muslims, which has been distorted by the media. Finally, the utmost regards and appreciation are offered to the reputable scholars who have devoted their time to writing about Islam and Muslims in South Korea, either through books, articles or theses, which have significantly introduced the existence of Islam and the Muslim community in the country and made it possible for other researchers to pursue the study even further.

1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW

Almost every scholar who has written about Islam and Muslims in South Korea has focused on the arrival of Islam to the country in the past and present. Several discussions exist regarding the Muslim community in South Korea, but they still lack elaborations that can help in understanding the relationship between local and foreign Muslims and there are fewer detailed discussions about the establishment of the Muslim community. In other words, even though there are some scholars who have discussed the Muslim community in South Korea, these discussions have merely scratched the surface of the topic and lacked in-depth explanations. Therefore, it can be noted that there is still a huge gap in the existing works that need to be filled. At the same time, the study of minority communities can be classified as a challenging field of study because of

limited resources to refer to and most importantly due to language barriers, especially when it involves the study of minorities in non-English speaking countries such as China, Korea, and Japan. Because of this limitation, the sources of this proposed research are mostly based on materials in English, Malay, and translated versions.

A prominent scholar who specialised in Islam in South Korea is Hee Soo Lee, who has written many literatures regarding Islam in the country. One primary literature of his is a book entitled *The Advent of Islam in Korea*²³, describing an extensive history about the contact made by Muslim traders to the Far East region, especially China, then arriving to the Korean Peninsula as early as the 9th century during the reign of the Silla Kingdom, until the coming of the Turkish army in support of South Korea during the Korean War (1950-1953). There are several important sub-topics that have been written by Lee that can support the study; for example, he gives a general idea on the socio-economic landscape of the Korean Muslims after 20 years of the propagation of Islam in the country, which describes the ability of Korean Muslims to donate and help each other, as well as their efforts in performing their religious duties and others. Lee then proceeds with the challenges and future prospects of Islam and the Muslims in the country by listing several points. This general information will be a basis to initiate an in-depth clarification about the situation of the Muslim community in Busan including the challenges and future prospects.

The second work by Hee Soo Lee that is worth mentioning is his article entitled *A Survey on Muslims in Korea – 2011*²⁴ which claims that surveys or studies on Muslims are still in their infancy and have left a gap in terms of understanding the lives of

²³ Hee Soo Lee, *The Advent of Islam in Korea; a Historical Account*, (Istanbul: Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture, 1997) 1-223.

²⁴ Hee Soo Lee, “A Survey on Muslims in Korea – 2011”, *Institute for Asian Muslim Studies*, (2011): 1-96.

Muslims, especially foreign Muslims residing in South Korea. The survey that took place in 2011 was conducted in Ansan and Itaewon district located in Seoul, is quite recent and has provided substantial information pertaining to affairs of the Muslim migrants such as income, occupation, education, and religious life. The survey also covered the reasons for the arrival of Muslim migrants to the country, as well as presented statistics on the migrants' countries of origin and their concerns. Even though the survey was concentrated in the Seoul area, it will still be of great help as a guideline to understand the situation of foreign Muslims in South Korea, especially Busan.

Another noteworthy literature was written by the former KMF president, Sohn Joo Young, entitled *Organisations and Activities of the Muslim Minority in Korea*²⁵ discussing the propagation of Islam since the 1950s by a Turkish Imam in Seoul. The writer wrote extensively on the history of Islam in the country with the main information on the establishment of the Korean Muslim Federation (KMF), their activities, and their standard operation procedure (SOP). He then described the KMF branches in South Korea, where the Muslim community resides. This information helped the researcher to pinpoint the location of the Muslim community in the country; however, the information is limited to only the location of the Muslim community, the building of mosques and several activities that took place at the mosques operated by the KMF. For example, the establishment of the KMF Busan branch with the building of the Al-Fatah Mosque was described.

There is a lack of discussion on the historical development of the Muslim community in the article, but this is compensated by points on why Islam is able to survive in the country, which is important as it will also relate to the survival of the

²⁵ Sohn Joo Young, "Organisations and...", 1-28.

Muslim community. For instance, the author claims that the teachings of Islam is similar to Korean teachings and that there is a good relationship between the South Korean government and Muslim countries. In addition, public opinion on current religious institutions are unfavourable as they have turned to capitalism, hedonism, and the fall of Eastern culture and morals because of Western influence, while Islam prohibits immoral acts, living only to seek pleasure, and monopoly in business. These positive points are justified in the study and since the article did not have a detailed elaboration on the Muslim community, this research aims to fill these gaps.

Don Baker, a scholar who specialises in Korean history, produced an article entitled *Islam Struggles for a Toehold in Korea: Muslims in Land Dominated by Monks and Ministers*,²⁶ which substantially describes the history of Islam and Muslims in the Korean Peninsula since the 11th century. He also mentions the establishment of a second mosque in Busan after Seoul, while saying that the Muslim community is growing, especially since the migration of Muslim workers into the country. He then states several reasons why Islam has a slow development in South Korea; for example, the strict teachings of Islam, as well as mosques being flooded with foreigners which made them unapproachable to the Koreans, etc. These points were helpful in determining whether this situation has happened in Busan, as his points are broadly described, without any specific mention of cities or provinces.

Jiyun Camilla Nam specifically assesses the Muslim community in Seoul in her article - *Islam, Itaewon, Muslims and Koslms: Inter-cultural Dynamics in the Muslim Neighbourhood of Seoul*,²⁷ which critically discusses the treatment received by Muslims living in the Itaewon district of Seoul. She also introduces the meaning of the word

²⁶ Don Baker, "Islam Struggles for a Toehold in Korea: Muslims in a Land Dominated by Monks and Ministers," *Harvard Asia Quarterly*, vol. X, no. 1 (winter, 2006): 25-30.

²⁷ Jiyun Camilla Nam, "Itaewon...", 52-54.

Koslims to the reader, which is an abbreviation for Korean Muslims. The article provides good information regarding the challenges and problems faced by the Muslim community in Itaewon in terms of socio-economy; moreover, her article includes the situation of local and foreign Muslims. This kind of information is of great help to the research as it serves as a guideline in understanding the challenges faced by the Muslim community and can be used to identify whether the same situation has also happened in Busan.

An article written by Bae Ji Sook entitled *Live is Very Hard for Korean Muslims*²⁸ raises the challenges posed towards Korean Muslims as a Muslim community surviving alongside a non-Muslim community. Since they are the minority in terms of religion, their religious practices are hard to adhere to, especially in performing five daily prayers which requires three to five minutes of break during working hours. Since most companies do not have this reservation for religious practices, this becomes difficult for them to perform. Several other challenges are fasting, observing the Islamic dress code, and avoiding non-halal eateries that provide food, for instance, pork, alcohol and others, during company gatherings or business meetings. Since these challenges are faced by almost every local Muslim, they were also studied in Busan and a deeper investigation on those issues was carried out to clarify whether the challenges are only faced by Korean Muslims, or the situation also happens to foreign Muslims residing in Busan.

A dissertation written by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin Mohd Ghazi entitled *Islam in South Korea: Progress and Challenges of Da'wah Activities Since the 1950s*²⁹

²⁸ Bae Ji Sook, "Life is Very Hard for Korean Muslims," *The Korean Times*, 10 August 2007, <http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2007/08/117_8104.html> (accessed 22 October 2016)

²⁹ Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin Mohd Ghazi, *Islam in South Korea: Progress and Challenges of Da'wah Activities Since the 1950s*, (Kuala Lumpur: International Islamic University Malaysia, 2016) 1-105.

discusses da'wah activities in South Korea, describing its progress and the challenges faced by *da'i*, as well as the local and foreign Muslim communities. Since the author had interviewed an Imam from Busan, the study provides a great deal of information; for instance, the situation of local and foreign Muslims in Busan, their activities and challenges faced. The interviews also introduce an active small organisation, *Geumsaem* whose purpose is to help Muslims, especially foreign Muslims with their affairs and problems. Moreover, the author lengthily describes the confrontation of Christian evangelists towards Islam and Muslims in the country through media such as television, social media, newspapers, and others. Ahmad describes the confrontation generally, as it had happened throughout South Korea. This study, therefore, looked deeper into Busan to determine whether there has been strong confrontation coming from the Christian people towards the Muslim community in Busan.

A journal article entitled *Islam and South Korea's Middle East Diplomacy*³⁰ by Niu Song brings forth a long diplomatic history between South Korea and Muslim countries in the Middle East that began in 1957. The journal article provides great details on the reintroduction of Islam to the country after its severed relationship with South Korea during the Joseon dynasty, which began in 1950 during the Korean War and has continued until today. Niu describes the coming of the Turkish army, the establishment of KMF, mosques, and Islamic centres through the collaboration between local and foreign Muslims, the South Korean government, and Islamic countries. The author then focuses on South Korean diplomatic policies in the Middle East, where the positive development in this relationship had made it possible for Islam to thrive in the country. KMF played an important role as mediator between the Middle East and the

³⁰ Niu Song, "Islam and South Korea's Middle East Diplomacy," *The British Association for Korean Studies*, vol. 16 (2015): 60-72

South Korean government. The journal article provides an approximation of the number of Middle Eastern people residing in South Korea which numbered 100,000 people scattered throughout South Korea, including Busan. It also provides information on the labour migration of Muslims to the country, which is worth a study.

*Life in Busan: A Guide for Foreign Residents*³¹ by Kim Jong Hae is a guidebook written that provides substantial information needed by foreigners who plan to or already reside in Busan. The book also provides general information on Busan and its history. This book introduces a centre called the Busan Global Centre under the Busan Foundation for International Activities (BFIA), whose role is to help the international community living in Busan; thus, ensuring the success of making Busan an international city to live in. This guide also provides detailed explanations for foreigners who decide to live in Busan, for instance, information on housing, transportation, waste and money management, social and healthcare, and employment. This guidebook, therefore, was a great help in identifying the organisation that deals with foreign community affairs. Moreover, this book, produced by BFIA, was thoroughly investigated to understand if there is any involvement from the Busan government to support their cause.

Lastly, Flo Frank and Anne Smith wrote a handbook entitled *The Community Development Handbook: A Tool to Build Community Capacity*,³² which provides a guideline to community development. This greatly helped the researcher in identifying the possible reasons why people come together in community building which may be applied for the situation faced by Busan's Muslim community, for instance, the need for education, welfare, and security. The handbook steered the research towards understanding the dynamic relationship between local and foreign Muslims in Busan,

³¹ Kim Jong Hae, *Life in Busan: A Guide*..., 1-113.

³² Flo Frank and Anne Smith, *The Community*..., 1-90.

particularly with regards to community building. Even though the handbook does not emphasise on minority communities, it can still be applied as a general discussion on community development.

Several literatures that have been mentioned in this study discuss Islam and the Muslim community in general; however, there is still a lack of deeper discussion on existing Muslim communities, such as the Muslim communities in Busan, Gwangju, Jeju, and Anyang. Moreover, most of the literatures have only focused on the Muslim community in Seoul as it is the first established Muslim community and the main place in South Korea. Huge gaps are, therefore, left in the study since other Muslim communities have been less examined. This study attempts to compensate for this lack of information regarding other Muslim communities, especially in Busan. Thus, this research will offer comprehensive insights into the establishment of a Muslim community in Busan, including the challenges and future prospects, with the aim of addressing the existing gaps in the literature. It is hoped that future researchers will continue the study by introducing other Muslim communities in South Korea in further detail.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Since the topic of study is examined through the researcher's historical point of view, historical research method via qualitative approach is used for this study. Thus, it is important to critically examine and analyse primary and secondary sources that were used in support of the study. This historical research on past events reveals the facts, and conclusions are drawn to give an understanding of what had happened and how it happened. This is in accordance with the following definition given by Boyd on historical research:

“...the systematic and objective location, evaluation and synthesis of evidence in order to establish facts and draw conclusions about the past events.”³³

1.7.1 Primary Sources – Documents and Newspapers

Primary sources are crucial in historical research, and it consists of important documents that can describe in detail what happened in every event. Primary sources mostly consist of items such as memoirs, artefacts, manuscripts, and others.³⁴ Official government documents are considered as the premier of primary sources since these documents describe events in detail³⁵ and more importantly, are related to decision-making or policymaking of the state. Examples of government records used are the declaration legally recognising Islam as one of the South Korean religions, as well as a record of the donation of land to build the first mosque in Seoul, among others. While this type of sources were deposited mostly in the National Archives of Korea, some can be found in certain institutions outside the country. For instance, the record pertaining to the donation of land for construction of the first mosque can be found at Malaysia’s National Archive as Malaysia was involved in the transaction. These primary sources can be classified as *diplomatic sources*³⁶ which record the legal rulings and declarations made by the government.

Another type of primary source is *social documents* which are records kept by organisations, schools, or religious bodies such as churches and mosques that record the status of the social, political, and economic climate of their organisations, schools and

³³ Nicholas Walliman, *Your Research Project: A Step-by-Step Guide for the First-time Researcher*, (London: Sage Publication, 2001), 88.

³⁴ UCLA Institute, “Primary Resources,” <ipr.ues.gseis.ucla.edu/info/definition.html> (accessed 9 December, 2013).

³⁵ William Kelleher Storey, *Writing History: A Guide for Students*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 18.

³⁶ Martha Howell and Walter Prevenier, *From Reliable Sources: An Introduction to Historical Methods*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 2001), 21-22

religious bodies. With these records, an organisation such as KMF, can gather information on the Muslim community socially, politically, and economically. As the study continues, the roles played by the local newspapers including online newspapers, were thoroughly examined so that information regarding the Muslim community as reported by the media was added as sources. Publications such as *The Korea Times* and *The Korea Herald* have been covering news about Islam and Muslims; for example, they covered the rooting of Islam in the country,³⁷ the confrontation of Christian followers toward government Muslim-friendly policies³⁸ and others.

1.7.2 Primary Sources – Field Research (Interview and Observation)

Another significant primary source that was used in this study is the personal accounts of people involved in the events. Since this is a relatively contemporary subject to be studied on the Muslim community in South Korea, interviews were conducted and the sources mostly involved personal accounts such as diaries, letters and memoirs; for instance, those belonging to the head of the former KMF Busan branch, Zubair Lee, who dedicated his life to propagating Islam in Busan and Imam Syaikhoni who left his country, Indonesia to come to South Korea for *da'wah* activities. In addition, the personal accounts of several other local and foreign Muslims were also thoroughly studied after conducting interviews, particularly on their experience in Busan.

To strengthen the credibility of the study, it is a must for the researcher to visit Busan and other cities or provinces to personally collate the sources required for the research. It is a requirement that the collection of sources via interviews be done

³⁷The Korea Time, “Islam takes root and blooms,” *The Korea Times*, 22 November, 2002, <<http://www.islamkorea.com/english/articlean1.html>> (accessed 21 August 2016)

³⁸ Jung Min Ho, “Muslim-friendly policies to boost tourism face Christian backlash,” *The Korea Times*, 20 March, 2016, via The Korea Times, <http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2016/03/113_200737.html> (accessed 21 August 2016)

directly. The acquisition of primary sources was of utmost priority during this visit. A visit to the Busan Muslim community in South Korea was done not only to trace the history of Muslims there, but to further understand the relationship between the local and foreign Muslims.³⁹ This in-depth work is required as it will provide more detailed information regarding the establishment of the Muslim community in the country in general, and in Busan in particular, and provide comprehensive knowledge about the existence of the Muslim community that can be used as a future reference. As stated by McNamara:

“Interviews are particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant’s experiences. The interviewer can pursue in-depth information around the topic.”⁴⁰

Six steps are used in this study to ensure the information gathered from the interviews follows the guidelines of academic writing. The first step involves the recruitment of participants for the study where the researcher identifies potential interviewees, and the second involves the design of interview questions by preparing unstructured and open-ended questions. After formulating the questions, the third step is detailing the suitable way of conducting the interviews effectively, and this entails some plans as to where and when to conduct the interview, as well as who would be interviewed. Following the interview, the next step is to delve into the data collection process, which includes transcription of the interview materials along with thorough record-keeping. Subsequently, the fifth step is the data analysis process, which involves the interpretation or reinterpretation of the gathered information by employing both thematic and narrative analyses to ensure the data analysed answers the research

³⁹ The researcher’s visit to Busan, South Korea took place from 24 June 2018 until 13 August 2018.

⁴⁰ Dapzury Valenzuela and Pallavi Shrivastava, “Interview as a Method for Qualitative Research,” *Southern Cross University and the Southern Cross Institute of Action Research*, <<http://sdhrc.tbzmed.ac.ir/uploads/189/CMS/user/file/3544/conferece/slides/Research2.pdf>> (accessed 27 February 2017)

questions. The information acquired is meticulously scrutinised to eliminate any potential inaccuracies. Finally, the reporting phase is the last step, where the primary data collected that is free of bias and prejudice is utilized in writing this thesis to provide an in-depth explanation about the topic under study.

Participants Recruitment

Before visiting Busan, South Korea, the researcher was able to determine only one interviewee, namely Zubair Lee, whom the researcher had been in contact with since his Master study between 2013 and 2016. Hence, to find more respondents, this research deployed a snowball sampling; - this method is used for picking a selective survey sample and is often used to uncover concealed populations.⁴¹ Silvia mentioned that by deploying this method, potential interviewees could be identified through the suggestions of other interviewees.⁴² This type of sampling was useful as Zubair Lee provided several names to be interviewed, and from some of them, additional potential interviewees were made known to the researcher.

Moreover, it is very important for the researcher to visit the city in order to recruit or search for several interviewees who will provide substantial information regarding the development, challenges and future prospects of the Muslim community in Busan. According to Monique et al:

“The process of participant recruitment involves two stages: the first is to define an appropriate study population; and the second is to identify strategies for recruiting participants from this study population. Participant recruitment, therefore, is the process of selecting individuals from your study population to participate in a research study.”⁴³

⁴¹ Paul Silvia, *Select a Sample: Little Quick Fix*. United Kingdom: SAGE Publications, 2020.76.

⁴² *Ibid.* 77.

⁴³ Monique Hennink, Inge Hutter, Ajay Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods*. United Kingdom: SAGE Publications, 2010. 84.

Several interviewees were identified, namely Imam Zubair Lee,⁴⁴ Imam Yasir Lee,⁴⁵ and Muhammad Kim,⁴⁶ who are currently leading the local Muslims in Busan. Interviewees from the foreign Muslim community were also involved, namely Imam Syaikhoni⁴⁷ and Junaidi Al-Fais,⁴⁸ as well as other interviewees (local and foreign) that were scouted by the researcher during his visit to Busan, South Korea. Overall, 24 interviewees⁴⁹ participated in the research, and most of them were met by the researcher during his visit to the mosques and Islamic centres listed in Appendix B.

Interview Questions

Given the scarcity of data, the researcher applied the interview method to gather first-hand information pertaining to the Muslim community in Busan. The interviews serve to legitimise this research and increase its credibility. The interview questions were open-ended, structured, and unstructured so as to extract as much information as possible from the interviewees.⁵⁰ Mitch Byers defined unstructured interviews as follows:

“... a method of collecting information “in which the interviewer starts with only a general sense of the topic... and creates questions as the interaction proceeds.” Unstructured interviews, also sometimes called conventional interviews, can range widely in style.”⁵¹

On the nature of unstructured interviews, Keith Punch explains,

“There is a wide range indeed when it comes to unstructured interviewing. The traditional type of unstructured interview is the non-standardised, open-ended, in-depth interview, sometimes called the ethnographic interview. It is used as a way of understanding the

⁴⁴ Zubair Lee was a former chairman of the KMF Busan branch and an Imam at Al-Fatah Mosque. He is also a member of *Geumsaem*.

⁴⁵ Imam Yasir Lee is the current Imam at Al-Fatah Mosque.

⁴⁶ Muhammad Kim is a member of *Geumsaem*.

⁴⁷ Syaikhoni is an Indonesian national who came to Busan, South Korea as a *da'i* and Imam.

⁴⁸ Fais Al-Junaidi is an Indonesian working in South Korea and one of the Bilal working at Al-Fatah Mosque.

⁴⁹ See Appendix B.

⁵⁰ Dapzury Valenzuela and Pallavi Shrivastava, “Interview ...

⁵¹ Byers Mitch, Interview RX. United States: Nearline Publishers, 2006. 14.

complex behaviour of people without imposing any a *priori* categorisation which might limit the field inquiry.”⁵²

The interview questions revolved around the Muslim community in Busan, South Korea, covering a wide range of topics including socio-cultural, education, politics, etc. Among the structured questions asked were, for example, how many local and foreign Muslims live in your area, can you describe the establishment of Muslim community in your location, how has the Muslim community in your area been treated by locals, and other possible questions that were carefully scripted prior to the interview.⁵³ Additional questions were added when needed for clarification or additional information. Mitch Byers mentioned the benefit of such a method:

“One advantage of an unstructured interview is the questions are typically asked in a spontaneous manner, enabling you to engage in a broader discussion.....”⁵⁴

The list of questions asked is listed in Appendix C.⁵⁵

Interview Methods or Guides

Several methods or guides were deployed by the researcher to acquire maximum information in a short period of time. This is to ensure that all the needed data can be gathered within 50 days of the visit. Thus, the first one is scheduling, where the researcher coordinated interview slots making sure that the time and venue are convenient for the potential interviewees. For instance, in the case of Musa Han Lee, the researcher had to follow his schedule as he is an office worker. Musa suggested that the researcher meet at his office during the lunch hour for the interview. However, most of the interviews were not scheduled in advance as most of the participants were only

⁵² Keith F. Punch, *Introduction to Social Research: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*. India: SAGE Publications, 2005. 172.

⁵³ Robert K. Yin, *Qualitative research from start to finish*. New York: Guilford Press, 2016. 133.

⁵⁴ Byers Mitch, Interview RX..., 14.

⁵⁵ See Appendix C.

available on Friday noon, Saturday, or Sunday, for which reason the researcher would normally meet them at mosques and Islamic centres.

The second step is obtaining informed consent from the interviewees by explaining the purpose of the study, the interview process, and how the data will be used. This is very important, as the participants need to be made aware of their right to withdraw at any time if they feel uncomfortable disclosing any information for any reason. Thirdly, building rapport, where the researcher created a welcoming and non-judgmental environment to encourage the participants to speak openly, and at the same time, attempted to be more friendly; hence, creating a more relaxed, and non-formal interview. For example, during the interview with the Indonesian community, the researcher used Malay and Indonesian instead of English so that the former would feel at ease speaking in their mother tongue.

The fourth method used by the researcher is asking questions where the interviews were flexible with open-ended questions and probing for deeper insights as much as necessary. Using this method, the interviewees would share their experiences and stories with ease. Lastly, recording, where the researcher used his mobile phone to capture the audio for data collection. These five steps are crucial in order to gain primary sources from the interview method, as written sources are scarce.

Data Collection

“Transcription is a time consuming but vital part of the oral history process. Transcription is the process of taking your audiotapes and creating a written account of the interview.”⁵⁶

After the previous steps were completed, it was time for the researcher to work on transcription which is time-consuming and costly as the process calls for a translator.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Leavy Patricia, *Oral History: Understanding Qualitative Research*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2011. P. 49.

⁵⁷ Donald A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2015. P. 176.

For the interviewees who spoke in English and Indonesian, the researcher performed the transcription process by himself. However, for the interviewees in Korean, the researcher received help from a Korean native speaker who volunteered to help with the work. The data collected was organised and kept securely to maintain the interviewees' confidentiality and anonymity as some of the data might be sensitive or controversial.

Data Analysis

This study deployed an inductive approach⁵⁸ consisting of thematic and narrative analyses. The integration of both analyses can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic, especially when dealing with complex and intricate issues like minority issues and Islam in non-Muslim countries. Thus, thematic analysis can be used to identify and analyse main themes within the data, which can provide a structured and systematic way to organise and present key findings that can be derived from interviews and other qualitative data sources. On the other hand, narrative analysis can be used to delve deeper into the individual stories and experiences of the interviewees. This approach can help the researcher explore personal narratives, storytelling techniques, and the nuances of how people construct meaning and make sense of their experiences. Hence, the thematic analysis used by the researcher provides a broader context and framework, followed by the narrative analysis to offer more in-depth insights and personal perspectives.

In this study, three themes were developed by the researcher under the thematic analysis. The first theme is the early establishment and development of the Muslim community in Busan, where interviews with pioneers of the Muslim community in

⁵⁸ “The researcher begins by gathering detailed information from participants and then forms this information into categories or themes. These themes are developed into broad patterns, theories, or generalizations that are then compared with personal experiences or with existing literature on the topic.” John, W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 4th ed. (California: Thousand Oaks, 2014), 65.

Busan provided narratives related to the reason for the community establishment, initial struggles, and the factors that contributed to the development of the community. The second theme is related to social integration and discrimination where the researcher analysed the interviews that narrated challenges related to social integration and experiences of discrimination. The last theme revolved around future prospects and recommendations which explores the community members' narratives on their efforts to unite the Muslim community and improve their well-being.

Moving on to the narrative analysis, it provided a more personal and human perspective on the development, challenges, and future prospects of the Muslim community in Busan. Firstly, in term of the development of the Muslim community the individual narratives exemplify the experiences of early local and foreign Muslims who played a pivotal role in establishing the community. For instance, Ismail Poo Hwang highlighted the challenges he faced in the early years of Islam in Busan one being the lack of knowledge of Islam among members of the community.

“During that time, me myself don't know what Allah is, what is Islam.... So did my wife. My friend who helps and teaches me very basics, then he also gone. That's the beginning of my story. It was very hard during that time thus the economy was in bad condition. The guide for Islam didn't exist at all. To follow the Muslim way of life without an example is very limited. Then, there is no one teaching about how to perform prayer. That was the situation during that day.”⁵⁹

As for the narrative analysis on challenges faced by the community, one example is from the interview with Samina Jin, relating her personal experience when she started wearing hijab:

⁵⁹ Ismail Poo Hwang interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 29 June 2018.

“About Hijab, every Korean sharply glance when they saw me wearing hijab. Even there was people who pull out my Hijab. Until I feel not to wear a hijab because of those circumstances.”⁶⁰

Lastly, from the interviews, there were also narratives on the future prospects and aspirations of the community members to build a brighter future in Busan. For instance, this was reflected, in the interview with Muhammad Adam, who voiced his hope for the unity of Muslims in Busan and the abandonment of practices that are not enjoined by Islam:

“I hope KMF Busan Brunch can avoid corruption and I would like to see the Muslim community be good to each other and united.”⁶¹

In conclusion, the combination of both analyses provided a holistic understanding of the community’s establishment and evolution. Thematic analysis unveiled the key trends that shaped their journey, while narrative analysis illuminated the human dimension, personal stories, and the challenges faced by the community members. Both methods have enriched the research exploration, allowing for the celebration of their successes, empathizing with their struggles, and appreciating their proactive effort to build a strong community. By intertwining thematic and narrative analyses, this study offers a comprehensive perspective on the Muslim community’s history, challenges, and hopeful future, promoting greater awareness and support from international Muslim communities for the Muslim community in Busan.

Reporting

The last step after the completion of the interview method and data analysis is reporting. Since this is historical research, the reporting is descriptive and narrative in nature. It is worth mentioning here that in reporting, even with the same data collection and analysis

⁶⁰ Samina Jin interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 10 July 2018.

⁶¹ Samina Jin interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 10 July 2018.

strategies used in qualitative research, the reporting of findings might vary from one researcher to another.⁶² With that in mind, the analysed interview data was therefore incorporated into the research findings extracted from other sources. During reporting, the interview data was scrutinised, and some names of the interviewees, either due to the sensitivity of the information or personal requests by the interviewees themselves, were undisclosed to avoid any backlash and preserve anonymity.

1.7.3 Secondary Sources

There are several articles, journals, and theses that were used in this study. Secondary sources are very important as they provide findings, historian's interpretations and much needed information from previous studies done on or related to the subject matter under study. According to John Hamilton:

“A secondary source is research that someone else has already done on a subject. It is one step further away from an event than a primary source.”⁶³

The secondary sources used in this research are limited but able to provide substantial information for this research and they include books, journal articles, and documentaries.

Other visual sources were also examined, such as documentaries from Malaysian National Archives and documentaries posted on YouTube about Islam and Muslims in South Korea; for instance, the 50th History of Islam in Korea, Korea Today – Muslims in Korea Prepare for Ramadhan and others. However, critical analysis has to be carried out to filter false information contained in these documentaries as some were created by non-Muslims without much knowledge of Islam. For example, a documentary video

⁶² John, W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative...*, 211.

⁶³ John Hamilton, *Primary and Secondary Sources*, (Minnesota: ABDO Publishing Company, 2010), 8

on halal products portrayed pork affixed with halal stamp, as the creator of the documentary is not Islam-literate.

1.7.4 Limitation

There were several limitations hindering the research work, the most predominant of which is the language barrier, where the subject studied is in Hangul, the Korean language by nature, as this is the official language of South Korea. It was, therefore, harder for a non-Korean speaker to conduct this study as most South Koreans are not able to converse in the English language. Moreover, English literatures on the study subject are limited and insufficient. However, the researcher learnt the language to lessen the barrier which greatly helped in acquiring materials or sources written in the Korean language. Another limitation is in relation to the field work; due to financial restraint the researcher managed to stay only around 50 days in Busan. Additionally, throughout the stay, the researcher could only conduct the interviews on weekends as most of the potential interviewees were working and they lived mostly at their respective workplaces. The unwillingness of the mosques' representatives to provide any records or documents regarding the community was also a hindrance, possibly due to the need to maintain the confidentiality of the records or documents. Lastly, the researcher occasionally experienced difficulty in conducting the interview when some of the interviewees did not want to participate for various reasons, for instance, due to their illegal status in the country in the case of some foreign Muslims.

1.8 CHAPTERISATION

In fulfilling the need to complete the study, the research is divided into seven chapters.

Chapter One: Introduction

Chapter One, as an introductory chapter, provides basic information on the background of the topic's study while addressing several research questions to be answered by the researcher. It is also important to highlight the objectives and significance of the study in order to illustrate the importance of the study. Furthermore, a critical analysis on the existing literature was done to establish gaps in the field. Finally, a clarification of the research methodology used by the researcher is provided.

Chapter Two: Islam and Muslims in South Korea: Perspectives and Views of South Koreans

This chapter mainly focuses on the history of Islam and Muslims in South Korea. Chapter Two also provides statistical data of Muslims, both local and foreign, living throughout the country and introduces each available Muslim community in the country. The chapter provides general information about Islam and Muslims in South Korea in order to give some knowledge to the readers about the situation in the country before going deeper into Busan. Moreover, before researching about Islam and Muslims in Busan, Chapter Two looks into the perspectives and views of South Koreans towards Islam and Muslims; hence, establishes a general view that is connected to the research on Busan.

Chapter Three: The History of Busan and the Establishment of Muslim Community

The third chapter looks into the history of Busan itself and a deeper investigation on Islam and the Muslim community in Busan by providing their history, location, and statistics on the number of local and foreign Muslims living in Busan. The chapter also probes on the Islamic practices observed by the Muslims in Busan, the popularly practised *Madhab* and other ideologies such as Sufism.

Chapter Four: Local and Foreign Muslims: Living as One Community

The study then focuses on the cooperation and level of dependency between local and foreign Muslims in terms of education, religious practices, economy, daily affairs and others.

Chapter Five: Prominent Muslim Figures and Organisations in Busan

In this chapter, a list of prominent Muslim figures that play significant roles in propagating Islam and helping to develop the Muslim community are portrayed and studied in length. Moreover, several institutions and organisations involved in these efforts were also investigated to gain insight into their works and efforts done since the establishment of the community.

Chapter Six: Busan's Muslim Community in the Face of Challenges

As a minority community in South Korea, they have not been exempted from challenges, especially as a Muslim minority community since Islam and Muslims are currently being perceived as a threat that has stemmed from what happened in the Middle East and in Western countries. The challenges that this community have experienced in their daily life were studied. It is important to study these problems, including problems that can hinder da'wah activities in Busan. To do so, interviews with local and foreign Muslims in the country were conducted to provide substantial information on their experiences and the way they face these challenges.

Chapter Seven: Future Prospects and Conclusion

After understanding the relationship between local and foreign Muslims and their challenges, this chapter discusses the future prospects of the Muslim community in Busan. Since Islam is the fastest growing religion in the West, has this situation also happened in Busan? Will the Muslim community continue to grow larger, at the same time establishing itself in every part of the country? To answer these questions, several prospects are listed. The last chapter concludes the study while answering all research

questions raised by the researcher, including the future prospects of the Muslim community in Busan. Besides, several limitations that have hindered the research are discussed, as well as recommendations for future research.



CHAPTER TWO

ISLAM AND MUSLIMS IN SOUTH KOREA: PERSPECTIVES AND VIEWS OF SOUTH KOREANS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Islam, Muslims, and the Korean Peninsula have a rich relationship in history being forged since the early period of Islam and the first unified kingdom of Silla (57 B.C. – 935 A.D.). The relationship of mainly trade in the early stage has continued for 500 years until today, as demonstrated in the strong economic relation between the Middle East and South Korea. Having said that, despite the long period of connection, many Koreans still fail to acknowledge Islam and Muslims as a peaceful religion and people, as illustrated in this chapter. This resulted from distorted information and lack of knowledge about Islam and Muslims among the public. Moreover, the propaganda led by the West has made it worse as Islam and Muslims are portrayed as an inimical religion and terrorists. Starting with a short history of Islam and Muslims in South Korea, this chapter will analyse events shaping the South Korean views and perspectives towards Islam and Muslims in order to understand the reasons behind their negative opinions and at the end this chapter will bring forth the young generation South Korean views in 21st century. Thus, this chapter is very important to provide a brief introduction to Islam and Muslims in South Korea and present South Korean perspectives to the readers, on both the Islamic faith and its followers, especially for those who are still new to this study.

2.2 ISLAM AND MUSLIMS IN SOUTH KOREA: A HISTORY

According to several views, the Islamic world has been in contact with the Korean Peninsula since the period of early caliphate and Silla dynasty years, i.e., in the 11th century where their relationship was mostly based on trading activities.⁶⁴ However, according to Hee Soo Lee, the Muslim traders had reached the Korean Peninsula two centuries earlier as he referred to the *Kitab al-Masalik wa-l-Mamalik* (Book of Roads and Kingdoms) written by Persian geographer Ibn Khurdadhbih, who mentioned in his book about the Silla dynasty (661 - 935 A.D.) which came into contact with the Arabs starting from the mid-ninth century.⁶⁵ This disparity happened as there is no exact record found in Korean sources about the coming of Muslim traders to the peninsula. It is the same with the route taken by the traders to reach Far East, either by land through the Silk Road or by sea, where scholars had different opinions on this.⁶⁶

Several evidence have been found to show trading activities between Muslims and Koreans. For example, the items found by archaeologists in several tombs of the kings originated from the Arabian Peninsula, such as a conventional cut glass found in the Silla king's tomb in Gyeongju and also statues presumably of Arabs found around the area of royal tombs based on their facial features and the garments that they wore.⁶⁷ Despite being in contact for a long period, there is no record of any conversion of Korean people to Islam during that period. The reason is likely that the Muslim traders came to the Korean Peninsula mainly for trading activities. Moreover, since the dynasties during this century were under the protectorate of China, they displayed their loyalty by adopting the religion of the Chinese government; hence, discouraged other

⁶⁴ Yoon Kyung Sun, *Islam in Korea*, (Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1983), 21-22.

⁶⁵ Hee Soo Lee, "1,500 Years of Contact between Korea and the...."

⁶⁶ Yoon Kyung Sun, *Islam in...*, 25-29.

⁶⁷ Zubair Lee Dong Ha interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Gijang Cold Storage on 15 July 2018.

religions from being disseminated and practiced by the people in the peninsula.⁶⁸ Additionally, it can be said that possibly due to the language barrier between the Arab traders and people of the dynasties during that time had caused a failure to record the activities, especially since the Arab traders who reached the Korean Peninsula were small in number because they were all more focused on doing trade with China. A greater number of Arab traders went to China's cities and ports as these places were more well-renowned and busier in terms of trading activities like Guangzhou and Quanzhou which the Arab traders had developed a big community there.⁶⁹ Another possibility is because of the isolationist policy of Korea during the Joseon dynasty and continued after the defeat of Japan which led to the absence of records of conversions.

On the Muslims who came to Korea, Hee Soo Lee in his article mentioned their situations living under the rule of great Korean dynasties as described by Ibn Khurdadhbih on Muslims during the era of the Silla dynasty (661 to 935 A.D.), stating that:

... Silla is located to the extreme end of China and as a white race, Silla people are descendants of Noah's son Japhet and Japhet's son Amur...Silla is a country abounding in gold. Muslims who advanced there, captivated by its congenial surroundings, tend to settle there for good and do not think of leaving the place. (845 A.D.)⁷⁰

From this information, it seems that Muslims had already been living in the Korean Peninsula in the 9th century.⁷¹ Moreover, by the era of the Goryeo dynasty (918 to 1392

⁶⁸ Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi, (2016). Islam in South Korea: Progress and Challenges of Da'wah Activities since the 1950s. Master Thesis, International Islamic University Malaysia., 29-30.

⁶⁹ Xiuli Wang, The Arabs Living in Coastal China during the 10th – 13th Centuries. HAL Open Science. 202-214.

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=0CAMQw7AJahcKEwjYzrL888r5AhUAAAAAHQAAAAAQAg&url=https%3A%2F%2Fhal.univ-reunion.fr%2Fhal-03249784%2Fdocument&psig=AOvVaw0QtIXKw7xBXXAvVsyXVSrm&ust=1660722986875993>
(accessed 16 August, 2022).

⁷⁰ Hee Soo Lee, "1,500 Years of Contact between Korea and the...."

⁷¹ Ali An Sun Geun, *Islam Damai di Negeri Asia Timur Jauh: Meneropong Penyebaran dan Dinamika Islam di Korea*. (Jakarta: IJIN Jakarta Press, 2011)., 86-90.

A.D.), many Muslims came either as traders, immigrants or government officials and settled in permanently like a Uighur man named Samga who married a Goryeo woman whose descendants later were known as the Jang clan of Doksu. The current South Koreans with the surname Jang are believed to be the descendants of Muslim Uighur.⁷² Continued from the late Goryeo to the early Joseon dynasty (founded in 1392),⁷³ the Muslim community flourished as they owned shops, did business by selling goods from Arabia, and freely enjoyed the freedom of practising their religion and culture. A mosque called Yegungs (ceremonial palaces) (no date stated) was built, and the head of the Muslim community received an invitation to attend the ceremonies located in the palace.⁷⁴ The period of tolerance towards Muslims, however, did not last long. After 40 years of the Joseon dynasty in power, trading activities halted, and Muslims were prohibited from practising their religion. This happened as the Joseon government adopted Confucianism as a sign of loyalty to the newly established Ming dynasty who declared that all Muslim officials in the court to be replaced by Confucian officers. The prohibition on the employment of Muslims in government service continued until the early 19th century.⁷⁵ Starting from this prohibition, there are no recorded trading activities between the Middle East and Korean Peninsula until the 20th century.

After the end of World War Two, the surrender of Japan led to the division of the Korean Peninsula into two parts. The north was under a Communist government supported by China and Russia, while the south was under a democratic government supported by the United States. Five years after the surrender of Japan, North Korea launched an attack on South Korea which led to the start of the Korean War on 25th June

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ John B. Duncan, *The Origins of the Joseon Dynasty*, (Washington: University of Washington Press, 2015), 101.

⁷⁴ Hee Soo Lee, "1,500 Years of Contact between Korea and the...."

⁷⁵ Yoon Kyung Sun, *Islam in...*, 31-32.

1950.⁷⁶ South Korea, backed by the United States and Allied Forces, successfully repelled the advancement of the North Korean armies and the war eventually ended three years later with the devastating result of 1.2 million people who lost their lives.⁷⁷ During the war, a Muslim country, Turkey sent about 15,000 soldiers to assist South Korea along with some other countries under the banner of the Allied Forces. About 462 members of the Turkish army died in the war, where the average age of the soldiers was 21 years old. A monument was constructed in the memory of the fallen Turkish soldiers at the United Nation Memorial Cemetery in Busan, South Korea.⁷⁸ As a result from this war, South Korea and Turkey formed a very close relationship as South Koreans felt indebted to Turkey and the Allied Force countries and were known as ‘*Hyungjae*’ which means ‘sibling’ by the South Koreans as a show of gratitude for their help.

After the war ended, Islam started to spread slowly in South Korea as several Turkish armies decided to stay in the country. Adul Gafur Karaismailoglu, an appointed Imam to the Turkish army, was one of those who decided to stay. He led the prayers and delivered sermons during Friday Congregational Prayers, which caught the attention of two Korean civilians who frequently visited the Turkish tent. The two, Umar Jin Gyu Kim and Muhammad Du Young Yoon, were the first to convert to Islam and the first official recorded conversion that happened in South Korea. They soon became the forerunners of Islam in its early stage in South Korea and the first Muslim

⁷⁶ Ohn Chang Il, “The Causes of the Korean War, 1950-1953”, *International Journal of Korean Studies*, vol. XIV, no. 2 (fall, 2010): 19-20.

⁷⁷ Bethany Lacina and Nils P. Gleditsch, “Monitoring Trends in Global Combat: A New Dataset of Battle Deaths”, *European Journal of Population*, vol. 21, no. 2-3 (spring, 2005): 154.

⁷⁸ The information was acquired during a visit to the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Busan on 11 August 2018.

organisation called the Korean Islamic Society⁷⁹ was established under their leadership.⁸⁰ One year later, other Imams from Turkey arrived, named Zubayr Koch and Abdul Khaman,⁸¹ who were committed in spreading Islam in South Korea. A temporary mosque built using a military tent was erected and as the da'wah works continued, it brought about 200 locals who reverted to Islam.⁸² Moreover, an Indonesian named Amir Patas who worked at the Korean embassy in Indonesia had sent 11 Indonesian university students to the Seoul Mosque to help with da'wah activities in South Korea between 1983 to 1985.⁸³

The da'wah activities continued until the end of the 20th century but these regressed as wars in the Middle East happened, i.e., the Iran-Iraq War (1980 - 1988) and the Gulf War (1990 – 1992). The wars portrayed a bad image of Muslims as people who are prone to war (because of these two wars that happened in the Middle East), especially in the eyes of South Koreans which led them to avoid any contact with Muslims. Moreover, the death of prominent Korean Muslim leaders, Hwa Shik Lee and Do Young Yoon, slowed the da'wah activities at that time, which can be said as the worst period of Islamic da'wah in South Korea.⁸⁴ However, the late 20th century showed a better prospect as the coming of Muslim workers to South Korea following the industrial booming once again gave hope to the da'wah activities as the Muslim workers started to get involved with the Korean Muslims and built a strong community all over South Korea.

⁷⁹ Korean Islamic Society was rebranded in 1966 under the leadership of Sabri Jung Gil Seo, Sulayman Hwa Sik Lee, Muhammad Du Young Yoon. The society was named the Korean Muslim Federation (KMF), and is still used today.

⁸⁰ Sohn Joo Young, "Organisations and...", 1-28.

⁸¹ Ali An Sun Geun, *Islam Damai...*, 93.

⁸² Sohn Joo Young, "Organisations and...", 1-28.

⁸³ Ali An Sun Geun, *Islam Damai...*, 95.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 3.

Statistics provided by Houssain Kottani in his journal ‘Muslim Population in Asia: 1950-2020’ shows an increment in the number of conversions to Islam from 1950 to 2009. He stated that “estimates for the Muslim population increased from few hundred or less than 0.01 percent in 1950, to few thousands or around 0.02 percent in 1971, to 235,000 or 0.50 percent in 2009”.⁸⁵ The 235,000 Muslims consist of 45,000 Korean Muslims and 190,000 foreign Muslims.⁸⁶ Currently, the number of Muslim population in South Korea has not changed much as most researchers still use these numbers when providing information about the Muslim population in South Korea. Looking at the trend of converts in South Korea, it can be estimated that up until 2018 the number has reached 50,000. In the meantime, the Pew Research Centre (a non-partisan and non-profit research centre in America) estimated that by 2030, there will be 76,000 South Korean Muslims living in the country, which accounts for 0.2 percent of the South Korean population.⁸⁷

The Muslim community in South Korea is usually centred around the main mosques or Islamic centres. There are currently 11 main mosques in South Korea and almost 30 *musallas*⁸⁸ and smaller Islamic centres all around the country. For instance, there are Seoul Central Mosque, Al-Fatah Busan Mosque, Jeju Islamic Centre, and others. Usually, the community around these mosques or Islamic centres are multi-national or multi-racial, which consists of Muslims of South Korea, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, and others, while most *musallas* are dominated by certain nationalities only. For example, a *musalla* and the Islamic centre of Jeonggwan

⁸⁵ Houssain Kettani, “Muslim Population in Asia: 1950-2020”, *International Journal of Environmental Sciences and Development*, vol. 1, no. 2 (2010): 151.

⁸⁶ Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin Mohd Ghazi, *Islam in South Korea...*, 36.

⁸⁷ Pew Research Centre, “Table: Muslim Population by Country”, (2011) <<https://www.pewforum.org/2011/01/27/table-muslim-population-by-country/>> (accessed 20 March, 2019)

⁸⁸ *Musalla* term refer to place of prayer. Oleg Grabar. *Islamic Art And Beyond: Constructing the Study of Islamic Art* (Variorum Collected Studies Series). United Kingdom: Ashgate Variorum, 2006. P. 124.

are dominated by the Indonesian community as many Indonesian workers and students live, work, and study near the area. Table 1 shows the list of the main mosques and Islamic centres in South Korea.

Mosques and Islamic Centres	Province	Address	Telephone Number
Seoul Central Mosque	Seoul	732-21 Hannam 2 Dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul, South Korea	+82 2-793-6908
Busan Mosque	Busan	30-1, Namsan-dong, Geumjeong-gu, Busan	+82- 51- 518-9991
Jeonju Mosque	Jeolla	1562-10, Inhu-dong 2-ga, Deokjin-gu, Jeonju-si, Jeollabuk-do	+82- 63- 243-1483
Ansan Mosque	Gyeonggi	741-5, Wongok-dong, Danwon-gu, Ansan-si, Gyeonggi-do	+82-31-492-1948
Anyang Mosque	Gyeonggi	618-132, Anyang 5-dong, Anyang-si, Gyeonggi-do	+82-31-444-7757
Bupyeong Mosque	Incheon	574-19, Sipjeong-dong, Bupyeong-gu, Incheon	+82-32-512-2612
Paju Mosque	Gyeonggi	421-9, Yeongtae-ri, Wonreung-myeon, Paju-si, Gyeonggi-do	+82-31-946-2110
Gwangju Center and Mosque	Gwangju	894-7, Wolgyeo-dong, Gwangsan-gu, Gwangju	+82-62- 972-5136
Islamic Center of Daejeon	Daejeon	106-6, Oeun-dong, Yuseong-gu, Daejeon	+82-42-867-4231
Daegu Islamic Center	Daegu	202-6, Jukjeon-dong, Dalseo-gu, Daegu	+82-53- 523-2171
Jeju Islamic Centre	Jeju	Rm. 1215, Jeonghan Officetel, 939, Nohyeong-dong, Jeju	+82- 64- 712-1215
Al-Huda Gumi Mosque	Gyeongsangbuk	13 Gumijungang-ro 31-gil, Wonpyeong 1(il)-dong, Gumi, Gyeongsangbuk-do	+82-54-458-9046

Table 1: Mosques and Islamic Centres in South Korea established since the 1950s⁸⁹

The next topic discusses the religions in South Korea in order to understand more about the nature of religion in the country.

⁸⁹ Ibid, 81.

2.3 RELIGIONS IN SOUTH KOREA

Korea has a long history of religion since the early establishment of the great Korean dynasties.⁹⁰ In the past, since the Korean Peninsula was under the protectorate of the China dynasty, they adopted the religions embraced by China as a sign of loyalty. However, during the early Korean dynasties, religions like Buddhism and Confucianism were strictly practised by the royal families and high officers while the common citizens practiced Shamanism or in Korean known as *Shindo*. This situation had shaped today's South Korea in the sense that as the monarchy system already ended, the people started to live as atheists where religion is being seen as useless or without any meaning.

Shamanism or *Shindo* was the root of the early Korean belief system before the coming of Buddhism and other religions to the Korean Peninsula. However, it is still practised by many Koreans, which include the practise of fortune telling to know about their future, where they either will be blessed with good fortune or bad fate. The fortune telling conducted by Shamans also involve exorcism to repel any evil spirits if requested by the client. Moreover, even the Koreans who associate themselves with certain religions still practise Shamanism in their lives, which is the reason why the practise of Shamanism is still popular in modern Korea. However, as many fraud activities involve Shamans, the Korean government discouraged the South Koreans from seeking help from the Shamans.⁹¹

Meanwhile, Buddhism started to be practiced by the Silla dynasty in the 4th century A.D. and flourished under the unified Goryo dynasty (918 - 1392).⁹² The dynasties strictly followed the teaching of Buddha, and the Buddhist monks were highly

⁹⁰ The three great dynasty of Korea were Silla (57 B.C.E. – 935 A.D.), Goryo (918 - 1392), and Joseon (1392 - 1897).

⁹¹ Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin Mohd Ghazi, *Islam in South Korea...*, 23-24.

⁹² Don Baker, "Islam Struggles for a Toehold in Korea: Muslims in a Land Dominated by Monks and Ministers", *Harvard Asia Quarterly*, vol. X, no. 1 (winter, 2006): 18-21.

regarded in the society. In later Joseon dynasty, when Confucianism was adopted by China, the Joseon dynasty (1392 - 1897) also started the transition of religion from Buddhism to Confucianism. This development had stopped the affiliation of the Joseon dynasty to Buddhism and followers of Buddhism received a harsh setback by being subdued for the next 500 years because of the transition.⁹³ Buddhism in Korea has nevertheless survived until now, and still has a stronghold in the east of the South Korean region while the temples are declared as historical sites by the Korean government.⁹⁴

Later in the 18th century, Christianity started to be introduced by a Joseon diplomat who returned to Korea after meeting with the French missionary in China. There are two types of Christianity practised by South Koreans. The first to come is Catholic, brought by the diplomat; however, Catholic teaching was discriminated by the Confucian Korean government at that time.⁹⁵ Different from the Catholics, the Protestants did not go through what the Catholics experienced as the religion came later in the 19th century, during the period when people started to be receptive towards other religions in South Korea.⁹⁶ This situation led to the expansion of Protestantism and it is the most dominant Christian sect in South Korea according to a 2015 report.

Furthermore, Islam started to be accepted by a few Koreans after the end of the Korean War. According to Sohn Joo Young, some Koreans were attracted to Islam in 1956 when an Imam from the Turkish army who was residing in South Korea after the war gave a lecture or sermon on Islam. Some reverted to Islam during this time and

⁹³ James H. Grayson, *Korea – A Religious History*, (New York: Routledge/Curzon, 2002), 120-138.

⁹⁴ Andrea Matles Savada, William Shaw, ed. *South Korea: A Country Study*, (Washington: DIANE Publishing, 4th edn., 1997), 127-128.

⁹⁵ The discrimination happened because it preached for monotheism, which the idea did not sit well with the Confucian government at that time. Most of their activities were banned and the people involved with Christianity during that period was captured and prosecuted.

⁹⁶ Don Baker, *Religions of Korea...*, 24-28.

became the first Korean Muslims.⁹⁷ In addition, several newly established religions like the *Ch'ondgyo*, Won Buddhism, Unification Church religion and others⁹⁸ emerged and the founders of these new religions assimilated some elements of the well-established religion and Korean culture to suit their agendas and needs.

Statistics issued by the Korean government in 2003 showed that 54 percent of South Koreans affiliated themselves with religion, while 46 percent did not have a religion or declared themselves as Atheists. As quoted by Baker:

“In 2003 the South Korean government, based on a partial census, estimated that 54 percent of its citizens had a religious affiliation. Of those, 25.3 percent were Buddhist, 19.8 percent were Protestant, 7.4 percent were Catholic, 0.3 percent called themselves Confucians, 0.21 percent called themselves Won Buddhists (a new Korean religion), and 0.75 percent had another religious affiliation.”⁹⁹

However, religious statistics in South Korea show significant changes in the last 15 years. In 12 years, from 2003 to 2015, the statistics show that the number of non-religious South Koreans increased to 56 percent from 46 percent, while 44 percent associated themselves with religion. The increment of 10 percent of South Koreans without religious affiliations is quite significant; in fact, it shows that the country is leaning towards an atheist dominated country.¹⁰⁰¹⁰¹ Other significant changes can be seen with regard to Buddhism when in 2003, 25.3 percent of the population were practising Buddhism; however, in 2015 the number dropped to 15.5 percent, i.e., a 9.8 percent drop in 12 years, while Christian Protestants dropped 1 percent within the same

⁹⁷ Sohn Joo Young, “Organisations and...”, 1-2.

⁹⁸ Don Baker, *Religions of Korea...*, 29.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 3.

¹⁰⁰ Korean Statistical Information Service, “Population by Gender/Age/Religion – City/Country”, (2015) <http://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=101&tblId=DT_1PM1502&conn_path=I2> (accessed 15 November, 2018).

¹⁰¹ Korea.net, “About Korea: Religion”, (n.d.) <<http://www.korea.net/AboutKorea/Korean-Life/Religion>> (accessed 15 November, 2018).

period. Nonetheless, Catholic Christians gained a 0.5 percent increase, with 7.9 percent of the Korean population in 2015 affiliated with them.¹⁰²

There are several reasons that can be concluded from this finding. Firstly, the change of society from a monarchy/religious to capitalist society started to change the religious situation in South Korea. The slogan ‘money is king’ was grinded into the younger generation who has now started to see the world in a materialistic context. Secondly, it is the secular ideology that is being imposed in South Korea where religion is seen as an individual belief and a private matter which people try to avoid talking about while dissemination of religion is discouraged. The final reason is viewing the world only in a scientific way. They think religion is outdated and not relevant in their daily lives; hence, they left religion. These reasons are not only applicable to South Koreans as this situation happens all around the world including the new Muslim generation who perceive religion as no longer important or relevant in modern times.¹⁰³

2.4 EVENTS SHAPING SOUTH KOREANS’ PERSPECTIVES TOWARDS MUSLIMS

“Muslim” still carries a negative connotation for many South Koreans as they listen to a lot of unscrupulous propagandas against Muslims. When Muslims are mentioned, the first word they will utter is terrorist, bad and brutal people and many more. The 9/11 tragedy became the spark lit against Muslims as the two planes crashed into the Twin Towers, leading the media to start portraying Muslims as violent and the world’s enemies.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Pew Research Center, “Young adults around the world are less religious by several measures” < <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2018/06/13/young-adults-around-the-world-are-less-religious-by-several-measures/>> (accessed 6 October, 2023).

As one of the closest friends of the U.S., South Korea is in favour of the latter. The South Korean media, printed as well as electronic, like newspapers, television channels and internet, play a vital role in disseminating propagandas against Muslims and it became the main source for the Korean people to know about Islam and Muslims.¹⁰⁴ Since 2001 until now, prejudice towards Muslims in South Korea remains and is getting stronger as a result of several events that had happened in the Middle East in 2003 and 2007.

The situation in the Middle East did not help to uplift the Muslims' image to the South Koreans, and it got dreadful after the two incidents. Firstly, the beheading of a South Korean interpreter and Christian missionary, Kim Sun Il in Iraq after being kidnapped by an Iraqi insurgent group in 2003. This punitive action by Iraqi insurgents under Al-Zarqawi¹⁰⁵ was to warn South Korea to call off their plan to send 3,000 armies to Iraq, making it the third largest deployment of troops after the U.S. and Britain. The group released their statement condemning the deployment as below:

"To the South Korean citizens: We warned you," one of the militants read from a statement in the video broadcast Tuesday. "This is the result of your own doings. Enough lies, or cheatings. Your soldiers here are not for the sake for the Iraqis, but they are here for the cursed America."¹⁰⁶

The deployment was to show South Korea's support to the U.S. South Korea also claimed that their armies would be deployed in Erbil; they were not to enter the field of war but rather to rebuild infrastructures in Iraqi areas that were destroyed during the

¹⁰⁴ Ali An Sun Geun, *Islam Damai...*, 267-268.

¹⁰⁵ Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, a Jordanian, is the leader of the jihadist insurgent in Iraq. The group known as Jama'at Al-Tawhid Wal Jihad was involved in the kidnapping of Kim Sun Il, and later beheaded the South Korean evangelist in 2003.

¹⁰⁶ Sohn, Jie-ae, Faraj, Caroline (23 June 2004). "[South Korean hostage beheaded: Seoul reaffirms plans to send more troops to Iraq](https://web.archive.org/web/20040625225503/http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/06/22/iraq.hostage/)". Cable News Network. Seoul, South Korea: Time Warner<. <https://web.archive.org/web/20040625225503/http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/06/22/iraq.hostage/>> (accessed 1 December, 2018).

war. Moreover, only a small number of the army were combat troops while the rest specialised in medical, engineers, construction, security trainers and others.¹⁰⁷

The situation in South Korea during this time was chaotic as many demonstrations were being held to protest against the kidnapping. In order to convince the Iraqis that the South Korean troops deployment was to establish peace and rebuild Iraq, the South Korean president, Roh Moo Hyun¹⁰⁸ urged the foreign minister to deliver a speech about South Korea's intention. However, this did not deter the insurgents as Kim was mercilessly killed.¹⁰⁹ After the news and video of Kim Sun Il being killed were released, the public became angry and anti-Muslim and anti-Iraqi movements started to emerge rapidly in South Korea. As the situation became chaotic, the police and anti-riot unit were deployed in Seoul and other places to avoid any unwanted backlash against Muslims who were living in South Korea. The mosques started to receive bomb threats indicating the situation was getting worse by the minute.¹¹⁰ The people of South Korea urged the government to take revenge on the death of Kim, with some even offering themselves to go to Iraq to fight against the Iraqi insurgents. In the aftermath of the event, the government had evacuated their citizens who lived and worked in Iraq and some companies like Cana General Trading where the deceased Kim worked at, ceased their operation in Iraq in order to avoid the same incident from happening in the future.¹¹¹ In the midst of the tragedy, South Korean Muslims and foreign Muslims started to become the target of harassment, and some said that they feared for their lives

¹⁰⁷ Ibid

¹⁰⁸ Roh Moon Hyun was the South Korean President from 2003 to 2008; under his administration he faced two main tragedies of hostages in the Middle East which tested his ability to lead the South Korea government.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid

¹¹⁰ James Brook, "The Reach of War: South Korea; Hostage's Death Unleashes Mixed Emotions Back Home". *New York Times*. 24 June, 2004. <<https://www.nytimes.com/2004/06/24/world/the-reach-of-war-south-korea-hostage-s-death-unleashes-mixed-emotions-back-home.html>> (accessed 21 October 2018)

¹¹¹ Ibid

as the South Korean sentiment following this tragedy was quite strong and many Muslims avoided leaving their homes for a while to steer away from any unwanted incidents that might befall them.

Another incident happened in 2007 when a group of South Korean evangelists sponsored by Saemmul Presbyterian Church,¹¹² who went to Afghanistan on July 19th of that year, was kidnapped by the Taliban.¹¹³ Out of 23 hostages, two were killed in the middle of negotiation as the South Korean government provoked the Taliban by refusing to pay the ransom. The Taliban demanded the South Korean government to withdraw 200 of its troops from Afghanistan and stop the missionary work done by South Korean evangelists in the country. Moreover, they demanded the release of 23 Taliban militants from prison. As the prevision event of 2003, this hostage situation had rallied the people of South Korea urging for the hostages to be released. Small gatherings were held in several places in South Korea while some protesters had demonstrated in front of the Seoul Central mosque.¹¹⁴ Muslims in South Korea also condemned the kidnapping by the Taliban as it is not in accordance to the teaching of Islam.¹¹⁵ Prayers were held in the mosque hoping for the safe return of the hostages and to avoid any backlash from South Koreans whose anger due to the event might be unleashed towards the Muslims residing in South Korea.¹¹⁶ The Korean Muslim Federation released a statement as below:

¹¹² Taliban was established by Mohammed Omar in 1994 in Afghanistan with the aim to end the civil war in Afghanistan.

¹¹³ Jennifer Veale, "Korean Missionaries under Fire". *Time Magazine*. July 27, 2007. <<http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1647646,00.html>> (accessed 21 October 2018)

¹¹⁴ Al-Jazeera "South Korean hostage talks 'likely'". *Al-Jazeera*. August 3, 2007. <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2007/08/2008525133627997592.html>> (accessed 21 October 2018)

¹¹⁵ Moon Gwang Lip "Muslims here pray for safe homecoming of 22 hostages", *JoongAng Daily*, July 30, 2007. <<http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2878605>> (accessed 21 October 2018)

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*

“We, the Muslims in Korea, express our deepest condolences to the Korean victim in Afghanistan and share his family’s sense of bereavement ... The Korea Muslim Federation strongly demands that the Korean hostages be released and is appealing for their safe return,”¹¹⁷

It took 43 days for the situation to subside with the help from the Afghanistan and Indonesian governments. These two events led to the South Korean government passing a law banning South Koreans who damaged the ‘national prestige’ from using their passport up to three years to travel overseas. The law is believed to be aimed at the Christian missionaries who went to the Middle East for evangelist work.¹¹⁸ According to an article written by Moon Gwang Lip, the missionaries’ activities in the Middle East had given a hard time to the government as well as brought a bad reputation to South Korea. Although the government did not specify any group or religious movement, the Korean Christians believed it is a law imposed upon them.¹¹⁹

It has been more than 10 years after these two events happened. Public sentiment on Muslims is still strong as the anti-Muslim Western propagandas did not cease. These events and propagandas have shaped the Koreans’ perspectives of Muslims; some Muslims, especially Muslim women, are harassed where they are mocked for wearing the hijab and some had experienced their hijab being grabbed by South Koreans.¹²⁰ However, the perspective towards Muslims is also getting better¹²¹ in some parts of South Korea like Itaewon in Seoul and Namsan-dong in Busan, thanks to the efforts done by the KMF and other Muslim organisations where they held many events aimed

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*

¹¹⁸ Moon Gwang Lip (February 16, 2011). "Missionaries fret about new passport restriction". JoongAng Daily. JoongAng Ilbo. <<http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2932276>> (accessed 21 October 2018)

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*

¹²⁰ Muhammad Saif interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 10 August 2018.

¹²¹ There is also wisdom from the events where South Koreans who did not want bias and misinformation to cloud their judgment on Islam and Muslims as some took a step back from hate and began searching for the truth about Islam and its teachings. Ali An Sun Geun, *Islam Damai...*, 269-270.

to give understanding to the South Koreans about Islam, such as Mosque Open Day and distributing pamphlets about Islam. Moreover, many Muslim students have come to South Korea to pursue their studies, and they became small ambassadors of Islam in universities throughout South Korea, explaining about Islam and Muslims, and clearing any misconceptions while showing that Muslims are not terrorists.¹²²

Internally, an event took place in South Korea in 2018 that stirred the nation as 500 refugees from Yemen arrived at Jeju Island at the end of 2017. They initially came as tourists due to the island's visa-free tourism policy; however, they became refugees after the immigration officers launched a crackdown on them. The South Korean government granted a one-year humanitarian permit to 339 Yemenis while rejecting 34 others because of criminal charges back home while the rest were still under review.¹²³ The situation worsened as anti-refugee sentiment among the South Koreans increased day by day. Islamophobia and misconception towards Islam and Muslims had planted a bad image as the South Koreans thought that the Muslim refugees will cause havoc and problems to the country. The situation continued until 2019 which led to the action taken by the South Koreans where they collected more than 700,000 signatures petitioning the government to discontinue the visa-free policy to Yemen and send them back to Yemen.¹²⁴

¹²² Ibid

¹²³ Kim Min Joo & Simon Denyer, (October 17, 2018), South Korea Denies Refugee Status to Hundreds of Yemenis Fleeing War, The Washington Post. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/south-korea-denies-refugee-status-to-hundreds-of-yemenis-fleeing-war/2018/10/17/5d554d1e-d207-11e8-8c22-fa2ef74bd6d6_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.f6ea1f81a633> (accessed 20 March, 2019).

¹²⁴ Faras Ghani, (14 August, 2018), How Islamophobia is Driving Anti-Refugee Sentiment in Korea. <<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/islamophobia-driving-anti-refugee-sentiment-korea-180813062317079.html>> (accessed on 21 March 2019).

2.5 THE VIEWS OF SOUTH KOREA'S YOUNG GENERATION ON ISLAM AND MUSLIMS

The young generation in South Korea seems to be more open-minded about issues regarding Muslims. Some have done research on Muslims while others have even travelled to Muslim countries like Malaysia and Indonesia to understand further about Muslims with their own eyes and not rely only on the news they hear or see in the media. The young generation acquired information from social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube channels. For instance, Jay Kim, a YouTuber, started to have an interest in Islam and Muslims after meeting his fans in Indonesia which changed his opinion about Islam and Muslims. In his YouTube post entitled 'Why am I interested in Muslims'¹²⁵, Jay said that at first, he thought that Muslims are mainly from the Middle East, and he did not know that there is a large community of Muslims in Southeast Asia, i.e., in Malaysia and Indonesia. His first impression about Muslims was scary bearded men and fully covered women; hence, he was prone to have prejudices towards Muslims especially when it is hard to spot a Muslim in South Korea. His prejudice was also mainly because of the feeding of media to the public about Islam and relating them to the 9/11 event, the Taliban and ISIS, which is what has been propagated in South Korea; thus, shaping non-Muslims' views of Islam and Muslims as dangerous and horrible.

Jay then mentioned that his prejudices towards Muslims completely shattered after he went to Jakarta, Indonesia for a fan meeting. His first impression of Muslims changed as the Muslims in Jakarta were kind and nice to him, including the peaceful vibe that he felt during his stay in Indonesia. He continued his video by saying the same thing happened when he went to Tunisia and started to fall in love with the Muslims

¹²⁵ Jay Kim published the video entitled 'Why am I interested in Islam?' on 18 January 2019 on the YouTube platform which garnered 350,000 views from all around the world. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Syli-YMwZOO>

and their culture. As a result, he started to study about the Muslims, read books and the Korean translated Al-Quran. What impressed him more is that the teaching of Islam is similar to his thinking; for instance, he mentioned about the teaching of Islam on ‘doing good things and not to do bad things and help others’. At the end of his video, he stressed that the meaning of Islam itself is peace, as he believed it to be a truthful statement and considered reverting to Islam after he completed his research and study on the religion.¹²⁶

Currently, YouTube has become a new platform for South Koreans, Muslims or non-Muslims, in introducing Islam and Muslims either to the South Korean audience or audience all around the world based on their experiences after visiting Muslim countries. There are several other South Korean YouTubers who talk about Islam and Muslims; for example, Abdullah Dong Shin Park who reverted to Islam on 30 December 2009. Actively doing da’wah through his YouTube channel named ‘Korean Muslim – Mualaf’,¹²⁷ he shared his life before and after reversion.¹²⁸ Several non-Muslim South Korean YouTubers like ‘Blimey’,¹²⁹ solely focus on Malaysia and South Korea and its culture, including topics on Islam, Muslims, halal, and others. For example, a video entitled ‘Korean girls tried Ramadhan fasting’ which shows how the girls tried to fast during Ramadhan to understand the reasons and feel what the Muslims go through while fasting. Besides that, YouTuber ‘JAYKEEOUT x VWVB’¹³⁰ focuses on issues in South Korea through street interviews and social experiments which also cover Islam and Muslims in South Korea, like their video entitled ‘What Korean

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Korean Muslim – Mualaf is a YouTube channel created by Abdullah Dong Shin Park. <https://www.youtube.com/user/AbdullahKorean>

¹²⁸ Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin Mohd Ghazi, *Islam in South Korea...*, 90.

¹²⁹ Blimey is a South Korean YouTuber consist of three members who share their experienced in Malaysia. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvJ4XcL0YnybHu4Er9LZGGw/featured>

¹³⁰ Jaykeeout is a YouTube channel doing interviews and social experiments in issues that mainly happen in South Korea. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyTQoMLiPfsRLHBJtMXKYg/featured>

Muslims think about ISIS’, ‘Talking to Koreans as a Muslim’ and ‘I have few Muslim friends’. There are many South Korean YouTubers who lived, worked, or studied in Malaysia and Indonesia who talked about Islam and Muslims and their experiences as they encounter Muslims first-hand. This is a good development as not only did they learn about Islam and Muslims to gain knowledge for themselves, but also indirectly provide information about Islam and Muslims to their subscribers and viewers. Hopefully, such efforts by the new generation of South Korea will decrease, if not completely eliminate, the negative perspectives on Islam and Muslims as portrayed by the media.

2.6 CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, Islam and South Korea have a long history of contact that happened since the 4th century between the Islamic caliphate and the Silla dynasty. They are not strangers to each other but at the present time, they are being separated by the hidden truth out of lies played by the media. Hence, the study of their history is very important to acknowledge the relationship and understand the current position of Islam and Muslims in the eyes of the people of South Korea. At the same time, Muslims must be more proactive in spreading true information about Islam in South Korea to nullify the bad perceptions the South Koreans have on Islam and Muslims. Besides, from the study done by the researcher, it can be concluded that the new generation is more open-minded and willing to learn about Islam and Muslims rather than blindly believing what the media feed in the news. Hopefully, there will be more new YouTubers from South Korea, Muslims or non-Muslims, who will cover about Islam and Muslims as this platform is mainly used by the new generation which can give accurate information and ideas about Islam and Muslims. South Korean Muslims themselves should start to grab

this opportunity by producing videos on Muslim communities in South Korea, such as the Muslim community in Seoul, Gumi, Busan and others as this platform is getting popular and attracts the new generation which will give them a true understanding about Islam and Muslims.



CHAPTER THREE

THE HISTORY OF BUSAN AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Busan¹³¹ is the second largest metropolitan city in South Korea. The city is known as the south gate of Korea where the country's biggest main seaport is located, which provides access to the sea route trading all over the world. In this chapter, a deeper look into Busan's history is made in order to give in-depth information about the place where the research was conducted. This information includes geography and demography, population, etc. Moreover, the history of Busan since the three great kingdoms, the Japanese occupation, and the Korean war was also studied. The important part of this chapter is the establishment of Busan as a metropolitan city and the developments that shaped today's Busan which include the religions available in the city. Next, the chapter will critically analyse the coming of Islam and Muslims to the south part of South Korea in general and the establishment of the first Muslim community in Busan in particular. Interviews with several South Korean Muslims from Busan who are involved with the establishment of the Muslim community in Busan are included to understand the coming of Islam to Busan. At the same time, a discussion on practices like madhab and Islamic teachings in Busan is included in this chapter, including the location of several Muslim settlements in the city.

¹³¹ Busan or formerly known as Pusan means 'Cauldron Mountain' which reflects the landscape of the area surrounded by mountains that are shaped like a cauldron. Kwang Soo Oh, (2012), "Even if you try to pronounce it as 'Pusan'...", <<http://www.kookje.co.kr/news2011/asp/newsbody.asp?code=0200&key=20120425.22002211106>> (accessed on 6 October 2023).

3.2 BUSAN, SOUTH KOREA: A HISTORY

Before we look further into the Muslim community in Busan, it is important to learn about the history of Busan itself. Since Busan became the second home to Islam and Muslims after Seoul, it is important to learn about the history and how did Busan strive to be the second Metropolitan City in South Korea. Furthermore, it is important to study the history of Busan as the research itself focuses on Islam and the Muslim community in Busan. Indeed, the development of the Muslim community in Busan is closely related with the situation in Busan itself.

3.2.1 Busan During the Three Great Kingdoms

During the researcher's visits to the Dongsam-dong Shell Midden Museum,¹³² some information could be gathered about the history of early Busan. The first exhibition hall introduced the Neolithic Age which was the starting point of Busan history, with the discovery of the Shell mound at Dongsam-dong that is believed to have existed in 4000 B.C.¹³³ They found several evidence to support the Neolithic Age like bone tools, pottery, stoneware, etc., which through radiocarbon dating indicates that the items are aged between 3500 to 7500 years old.¹³⁴ The Neolithic Age people of Busan resided along the seashore, south of the Korean Peninsula, and were involved mainly in fishing activities based on some artefacts found by Korean archaeologists, such as fishhook, fishing net weight, and harpoon in the area.¹³⁵

¹³² Dongsam-dong Shell Midden Museum opened by Busan Museum on 24th April 2002. It is a small-sized museum built to preserve the historical shell mound found in 1929 during the Japanese occupation. Information gathered and observation was during researcher visit to the Museum on 9 August 2018.

¹³³ Visit to Dongsam-dong Shell Midden Museum, 9 August 2018.

¹³⁴ Kim Chong Hak, *The Prehistory of Korea*, Trans. by Richard J. Pearson and Kazue Pearson, (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1978), 10.

¹³⁵ Lee June Jeong, *From Shellfish Gathering to Agriculture in Prehistoric Korea: The Chulmun to Mumun*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 2008), 60-70.

Since the first century, there were several dynasties formed in the Korean Peninsula with their own territories and influence that reached until Manchuria. They were Gogoryeo (37 B.C.E – 668 C.E.), Baekjae (18 B.C.E. – 660 C.E.), and Silla (57 B.C.E. – 935 C.E.) which were in constant conflict with one another. In the meantime, China, which during this time was governed by the Tang dynasty (618 C.E. – 907 C.E.), favoured Silla. Hence, by the mid-7th century, the Silla dynasty with the aid of Tang annexed Baekjae and Gogoryeo armies and established the first unified dynasty in the Korean Peninsula.¹³⁶ Having established its power at the central and south of the Korean Peninsula, Silla occupied the Busan area after the fall of the Gaya kingdom (42 C.E – 562 C.E.). During this period, Busan was on the outskirts of the Silla kingdom which later was merged into Dongnae-gun (district) in 751 B.C. under the order of King Gyeongdoek.¹³⁷ Starting from this point, Dongnae flourished as the resting place to the King and nobles where several hot springs were opened there and some high-ranking officials even went to Haeundae beach for relaxation.¹³⁸ Since Buddhism started to spread during the Silla kingdom under King Munmu, the first and oldest temple was built in Busan, known as the Beomeosa Temple.¹³⁹

Later, the annexation of Silla under her last king, King Gyeong Sun (927 C.E. – 935 C.E.) by King Taejo¹⁴⁰ (918 C.E – 943 C.E) of Goryo in the early 10th century led to a newly established dynasty and Taejo became the sole ruler of the Korean

¹³⁶ Hwang Kyung Moon, *A History of Korea*, 2nd Ed. (London: Macmillan Publishers Limited, 2017), 1-6.

¹³⁷ King Gyeongdoek (742 C.E – 765 C.E.) was a ruler of the Silla kingdom during whose rule the teaching of Buddha flourished in the Korean Peninsula.

¹³⁸ Visit to Busan Museum, 9 August 2018.

¹³⁹ Beomeosa Temple (678 C.E.) was built 1,300 years ago. The name Beomeosa means Heavenly fish. Foong Pek Yee, (2003), “*Busan’s Ancient Beomeosa temple is Rich with Heritage and History*”, <<https://www.thestar.com.my/news/community/2013/11/08/a-mountain-sanctuary-busans-ancient-beomeosa-temple-is-rich-with-heritage-and-history/>> (accessed on 4th December 2018)

¹⁴⁰ King Taejo of Goryo had unified the Korean Peninsula under one dynasty; thus, became the founder of the great Goryo dynasty.

Peninsula.¹⁴¹ During this period, intermarriage between the dynasties were done in order to stop any uprising as the married royal families can retain their land and wealth but must pledge allegiance to the Goryo dynasty, including the marriage of the former king of Silla, King Gyeong Sun to the princess of King Taejo. The Tang dynasty was no longer a threat to the Korean Peninsula when it fell in the early 10th century.¹⁴² The successive Chinese dynasties, Song (960 C.E. – 1279 C.E.) and Liao (907 C.E. – 1125 C.E.) acknowledged the sovereignty of Goryo as an independent dynasty until 1270. However, the good relationship between Song and Goryo led to an uneasy feeling felt by Liao, which led to the Khitan-Liao to invade Goryo. Liao armies marched into Goryo territory and almost won over Goryo, but in the end they were defeated by the Korean general in the south. Goryo formed an alliance with the Mongols and drove out Khitan-Liao from the Korean Peninsula.¹⁴³

Later, it was a prosperity period where trading activities resumed and flourished. The relationship with Song resumed. Trading activities with Song, Japan and Abbasid Caliphate were great leading to the thriving economy of Goryo. Meanwhile, after the fall of the Silla kingdom in 935 C.E., the Busan area was neglected by the Goryo government as Busan was far from the central political power of the latter, which was located at Kaesong (today's location in North Korea bordering South Korea). Although Busan became an irrelevant political area, Busan's defensive fortress and military strength still became a priority to the Goryo to hold against Japanese invasion into the Korean Peninsula.¹⁴⁴ Apart from having to safeguard the southern part of her territories, in the north, the peaceful period turned bleak when the Mongol-Yuan dynasty started

¹⁴¹ Hwang Kyung Moon, *A History ...*, 31-41.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Lee Kenneth B. and Yi Kong Bok, *Korea and East Asia: The Story of a Phoenix*, (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., 1997), 59-61.

¹⁴⁴ Visit to Busan Museum, 9 August 2018.

their campaign to invade Goryeo 10 years after Khitan's invasion.¹⁴⁵ Goryeo surrendered to the Yuan dynasty (1271 C.E. – 1368 C.E.) in 1270s and became a vassal state of the latter that lasted until 1356. In order to maintain Yuan's power in Goryeo, the royals of Goryeo were forced to marry Yuan royalty and this continued for the next 80 years.¹⁴⁶ Later, the Yuan dynasty started to crumble as the Ming dynasty (1368 C.E. – 1644 C.E.) emerged as a stronger dynasty in China. King Gong Min of Goryeo (1330 C.E. – 1374 C.E.) took this opportunity to release Goryeo from Yuan's reign and by 1356, the Goryeo armies successfully pushed out Yuan forces from the northern border and reclaimed its territory. Once again, Goryeo became an independent dynasty until 1392.¹⁴⁷

Then a rebellion happened as General Yi Seong Gye (1335 C.E. – 1408 C.E.) under the last king of Goryeo, King Woo (1365 C.E. – 1389 C.E.) rebelled after he reached the border to conquer Liaoning in China. He overthrew the Goryeo dynasty and established the Joseon dynasty in 1392 and gained the title, King Taejo of Joseon. Joseon was a prosper dynasty even though there were a lot of internal conflicts between members of the royal family, up until the end of the 16th century.¹⁴⁸ During these 300 years, there were several achievements by the Joseon dynasty; for example, Sejong the Great (1418 C.E. – 1450 C.E.) introduced Hangul – a newly developed Korean writing system which is used until today. They also excelled in medicine, agriculture, language, and literature.¹⁴⁹ When Joseon came to power in the late 14th century, Busan was seen as a gateway for trading activities with Japan. Japan traders were permitted to settle in and be involved in trading activities. The trading activities continued for a long period

¹⁴⁵ Lee Kenneth B. and Yi Kong Bok, *Korea...*, 71-73

¹⁴⁶ Morris Rossabi, *Eurasian Influences on Yuan China*, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies Publishing, 2013), 180-184.

¹⁴⁷ Kim DJun Kil and Kim Chun Gil, *The History of Korea*, (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2005), 69-70.

¹⁴⁸ Choi Byong Hyon, *The Annals of King T'aejo: Founder of Korea's Joseon Dynasty*, (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014), 60-100.

¹⁴⁹ Kim-Renaud Young Key, *The Korean Alphabet: Its History and Structure*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), 1-30.

even though Japan kept showing a hostile attitude towards the Joseon Kingdom. For example, in 1592, the Japanese started their campaign to conquer China through Korea; they invaded Korea and tried to turn her into a buffer zone to fight against the Ming dynasty. The people and army of Joseon gave a great resistance. Although the Japanese successfully annexed the southern part of the Korean Peninsula, after eight years, Joseon and Ming forces successfully pushed out the Japanese from the peninsula.¹⁵⁰ After the devastating war with Japan, Joseon once again came under attack by the Manchu-Qing dynasty who tried to bring down the Ming dynasty. Consequently, the Qing dynasty (1636 C.E. – 1912 C.E.) became a new power in China and Joseon became a vassal state to the Qing dynasty. Despite having to pledge loyalty to Qing, Joseon started to experience a peaceful period again which lasted for nearly 200 years.¹⁵¹

In the late 19th century, the Joseon dynasty was forced to sign a treaty with Japan called the Ganghwa Treaty in 1876 declaring Joseon independent from China and enjoyed the same sovereignty as Japan, while Busan was declared as the first international port.¹⁵² It was a significant treaty as Joseon can claim independence from China; however, it was only a plot by the Meiji government for the advancement of Japan's intent on the Korean Peninsula. Moreover, the treaty was unfair as most of the points in the treaty sided with Japan.¹⁵³ For example, the Joseon kingdom needed to open several seaports like the seaport at Incheon and Wonsan to the Japanese traders who enjoyed freedom to trade without the interference of the local government.¹⁵⁴ As a

¹⁵⁰ James B. Lewis, *Frontier Contact between Joseon Korea and Tokugawa Japan*, (London: RotledgeCurzon, 2003), 1-336.

¹⁵¹ Richard J. Smith, *The Qing Dynasty, and Traditional Chinese Culture*, (Maryland: The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc., 2015), 60-61.

¹⁵² Michael D. Shin, *Korean National Identity under Japanese Colonial Rule: Yi Gwangsu and the March First Movement of 1919*, (New York, Routledge, 2018), 49-53.

¹⁵³ Kim Key Hiuk, *The Last Phase of the East Asian World Order: Korea, Japan and the Chinese Empire, 1860-1882*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 206-231.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

result, the Japanese gathered information about the Korean Peninsula including the territorial and government places, terrain of the peninsula and others, which eventually led to the annexation of the Joseon kingdom in the early 20th century, i.e., in 1910.¹⁵⁵

3.2.2 Busan During Japanese Occupation (1910 - 1945)

The occupation of Korea by the Japanese Imperial army happened in 1910 after the assassination of Prince Ito, the Japanese Resident General of Korea. Japan fully took control over Korea in order to avoid subsequent uprisings and also as a payback for the assassination of Prince Ito. The Japanese occupation followed the Japan-Korea annexation treaty signed by Terauchi Masatake¹⁵⁶ and the Korean prime minister, Ye Wan Yong.¹⁵⁷ From this year onward, a large number of Japanese began to migrate to Korea and used this opportunity to acquire the Korean people's land. This development was not in favour of the Koreans as they now became tenants instead of owners in their own country where they were forced to turn over their ownership to the Japanese. Moreover, many Koreans were deported to Japan as labourers and the number reached up to two million.¹⁵⁸ In Busan, the local Koreans were forced to build a steam tramway rail since the port was the main trading hub for Japan.¹⁵⁹

In 1929, students of Korea including those from Busan started an uprising against Japan which led to military strengthening by Japan. Busan had put up a strong opposition towards the Japanese occupation. The Koreans of Busan from different

¹⁵⁵ James B. Lewis, *Frontier Contact between...*, 1-336.

¹⁵⁶ Terauchi Masatake was a Japanese Minister of War sent to Korea to finalise the Japan-Korea annexation treaty in 1910.

¹⁵⁷ Mark E. Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation Policies in Colonial Korea, 1910 – 1945*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2011), 185-187.

¹⁵⁸ Shannon McCune, *Korea's Heritage: A Regional and Social Geography*, (Vermont: Tuttle Company, 1956), 80-90.

¹⁵⁹ The Korea Transport Institute (South Korea), *The History of Korean Railway by Photographs: KOTI Knowledge Sharing Report Issue 17*, edited by Lee Jun, (Gyeonggi, The Korea Transport Institute, 2014), 17-23.

backgrounds like workers, patriots, students, and others rallied a movement against the Japanese administration causing the latter to take counter measures to suppress further uprising. Japan started to ban any Korean cultural activities including religious worship and replaced it with the Japanese belief called Shinto¹⁶⁰ with Shinto shrines erected all over Korea. Moreover, the Korean language and history were banned, and the school curriculum was replaced with that of Japanese in order to instil loyalty towards the Japanese emperor.¹⁶¹ One Japanese officer mentioned:

““How can we instill this spirit?” First, cause them [the Koreans] to accept the emperor as a manifest deity and fervently and piously to worship the Emperor as a great god and to believe in the Sun Goddess Amaterasu. So, having a spiritual attitude, we will make them worship [the emperor with] unwavering conviction... in order to integrate Korean recruits as Japanese soldiers, it is imperative that we conduct spiritual training to instill this spirit in them with regular training.”¹⁶²

The locals were also forced to change their names to Japanese names.¹⁶³

During World War 2, Japan had recruited Koreans as military personnel¹⁶⁴ to fight war or become jail wardens in Burma, Siam, and the Philippines. Moreover, the Korean women were forced to work as comfort women for the Japanese soldiers. An estimated 200,000 Korean women were used as sex slaves by Japanese soldiers during the war. Up until now, the fight for justice for the victims continues by demanding the Japanese government to apologise for the treatment towards the former comfort women

¹⁶⁰ Shinto is a traditional Japanese religion that stresses on rituals to connect the ancient Japan with the current day. It is widely practised by the Japanese, and it is estimated that over 80 percent of the population are Shinto believers. Naofusa Hirai, (2023), “Shinto”, <<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Shinto/Shinto-reaction-against-Buddhism>> (accessed on 6 October 2023).

¹⁶¹ James Hoare, *Korea: an introduction*, (London: Kegan Paul International, 1988), 50-67.

¹⁶² Brandon Palmer, *Fighting for the Enemy: Koreans in Japan's War, 1937-1945*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013), 56-60.

¹⁶³ Sonia Ryang, *Koreans in Japan: Critical Voices from the Margin*, (London: Routledge, 2000), 10-20.

¹⁶⁴ Lie John, *Multi-ethnic Japan*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 105-110.

by its soldiers during the war.¹⁶⁵ Statues of comfort women were erected in Seoul and Busan as a remembrance towards them. Moreover, Busan Civil Congress through Busan City Council passed an ordinance to support the victims by providing 1 million won per month for living expenses and several other benefits.¹⁶⁶ This was done since the 2015 Japanese funding for the group failed as South Koreans protested against it leading to the South Korean government to cancel the deal.¹⁶⁷ Kim Bok Dong, a 92 year old comfort woman for one, as reported in New York Times, contented with the decision made by the government and she urged the Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe to formally apologise and compensate the victims.¹⁶⁸ The horrible treatment received by Koreans lasted until the end of World War 2 with the surrender of Japan to the Allied Forces in 1945.

The aftermath of the war saw Korea being divided into two along the 38th parallel line that separates south and north in 1945. It was believed to be a temporary separation before the Allied Bloc, which consisted of the United States and United Kingdom, and the Axis Bloc, which consisted of China and Soviet Union, could oversee the creation of a single government that can unify Korea. The northern part of Korea was put under the Soviet Union while the south consisted of Busan under the United States' control.¹⁶⁹ However, despite the establishment of Soviet-American commission,

¹⁶⁵ Mike Firn, "'Comfort Women' statue threatens to derail Japan-South Korea accord", (December 31, 2015), <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/southkorea/12075523/Comfort-women-statue-threatens-to-derail-Japan-South-Korea-accord.html>> (accessed 1 November, 2018).

¹⁶⁶ Jeong Chi Seob, "Busan Girls Awarded Legal Protection", (June 30, 2017) <<http://www.hankookilbo.com/News/Read/201706301232893193>> (accessed 1 November, 2018).

¹⁶⁷ Cho Sang Hun, "South Korea Signals End to 'Final' Deal with Japan Over Wartime Sex Slaves", (November 21, 2018), <<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/21/world/asia/south-korea-japan-sex-slaves.html>> (accessed 30 November, 2018).

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Michael Edson Robinson, *Korea's Twentieth-century Odyssey*. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press 2007), 107-108.

they failed to come to any decision¹⁷⁰ on ways to unite the country and this led to the American submission of the issue to the United Nation (UN) General Assembly where the UN decided to recognise the Republic of Korea in the south as the sole government in 1948.¹⁷¹ Two years later, North Korea invaded South Korea on 25th June 1950 which led to the Korean War (1950-1953).

3.2.3 Busan During Korean War (1950 - 1953)

The Korean War happened during the Cold War era and before the gruesome war that happened in Vietnam. The Korean War brought a devastating result to the Korean Peninsula and was perceived as one of the worst civil wars in human history. It is estimated that the war consumed 1.2 million lives of Koreans¹⁷², leaving the nation with numberless widows, orphans, and childless parents. It began on 25th June 1950 when the North Korean armies marched into South Korean territory and within three months of their advancement, South Korea was left only with the south-eastern part of the country with Busan as the last defence for South Korea and the Allied Forces, which was later known as The Busan Perimeter. The port of Busan became busy with a supply of soldiers and materials from the American base in Japan.¹⁷³

Despite having difficulties in holding against the vast troops of North Korea, the perimeter was successfully guarded by the Allied Forces as they destroyed every bridge and road using the American Air Force, forcing North Korea to remain idle in order to avoid any airstrike. Due to continuous airstrike and strong defence along the perimeter,

¹⁷⁰ Kim Dong Jin, *The Korean Peace Process and Civil Society: Towards Strategic Peacebuilding*, (New York: Springer Publishing, 2018), 58-60.

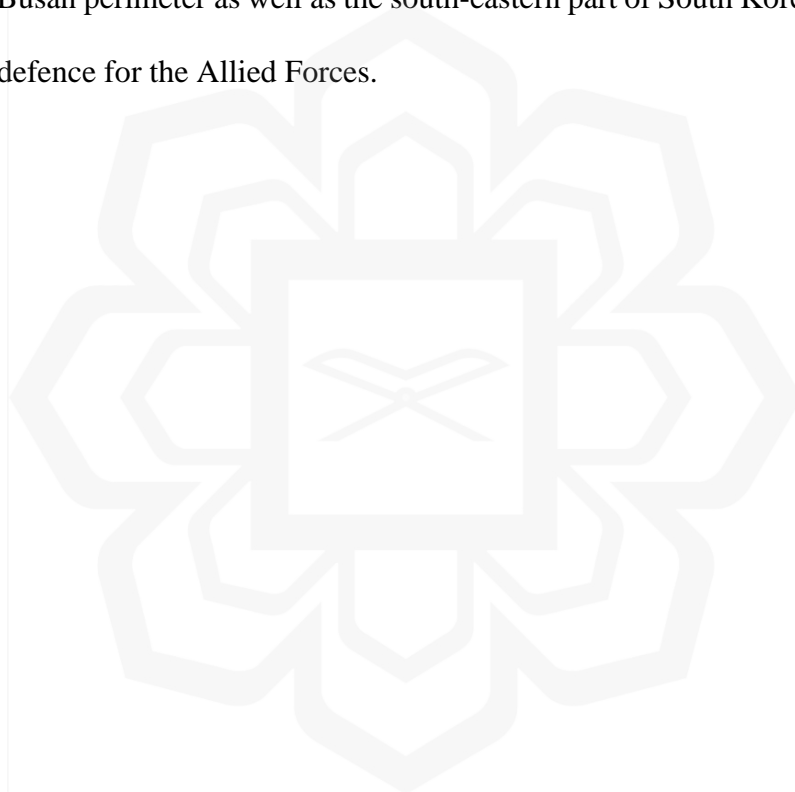
¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Bethany Lacina and Nils P. Gleditsch, "Monitoring Trends in Global Combat: A New Dataset of Battle Deaths", *European Journal of Population*, vol. 21, no. 2-3 (spring, 2005): 154.

¹⁷³ Saylor Academy, "Korean War," (2011), 8-10. <<https://www.saylor.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Korean-War.pdf>> (accessed 6 November, 2018).

North Korean troops retreated after six weeks as they lost a lot of troops while not having enough supplies to continue the fight against the Allied Forces who kept getting supplies from the American base in Japan - which equipped the Busan perimeter with 500 tanks and 180,000 soldiers. The Allied Forces¹⁷⁴ successfully guarded the perimeter as the North Korean troops retreated north as the surprised attack plan by General MacArthur on Incheon in September was successfully accomplished.¹⁷⁵

The map in Figure 3 shows the advancement of North Korea into South Korea and the Busan perimeter as well as the south-eastern part of South Korea which became the last defence for the Allied Forces.



¹⁷⁴ Ibid. The Allied Forces in Korean War composed of 16 countries which sent their troops, and they are as follows: United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Turkey, Australia, Philippines, New Zealand, Thailand, Ethiopia, Greece, France, Colombia, Belgium, South Africa, Netherlands, and Luxembourg, while 29 other countries were involved in medical and supply support during the war.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.



Figure 1: The Map of Korean War¹⁷⁶

Furthermore, Busan received an influx of refugees as the area survived during the North Korean advancement into South Korea. The arrival of refugees began in early 1951 and amounted to half a million people. The existing Busan residents during that time were 882,000, which resulted in the increment of population in Busan to almost 1.4 million people. The situation did not just happen in Busan but also in several cities on the south

¹⁷⁶ The map shows the advancement of North Korea into South Korea vice versa. <<https://www.lcps.org/cms/lib/VA01000195/Centricity/Domain/.../Korean%20War.pdf>> (accessed 6 November, 2018).

coast of South Korea where it is estimated that six million refugees left the north and central part of South Korea to move downward looking for a safe haven.¹⁷⁷ The condition of the refugees worsened as clean water was accessible to only 300,000 people since the system used by Busan city in the 1950s was outdated; they were still using the water supply system from the 1930s. This situation led refugees to work in water delivery services, delivering water from house to house. Remarkably, the education activities did not stop during war, with nearly 70 percent of children who went to school, and shared classrooms and textbooks between them.¹⁷⁸ The war lasted for three years with the Allied Forces siding with South Korea while the Axis Bloc sided with North Korea. After three years, one month and two days, the war ended on 27th July 1953.

A memorial was built in Busan as the resting place and cemetery to the fallen soldiers from the Allied Forces. The United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Busan, South Korea was established in 1951 as a temporary burial site for the fallen soldiers. Later in 1959, an agreement signed between the United Nations and the South Korean government recognised the site as the Memorial Cemetery of the United Nations with the Korean government agreeing to donate the land.¹⁷⁹ The cemetery housed 2,300 fallen soldiers; the United Kingdom has the highest body count with 885 soldiers buried, followed by Turkey with 462 burials, and others include Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, and several other Allied Forces countries. The 144,902 m² area of land was registered as Cultural Heritage Asset on 24th October 2007 as a plan by the authority to preserve the land.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ Andrei Lankov, "January 1951: Life of Korean War Refugees in Busan," *The Korea Time*, 31 January 2010, <https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/special/2010/02/113_60003.html> (accessed 6 November, 2018).

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Visit to United Nation Memorial Cemetery, Busan, 11 August 2018.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

3.3 PRESENT BUSAN: A METROPOLITAN CITY

The aftermath of the Korean War brought devastating effects to South Korea. The country became the poorest country with the people petrified by the war. Moreover, the condition in Busan was chaotic as the increase in population led to an increase in poverty, unsheltered families, and worker surplus, including the possibility of the spread of diseases since there is not enough clean water accessible to the people. The situation gradually improved after the war ended in 1953.¹⁸¹

Since the war, Busan already had its own self-government, and 10 years later, it received approval for a self-governing city separated from the main province, Gyeongsannam-do. During this period, Busan rose as an economic power in South Korea and was declared a Metropolitan City by 1995.¹⁸²

Busan is located at the south-eastern tip of South Korea bordering its former province, Gyeongsannam-do, Ulsan city on the right, and the Pacific Ocean separated Busan from the nearest Japanese territory, Tsushima Island around 49.5 kilometres. The Metropolitan City is blessed with great landscape surrounded by mountain, ocean, and rivers.¹⁸³ Busan is known as the South Gate to South Korea which shows how significant the port of Busan is to the country, making it the ninth busiest port in the world for trading activities. Demographically, Busan is mainly covered by mountains which now has become a problem as the city lacks flat areas for the development of the industrial sector. There were 3.6 million people in Busan in 2004; however, there was a decrease in the population in 2015 to 3.4 million people due to migration either to other parts of South Korea or other countries. Another reason was because of the overpopulation of Busan coupled with the lack of suitable land for development which led to

¹⁸¹ Busan Metropolitan City, “History of Busan” <<https://english.busan.go.kr/bsdistrict>> (accessed 8 November, 2018).

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ryu Jang Soo, Park Sung Joon, Lee Dae Shik, Jun Hyun Joong, Cho Eui Soo & Kim Jong Han, “Supporting the Contribution of Higher Education Institutions to Regional Development”, (January, 2006), 1-3.

the sharp increment of living cost in Busan,¹⁸⁴ causing some locals to leave the city for more affordable places.



Figure 2: The Map of South Korea¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, 4.

¹⁸⁵ The map shows the location of Busan in South Korea bordering Gyeongsangnam and Ulsan. Vladimir Pesic, "Checklist of the Water Mites (Acari, Hydrachnidia) of Korea, with Description of the New Subgenus and Two New Species," *Ecologica Montenegrina*, (2014), 205. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/269113193_Checklist_of_the_water_mites_Acari_Hydrachnidia_of_Korea_with_description_of_one_new_subgenus_and_two_new_species> (accessed 7 November, 2018).

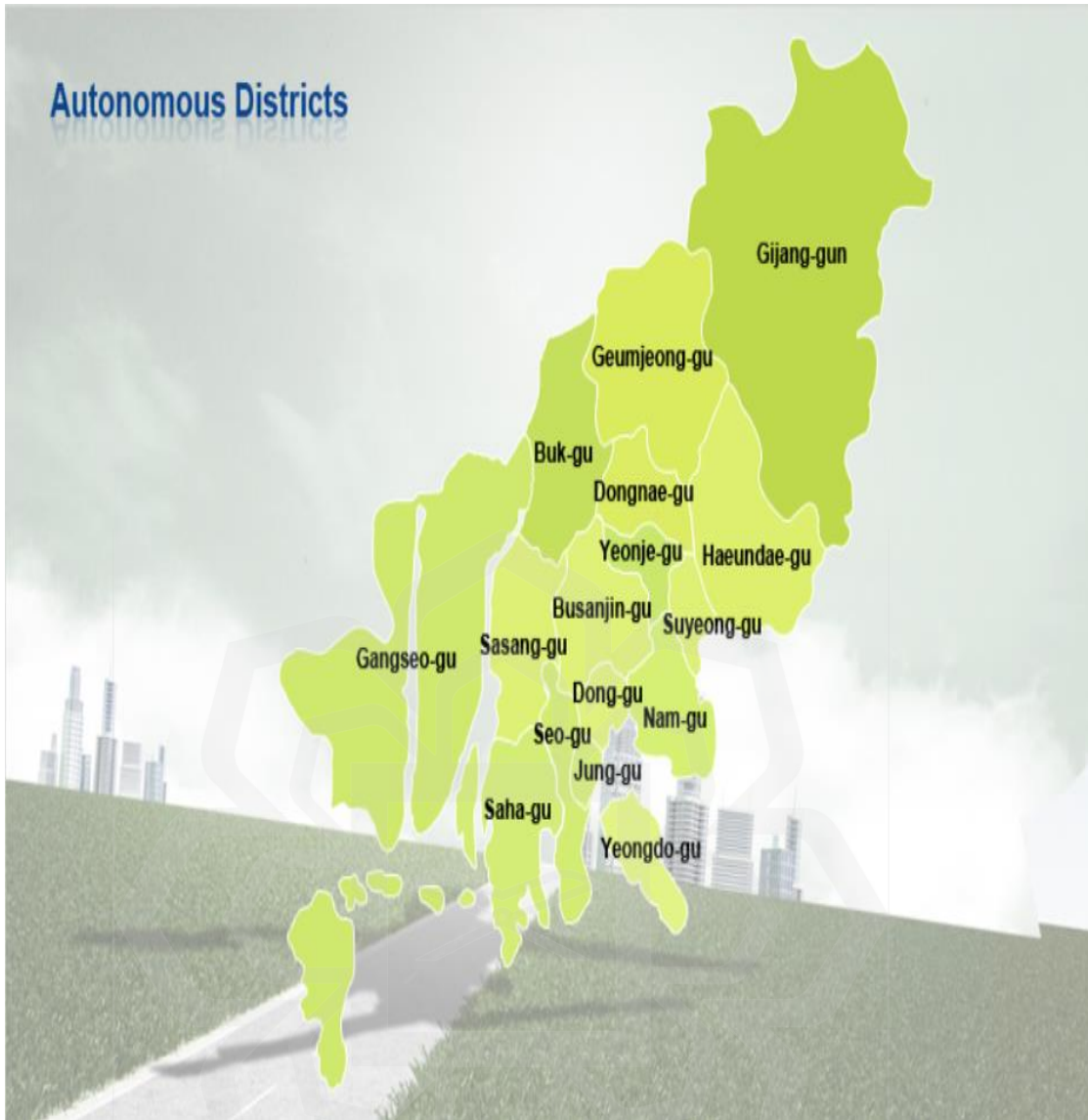


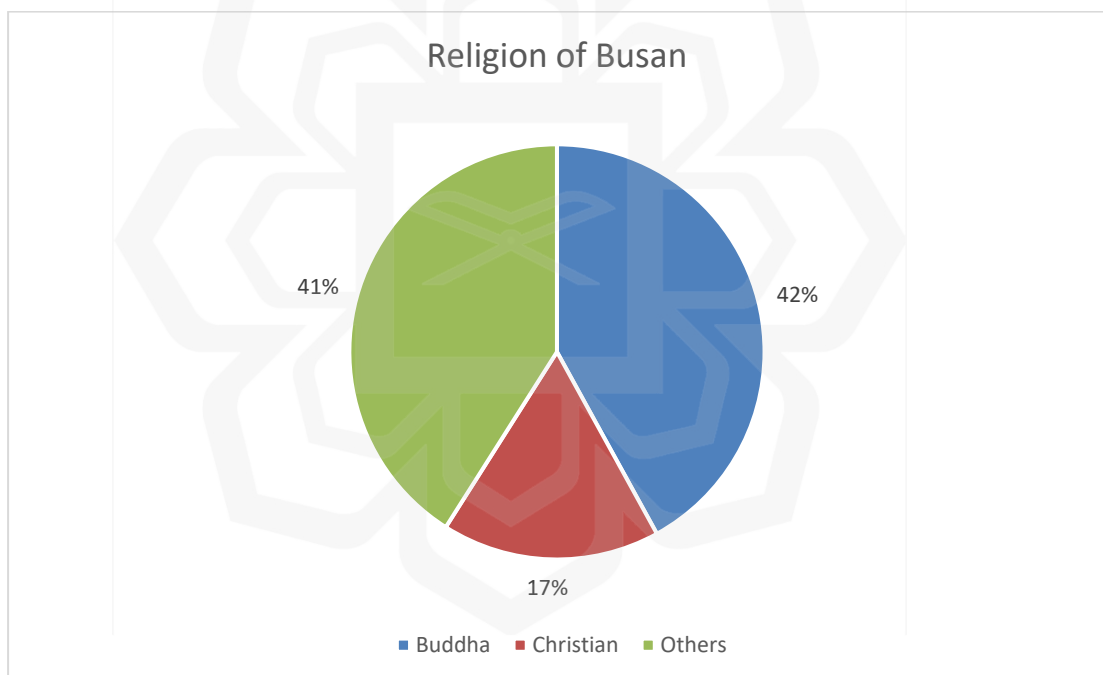
Figure 3: Map showing administrative division of Busan¹⁸⁶

As shown in the map of the administrative division in Busan, there are 15 autonomous districts called *gu* and one county called *gun* (Gijang-gun). The most populated areas are Haeundae-gu and Busanjin-gu with almost half a million people residing in the districts. On the other hand, Jung-gu has the smallest population with 50,000 people.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶ Busan Metropolitan City, “Autonomous Districts” <<https://english.busan.go.kr/bsdistrict>> (accessed 8 November, 2018).

¹⁸⁷ Ryu Jang Soo, Park Sung Joon, Lee Dae Shik, Jun Hyun Joong, Cho Eui Soo & Kim Jong Han, “Supporting the Contribution of Higher Education Institutions to Regional Development”, (January, 2006), 3-4, 8.

Busan is also known as the education hub housing 13 universities including four national universities, namely Pusan National University, Busan National University of Education, Pukyong National University, and Korea Maritime University, while the rest are private universities. These universities have attracted a lot of foreign students from all around the world including Muslim countries, especially universities like Pusan National University and Pusan University of Foreign Studies.¹⁸⁸ In terms of religion, a survey done by the Korean Statistical Information Service (KOSIS) in 2007 showed 42 percent of the population in Busan follow the teaching of Buddha, while 17 percent live as Christians with the Protestants having triple more followers compared to the Catholics. The rest of the population are either atheists or follow minority religions and traditional practices.



Pie Chart 1: Religious Affiliation in Busan

According to Zubair Lee, a former KMF President of Busan branch, there are around 1,000 – 2,000 South Koreans who have reverted to Islam since the establishment of the

¹⁸⁸ Ryu Jang Soo, Park Sung Joon, Lee Dae Shik, Jun Hyun Joong, Cho Eui Soo & Kim Jong Han, “Supporting the Contribution of Higher Education Institutions to Regional Development”, (January, 2006), 3-4.

Muslim community in Busan. However, there are currently around 20 Korean Muslims who are actively in contact with the Busan Mosque and frequently visit the mosque (practising Muslims), while others are no longer in contact with the Busan Mosque, hinting that either they are no longer Muslims or prefer to live as closet Muslims, practising Islam as individual or private practice.¹⁸⁹

3.4 THE HISTORY OF ISLAM AND MUSLIMS IN BUSAN

When talking about Islam and Muslims, many will mention the infamous district in Seoul called Itaewon. Almost every article, news, published books and theses on Islam or Muslims in the country have information about it as it is the birthplace of the first Muslim community in South Korea after the end of the Korean War. Lengthy discussions on the establishment of the Muslim community development in Seoul had been done by many scholars, either local or foreign. Moreover, as Seoul is the capital city of South Korea, it is natural for writers or journalists to write about what happened there as it is an infamous place leading to a limited number of writings about Islam and Muslims in Busan, although Busan was the second home for Islam and Muslims after Seoul. This is one of the reasons why the researcher was intrigued to write on Busan and the factors that contributed to the thriving Muslim community in Busan.

For this study, Busan was chosen over other areas in South Korea as the city is the main industrial area in the country, which attracts a lot of foreigners to come and work there, especially Muslims from countries such as Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Uzbekistan, and others. Their arrival created a new Muslim community in South Korea who came to work while involved in the spread of Islam or da'wah activities in Busan.

¹⁸⁹ Zubair Lee Dong Ha interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Gijang Cold Storage on 18 July 2018.

Moreover, South Korea had attracted many Muslim tourists as the country became popular due to the so-called Korean pop culture. In addition, Busan has become a great tourist destination for Muslims, especially for those who like to visit the Muslim community there and the Busan Mosque. Busan is also filled with a lot of tourist attractions like the Beomeosa Temple, Haeundae Beach, several museums, and the UN memorial park for the fallen heroes during the Korean War. Moreover, with the drop of Chinese tourists because of the tension between China and South Korea, the country currently plans to welcome more Muslims to the country by providing halal eateries and restaurants¹⁹⁰ as well as providing *musallas* at airports, shopping malls, and other places.¹⁹¹ Hence, writing on Islam and Muslims in Busan will fill in the gap left by the overwhelming accounts on Seoul at the expense of other cities or places.

3.4.1 The Creation of Muslim Community in 20th Century Busan

Islam and Muslims were non-existent in Busan before 1975; there is no recorded data suggesting the presence of Muslims in Busan during this period. It took 22 years after the Korean War for Islam and Muslims to reach the southern part of South Korea. During the 22 years, Islam and Muslims flourished in Seoul as the UN-led Turkish army decided to stay and build a Muslim community there. The situation was acknowledged by a former Imam, Ismail Poo Hwang, since he was the first Korean from Busan to become a Muslim. He went to Seoul to learn more about Islam and the Arabic language as the Muslim community was only available in Seoul during that time. After his

¹⁹⁰ Yoon Min Sik, “Korea Plans on More ‘Muslim Friendly’ Restaurants”, The Korea Herald, (March 30, 2017), <<https://www.thejakartapost.com/travel/2017/03/30/korea-plans-on-more-muslim-friendly-restaurants.html>> (accessed 16 December, 2018).

¹⁹¹ Rachel Premack, “After Losing Chinese Tourists, South Korea Wants to Grow its Burgeoning Muslim Tourism Numbers”, The Forbes, (October 19, 2017), <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/rachelpremack/2017/10/19/south-korea-wants-to-solve-its-tourism-crisis-with-halal-food/#687e1cbc3640>> (accessed 16 December, 2018).

conversion in 1976, he then returned to Busan to establish a Muslim community in his own hometown. He went back with his friend, a Korean Muslim named Kim Myung Hwan, and initiated da'wah activities in Busan. Kim later became the first chairman of the KMF Busan Branch while Ismail became an Imam.¹⁹²

During this time (1970 - 1985), the South Korean government had a lot of involvement with projects in the Middle East. As a result, many Middle Eastern countries showed interest to help the Muslim community in South Korea. For example, in Seoul, the building of Seoul Central Mosque was done with the donation of the land from the South Korean government as a good gesture towards Muslims, especially those of Middle Eastern countries, since South Korea needed to strengthen their relationship with these countries in order to preserve their economic relationship. As a result, Middle Eastern countries like Saudi Arabia, Libya, and others donated money for the construction of the mosque. In Spring 1975, the Head Office of Saudi Government launched the opening of the Seoul Masjid which garnered nearby South Koreans to learn about Islam. Since its opening in 1975, the da'wah programme became the main agenda of the mosque in order to help the Muslim community grow in Seoul.¹⁹³

The early stage of the Muslim community in Busan was a bit weak compared to Seoul since in Seoul, the community itself was established by well-educated Muslims who came from Turkey.¹⁹⁴ However, in Busan, Ismail himself was a newly reverted Muslim with limited knowledge about Islam. There were no Muslim scholars to teach Islam to the people. According to him, it was a hard beginning for Islam and Muslims

¹⁹² Ismail Poo Hwang interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 29 June 2018.

¹⁹³ Sohn Joo Young, Organisations and Activities of the Muslim Minority in Korea. (n.d.). Retrieved August 3, 2016. 1-2. www.world-dialogue.org/MWL/minority/C1430-M08-1.pdf.

¹⁹⁴ These well-educated Muslims from Turkey came to South Korea after the end of the Korean War to fill in the position of Imams and preachers in the Turkey community in Seoul.

as he was still learning about prayer and basic Islamic practices. Those who helped teach basic Islamic practices could not stay long in Busan, causing the Busan Muslim community to be a bit neglected. Moreover, in the 1970s, there was no halal food available in the community as they were surrounded by locals who did not have any idea about halal foods. Ismail mentioned that at that time he still consumed pork and non-halal food after he reverted to Islam as he said that because of limited knowledge about Islam, he did not know that there is halal and haram in Islam.¹⁹⁵

However, the situation improved later, when he went to Seoul to learn more about Islam, Arabic language, and the recitation of the Al-Quran. He went back to Busan as a certified Imam after he finished his study with a Pakistani Imam in Seoul. In the early years of Islam in Busan, Ismail said that a small room at the ground floor of the Cultural Apartment was rented to be used as a *musalla*. Meanwhile, several Muslims from Seoul helped with the opening of the *musalla* and some even when back to Seoul to request help to build a mosque in Busan. As a result, they were able to rent an area located at Namsan-dong (Namsan precinct) which cost 6,000,000 won per month to be used as a temporary mosque.¹⁹⁶

Later, the land was bought with the help from the Libyan government. This followed the effort done by the former Finance Minister of Libya, Dr Ali Fellaq, and the mosque received a donation of USD 50,000 which was needed for the building of the mosque. By 21st September 1980, the mosque known as Al-Fatah Mosque was officially opened to the public. Kim Myung Hwan became the chairman of the mosque and the first chairman of the KMF¹⁹⁷ Busan Branch as the Al-Fatah Mosque was put

¹⁹⁵ Ismail Poo Hwang interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 29 June 2018.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Kim Sung Soo, Review 2017, (Anti Fahrenheit, Busan, 2018), 5.

under the administration of the KMF Busan Branch. He became a chairman for only five months before he was replaced by another Korean Muslim, Kim Moo Sung, in February the following year. Under Kim Moon Sung, he successfully brought Thai missionaries, namely Abdul Rahman and Abdul Ghani.¹⁹⁸ The two Muslim *du'at* began their da'wah work in Busan with fruitful results. Ismail mentioned that the prayer hall of the mosque was crowded with South Koreans after four years of its opening. There was an estimated 500 South Koreans who visited the mosque monthly in the early years; however, he mentioned that most of the South Koreans who came just accepted Islam for money and work as they were eyeing the opportunity to be able to work in the Middle East, while some were waiting to receive money from donations made by the Middle Eastern countries.¹⁹⁹ This was confirmed by other South Korean Muslims like the former KMF Busan branch presidents, Yasir Lee and Zubair Lee, who were aware of the situation at that time.

In March 1983, the chairman once again changed. The third chairman, Park Chul Hwan, was appointed to continue the da'wah activities in Busan. At the same time, several Pakistani workers and refugees came to Busan. Foreign workers began to come to Busan as industrialisation was booming in the area. Workers from Bangladesh and Indonesia came to work either in the manufacturing sector, agriculture, or fishery activities. In March 1984, Ismail Poo Hwang was assigned with da'wah works, while at the same time, continued his role as Imam under several chairmen of the KMF Busan Branch.²⁰⁰ In 1986, Zubair Lee, who later became chairman of the KMF Busan Branch (2011 - 2016), became a Muslim after he went to the Busan Mosque to learn the Arabic

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹, Zubair Lee Dong Ha interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi via Facebook Messenger on 7 April 2016.

²⁰⁰ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 5.

language from a Pakistani teacher as preparation to work in the Middle East.²⁰¹ He then followed Abdul Ghani back to Thailand to study more about Islam and returned to Busan as a certified Imam.

The da'wah activities briefly halted during the late 80s to the mid-90s when the Iraq-Iran War (1980 - 1988) happened. The South Koreans who went to the mosque to gain information on working opportunities in the Middle East stopped their visits as the ongoing war discouraged South Koreans from working there. The decline in the number of South Koreans visiting the mosque had slowed down the conversion as the South Koreans tried to avoid the mosque, hence, halting the da'wah activities in Busan.

There were several other reasons for the slow conversion of South Koreans to Islam in Busan in the last decade of the 20th century. Firstly, Islam is foreign to many people in Busan as the religion did not arrive to the city until the 1970s, while other prominent religions like Buddhism and Christianity were already dominating the area. Apart from that, Islam is seen as a religion exclusively for the Arab people or viewed as a Middle Eastern religion, which for the South Koreans is extraneous to learn about. The second reason is the lack of preachers to help in the da'wah activities since Islam is still new in Busan. In fact, there was almost no preachers available in the area. Moreover, the newly reverted Koreans did not have enough knowledge or opportunities to learn about Islam which limited their competency to become preachers. Even though in the 1980s a Pakistani Muslim *da'i* and preachers from Thailand like Abdul Ghani arrived in Busan, the language barrier became a problem, and this problem hampered the da'wah activities in Busan. The last reason is the lack of accessible written books

²⁰¹ Zubair Lee Dong Ha interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi via Facebook Messenger on 7 April 2016.

on Islam and also the Al-Quran at that time. There were no translation books of Al-Quran into Korean language available.

The progress in the situation of Islam and Muslims in Busan during the 20th century generally was encouraging even though it had a slow start. By 1980, there was an increasing number of South Koreans who came to visit the mosque with several reasons such as to learn about Islam, to secure jobs in the Middle East, and so forth, although the number later subsided by the mid-1980s and into the 1990s following the outbreak of the Iran – Iraq War. Regardless of the different motives, several South Koreans turned out to become devout Muslims like Zubair Lee. The situation gradually improved by the 21st century but the slow progress continues until today.

3.4.2 Islam and Muslims in 21st Century Busan

The booming of the industrial and economic sectors in South Korea at the end of the 20th century had led to the need for more workers, and with the demand getting higher, the need for foreign workers increased tenfold. This was especially so in Busan where the industrial activities were thriving. Moreover, being the country's largest port industry and as the south gate of South Korea, foreign workers from Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Bangladesh, and Indonesia migrated in substantial numbers to Busan. The Busan Mosque started to be flooded with foreigners while the coming of South Koreans showed a decline. As of now, the South Koreans avoided the mosque since there are many foreigners compared to South Koreans attending the mosque, which caused the former to feel alienated. This situation led to the slow progress of da'wah directed towards South Koreans. Notwithstanding this, it was a good development as these foreign Muslims later will be the key players in the development of the Muslim community in Busan. Moreover, they gave financial support to the mosque through

donations when they visit the mosque, especially during Friday Congregational Prayers and paying Zakah during Ramadhan. In addition, since they are already Muslims, they poured their knowledge about Islam to the local Muslims and were involved with da'wah activities.

By October 2000, Imam Yasir Jong Eok Lee became the fifth chairman of the KMF Busan Branch.²⁰² He was also a certified Imam. Under his command, Arkmal from Bangladesh became the head of Da'wah replacing Ismail Poo Hwang who stepped down after 24 years leading the da'wah works.²⁰³ A lot of activities were done under Yasir Lee since the coming of foreign Muslim students to Busan increased the manpower for more activities. For example, opening booths at universities in Busan for the South Koreans to come and learn about Islam, discussions and classes to learn Arabic and Korean languages, Quranic classes and more.²⁰⁴

After 10 years of the Al-Fatah Mosque under Yasir Lee, the leadership was passed to another Korean, Zubair Dong Ha Lee in March 2011. Starting from this point, several *musallas* and Islamic centres began to be set up throughout Busan in order to cater to the need of foreign Muslims who work and reside far from the Al-Fatah Mosque. In 2011, Masjid Babussalam was established by Indonesian workers in Jeonggwan with the help from the KMF Busan Branch. This is the second available mosque/*musalla* in Busan to cater to the increasing number of foreign Muslims.²⁰⁵ During Zubair Lee's period, he introduced the *Geumsaem*²⁰⁶ (GSFC) organisation under

²⁰² Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 5.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Yasir Lee interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 10 July 2018.

²⁰⁵ Zubair Lee Dong Ha interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Gijang cold storage on 20 June 2018.

²⁰⁶ *Geumsaem* means Gold Spring in Korean language. Visit Busan, "*Geumjeongsan* Mountain makes Busan even more beautiful", via Visit Busan website, <https://www.visitbusan.net/en/index.do?menuCd=DOM_000000301001001000&uc_seq=396&lang_cd=en> (accessed 6 October 2023).

the mosque, a friendly organisation to help resolve any problem and as a support to foreign Muslims in Busan.²⁰⁷ The organisation received help from the Korean government like financial support as it is the government's policy to help any non-profit organisation in South Korea. However, there are certain criterion that need to be fulfilled in order to receive government funding and to register the organisation without any problem, such as the organisation must have 100 members, not affiliated with any religions, and actively doing activities.²⁰⁸

In 2012, Zubair Lee secured funds from the Turkish Da'wah Bureau to redecorate the praying hall of the Al-Fatah Mosque. Several new activities were also introduced, for example, Taekwondo class for foreigners organised by the *Geumsaem*, a slideshow and lecture on the history of Islam to the non-Muslims, as well as mosque tours and others. In the same year, another mosque was opened, namely Masjid Al-Kausar Islamic centre in Noksan. The mosque was built using the funds donated by foreign workers from Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Indonesia. By 2014, an Islamic centre in Sasang called Masjid Al-Misbah was set up and was visited mostly by Pakistani and Indonesian workers and nationals.²⁰⁹

In October 2015, Syaikhoni, an Imam from Indonesia began to work as the head of da'wah and the second Imam of the Busan Mosque until now. Zubair Lee was replaced by Professor Salahuddin Sung Soo Kim from Dong-Eui University in September 2016 as the sixth chairman of the KMF Busan Branch. Under his command, he appointed two Korean Muslims, Samina Jin and Abdul Hakim Yeon Gil Joo, as committee members for the da'wah work under the leadership of Syaikhoni. Several activities were successfully carried out by the sixth chairman, for example, joint

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

exhibition with the government to introduce the Muslim community in Busan, halal exhibition at the Jinju International Agriculture and Food Expo, and others.²¹⁰

It has been already more than 40 years since the Muslim community existed in Busan; hence, showing a significant change in terms of the community development, that is from one main community centred at the Busan Mosque at Namsam-dong, it has evolved to five Muslim communities centred in Noksan, Jangrim, Sasang, and Jeonggwan. This is a positive development for Islam and Muslims as the base for doing da'wah has increased. The Muslim community in Busan has mainly foreigners, i.e., from Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Uzbekistan who are primarily workers and students, while those from several other Muslim countries like Malaysia and African countries are mostly students who study in several available universities in Busan such as Busan University, Busan Foreign Studies University, and others.

According to an Indonesian businessman, Junaidi Al-Fais,²¹¹ there are currently 20,000 foreign Muslims living in Busan either as workers, students, or expats. A total of 12,000 out of 20,000 are from Indonesia while the rest are from Uzbekistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and others. In the meantime, South Korean Muslims living in Busan have reached 1,000 although there are only 20 to 30 South Koreans who are devoted to the teachings of Islam while others failed to be traced after their conversion to Islam. This situation happened because some of them just became Muslims in order to work in the Middle East, while some are hoping for easy money as Zakah will be given to those who are newly reverted. There are also South Koreans who became Muslims just to get married to foreign Muslims. Since the mosque did not have enough

²¹⁰ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 5.

²¹¹ Junaidi Al-Fais is a businessman in Busan, and at the same time, a part time Bilal at Al-Falah Busan Mosque. He lived in Busan since 2011. Junaidi Al-Fais interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 13 July 2018.

staff, the process of following up on the status of the newly reverted Muslims cannot be done effectively. Moreover, the newly reverted South Koreans tend not to come back to the mosque to deepen their knowledge of Islam including learning the basic Islamic teachings like the five daily prayers. This situation continues until today as no effective measures are taken by the mosque to solve these problems. The mosque administration hoped that the newly reverted Muslims learn from someone else such as their Muslim spouses or Muslim friends. Hopefully they will return to the mosque and help to develop the Muslim community in Busan.

In terms of Islamic practices among the Muslims in Busan, there exists a melting pot of Madhab since the background of Muslims who came to South Korea are different. There are four major Muslim national groups currently working and studying in Busan, namely Indonesians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, and Uzbeks. Indonesia which is situated in Southeast Asia is dominated by the Syafii Islamic school of thought while Pakistan, Bangladesh and Uzbekistan follow the school of Hanafi. An interview with Zubair Lee²¹² and Syaikhoni²¹³ revealed that the Muslim communities in South Korea prefer not to associate themselves with any of the schools including avoidance in declaring either they are Sunni or Shia. This is to avoid the community from falling into disagreement between them which can lead to dispute and disunity.

Hence, the Muslim community in South Korea, especially in Busan, choose to practise their own Madhab without forcing others to follow their ways to avoid any conflict in the community. If there is any disagreement between them, they will bring it to the KMF, Imam, or the mosque authority for advice and solution. In terms of Sufism,

²¹² Zubair Lee Dong Ha interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Gijang cold storage on 20 June 2018.

²¹³ Syaikhoni Jazuli interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Moroccan restaurant on 27 June 2018.

there is no available community that practises Sufism as the foreign Muslims consist of contract workers and students, while the South Korean Muslims avoid any discussion on sects in Islam, either Salafi, Wahhabi and others. However, there are several Sufi groups who came to South Korea for da'wah works. The Muslim practices in South Korea mostly deal with the basics of Islamic teachings since it is a minority group compared to a few majority Muslim countries whose population can implement Sharia law like *Hudud* (an Islamic penal law).²¹⁴

3.5 CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, Busan has a very long history, and it did not fall short against Seoul. The city has gone through ups and downs since the early prehistoric period, flourished during the era of the Silla dynasty, then later experienced considerable decline during the Goryeo period. However, the city survived throughout the Joseon period until the Japanese occupation era and became an international port. Moreover, Busan became the last defence to the Allied Forces during the Korean War and stood strong against the invasion of North Korea, which later became a crucial momentum for the Allied Forces to push back North Korean troops out of South Korea. The decade of changes from one development to another did not weaken Busan but made it resilient and stronger as proven today where the city has now been declared as a Metropolitan City and has become the country's number one seaport trading area. The rapid post-war development of Busan had brought many Muslim workers to the city. The 1970s marked the beginning of the spread of Islam in Busan as several Muslim communities had been established there by the local South Koreans and foreign Muslims. Four out of five

²¹⁴ Not all majority Muslim countries adopted Sharia Law

communities were established 10 years from the onset of the 21st century. The in-depth discussion on the communities will be done in Chapters Four and Five, which will show the role of institutions and organisations like Korean Muslim Federation (KMF) including several important figures such as Ismail Poo Hwang, Zubair Lee and others who became the factors that made it possible for the creation of the Muslim community in Busan.



CHAPTER FOUR

LOCAL AND FOREIGN MUSLIMS: LIVING AS ONE COMMUNITY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Islam sees good community as crucial since it will lead to the blessing of Allah (S.W.T.). Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) mentioned in his hadith that the Muslims are like one body:

“The parable of the believers in their affection, mercy, and compassion for each other is that of a body. When any limb aches, the whole body reacts with sleeplessness and fever.”²¹⁵

Especially when living in a non-Muslim country, the bond between Muslims must be strong, as unity will determine their survivability. In order to survive, cooperation and support should be a priority which will be the strength to develop the community. Without this aspect, the community will fail to stay alive and develop. That is why, Islam stresses on the unity among Muslims, helping each other despite different races and backgrounds in order to strengthen the Muslim community. Hence, it is appropriate to discuss the relationship between local and foreign Muslims in Busan, to understand the level of cooperation between them, and to give ideas on how to improve and strengthen the Muslim community in Busan. The research investigated the cooperation between them in terms of social and political aspects, culture, education, and others, while the method used to study the cooperation between local and foreign Muslims were through interviews, article journals, and other accessible materials acquired during the research period.

²¹⁵ M. Muhsin Khan, *Sahih Bukhari Volume 8, Book 73 – Good Manners and Form (Al-Adab)*, (2009), 1338-1339. <https://d1.islamhouse.com/data/en/ih_books/single/en_Sahih_Al-Bukhari.pdf> (accessed on 12 December 2018)

4.2 LOCAL AND FOREIGN MUSLIMS: STRIVE FOR UNITY

Islam stressed on unity among its followers, that is all Muslims are required to take care of each other without discrimination as Muslims are like one body worshipping the same God where skin colour and social status do not matter at all in the eyes of God. As stated in the Al-Quran: “O people, We have created you male and female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. Verily, the most noble of you to Allah is the most righteous of you. Verily, Allah is knowing and aware.” (*Qur’an: Al-Hujurat: 13*).

According to Jamal Badawi, there are six fundamental elements of Muslim unity. The first three fundamentals are directly related to the pillars of faith in Islam, namely unity must be based on the belief to the Oneness of God, belief in the prophets, and the third one, belief in what had been revealed, i.e., the Al-Quran.²¹⁶ These three are the symbols of unity which every Muslim must agree upon since they are related to the Aqedah. Failure to believe in these fundamentals would mean that one cannot claim himself to be a Muslim. The fourth fundamental is belief in Muslims as one Ummah, helping each other without discrimination and treating each other like a family. Next, to be a caliph on the earth to spread the religion of God, and lastly, confronting the challenges faced by the community together and bringing compassion to the whole world.²¹⁷

Moreover, in Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.)’s farewell sermon, he addressed the congregation as follows:

“All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor a black has any superiority over white except by piety (taqwa) and good action. Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the

²¹⁶ Islamic Guidance Society, *Leadership & Unity in Islam*, (Nebraska, iUniverse Inc., 2002), 13-15.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

Muslims constitute one brotherhood. Nothing shall be legitimate to a Muslim which belongs to a fellow Muslim unless it was given freely and willingly. Do not, therefore, do injustice to yourselves”.²¹⁸

The message called for Muslims to be fair with each other, making this last sermon an important piece of advice to be adhered to by Muslims in Busan, who consist of people from different races, origins, and backgrounds.

Of the total population of Busan (3.47 million as of 2018),²¹⁹ there are about 21,000 local and foreign Muslims living in the city, of which 20,000 are foreign Muslims from Indonesia, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and other countries, while 1,000 are Korean Muslims. Of the latter group, however, the number who are involved in the community is around 20 people only which is very small.²²⁰ This situation resulted from the non-religious intentions of many South Korean converts whose change of faith was mainly as a tool to get jobs in Muslim countries, especially in the Middle East, or to get married to Muslims, or to be at the receiving end of the money donated by Muslim countries. Additionally, some prefer to stay anonymous after their conversion (practise religion on their own terms as religion in South Korea is a private matter), where most of them, according to both Zubair Lee and Yasir Lee, do not come to the mosque anymore after changing their faith and most reverted women do not wear hijab to avoid any discrimination and backlash from the locals.

With the large number of Muslims living in Busan, there is a need for cooperation between the local and foreign Muslims in order to solve problems and avoid any conflicts. Hence, they help each other in daily life activities such as social,

²¹⁸ Arab News, The Last Sermon of Prophet Muhammad, 11 October 2013, <https://www.arabnews.com/news/467364> (accessed 6 October, 2023).

²¹⁹ BeFM News, Busan's Population Falls Again in 2018, 16 January 2019, <https://www.hapskorea.com/busans-population-falls-again/> (accessed 8 December, 2019).

²²⁰ Junaidi Al-Fais interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 13 July 2018.

education, religion, and others, and in comparison, to non-Muslims in the metropolitan city, they form a small minority; hence, cooperation among themselves is necessary. The cooperation between local and foreign Muslims was scarce during the late 20th century as there were not many foreign Muslims living in Busan. However, the situation changed in the 21st century when the area became flooded with foreign workers from Muslim countries who came to Busan for work. They started to help each other in Islamic education, providing halal sources, and in the establishment of mosques, *musallas* and others.

4.3 SOCIO-CULTURAL CONDITION

Socio-culturally, the Muslim community in Busan is diverse since the members are from different countries and backgrounds. There are Muslims from Southeast Asian countries like Indonesia and Malaysia, the African continent, the Middle East, and Central Asia besides the South Korean Muslims. Hence, it led to a fusion of different cultures, social statues, madhab affiliations, and others. However, the diversity did not divide the members, rather it became the strength of the community to come together as one Ummah. Moreover, it is noteworthy that the Korean Muslims embraced the diversities and some even adopted the culture from other countries as a part of the assimilation process; hence, enabling them to teach each other's culture and learn to be respectful towards others.

In assessing the state and extent of cooperation, first, the researcher investigated the collaboration between Korean Muslims. As South Koreans experienced a lot of disgruntled situations over the past years, such as the Japanese occupation (1910-1945) and the Korean War (1950-1953), the bond between South Koreans is strong, especially when they are constantly under threat from North Korea. Socially, Korean Muslims in

Busan tend to be in communication with each other as they are the minority and depend on help from their fellow Korean Muslims to be able to practise their religion as most of them speak only their mother tongue. Moreover, with only around 20 active Korean Muslims who are directly involved with the Muslim community, they always need to strengthen their bond. Second, the researcher investigated the cooperation amongst foreign Muslims and between local converts and foreign Muslims who have a symbiotic relationship and need each other to survive as Muslims in South Korea, where the community has different socio-cultural backgrounds.

In terms of culture, they still celebrate several festivals related to Korean heritage. As they live in the country that they were born in, it is impossible to abandon their culture, especially for those who still have non-Muslim parents and family. However, they try their best to avoid any activities or celebrations that contradict Islamic teachings, such as ancestry rites or offerings during the *Chuseok*²²¹ festival and Christmas. According to an interview with Zubair Lee,²²² he will go back to his family home during the festival period, especially *Chuseok* since it is a holiday where the gathering of families takes place. However, he said that he did not join activities which contradict Islamic teachings like *Charye*²²³ and *Seongmyo*²²⁴.

The South Korean Muslims also celebrate their traditions together; for example, the celebration of liberation day, visiting each other, doing social activities together like making Kimchi and distributing it to the Muslim community, having a feast at nearby halal restaurants, and helping each other in adapting to the changes in the way of living

²²¹ *Chuseok*, also known as *Hangawi*, is a national festival celebrated in South Korea related to agriculture which centred around the harvest moon festival. Jaemin Roh, *Essential Korean Reader*, (London: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2017), 149.

²²² Zubair Lee Dong Ha interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Gijang cold storage on 15 July 2018.

²²³ *Charye* is a family activity related to an ancestral ritual done in the morning of *Chuseok*. Ibid.

²²⁴ *Seongmyo* is an activity where South Koreans visit their ancestors' grave during *Chuseok* as a way to show appreciation for a good harvest. Ibid.

after reverting to Islam. Although some Korean Muslims have assimilated foreign Muslim cultures, they still maintain their own culture and heritage.

On the other hand, for foreign Muslims, since they come from different backgrounds and work far away from their hometown, they tend to bond and naturally help each other in every matter. They will usually build their own community in the place they reside and work, as it is easier to stay together rather than staying alone; this way, they will be able to preserve their traditional cultures while helping each other thrive in a foreign country.

In Busan, the researcher found that there is quite a big number of Indonesians residing there and most of the mosques and *musallas* are administrated by the Indonesian community. There are foreign workers from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, and other Muslim countries but they are in smaller numbers compared to the Indonesians. Nevertheless, despite their differences, they are able to mingle with each other since they are all Muslims, and help each other either in terms of daily necessities, common activities, and others. Since Muslims are like brothers, that is why it is not difficult for foreign Muslims living in non-Muslim countries like South Korea to be helpful towards each other. So socially, it is the faith as a Muslim that makes it possible for Muslims to come together and create their own community in non-Muslim countries.

Moreover, tolerance is the key to avoid any confrontation because of the differences in culture and also Madhab affiliations since they are from different countries with different cultures. In spite of the different cultures, usually Muslims are happy to learn about other cultures and like mentioned earlier, the religion itself urges

every Muslim to know about one another and to understand and respect each other as stated in the Al-Quran, Surah al-Hujurat verse 13.²²⁵

In terms of social and cultural cooperation between South Koreans and foreign Muslims in South Korea, they usually have social gatherings and meetings in order to strengthen the relationship between them. Several activities are conducted such as playing volleyball, hiking, picnic, and feast gatherings which can tighten the connection between the community members. South Korean Muslims are also invited to join Indonesian gatherings and are exposed to the Indonesian culture. These activities paved the way for the Muslim community in Busan to close the social and cultural gaps between the members of the community, and at the same time, to strengthen the community itself.²²⁶

Resultant from their cooperation socially and culturally, it enabled the Muslim community in Busan to stay stable and develop even more throughout the years. Positively, many South Korean Muslims can mingle with foreign Muslims or the international communities who visit South Korea, especially Busan. Zubair Lee himself can speak Indonesian and Malay, while Imam Yasir Lee and several others can converse in English, resulting from their communication with foreign Muslims who live in Busan. In addition, foreign Muslims are able to learn Hangul, the Korean Language, and can converse with the Korean people without any problem. In terms of culture, they have become accustomed to one another and from there, they developed the feelings of respect and admiration towards each other's culture.

²²⁵ "O people, We have created you male and female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. Verily, the most noble of you to Allah is the most righteous of you. Verily, Allah is knowing and aware." Al-Quran; Surah Al-Hujurat; Verse 13. Islamic Guidance Society, Leadership & Unity in Islam, (Nebraska, iUniverse Inc., 2002), 13-15.

²²⁶ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 6 – 25.

4.4 ORGANISATIONS, SECURITY AND POLITICS

In terms of organisation, security and politics, the cooperation between the local and foreign Muslims are much needed as this is related to their voice being heard and their rights being protected as a minority, especially as a religious minority which tends to be viewed negatively in the current world because of the false claims against Islam. Hence, the need for a strong dependable organisation is a must as the organisation can help Muslims who stumble upon problems either related to personal issues, issues with authorities, or issues pertaining to their work and religious rights. These Muslim organisations can serve as the bridge between the Muslims and non-Muslims in South Korea, the South Korean government, local government, and other organisations like university, school, and others, by acting as a proxy to voice out any issues pertaining to Muslim affairs. Moreover, this also includes situations related to security, immigration and working conditions. These organisations can address the issues of concern among Muslims especially foreign Muslims for any unfair or bias treatment that they receive leading to hopefully agreeable solutions for the parties involved.

To date, several organisations have been established by Korean Muslims in order to help them in matters related to their lives after becoming Muslims in South Korea. For example, the establishment of the Korean Muslim Federation (KMF) in 1967.²²⁷ The Korean Muslim Federation (KMF) became the main Muslim organisation in South Korea recognised by the government that received funds from the South Korean government as well as other Muslim countries.²²⁸ The organisation started to spread Islam and help the newly reverted Muslims. Since the Korean Muslims are minorities, they started to come together under KMF and do activities together; for

²²⁷ Sohn Joo Young, "Organisations and...", 1-2.

²²⁸ Ibid, 1-5.

example, they organised a camp for Muslim children during the summer holiday at the mosque, taught them how to perform prayers, and also organised a fast camp during the month of Ramadhan to preserve their faith during the holy month, where they camped at the mosque for a month.²²⁹

Politically speaking, the South Korean Muslims prefer not to engage in any political activities except for casting a vote,²³⁰ and they took this stand because their number is not that significant to have an impact in politics and they only fulfil their role as South Koreans by casting a vote during elections.²³¹ Although they are not involved with political parties, they still receive visits from representatives of political parties like the Busan Agriculture committee from The Green Party Korea²³² who visited the Al-Fatah Mosque to discuss agricultural issues especially pertaining to halal produces and also to learn more about Islam and the Muslim community in Busan.²³³ Such visits give opportunities for Korean Muslims to show the good side of Islam to the political parties in Busan.

In order to safeguard the South Korean Muslim community in Busan, South Korean Muslims established a connection with the local police, especially the counter terrorist unit in Busan. For example, there was an incident where an Uzbekistan worker was ranting about doing harmful acts because of his support towards the Islamic State

²²⁹ Ibid, 6.

²³⁰ Since there are around only 45,000 South Korean Muslims throughout South Korea and in Busan there are only 1,000 registered Muslims with less than 100 of them actively involved with the Muslim community, it is not possible for them to engage directly in politics, either to establish a political party or join as Muslim candidates in any of the established political parties in South Korea. Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin Mohd Ghazi, *Islam in South Korea...*, 56-57.

²³¹ Zubair Lee Dong Ha interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Gijang cold storage on 15 July 2018.

²³² The Green Party Korea was founded in 2012 focusing on environmentalist ideas after the devastation of the Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011. They also bring forth issues pertaining to climate change, nuclear power, and feminism. Kim Juon, "Peace, Politics and Green Possibilities in South Korea", *Green European Journal*, 24 September 2018, < <https://www.greeneuropeanjournal.eu/peace-politics-and-green-possibilities-in-south-korea/>> (accessed 8 December, 2019).

²³³ Kim Sung Soo, *Review...*, 9.

(ISIS),²³⁴ which posed a red flag for the Korean authorities. With the help from local Muslims, the man was apprehended and deported back to Uzbekistan.²³⁵ This collaboration between local Muslims and police can help avoid any extreme views being manifested into action, which can possibly tarnish the image of Islam and Muslims even more, especially in a country where Islam is viewed in a negative light by the people.

While South Korean Muslims are dependent on the KMF, foreign Muslims, on the other hand, have their own organisations that can support them in times of need. However, the researcher found that most of these organisations are established by Indonesians, such as PUMITA²³⁶ and Salam Nuri²³⁷, with both having branches in Busan, while organisations like the Busan Muslim Student Association (BMSA)²³⁸ was established to gather Muslim students from Busan universities. These organisations organise activities such as gathering the foreign Muslims together for iftar (breaking fast), conducting religious classes, and at the same time doing activities like hiking, travelling, halal food festival and others.²³⁹ These organisations are also occasionally involved with the local mosque or *musalla* administrated by foreign workers, such as the mosque in Jangrim, Sasang and others, where members of these organisations

²³⁴ Zubair Lee Dong Ha interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Gijang cold storage on 15 July 2018.

²³⁵ Ibid

²³⁶ Persaudaraan Umat Muslim Indonesia Al-Fatah (PUMITA) is an Indonesia organisation in Busan, South Korea. It is a branch from Ikatan Keluarga Muslim Indonesia (IKMI) which resides in Seoul. Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi, (2016). *Islam in South Korea...*, 79.

²³⁷ Salam Nuri is an active organisation in South Korea which holds monthly programmes to clear misconceptions about Islam to the South Koreans. They also conduct Arabic and Quranic classes to the masses who are interested to learn the language. Salam Nuri, "About Us", (n.d.), <https://www.salamnuri.org/?page_id=1371> (accessed 1 December, 2019).

²³⁸ BMSA is the short form for Busan Muslim Student Association located in Busan, South Korea, which aims to help Muslim students from all over the world who come to study in Busan by providing information about South Korea, especially regarding their university in Busan. Interview with Muhammad, ex-president of Busan Muslim Student Association via Kakao Talk. Muhammad Saif interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi via Kakao Talk on 28 July 2018.

²³⁹ Kim Sung Soo, *Review...*, 11-12.

become the mosque and *musalla*'s representatives which rotate every few years. Since they are foreign workers and students, some may encounter problems with the immigration for their visa and unfair treatment from employers. These organisations try their best to give advice and suggestions for the workers or students to solve their problem.²⁴⁰

The foreign Muslims, as the Korean Muslims, are very much concerned in safeguarding their community in Busan. According to Istantor, the manager for Al-Kausar Mosque, the mosque has good contact with the authorities like the police force where they co-organise programmes with the nearest police station; for example, a talk by the police about the neighbourhood and safety measures if anything happens around the mosque. At the same time, the police are also in contact with the Muslim community in their area in order to avoid any conflict with the locals as Muslims are perceived as a threat by some South Koreans, and to avoid any extremism on the part of Muslims in the neighbourhood, as what happened with the Uzbek nationalist who spouted his support towards ISIS. Moreover, local and foreign Muslims are quite supportive of each other in solving problems related to immigration and visa status, such as the case of Zubair Lee who always goes to the South Korean immigration agency if there is any problem between the immigration agency and foreign workers. They try to solve any problem together with the help from the embassy and usually in matters related to visa and passport.²⁴¹

Korean Muslim Federation Busan Branch (KMF), Persaudaraan Umat Muslim Indonesia Al-Fatah (PUMITA), Busan Muslim Student Association (BMSU) and other

²⁴⁰ Muhammad Saif interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi via Kakao Talk on 28 July 2018.

²⁴¹ Zubair Lee Dong Ha interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Gijang port on 2 July 2018.

Muslim organisations often do activities together, which are mostly located at Al-Fatah Busan Mosque. Their activities consist of religious class, feast gatherings, Al-Quran recitation competition, and others.²⁴² They also come together to solve bigger problems that can affect the Muslim community in Busan, such as issues pertaining to the misconceptions towards Islam, like when one of the Korean broadcasting stations called MBC²⁴³ aired a Korean drama about Muslim Arabic culture. In the drama called ‘Man Who Dies to Live’, sexy women in hijab were portrayed, drawing harsh criticism from international Muslim viewers including Muslims in South Korea. Further to that, these organisations held a protest after Friday Congregational Prayer to call out MBC about the inappropriate portrayal of Muslim women which caused the broadcasting station to eventually cut the scene from the drama.²⁴⁴

There is also an international organisation, namely the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY),²⁴⁵ which organised a retreat and programme for Muslim youth and the Busan Muslim community. Muslim parents sent their young children to join the programme where they can strengthen their foundation in Islam, meet with Muslim youth from all around the world, and get motivated to contribute to the betterment of the community. The organisation will usually conduct religious lectures, team building, and da’wah seminars to prepare the young generation to be good leaders of the future.²⁴⁶

Organisations play an important role in a minority community as it can become a helpline for the Muslim community in Busan to voice out their issues to someone who

²⁴² Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 27.

²⁴³ Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) is one of the main public broadcasting stations in South Korea.

²⁴⁴ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 47

²⁴⁵ World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY) was established by Kamal Helbawi in 1972 under the Muslim brotherhood organisation. Sohn Joo Young, “Organisations and..., 6.

²⁴⁶ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 8

understands their needs and problems, especially for foreign Muslims as they live far away from their own country and are exposed to harassment, exploitation, unfair treatment, and many other problems. To ensure the safety and security of Muslims, either local or foreign, these organisations need to be administrated by people who envision changes and greatness for the community to thrive even more in the future. This will become the catalyst for the next generation to serve the Ummah better, and hopefully they will be able to join political organisations to be the Muslim voice at the government level.

4.5 EDUCATION

South Korea is one of the most literate countries in the world, with almost 100 percent of the population able to read and write. Hence, it is not a problem for South Korean Muslims to have access to the education system in the country, and although the system follows Western education,²⁴⁷ for worldly knowledge, they are well-equipped because since childhood they are compelled to seek education due to the high regard rendered by South Korean society to people with knowledge.²⁴⁸ Education is essential in building a better community, especially in equipping Muslims with Islamic knowledge, as the challenges of living in a non-Muslim country is greater; hence, education for Muslims especially the younger generation is a must. The community must invest in education in order for its members to develop and sustain themselves in various fields such as economy, social aspects, and religion itself.

In order to enhance the understanding of the Muslim community about Islam, South Korean Muslims had come together especially under organisations like KMF to

²⁴⁷ Hee Soo Lee, *the Advent...*, 223.

²⁴⁸ Amanda Ripley, "Teacher, leave Those Kids Alone," *Time*, 25 September, 2011, via [Time < http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2094427-2,00.html >](http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2094427-2,00.html) (accessed 6 June, 2018)

help each other in increasing their knowledge on the religion. They also received help from foreign Muslims in Korea whose unceasing assistance since the early days of Islam in the country is highly appreciated by South Korean Muslims. In the early years of Islam in Busan, at first, the local Muslims did not have any Muslim scholars to refer to, leading to the practice of Islam being very much neglected.²⁴⁹ Yet, with the help of a handful of foreign Muslims, they began to learn about Islam from the basics, the do's and don'ts, and others, which helped deepen their understanding of the religion and allowed them to correct their practices.

Several South Korean Muslims like Zubair Lee and Yasir Lee gained the opportunity to learn about Islam deeper as they began their Islamic study in Muslim countries or places where great Muslim scholars were found. For example, Zubair Lee went to Southern Thailand where the majority of Muslims in Thailand live as he followed his teacher, Abdul Ghani, back to the country where he spent some years learning about Islam.²⁵⁰ Meanwhile, Yasir Lee was invited to countries like Turkey, Malaysia, and others to learn more about Islam.²⁵¹ Consequently, their knowledge on Islam increased, which led them to become the main figures in the Muslim community in Busan. Among these figures, there is also Ismail Poo Hwang who along with Zubair Lee and Yasir Lee started to teach Islam to the newly reverted Muslims, and they also provided Arabic and Islamic classes to them by inviting Muslim scholars from other Muslim countries to Busan like Abdul Ghani.

²⁴⁹ Ismail Poo Hwang interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 29 June 2018.

²⁵⁰ Zubair Lee Dong Ha interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi via Facebook Messenger on 7 April 2016.

²⁵¹ Yasir Lee interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 10 July 2018.

In terms of foreign Muslims in South Korea, having to live in a foreign country, educating each other on the do's and don'ts of the country is a must to avoid any unwanted misconceptions between the local and foreign communities. Hence, it is very important for foreign Muslims to learn Hangul in order to be able to converse with the locals smoothly. For this purpose, they help one another in learning the Korean language so that they can understand each other, resulting in the locals being more welcoming to the foreign Muslims living in South Korea. Apart from that, the foreign Muslims also organised Korean language classes by inviting either native speakers or foreign Muslims who are fluent in the language to learn the language faster. Usually, most of the foreign Muslims who come to South Korea will be educated by their consulate on living in South Korea as they want to avoid any problems caused by their workers and students abroad that can tarnish their country's name. Knowledge is, therefore, a must in coping with living in a foreign country, especially for the newly arrived foreign Muslims who did not have much knowledge about living in South Korea, particularly for those who did not speak Hangul (language barrier).²⁵²

Aside from language classes, they also joined Islamic lecturers at the mosque or *musalla*, either during the night or weekend. Every mosque and *musalla* will invite an Imam or Islamic preachers to the place of worship and deliver their lectures on Islam. Besides, they also have Quranic classes for those who want to improve their recitation of Al-Quran.²⁵³ Having these classes is a blessing to the foreign Muslims, as it is quite difficult to learn the knowledge elsewhere since South Korea is not a Muslim country where they can learn Islamic knowledge organised by either the government or private

²⁵² Muhammad Saif interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi via Kakao Talk on 28 July 2018.

²⁵³ Istantor interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Kausar Mosque on 27 July 2018. Istantor is the manager of Al-Kausar Mosque.

organisations as in Muslim countries, through schools, universities, Pondok,²⁵⁴ media, and others.²⁵⁵

Cooperation between local and foreign Muslims in education is quite strong as they depend on each other to survive as Muslims in a non-Muslim country.²⁵⁶ All Muslim settlements in Busan, at a varying degree, are populated by Indonesian people who are quite helpful in organising educational activities including classes for those who want to learn the Indonesian language. According to an interview with Samina Jin,²⁵⁷ twice a month, she and the Indonesian women will have a women's gathering at the Al-Fatah Mosque, where she teaches newly reverted Muslimah about Islam, and at the same time, organise a social gathering to strengthen the bond among the Muslims in Busan.²⁵⁸

Apart from the Indonesian community, Saudi Arabia is also actively involved with the education development in South Korea. To further develop the education programme in Busan, in March 2017, a visit by the Saudi Arabia missionary bureau took place. Its representative, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ghamidi, had a discussion with Salahuddin Kim, the president of the KMF Busan branch on opening an Islamic academy for the Muslim community in Busan, and by 19 March 2017, they agreed to open an Islamic-Arabic academy at the Al-Fatah Mosque with the aim to teach Arabic and as a centre for da'wah activities.²⁵⁹ This collaboration with a Muslim country is

²⁵⁴ Pondok is a religious school normally found in Malaysia and Indonesia.

²⁵⁵ Malaysia also has a religious agency under the federal government like Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM) who overlooks the implementation of Islamic activities in Malaysia and administrator of Islamic affairs. JAKIM, "Sejarah JAKIM", via JAKIM website, < <https://www.islam.gov.my/ms/info-korporat/profil-jakim/sejarah> > (accessed 6 October 2023).

²⁵⁶ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 7.

²⁵⁷ Samina Jin interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 10 July 2018.

²⁵⁸ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 10.

²⁵⁹ Ibid, 14-15.

quite important as they will receive donations to improve the education of Muslims in Busan and it will pave more cooperation in the future.

Education plays an important role in shaping the next generation of Muslims. It is also important to strengthen the Muslim faith and their foundation in practising Islam. Since they are living in a non-Muslim country like South Korea, the Muslims especially the young generation need to be fortified with knowledge and have unshaken faith, particularly in view of the ongoing Korean pop culture which can sway the young generation towards un-Islamic practices.²⁶⁰ Furthermore, it is quite hard for the young Muslim generation to survive in a very competitive country if they are left uneducated; they will not be able to contribute to the betterment of the Muslim community if they are lacking in knowledge, either in Islam or worldly knowledge.

4.6 ECONOMY

In terms of economy, this sector needs strong cooperation between local and foreign Muslims as the community needs funding to be able to survive in a non-Muslim country. They need to support each other's businesses, not only for their economic survival but also for convenience, particularly in producing and selling halal products as these products are not easily found in South Korea. Moreover, the Muslim community needs to improve their economic status as they need to be able to pay the monthly expenses for the mosques, *musallas*, and Islamic centres. There are several individuals in Busan, local and foreign Muslims, who are directly involved with business, especially halal products, food, restaurants, and tourism. Hence, an interview was conducted between the researcher, Zubair Lee and Sulayman, the owner of Cappadocia Turkish Kebab to

²⁶⁰ Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin Mohd Ghazi, *Islam in South Korea...*, 64-65.

investigate the economic relationship between South Korean Muslims and how it helps in providing halal food for the Muslim community and tourists.

One of the main reasons why some Korean Muslims began to work in the abovementioned industries is because, following their conversion, normally South Korean Muslims feel awkward towards fellow South Koreans as they start to pray, fast during Ramadhan, and do not join company parties after work, known as *hoesik*,²⁶¹ which often involve haram activities such as drinking alcohol and eating pork. As a result, they would rather be left alone, and this is natural since their faith during this time is quite shaky. Some even quit their job since they were treated differently by fellow employees as they were unable to do several things that are expected from them after accepting Islam. Since the South Korean society heavily depends on social gatherings such as parties after work and drinking during meetings with clients, it is quite hard for South Korean Muslims to mingle with their colleagues; hence, making them feel isolated.²⁶² In order to avoid isolation, many quit their jobs and started to work together within the Muslim community only. For example, Muhammad Kim and Zubair Lee who focused on providing halal products to the Muslim community.²⁶³

Nowadays, with the growth of the South Korean popular culture, Muslims all around the world have started to get attracted to the culture of Korea, especially related to food. Hence, the KMF Halal Committee has currently started to handle halal certification for Korean food exported and distributed to Muslim countries. They also received recognition from halal committees or organisations such as JAKIM in

²⁶¹ *Hoesik* means staff dining or company dining after work. Cakar Ulas & Kim Hae Eun, "Korea's Drinking Culture: When an Organizational Socialization Tool Threatens Workplace Well-being", *Turkish Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 8, no. 2 (2015): 290.

²⁶² *Ibid*, 300.

²⁶³ Muhammad Kim interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Gijang cold storage on 6 August 2018.

Malaysia, THIDA in Taiwan, and BPJPH in Indonesia.²⁶⁴ This situation led to local and foreign businesses, either Muslim or non-Muslim, to apply for certification as they tried to appeal to customers from Muslim countries to come to their eateries and restaurants. Restaurants beside the Al-Fatah Mosque like Cappadocia Turkish Kebab House and Morocco Casablanca Restaurant are usually filled with locals, foreign workers, students, and tourists as both restaurants are handled by Muslim owners. Since Zubair Lee and Muhammad Kim ventured into halal produces, they are the ones who imported halal meat and chicken either from Australia or Thailand. They also rented a cold storage at Gijang-Gun to store all the products they had imported. At the same time, they import halal snacks such as instant noodles and chocolates from Indonesia.²⁶⁵

According to the Cappadocia owner, Sulayman, years ago, the Muslim community had rented a slaughtering area to provide halal beef and chicken to the Muslim community in Busan. However, the operational cost was quite high, as they needed to pay the rent and hire more than one person for the slaughtering process (especially one who has certification to slaughter chickens and cows), and there was only minimal demand, thus, they were forced to stop producing halal products.²⁶⁶ He added that Zubair Lee usually helps business places if they are unable to pay a lump sum for the products that they purchased from him by giving a longer time for the business to pay back. However, Zubair Lee said that it is also quite difficult for him if these owners do not pay in time for their purchases, as he needs to use the money to pay or buy products from other countries and to pay the cold storage rent and utility bills.

²⁶⁴ Korea Muslims Federation Halal Committee, "About Us", via Korea Muslims Federation Halal Committee website, <<http://kmfhalal.org/en/about>> (accessed 8 November 2018).

²⁶⁵ The author visits the cold storage at Gijang-Gun on 1st August 2018. Several halal certificates from Australia, Thailand, Malaysia and KMF were investigated during the visit.

²⁶⁶ Sulayman interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Gijang cold storage on 3 August 2018.

Since he understands the struggle, he will usually persevere as they will eventually pay back.

Having halal supplies from Zubair Lee, foreign Muslims can take a deep breath as they are able to acquire halal products much easier compared to 10 years ago. Zubair Lee and Muhammad Kim will deliver the products to the Muslim community throughout Busan when requested. Hence, some mosques and Islamic centres have built a small shop in their place to store and sell the products to the Muslim community at areas such as Noksan, Jangrim, and Sasang.²⁶⁷ The income from this small business can help in reducing the cost needed to pay for the expenses on utility bills such as electric and water bills of the mosques and Islamic centres in Busan. For foreign workers, since they generally come from countries whose value of currency is less than South Korea, the payment they receive monthly from their employers is quite substantial. According to Istantor, most of the employees receive around 2.5 million won²⁶⁸ monthly, which is enough for them to live in Busan while sending some money back to their hometown and donating some to the mosques and Islamic centres.²⁶⁹ Some Indonesian women in South Korea had set up a small eatery selling Indonesian foods to Muslims around the mosques' vicinity.²⁷⁰ They also buy halal products from Zubair Lee or buy it from the shops at the mosque or Islamic centre. This shows how the local and foreign Muslims cooperate with each other to fulfil their daily needs.

It is worthy to mention here that economic investment is a must for minority Muslims as they need a source of income to stay afloat in their daily lives and to

²⁶⁷ Istantor interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Kausar Mosque on 27 July 2018.

²⁶⁸ 2.5 million won equals to almost 9,000 in Malaysian Ringgit.

²⁶⁹ Istantor interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Kausar Mosque on 27 July 2018.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

maintain the community expenses. Hence, the Muslims, either local or foreign, should support and cooperate with each other to ensure that the Muslim community can stand strong. They also need to plan for future economic development to cater to the growing number of Muslims, either local or foreign, in Busan. For example, instead of renting a slaughterhouse, they can try building it from scratch by first purchasing a land through donations or financial support from other Muslim countries. By doing so, they can produce their own halal products. Moreover, since South Korea is now regarded as one of the countries that many Muslims want to visit because of its popular culture,²⁷¹ they also need to venture into halal tourism by providing Muslim-friendly homestays, foods, tours, etc., which will be a good start. In the long run, they will be able to generate income from these activities. The Muslim community should take this opportunity to get involved in the industry since the South Korean government currently is also very interested to invest in this sector, as proven in the implementation of a halal tourism policy with the launch of a book on halal restaurants, hotels, markets, cosmetics, and public facilities to cater to the growing Muslim tourism, especially in Seoul, Daegu, Jeju, Busan, and others by the Korea Tourism Organisation (KTO).²⁷² Hopefully, the Muslim community in Busan can strive for the betterment in economy; hence, relieving themselves from being dependent on donations from Muslim organisations or countries.

²⁷¹ Yonhap News, “Over 1 million Muslim tourists to visit S. Korea this year,” *Yonhap News Agency*, 15 September 2019, via Yonhap News Agency, <<https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20190915000700320>> (accessed 3 January, 2020).

²⁷² Ajeng Puspa Marlinda, Bambang Cipto, Faris Al-Fadat, Hasse Jubba, “South Korea’s Halal Tourism Policy – The Primacy of Demographic Changes and Regional Diplomacy”, *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* vol. 10, no. 3 (2021): 257. <<https://www.richtmann.org/journal/index.php/ajis/article/view/12467/12067>> (accessed 14 August, 2021).

4.7 RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AND DA'WAH ACTIVITIES

Religious practices for the minority are a hard thing to do, especially for the newly reverted Muslims who need much guidance and help in order to survive in a non-Muslim country. That is why there is a need for the establishment of a community as it will bring a lot of people together, helping and caring for one another. In the case of Busan, with the early community established around the Al-Fatah Mosque, it brings together South Korean Muslims and Muslim workers and immigrants from countries like Uzbekistan and Pakistan; hence, enabling them to teach and learn from each other. From this situation, the religious practices began to be practised correctly by the local Muslims and it marked the beginning of da'wah activities as the Muslims in Busan were now able to learn and deepen their knowledge in Islam and its practices.²⁷³ Da'wah activities in Busan has gone through ups and downs; during the 20th century, da'wah was slow due to, among others, the small number of Muslims and lack of Muslim *da'i* coming from Muslim countries to Busan. However, the situation started to change for the better in the 21st century as Busan started to garner the attention of workers and students from Muslim countries who went to Busan to either work or study. As more and more foreign Muslims resided in Busan, they frequently visited the mosque for religious practices such as Friday Congregational Prayer and to pay Zakah. Hence, some of these workers and students began to get involved with da'wah activities at the Al-Fatah Mosque compound; for example, Syaikhoni who came to Busan to study Korean Language, then later became an Iman and *da'i* at the Al-Fatah Mosque.²⁷⁴

²⁷³ Ismail Poo Hwang interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 29 June 2018.

²⁷⁴ Syaikhoni Jazuli interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Moroccan restaurant on 27 June 2018.

The cooperation between Korean Muslims in Busan on Islamic practices and da'wah activities can be seen especially at the Al-Fatah Mosque where they spend most of their time learning about Islam and planning for religious activities. The South Korean Muslims help each other in correcting their prayers and recitation during prayer, and at the same time, they will do recitation of the Al-Quran before prayers. During Ramadhan, some Korean Muslims take a one-month leave from work to focus on fasting which is quite hard to do when working in a non-fasting environment. It is also to enable them to be close to the Muslim community during the fasting season. As Islam prohibits the consumption of alcohol and pork, those who work at companies will need to be vigilant towards what they eat and drink at the company, and at times they will bring they own food to work.²⁷⁵ In doing da'wah activities, South Korean Muslims under the KMF Busan branch with the support from the main branch in Seoul, produce pamphlets that are then made accessible at the mosque, so that any South Korean who wants to learn about Islam can read them. There are several pamphlets available at the mosque entrance, such as 'What is Islam?', 'What are the 5 pillars of Islam?', and 'Hijab',²⁷⁶ which cover very basic topics for those who want to know more about the religion.

For foreign Muslims, since they live in a non-Muslim country and the people have none to too little knowledge about Islam, it makes the practice of Islam a bit challenging. However, with support from each other, they can practise Islam without much problem. When the researcher asked Istantor about their employer's reaction

²⁷⁵ Musa Han Lee interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at MetLife Insurance Office on 11 July 2018.

²⁷⁶ These pamphlets have 12 issues which address the basic Islamic teachings and the questions often raised by non-Muslims. The pamphlets consist of the following titles: 1. Islam, 2. Allah, 3. Prophet Muhammad, 4. Quran, 5. Misunderstandings and truths, 6. Hijab, 7. Pork and alcohol, 8. Purpose of life, 9. Jesus, 10. Hereafter - life after death, 11. Female oppression, and 12. Five pillars of Islam. See Appendix C.

towards Muslim workers' religious practices, he mentioned that most of the employers try to understand and be tolerant towards the workers; for instance, allowing them to perform the five times obligatory prayers as long as they are able to finish their work on time. In view of this situation and such attitude on the part of the employers, he added that Muslim workers should, therefore, consistently show a good attitude by doing their work and at the same time practise their religious duties.

Since the foreign Muslims have a strong bond between them, they are able to build a mosque using their own financial resources. For example, the Al-Kausar Mosque was built with donations from Indonesian workers, and upon its completion, permits foreign Muslims to fulfil their religious practices comfortably. In terms of da'wah activities, foreign Muslims, especially students who study at several universities in Busan, are also active in conducting exhibitions, halal food festivals²⁷⁷ and others to introduce Islam and Muslims to the South Koreans.²⁷⁸

Apart from the cooperation amongst local Muslims to enhance their knowledge and Islamic practices, the same effort or engagement can also be witnessed between local and foreign Muslims in Busan, beginning in the late 20th century when Ismail Poo Hwang who was the first Muslim of Busan received help from Pakistani refugees who arrived in Busan for work.²⁷⁹ The Pakistanis taught them how to perform salah, fast during Ramadhan, and elaborated on halal and haram in Islam, as during that time, Ismail said that they even ate pork in the mosque because they did not know that it is prohibited in Islam. Coming out of this cooperation, the early generation of Muslims in Busan were able to practice Islam correctly, seeking God's blessing in leading their

²⁷⁷ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 11-12.

²⁷⁸ Muhammad Saif interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi via Kakao Talk on 28 July 2018.

²⁷⁹ Ismail Poo Hwang interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 29 June 2018.

daily lives. Later, they became the guide for newly reverted Muslims in Busan up until now. Moreover, they also learnt how to do da'wah with the help from foreign Muslims like Abdul Ghani, a *da'i* from Thailand who scouted Zubair Lee as an apprentice for da'wah activities. The cooperation between the local and foreign Muslims in Busan currently is good as they are able to go out together to do da'wah either at universities or at the mosque compound. Several activities were done together like open mosque day for locals to come and visit the mosque and distribute pamphlets about Islam. They also organised an exhibition on halal products to give the South Koreans correct information about halal.²⁸⁰

Cooperation between local and foreign Muslims also manifested in pilgrimages to Makkah with tour agencies like 'Air 1 Travel'²⁸¹ and 'Golden Bridge Korea'²⁸² that are involved in obtaining visas from Saudi Arabia and guiding or assisting the participants of Hajj and Umrah from beginning until the end of their trip. Since not many South Koreans are Muslims, the quota²⁸³ allocated by the Saudi government is normally given to foreign Muslims living in South Korea, and this, according to Junaidi Al-Fais, is indeed a great opportunity for foreign Muslims as they need not wait for a very long time for their turn to go for hajj. Many Pakistanis, Uzbeks, and Indonesians

²⁸⁰ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 11, 33, 71-73.

²⁸¹ Owned by Reda Kenawy that provides services for Hajj and Umrah for Muslims in non-Muslim countries like Japan, South Korea and Hong Kong. Air 1 Travel, "About Us", via Air 1 Travel website, <<https://www.air1travel.com/about-us/>> (accessed 22 June 2020).

²⁸² There is not much information about Golden Bridge Korea; however, it is believed to be a sub-company under the Golden Bridge Co., Ltd. located in South Korea. They actively recruited Indonesians to perform their Hajj under the South Korean quota. The company information is only accessible via Facebook. Golden Bridge Korea, "Home", via Golden Bridge Korea Facebook, <<https://www.facebook.com/Golden-Bridge-Korea-Hajj-Umrah-1718911005017867/>> (accessed 22 June 2020).

²⁸³ In 2016, a quota of 450 was given by Saudi Arabia to South Korea, in which both companies 'Air 1 Travel' and 'Golden Bridge Korea' received a quota of 150 per company. Ministry of Hajj and Umrah, "South East Asian Pilgrims for the year 1437 AH", via Ministry of Hajj and Umrah website, <<https://www.haj.gov.sa/en/InternalPageCategories/Details/31>> (accessed 22 June 2020).

took this opportunity to complete the fifth pillar of Islam while they were living in South Korea.²⁸⁴

4.8 CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, living in South Korea as a Muslim is quite a challenge for local and foreign Muslims; however, as the practice of Islam is not something that can be neglected, they are able to cooperate with each other to make it easier for Muslims to be able to perform their religious duties. As a result, they are able to build mosques and Islamic centres throughout Busan, provide halal foods and create a community where Muslims can practise their religion comfortably. Nonetheless, da'wah work in South Korea has gone through ups and downs as several issues hampered the activities. The situation in Busan is not much different as most of what happened in Seoul usually also happened in Busan. As mentioned before about the role played by KMF, the organisation as the main Muslim organisation in South Korea is also involved significantly in Islamic da'wah. However, they do not engage vehemently with the public in spreading Islam as most Koreans hate to be approached on the street by strangers, especially as there are a lot of scams and occult organisations that keep approaching people on the street. The organisation organises several activities which are in a more peaceful manner and accepted by South Koreans; for example, organise a mosque open day for the non-Muslims to come to the mosque and learn about Islam. In terms of foreign Muslims, they prefer not to spread Islam in South Korea nonchalantly as this action will upset the Koreans. Most of them are involved in da'wah activities by following the Korean Muslims and also involved in the activities organised by the KMF, mosques, or other Muslim organisations. As a result, both Korean and foreign Muslims

²⁸⁴ Junaidi Al-Fais interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 13 July 2018.

started cooperating among themselves in da'wah activities and shared ideas and knowledge on how to spread Islam in South Korea.

Living as one community in Busan, South Korea is quite challenging, and without cooperation between the local and foreign Muslims, the community will no doubt experience great difficulties to survive. The importance of cooperation between Muslims has been discussed in length in Islam and it is cooperation in every aspect of life. The Muslims in Busan have done a great job in building the community, as exemplified in the mushrooming of *musallas*, mosques, and Islamic centres. Moreover, they are able to run businesses especially in providing halal products and foods and help each other in the establishment and development of organisations like KMF, PUMITA Busan, *Geumsaem* and others. Hopefully in the future, the cooperation will get stronger, and the unity can one day end-the misconception towards Islam and Muslims in South Korea, while at the same time, Busan can become a model city in South Korea for Islamic propagation and peaceful co-existence between the population of Muslims and local non-Muslims.

CHAPTER FIVE

PROMINENT MUSLIM FIGURES, ORGANISATIONS, AND ISLAMIC INSTITUTIONS IN BUSAN

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the building of a community, leaders, people, and organisations are needed to ensure the community survives. The leaders will lead the people while the organisations will help in the daily affairs including protecting the people. With regards to a Muslim community, all the three bodies are actively fulfilling their role in Busan as Muslims do not have strong political and economic power due to being a minority group, which causes them to depend on each other. Hence, it is important to discuss the prominent figures and organisations in Busan in order to understand their contribution and role in building the community from early on until now. Several notable and current leaders like Ismail Poo Hwang, Zubair Lee Dong Ha, and Syaikhoni Jazuli who are actively involved in the community will be critically discussed, including organisations like the Korean Muslim Federation of Busan branch (KMF), Busan Muslim Student Association (BMSA), Persaudaraan Umat Muslim Indonesia Al-Fatah (PUMITA) and *Geumsaem* Foreign Centre (GSFC). Moreover, in this chapter, several important mosques and Islamic centres in Busan will also be covered by highlighting their instrumental role as the centre for the community to gather and become the symbol of unity for the Muslim community living in Busan, where the location, history and activities of the institutions will be thoroughly examined.

5.2 THE NEED FOR LEADERS IN ISLAM

Islam values the existence of leaders in the society, as shown in the person of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) as a well-rounded leader who became an example to all Muslims. In Surah Al-Ahzab chapter no. 33, verse no. 22, Allah (S.W.T.) says:

“Verily you have in the Prophet of Allah an excellent model, for him who fears Allah and the Last Day and who remembers Allah much.”²⁸⁵

It can be deduced from the verse that Muslims must follow Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) in every aspect of life including the way of leadership. From an Islamic perspective, leadership can be defined as an act by a person who has been given a role as a representative to govern the world on behalf of Allah (S.W.T.) without self-interests except to gain blessings from Him.²⁸⁶ Furthermore, Abdul Rashid Moten described leadership in Islam as “A moral activity and a process of communication between equals directed towards the achievement of a goal. The leaders are primarily distinguished from the followers by their knowledge, their commitment to the Islamic principles and

²⁸⁵ According to Al-Maududi, “In view of the context in which this verse occurs, the object of presenting the Prophet’s (peace be upon him) conduct and way of life as a model was to teach a lesson to the people, who had been motivated by considerations of selfish interests and personal safety on the occasion of the battle of the Trench. They are being addressed, as if to say: “You claimed to be the believers and Muslims and followers of the Messenger (peace be upon him). You should have seen how the Messenger (peace be upon him), whose followers you claimed to be, conducted himself on the occasion. If the leader of a group is himself a seeker of personal security, is lazy and indolent, gives preference to personal interests to everything else, and is ever ready to flee danger, it would be reasonable to expect manifestation of such weakness from his followers. But here the case was different. The Prophet (peace be upon him) endured along with others every toil and labor that he asked others to endure and endured more than others; there was no trouble which others might have experienced and he himself did. not. He was among those who dug the trench, and endured hunger and other afflictions just as the common Muslims did. He did not leave the battlefield even for a moment during the siege nor retreated an inch. After the betrayal of the Bani Quraizah his own family had also been exposed to danger even as the families of the other Muslims were. He did not make any special arrangement for his own and his family’s protection, which did not exist for others. He was always in the forefront to offer maximum sacrifices for the great objectives for which he was constantly asking others to make sacrifices. Therefore, whoever made a claim of being his follower should have followed the practical example set by the leader.” My Islam, Surah Al-Ahzab Ayat 21 (33:21 Quran) with Tafsir, (n.d.), via My Islam website <https://myislam.org/surah-ahzab/ayat-21/> (accessed 12 October, 2023).

²⁸⁶ Asan Vernyuy Wirba, *Leadership from an Islamic and Western Perspective*, (Witney: Chartridge Books Oxford, 2017), 39.

possession of superior moral values”,²⁸⁷ and he continued the statement that both leader and follower will not try to overpower each other for worldly gain since the goal is divine; hence, they strive to achieve the goal with the understanding that it is all an act of worship to Allah (S.W.T.).²⁸⁸ From these definitions and verse from the Al-Quran, it is important to note that the Muslim community must have a selfless leader who will strive for the betterment of the community under his leadership, as his only goal is to please the Almighty. In the context of Busan, the researcher found several prominent figures who strive for the betterment of the community, not only in religion but also worldly matters.

5.3 PROMINENT MUSLIM FIGURES IN BUSAN

There are several prominent local and foreign Muslim figures in Busan who have greatly contributed to the development of Islam and the Muslim community there. Having reliable figures to help with the problems, to support and encourage various endeavours is a great deal to the small Muslim community. From the leadership provided by these leaders, the community can run smoothly and gain many benefits. Several prominent figures that will be discussed include Ismail Poo Hwang, Zubair Lee Dong Ha, Yasir Lee, Samina Jin, Syaikhoni Jazuli, and Muhammad Junaidi Al-Fais. These Muslims had sacrificed a lot for the development of the Muslim community in Busan; thus, rendering their lives, roles, and contributions worthy of discussion.

²⁸⁷ Abdul Rashid Moten, Leadership in the West and the Islamic World: A Comparative Analysis, *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 15 (3) (2011): 339-349.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

5.3.1 Ismail Poo Hwang

Ismail or his Korean name, Poo Hwang is a Busan native known as the first individual in the city to become a Muslim and an Imam. As of 2018, he is an 86-year-old man who reverted to Islam in 1976 at the age of 40 years old, which means that he has been a Muslim for 42 years. Ismail was first introduced to Islam in the early 1970s while working in a construction and shipbuilding project in the Suez Canal, Egypt. His company assigned him and several Egyptians to stay in an apartment together; hence, from there, he got to know about Islam and was fascinated with the way the Muslims practised their religion, such as performing ablution before praying and praying on time even during long journeys. Since these actions or practices of Muslims are not done amongst his Christian and Buddhist colleagues, it piqued his interest in the religion, and thus, he started to learn more about it and then reverted to Islam. Later, when he returned to Korea, he went to Seoul in 1975 and stayed there for one year studying Islam and the Arabic language, as Seoul during that time already had a well-built Muslim community around the Seoul Central Mosque. As the mosque filled with Turkish nationals who stayed behind after the Korean War (1950-53) and also the pioneering Korean Muslims, daily religious practices like the five-time obligatory prayers were done on time with guidance from the Turkish Imam. This enabled Ismail to learn the Arabic language for free and consequently to read the Al-Quran.²⁸⁹

After a year in Seoul, he went back to Busan, and started a small community of Muslims there by renting a small room on the ground floor of the cultural apartment and had a hair salon converted into a *musalla*. In the same year (1976) he reverted to Islam, there was a plan to build a mosque in Busan by the Libyan government and this

²⁸⁹ Ismail Poo Hwang interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 29 June 2018.

began immediately following the donation by the Libyan government that amounted to USD 50,000 for its construction which finished in 1980.²⁹⁰ The mosque is known as the Al-Fatah Mosque or the locals call it the Dusil Mosque.²⁹¹ Although he studied Arabic in Seoul, he still was not able to practise the basics of Islamic practices like pray correctly, fast during Ramadhan, and he even did not know much about halal and haram.

Nevertheless, since he was the most knowledgeable of all the Muslims in Busan during that time, being able to read the Al-Quran, he was appointed as the Imam to lead the prayers. However, no Friday Congregational Prayer were held in the mosque for the first five years as they did not have the qualification to perform it. Notwithstanding this, Ismail did not give up in trying to provide a better environment to the Muslims in Busan. He even went back to Seoul to learn more about Islam; travelling more than 300 kilometres every Friday to Seoul to join the Friday Congregational Prayer there and during Ramadhan, he travelled to Seoul and stayed in the capital for one month in order to finish the fasting month there. He said that if he did not persevere, maybe he would have left Islam and lived a peaceful life as a non-Muslim in Busan.²⁹²

In the early 1980s, the community started to get bigger under Ismail's leadership as an Imam in Busan, and during this time, many South Koreans reverted to Islam. The mosque filled with them as the number reached around 500. To explain the sudden increase, Ismail pointed out that many of the reverts came after being told that they will be able to secure a job in the Middle East if they went to the Al-Fatah Mosque and became a Muslim. As the number of new Muslims grew, he was able to establish an

²⁹⁰ Sohn Joo Young, "Organisations and Activities of the Muslim Minority in Korea," (n.d.): 6. <www.world-dialogue.org/MWL/minority/C1430-M08-1.pdf> (accessed 22 September, 2018).

²⁹¹ The Al-Fatah Mosque in Busan is also known as the Dusil Mosque because of its location near the Dusil train station. Researcher observation and verified by local and foreign Muslim of Busan.

²⁹² Ismail Poo Hwang interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 29 June 2018.

Arabic academy, having the ability to teach Arabic after learning the language for several years in Seoul. Many South Koreans came to learn Arabic with him, and he taught it for free as those who came during that time were unable to pay for the class. He mentioned that in the early 1980s, many local people who came to the mosque and reverted to Islam were able to secure jobs in the Middle East in Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Libya, Jordan, and Kuwait, as those countries had massive construction works which required companies and labour from other countries. Thus, this resulted in a very strategic economic relationship between South Korea and the Middle Eastern countries.²⁹³ According to Hee Soo Lee:

“Korea is very close to the Middle Eastern countries, on economic point of view. Most of the Korean economic success, absolutely based on the Middle East during 1970 and 1980's in construction and engineering market.”²⁹⁴

As for the local Muslims living in Busan, fortunately, in 1985, many Pakistani immigrants arrived in the city for work, and they were then followed by Bangladeshi and Indonesian workers, which was a blessing to the Muslim community there as they now had someone to teach them about Islamic practices and knowledge like halal, haram, prayer, and fasting. It was a welcome relief for the Korean Muslims, who at that time were without guidance, to receive foreign Muslims who were knowledgeable about Islam. The arrival of foreign workers to Busan corresponded to the economic booming in South Korea that began in 1985, which was the result of rapid export growth because of trading surplus.²⁹⁵ He continued further saying that the South Korean government

²⁹³ Niu Song, “Islam and South Korea’s Middle East Diplomacy”, *The British Association for Korean Studies*, vol. 16 (2015): 65-66.

²⁹⁴ TRT World, “How did South Korean construction in the Middle East create cultural bonds?” *TRT World News*, 27 April, 2018, via TRT World, <<https://www.trtworld.com/asia/how-did-south-korean-construction-in-the-middle-east-create-cultural-bonds-17040>> (accessed 12 January, 2019).

²⁹⁵ Susan M. Collins, “Lessons from Korean Economic Growth”, *American Economic Association*, 80 (2) (1990): 104.

also began to promote the country's universities to international students, which helped bring in the foreign Muslim students to Busan; hence, increasing the number of Muslims in the city. The foreign Muslim students visited the mosque regularly, yet while this situation made him happy, at the same time, he was sad as the number of South Koreans visiting the mosque dropped drastically because of the war that happened in the Middle East, which gave Islam and Muslims a bad reputation. Moreover, the increased number of Muslims in Busan had hindered South Koreans from visiting the mosque.

Despite the negative impacts of the arrival of foreign Muslims to Busan, in the long run, the situation slowly improved as many South Koreans began to accept the influx of Muslims whose presence also sparked some interests among them to learn about Islam. In addition, Ismail said that with the increase of the foreign congregation at the mosque, the contribution of Sadaqah and Zakah grew, which helped in lessening the mosque's financial burden. Moreover, as the foreign Muslim community settled and worked in Busan, *musallas* and mosques began to mushroom at various places there.²⁹⁶

Throughout the years, he saw the community's ups and downs which he himself perceived as challenges as a minority. Having been a Muslim for 42 years, he has successfully reverted many South Koreans to Islam, and he still hoped for the community to strive, and Islam being accepted by South Koreans. He also joined a Quranic recitation competition in 2018 at the Al-Fatah Mosque; hence, showing his passion in Islam although at that time he was already at the age of 86.²⁹⁷ Hopefully, he

²⁹⁶ Ismail Poo Hwang interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 29 June 2018.

²⁹⁷ Link for YouTube video showing Ismail Boo Hwang reciting the Al-Quran during a competition entitled "Islam in Korea-Busan Islam Center: The First Imam in Busan-Korea", <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzo6Nul0hM4>, a YouTube channel under the KMF Busan created by the second Imam of Al-Fatah Mosque, Imam Syaikhoni.

continues to be in good health to overlook the development of the Muslim community in Busan.

5.3.2 Yasir Lee Jong Eok

Yasir Lee Jong Eok was the fourth KMF chairman of the Busan branch from 2000 till 2011 before being replaced by Zubair Lee Dong Ha. He still maintains his post as the main Imam for the Al-Fatah Mosque since 2000, which accumulated to 18 years of service as an Imam. He was a graduate from the Busan University of Foreign Studies under the department of Arabic language, and since he studied Arabic, it is one of the important factors that led him to Islam as studying Arabic meant that he also needed to learn about Islam. From the interview, he mentioned that he used to be an atheist who did not believe in the hereafter.²⁹⁸

After his graduation, he started to learn more about Islam and went to the Al-Fatah Mosque for more information, and in 1983, he accepted Islam and began his journey together with other newly reverted Muslims.²⁹⁹

In 2000, Yasir Lee became the chairman for the KMF Busan branch and the first thing he did as a chairman was to organise a Muslim student organisation because he saw that Muslim students during that time were not living in accordance to the teaching of Islam. Through this effort, he said that the Muslim students began to change their way of life. However, during his tenure, a lot of things happened around the world, especially the 11 September 2001 incident and the beheading of a South Korean citizen in Iraq in 2003, which generated a bad image of Islam and Muslims which he, Yasir

²⁹⁸ Yasir Lee interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 10 July 2018.

²⁹⁹ Yasir Lee did not receive any objection from his family members as they are also atheists, which means they did not care if their family members want to become a Christian, Muslim or Buddhist. Yasir Lee interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 10 July 2018.

Lee, needed to overcome.³⁰⁰ Other changes affected by Yasir Lee include the appointment of a *da'i* from Bangladesh named Arkmal in 2018 to handle the da'wah activities, and in 2010, he began remodelling the main building of the Al-Fatah Mosque on the first and second floors.³⁰¹

In 2010, Yasir Lee appeared on Malaysian television in a segment called 'Syhadah', a documentary by Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM) about Islam in Busan.³⁰² In the documentary, he maintained that many people from government agencies, non-government organisations, and schools visited the Al-Fatah Mosque to learn more about Islam.³⁰³ Yasir Lee mentioned in his interview with the researcher that more than 1,000 Koreans became Muslims from 1976 to 2018, and he had reverted more than 100 South Koreans although most of them left without a trace after they performed the declaration of faith (Syhadah). Some came to the mosque once a month and the number of devoted reverts only reached up to 15. On the reasons for the lack or loss of commitment to Islam among the local reverts, the Imam gave no detailed explanation; however, certain reasons can be related to the loss of commitment like the events that happened in the Middle East, the increased number of foreign Muslims made the mosque look foreign to the locals, and the bad image of Islam and Muslims portrayed by the media caused the local Muslims to detach themselves from the mosque. Upon being asked about Islam in South Korea in the future, he maintained that he hoped that the young generation can continue with da'wah activities and that the foreign

³⁰⁰ Already mentioned in Chapter 2, Sohn, Jie-ae, Faraj, Caroline (23 June 2004). "[South Korean hostage beheaded: Seoul reaffirms plans to send more troops to Iraq](https://web.archive.org/web/20040625225503/http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/06/22/iraq.hostage/)". Cable News Network. Seoul, South Korea: Warner<. <https://web.archive.org/web/20040625225503/http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/06/22/iraq.hostage/>> (accessed 1 December, 2018).

³⁰¹ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 5.

³⁰² Mohd. Zuriman Ismail (Producer). (2010). *Muslim di Busan, Korea*. [Video File]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsLE9tweh-I>

³⁰³ Ibid.

Muslims, organisations and countries can send their *du'at* so that the Korean Muslims can learn more about Islam from them. He passed the chairman position to Zubair Lee Dong Ha in 2011 but continued to be the main Imam at the Al-Fatah Mosque.³⁰⁴

5.3.3 Zubair Lee Dong Ha

Zubair Lee Dong Ha was an Imam and the fifth KMF chairman of the Busan branch from 2011 till 2016.³⁰⁵ During the growth of the Muslim community in Busan in the 1980s, Lee Dong Ha was one of the South Korean Muslims who came to the mosque to learn about Islam and the Arabic language, and at the same time tried to score a job in the Middle East. His journey to Islam began when he involuntarily followed a Pakistani *da'i* (who came to Busan as an immigrant in February 1986) to the Al-Fatah Mosque as he wanted to learn Arabic so as to have a better opportunity to work in the Middle East.³⁰⁶ Although at that time he was a Christian, he mentioned that the trinity doctrine in Christian was confusing, and the teaching of Islam about the Oneness of God had stimulated his interest in the religion. After several months of learning about Islam, he became a Muslim in the same year at the age of 30. During his visit to the mosque, he was introduced to Abdul Ghani, a *da'i* from Thailand, and he immediately became a disciple of Abdul Ghani and even followed him to Thailand in 1990 as Abdul Ghani decided to go back to his hometown.³⁰⁷ He stayed there for three years and rigorously studied Islam there under Ustaz Mustafa who was a friend of Abdul Ghani. During his stay in Thailand, he was impressed by the Muslims in Thailand following an event

³⁰⁴ Yasir Lee interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 10 July 2018.

³⁰⁵ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 5.

³⁰⁶ Zubair Lee Dong Ha interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi via Facebook Messenger on 7 April 2016.

³⁰⁷ Zubair Lee Dong Ha interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Gyeongju on 11 August 2018.

where he saw someone accidentally drop several banknotes, yet no one stole the money throughout the whole day, which made him believe that the teaching of Islam was truly being shown there via the actions of the Thai Muslims.³⁰⁸

In 1993, he returned to Busan and began his *da'wah* work actively and was even involved with the foreign Muslims' daily affairs, especially if they faced problems with the local authorities or if they needed help with accommodation, transportation, and so on. He got married to a Muslimah from Malaysia in 2002 and has a son whom he wants to train to become a *da'i* and future Muslim leader in Busan. In March 2011, after the resignation of Yasir Lee as the chairman, Zubair Lee was then appointed as the fifth chairman. As the chairman for the KMF Busan branch and an Imam, his three main focuses during his tenure were to firstly improve the Islamic practices of the Muslims, especially the Korean Muslims by providing guidance to them in performing the prayers correctly, particularly for the newly reverted Korean Muslims. Secondly, to help the Muslims, either local or foreign, if they faced any problems. For example, accommodation, issues with the immigration department, police, etc. The third was to distribute the necessary information to foreign Muslims related to their stay in South Korea and to disseminate Islam in Busan.³⁰⁹ Together with Muhammad Kim³¹⁰ and Musa Han Lee,³¹¹ he created an organisation called *Geumsaem*³¹² with the intention to help the foreign Muslims who came to Busan.³¹³

³⁰⁸ Ibid.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ Ibid. Muhammad Kim is a close friend to Zubair Lee, and he acted as guide and counsellor for the *Geumsaem*.

³¹¹ Ibid. Musa Han Lee is a taekwondo coach who teaches taekwondo classes to the local and foreign Muslims under *Geumsaem*.

³¹² The information on *Geumsaem* will be detailed later under the sub-topic entitled prominent Muslim organisations in Busan.

³¹³ Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin Mohd Ghazi, *Islam in South Korea ...*, 64 - 90.

In 2013, he received funds from the Turkish Da'wah Bureau³¹⁴ to do some mural work on the main building of the Al-Fatah Mosque. The collaboration successfully beautified the second floor of the mosque. In 2015, he recruited Syaikhoni, an Indonesian *da'i* to be involved with the da'wah work at the mosque and who later become the current second Imam of the mosque besides Yasir Lee.³¹⁵ During his tenure, he was able to help the foreign Muslims who stayed in Jeongwan, Noksan, Sasang, and Jangrim to build mosques and Islamic centres, which is quite an impressive feat on his part as these mosques and Islamic centres successfully came to function during his six-year tenure as the chairman of the KMF Busan branch. When the researcher visited these places, every foreign Muslim knew him and really respected him for his tireless effort in providing support to the foreign Muslim community in Busan.

Unfortunately, he resigned from the position after six years of hard work in 2016 after feeling exhausted by not having support from the community, especially from fellow Korean Muslims. Since then, Zubair Lee with help from Muhammad Kim ventured into the halal business in order to supply halal products for the Muslim community in Busan. He rented a cold storage at Gijang-gun and began to import halal meat, chicken, and foods from Australia, Thailand, Indonesia, and other Muslim countries. During the researcher's visit to the cold storage named Al-Fatah Halal Shop, in the office of the building, several halal certificates (shown in Figures 4, 5 and 6) were displayed and there were also several halal products showcased, such as halal ramen and halal cosmetic products. The products received good feedback from the Muslim communities not only in Busan, but also those in the nearby provinces. Hence, the existence of a halal shop is quite important for the community as the products are not

³¹⁴ The book did not state whether the Turkish Da'wah Bureau is part of the Turkish government or an NGO.

³¹⁵ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 5.

readily available at local shops. Besides the Al-Fatah Mosque, he supplied meat and chicken to restaurants like Cappadocia and Casablanca Morocco.

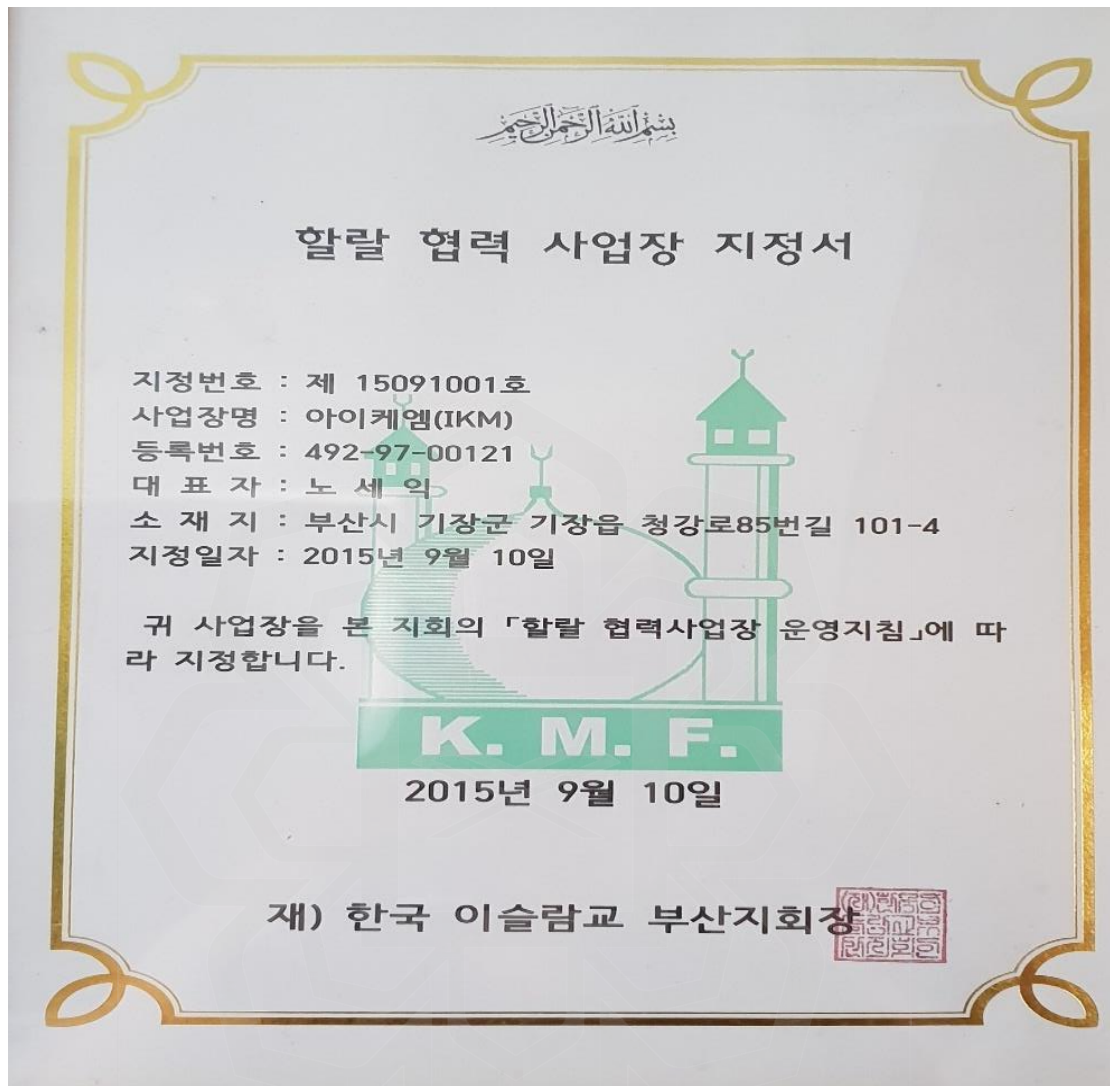


Figure 4: Halal certificate from KMF Halal Committee³¹⁶

It has been 32 years since he became a Muslim (1986 - 2018) and for him, it is not possible to leave Islam as his faith is strong. Zubair Lee hopes the new generation will be more invested in doing da'wah and the problems lingering around the KMF can be solved in order to build a better Muslim community in Busan.

³¹⁶ Picture of certificate taken during the researcher's visit to the cold storage at Gijang-Gun, 24 July 2018.

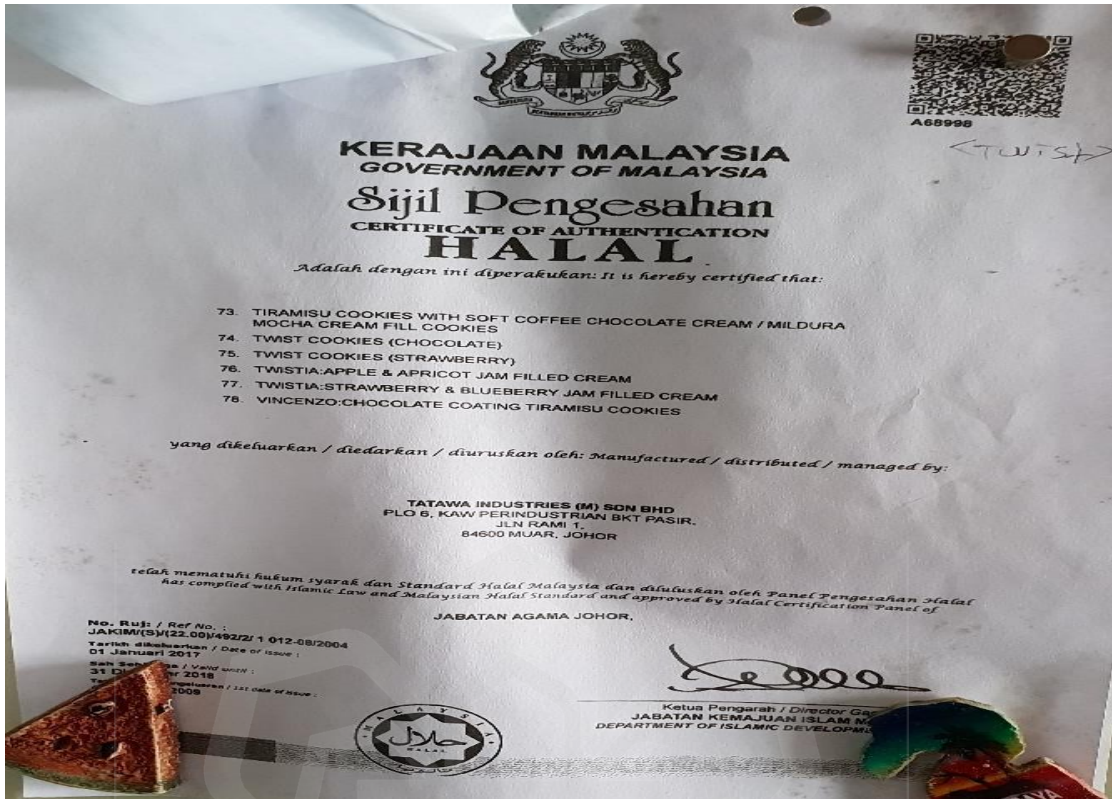


Figure 5: Halal certificate from Malaysia³¹⁷



Figure 6: Halal certificate from Australia³¹⁸

³¹⁷ Ibid, 24 July 2018.

³¹⁸ Ibid, 24 July 2018.

5.3.4 Samina Jin

Samina Jin is one of the prominent figures in the Muslim community in Busan and is known as the sole and pioneer Korean woman actively involved in the community, especially in advocating for Muslim women. She became a Muslim in 2016 at the age of 46 after marrying a Pakistani man who resided in Busan. According to Samina, before she became a Muslim, she was a Buddhist and Catholic; since her family members are Buddhists, she was educated with the Buddhist teachings up until high school during which period her friend once invited her to celebrate Christmas at church. The visit was fun for her as they were able to see an exhibition about Christianity and received snacks which are popular in South Korea like Choco Pie. She also listened to a sermon by a preacher, which was mostly about Jesus. Although at that time she was a student, unconsciously she wondered why the preacher kept talking about Jesus and not God.³¹⁹

At the age of 20 years old, she received permission from her parents to become a Catholic Christian. While working, she studied the religion meticulously to know mainly about God in Catholicism. However, her study did not go far as most of the Catholic followers only talked about Jesus and not God, which made her unsatisfied and disappointed as they did not enlighten her on God. Moreover, Samina found it difficult to accept the concept of holy water as a symbol for soul purification. Then, she converted back to Buddhism and took six months to study about the religion; she learnt that the teachings of Buddha were mostly about the spiritual journey of oneself while omitting God Himself, but she preferred the teaching of Buddha at that time as it teaches tolerance towards others and self-control.³²⁰

³¹⁹ Samina Jin interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 10 July 2018.

³²⁰ Ibid. 10 July 2018.

At the end, she realised that both Buddhism and Catholicism could not give a satisfying answer for her quest, which is to know about God. She then got married to a Korean man but later divorced, and in 2016 she met a Pakistani man and got married. Since she married a Muslim, it was compulsory for her to revert to Islam. Hence, Samina's journey to strengthen her Iman began in 2016. In the early stage of marriage and becoming a Muslim, Samina said that her husband did not force her to practise Islam although her husband is very diligent in following the Islamic teachings. As she observed her husband practising Islam religiously, she started to question herself as she already took the *Shahadah*³²¹ but had yet to follow the teachings of the religion. As a result, Samina started to look for information about Islam through the internet and acquired a translated version of the Al-Quran. When she began to read the Al-Quran, the first verse opened her mind and changed her view on Islam completely. She said as below:

When I open the translation of Al-Quran, I read the verse “*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*”, I was struck by the meaning of it. I cried for an hour because in my understanding, I thought Allah is the unmerciful/fearful God. Indeed, according to the translation “He” is the better God. So, I believe, this verse has opened my heart. Then I become sincerely study about Islam and understand the meaning of “*La Ilaha Illa Allah*”^{322, 323}.

Then she continued:

Even I studied about the Christianity and Buddhism before, I never encounter such a word of “*La Ilaha Illa Allah*”. This word is very special behind its own meaning which could change someone when they study about it.³²⁴

³²¹ The first pillar of Islam, the declaration or profession of faith. Musharraf Hussain, *The Five Pillars of Islam: Laying the Foundation of Divine Love and Service to Humanity*, (Leicestershire: Kube Publishing Ltd., 2012), 3-5.

³²² Ibid, 3.

³²³ Samina Jin interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 10 July 2018.

³²⁴ Ibid.

From this encounter, she began her journey to deepen her understanding about Islam. Subsequently, she spent two years at the Incheon Islamic Centre where she went there weekly to help with da'wah activities. In 2017, the KMF Busan branch appointed her as the first female *da'i* in the Muslim community in Busan, which is important as previously several South Korean women visited the Al-Fatah Mosque but due to the absence of a female *da'i*, it was a bit challenging for a male *da'i* to guide them, especially with regards to women issues in Islam.³²⁵ Currently, Samina teaches newly reverted Muslims from Ulsan from Tuesdays to Thursdays, as well as local and foreign Muslimahs who reside in Busan and Gyeong-nam provinces and come to the mosque twice a month to learn more about Islam. Samina is actively involved with da'wah activities and says that she feels happy whenever a South Korean comes to her to learn about Islam.

5.3.5 Syaikhoni Jazuli

Syaikhoni Jazuli is a 29-year-old Indonesian citizen from Sidoarjo, East Java. Currently, he is working as the second Imam at the Al-Fatah Mosque and is actively involved with da'wah activities in Busan. He came to Korea to study the Korean language at a local university. He stayed in Busan after completing his degree and was later appointed as a *da'i* in October 2015 by Zubair Lee, who was the chairman of the KMF Busan branch at that time.³²⁶ Immediately, he strategised and planned the activities to be carried out; for example, giving lectures at mosques and universities, disseminating pamphlets, organising mosque tours, and others.³²⁷

³²⁵ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 5.

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ Syaikhoni Jazuli interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Moroccan restaurant on 27 June 2018.

Currently, Syaikhoni actively gives lectures at the mosque to ensure that the audience would have a correct understanding of Islam related to Hadith, *Tajweed* and others.³²⁸ He also joins the president of the KMF Busan branch like Zubair Lee and Salehuddin Kim to oversee the KMF activities, especially those related to Southeast Asian countries like Indonesia and Malaysia. For example, he became a guide and translator for Salehuddin Kim during his visit to the Alkhwar Mosque in Surabaya, Indonesia to discuss about an educational programme, and later to Kelantan, Malaysia for an international da'wah conference for the Asia region.³²⁹ During his tenure as a *da'i*, he also became an Imam to lead the five congregational prayers, Friday Congregational Prayer, and others. He also gives the khutbah on Fridays, either in Indonesian, Korean or English.

He said that the situation is getting better as the da'wah work has lessened the misunderstanding about Islam, and since the community is getting bigger because foreign Muslims keep coming to Busan, the locals seem to be able to accept the Muslim community who lives among them. Throughout his three years as a *da'i* in Busan, he has already reverted more than 100 South Koreans to Islam.

In order to introduce the Muslim community in Busan to the world, Syaikhoni created a YouTube account under the name 'Islam in Korea (Busan)'³³⁰ which has garnered 125,000 views from all around the world and received positive feedback from the viewers. The content of the YouTube channel mainly focuses on the activities done at the Al-Fatah Mosque and several interviews done together with the South Korean

³²⁸ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 5.

³²⁹ Ibid, 40-50.

³³⁰ 'Islam in Korea (Busan)' is a YouTube channel created by an Indonesian named Syaikhoni Jazuli who is currently working as the second Imam of Al-Fatah Mosque in Busan. The channel that began in 2015 focuses on the activities done by the Muslim community in Busan. Via https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfNZiuAqutlb_mZ91I2IxIw/featured

Muslims.³³¹ Syaikhoni's decision to stay and serve in Busan has given a positive impact to the community as they have someone who has a deeper understanding in Islam, and able to lead and teach the community about Islam.

5.4 PROMINENT MUSLIM ORGANISATIONS IN BUSAN

An organisation is crucial in helping to develop a community since it can be a bridge between the community and authorities, especially if the organisation is recognised by the government. Examples of such organisations in Busan are KMF and *Geumsaem*. Through these organisations, the Muslim community can voice out their problems, either at individual, national or international levels, which include accommodation, work, immigration, and other issues. Under this sub-topic, several organisations that are active in Busan were investigated in order to understand their role in the Busan Muslim community life. The organisations are the Korean Muslim Federation (KMF) Busan branch, Persaudaraan Umat Muslim Indonesia Al-Fatah (PUMITA Busan), Busan Muslim Student Association (BMSA), and *Geumsaem* Foreign Centre (GSFC). These organisations are interconnected as they conduct activities in Busan in collaboration with each other.

5.4.1 Korean Muslim Federation (KMF) Busan Branch

The Korean Muslim Federation (KMF) Busan branch is the main Islamic organisation in Busan and is known as the first branch of the main KMF organisation centred in Seoul. The organisation oversees other Muslim organisations in Busan and is actively involved with the community. It is accessible not only to the locals, but also to foreign Muslims who reside, work, and study in Busan. The KMF Busan branch also oversees

³³¹ Ibid.

around 20 *musallas* and 10 organisations. According to Syaikhoni, the mission and vision of the Busan branch are to help the Muslim community in the city, and at the same time, to do da'wah to the South Koreans there.³³² The organisation began after the completion of the first mosque in Busan, the Al-Fatah Mosque in September 1980, with the inauguration of its first chairman named Kim Myung Hwan. The organisation was automatically officiated at the mosque and began their operation there. Kim Myung Hwan did not stay in his position long, as in February the following year, he was replaced by the second chairman, Kim Moo Sung, until 1983. During his tenure, the KMF Busan branch congregation regularly travelled to Seoul for Friday Congregational Prayer and lessons on Islam and Arabic because all the Imams and preachers resided there.³³³

In March 1983, the third chairman, Park Chul Hwan, ascended to the position and under his leadership, he appointed Ismail Poo Hwang as the main *da'i* of the KMF Busan branch in order to give da'wah to the South Koreans and help the newly reverted Muslims with regards to basic Islamic teachings. With the coming of foreign Muslims to Busan in the 1990s, it eased the burden of KMF as an Islamic organisation in handling Islamic matters at the mosque.³³⁴ By the 21st century, in 2000, Yasir Lee Jong Eok became the fourth chairman. His appointment had improved the ability of the organisation to act as an important Islamic organisation in Busan, having received help from foreign Muslims in planning and executing various programmes. In 2008, the organisation appointed Arkmal, a Bangladeshi as a *da'i* and by 2010, they managed to

³³² Syaikhoni Jazuli interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Moroccan restaurant on 27 June 2018.

³³³ Ismail Poo Hwang interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 29 June 2018.

³³⁴ There is no available information on why the first three chairmen vacated their seats and not much can be gathered about their personal information. Hopefully in the future, the researcher will be able to gather information about the previous chairmen of the KMF in much detail.

renovate the main building of the Al-Fatah Mosque under Yasir Lee's leadership. During his leadership, Islamic practices at the mosque were no longer difficult to perform as Yasir Lee himself is quite knowledgeable in Islam and affluent in the Arabic language and able to read the Al-Quran. His tenure lasted until 2010, which is quite long compared to his predecessors.

The situation of Muslims improved further following the appointment in March 2011 of the fifth chairman named Zubair Lee Dong Ha. Under his leadership, the organisation was able to help establish several mosques and Islamic centres in Busan. During his tenure, many Indonesian workers and students were actively involved with the KMF in running various activities like mosque visits by inviting non-Muslims to come to the mosque to hear explanations about Islam. The organisation is also actively involved in solving local and foreign Muslims' problems. In 2013, the organisation received funding from the Turkish Da'wah Bureau to produce a mural on the second floor of the mosque (the praying hall) so as to beautify the mosque further after the renovation work in 2010. In October 2015, the KMF appointed Syaikhoni Jazuli as the head of da'wah work in Busan; he has since then performed his work dutifully until now to introduce Islam to the South Koreans. Zubair Lee resigned in 2016 as the chairman and was replaced by Salehuddin Kim Sung Soo³³⁵ in September the same year.

Under Salehuddin Kim's leadership, the KMF progressed further and was involved in a lot of activities in 2017. During his tenure, he participated in a halal seminar organised by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs of South

³³⁵ Salehuddin Kim Sung Soo is an Associate Professor at the Department of Electrical Engineering at Dong Eui University and the current chairman of the Korean Muslim Federation Busan branch. The researcher was not able to make an appointment with him during his visit as Salehuddin Kim had a tight schedule at that time but was able to meet him for a short moment during his visit to the mosque to lead a conversion of a South Korean to Islam.

Korea on the improvement of the halal industry in South Korea.³³⁶ He and the KMF also had a meeting with Dong Eui University Lifelong Education Centre's officers to propose the establishment of an Arabic and Islamic Studies at the centre. Since he is a lecturer at the University, many programmes together with the Muslim Busan Student Association (MBSA) had been organised, such as halal food festival and participation in an event called International Day at the university to provide information about Islam; hence, making 2017 a very busy year for him and the KMF.³³⁷

In 2018, the organisation produced a book entitled 'Review 2017'³³⁸ as a platform to record all the activities done by the Muslim community in Busan throughout the year. Hence, this book served as the first significant record on all activities handled by KMF, and since then continued to be published every year. This is a great move by KMF under the leadership of Salehuddin Kim as before this, no official record was documented and available to the public, which makes it difficult for anyone to know about their activities. This also helps researchers who want to do research on the Muslim community in Busan. Besides, with the help from the KMF main branch in Seoul, the public can obtain pamphlets and several small book publications such as 'What is Islam?', 'Ramadhan and Fasting', and 'God in Christianity, What is His Nature?'.³³⁹ For those who are interested in Islam, they will be given these pamphlets for them to read and learn about Islam and they are welcome to hear lectures about Islam at the Al-Fatah Mosque. The representative of the KMF once led a revision ceremony and invited several other Muslims who were present at the mosque to be eyewitnesses for the

³³⁶ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 13.

³³⁷ Ibid, 20.

³³⁸ Kim Sung Soo, Review 2017, (Anti Fahrenheit, Busan, 2018).

³³⁹ These books are published in the Korean language and have a lot of useful information regarding Islam, and are easy to be understood by non-Muslims. The book entitled '*God in Christianity, What is His Nature?*' was written by Dr. Naji Ibrahim Al-Arfaj and translated into the Korean language.

ceremony which the researcher had the opportunity to attend. In that event, a South Korean named Hoo Young (a Catholic for 20 years) reverted to Islam on 1st July 2018 and changed his name to Muhammad Daniel after being introduced to Islam by his friend from Malaysia.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 자비로우시고 자애로우신 알라(하나님)의 이름으로

입 교 선 서
Conversion Certificate

사 진
Photo

교적번호 (No.) :

- 나는 나의 의사와 소원으로 이슬람교에 입교하여 무슬림으로서 의무를 다할 것을 선서합니다.
 I accept Islam completely with my own free will and promise to fulfill the obligations of Islam.
- 나는 이슬람을 나의 종교로, 알라(하나님)를 나의 주님으로, 무함마드(그분에게 알라의 평화와 깃들기를)를 나의 사도로, 꾸란을 나의 지표로 삼을 것을 선서합니다.
 I hereby witness and accept that, Allah is my Lord, Muhammad (peace be upon him) is His messenger, and the Qu'ran is my guidance.
- 나는 오직 한 분이신 알라(하나님)와 그분의 천사들, 예언자들과 성서들, 최후의 심판일과 정명을 믿어 이를 선언합니다.
 I believe in only one Allah (God), His angels, His scriptures, Judgement day and Destiny.

الشهادة 신앙고백 (Declaration of Faith)

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ
 아슈아두 알라~일라-하 일랄라, 와 아슈하두 안나 무함마단 라쑤-물라
 나는 알라(하나님)외에는 어떤 것도 신이 아님을 선언합니다. 그리고 무함마드는 알라(하나님)의 사도임을 선언합니다.
 I witness that there is no god except Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger.

성명 (Name)	(남·녀)	주소 (Address)		
무슬림명 (Muslim name)		E-mail	입교년월일 (Convert D/M/Y)	
생년월일 (Birth day)	(세)	직업 (Work)	인도자 (Guide)	
과거종교 (Prev. religion)		연락처 (Tel.)	이맘서명 (Imam sign)	

가족사항	관계	성명	연령	종교	관계	성명	연령	종교
	(Relation)	(Name)	(Age)	(Religion)	(Relation)	(Name)	(Age)	(Religion)

위와 같이 이슬람에 귀의 하였으므로 이에 자필 서명합니다.
 년(Year) 월(M) 일(D)
 성명(Sign.)

안 국 이 슬 람 교
Korea Muslim Federation

Figure 7: Conversion Certificate³⁴⁰

³⁴⁰ Figure 7 shows a conversion certificate that needs to be filled in by those who reverted to Islam in South Korea as a record. This picture was taken during the researcher's visit to Al-Fatah Busan Mosque

The present KMF Busan branch organisational structure consists of Salehuddin Kim as the president, Abdul Aziz as the secretary, Yasir Lee as the first Imam, while Syaikhoni is the second Imam, Abdul Malek as the coordinator for external cooperation, and Adam as the education coordinator. The KMF like other Muslim organisations in other countries has a lot of responsibilities which include the announcement of Ramadhan and Eid, collecting Zakah, preparing iftar, handling the reversion process, and so forth, which are related to Islam and Muslim affairs.

For the first time as a branch of KMF, in August 2017, the KMF made an exceptional move in defending Islam by organising a protest at the Al-Fatah Mosque after Friday Congregational Prayer,³⁴¹ with regards to a Korean drama under the Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) criticising the inappropriate display of an Arab girl wearing hijab and improper attire worn by the actresses in the drama. The corporation also received backlash from the international community, especially international viewers from Islamic countries, which led MBC to apologise and delete the scene.³⁴² The protest and backlash by both had rendered the MBC to apologise and cut out the inappropriate scene from the drama, which can be said as a progressive victory for Muslims as their voice reached the media. Prior to this, most complaints towards the media, especially Christian media, in South Korea turned a deaf ear to such requests.

The KMF Busan branch has been in operation since 1980 until present (more than 40 years and counting), throughout which period the organisation has gone through

on 1 July 2018, where a conversion of a South Korean happened, and the researcher was asked to be one of the witnesses during the process of the *Shahadah* (profession of faith).

³⁴¹ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 47.

³⁴² Yoon Min Sik, "Man Who Dies to Live' apologizes for its depiction of Islamic culture" *The Korea Herald*, 1 August, 2017, via The Korea Herald, <<http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20170723000242>> (accessed 15 December, 2017).

ups and downs and experienced many changes in its management as well as planning and activities. The organisation currently receives a lot of support from Korean Muslims and foreign Muslims, especially the Indonesian community, who had contributed a lot to the establishment of mosques and Islamic centres throughout Busan City through their commitment and donations which came from their own pockets during their working days in Busan.

5.4.2 Persaudaraan Umat Muslim Indonesia Al-Fatah (PUMITA BUSAN)

Persaudaraan Umat Muslim Indonesia Al-Fatah (PUMITA Busan) is an organisation established by the Indonesians for Indonesian people who live in Busan, with its headquarters also at the same place as the KMF Busan branch, which is the Al-Fatah Mosque. The organisation was established in 2002, and the current president is Asral Tanjung. The vision and mission of the organisation include to unite the Indonesian Muslims and to do da'wah to the Indonesians who are working in Busan, yet do not live according to the teachings of Islam and bring them to the mosque for guidance. Such actions among Indonesians who do not follow Islamic teachings are drinking alcohol, clubbing, and eating haram foods.³⁴³ Moreover, the organisation also acts as an intermediary and problem-solver for the Indonesians living in Busan with the help of KMF; for example, helping sick illegal migrants by sending them to the hospital or sending them back to Indonesia safely. Besides, the organisation helps search for jobs for those who do not have work and provides a temporary shelter at the PUMITA office for students who do not have a place to stay before they are able to settle in at a proper place.³⁴⁴ In case of death, the organisation will be involved with the funeral process

³⁴³ Junaidi Al-Fais interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 13 July 2018.

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

according to the Islamic way from start to end. Junaidi Al-Fais (Muazzin, the person who calls for prayer at the Busan Mosque) informed that most death cases are a result of the fishing activities during high tides and storms.

The organisation also has a very resourceful cooperative that helps provide items needed by Muslims, which is named 'Koperasi PUMITA'. Established in 2007,³⁴⁵ the cooperative has been overseen by Junaidi Al-Fais since 2012. Koperasi PUMITA is located at Namsan Dong, Busan and since it is under the PUMITA, it is 100 percent operated by Indonesians selling items and products which are hard to get in South Korea, such as religious literature including books on Al-Quran and Hadith, halal products and produces,³⁴⁶ and prayer cloths. Besides, the cooperative also sells electronic equipment like laptop, phone, camera and more. All of these items and products are mostly imported from Indonesia directly and some acquired from local suppliers.³⁴⁷ In order to reach the buyers, usually these items and products will be advertised on their Facebook page named 'Pumita Busan Koperasi'³⁴⁸ The Facebook page is also used to spread awareness on fake halal products sold in Busan, news about the well-being of Indonesians working in Busan, and information on Islamic lectures organised in Busan.³⁴⁹ Since it is based in Busan and many Muslims from around South Korea are very interested in acquiring items and products from 'Koperasi PUMITA', hence, the cooperative provides a long-distance service by sending the items and products using postal services.³⁵⁰

³⁴⁵ Nesty Astriani, "Pembangunan Website Sitem Informasi Pemesanan Barang Online (E-Commerce) di Koperasi PUMITA Busan, Korea Selatan", Perpustakaan Pusat Unikom, 2015, <<https://elib.unikom.ac.id/download.php?id=295609>> (accessed 2 December, 2019).

³⁴⁶ Shahrul, "The Effect of Cooperative Image and Quality of Service to the Satisfaction of Pumita Busan Cooperative Members", Perpustakaan Pusat Unikom, 2017: 3-4. <<https://elib.unikom.ac.id/download.php?id=355797>> (accessed 2 December, 2019).

³⁴⁷ Nesty Astriani, "Pembangunan Website Sitem Informasi....", 1-2.

³⁴⁸ Pumita Busan Koperasi <<https://en-gb.facebook.com/pumitakoperasi/>>

³⁴⁹ Nesty Astriani, "Pembangunan Website Sitem Informasi", 3.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

5.4.3 Busan Muslim Student Association (BMSA)

The Busan Muslim Student Association (BMSA) was established in December 2016 to represent the foreign Muslim students in Busan. The organisation is actively involved with Muslim student affairs and offers assistance to new students who come to Busan to pursue their studies. The organisation provides information related to their stay in South Korea, such as the cost of living, the do's and don'ts, and also introduces them to the mosques and Islamic centres available in Busan.³⁵¹ The organisation is active in two universities in Busan, namely Pukyong National University and Dong Eui University. Since the current KMF President is a lecturer at the Dong Eui University, BMSA has received great support from him to organise activities there.

Mohammed Mebarak and Mohammed Saif are the founding members of the organisation and was later joined by Alhaji Sesay. The first president of MBSA was Mohammed Mebarak from Algeria, who was involved with the establishment and registration of the organisation; however, he left after a few months as he needed to focus on his study. He was replaced by Alhaji Sesay from Sierra Leone in 2017. During his tenure, Sesay planned and executed several semi-regular activities like organising a cultural day, welcoming party for new students, and da'wah training courses. In 2018, Mohammed Saif from Sudan became the new president whom the researcher was able to reach out for an interview.³⁵² He continued the second president's activities and is still in contact with both previous presidents for advice and consultation. As of 2018, there were roughly 145 Muslim students from all around the world as active members of the organisation. Mohammed Saif could not ascertain the exact number of Muslim

³⁵¹ Busan Muslim Students Association, "About Us", (n.d.) <https://www.facebook.com/bmsa99/about/?ref=page_internal> (accessed 2 December, 2019).

³⁵² Mohammed Saif interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi via Kakao Talk on 7 July 2018.

students since not all of them joined the organisation. Moreover, he added, students come and leave after they finish their studies. Since they are living in a non-Muslim country, the local universities hardly facilitate them with prayer rooms; hence, they took the initiative to apply for a room at their own respective university to be converted into a *musalla*. As a result, in 2017, they were able to acquire a prayer room at Pukyong National University under the MBSA name and a room at Dong Eui University in 2018.³⁵³

The organisation did not receive any funding from any government bodies or universities, but they received donations from students. However, during Ramadhan, they received funding from the Qatar embassy to organise Iftar every year. Since its establishment in 2016, MBSA had already joined and organised several activities either at the universities, mosques or during events held by the South Korean government. The activities include a welcoming ceremony for new students, International Cultural day, Iftar in Ramadhan at universities, halal food exhibitions, participation in the City Hall's activities like calligraphy art while distributing books and pamphlets about Islam, and participating in the cultural events at universities representing the Muslim community's culture. Hence, through these activities, the MBSA is also actively involved in da'wah activities in cooperation with da'wah organisations like the Islamic Education and Research Academy (iERA).³⁵⁴

In March 2017, MBSA together with the KMF Busan branch organised a student welcoming party and halal food expo at the Al-Fatah Mosque to celebrate the arrival of new Muslim students while introducing them to various Islamic organisations and

³⁵³ Ibid. 7 July 2018.

³⁵⁴ Islamic Education and Research Academy (iERA) is an organisation with the main mission to do da'wah with compassion and sharing the beautiful religion with the world population. iERA, "About Us", (n.d.) <<https://iera.org/about/>> (accessed 2 December, 2019).

mosques in case they need help or have any questions during their stay in Busan.³⁵⁵ In May the same year, they organised a cultural exhibition on Children's Day which exposed South Korean children to the various existing cultures around the world.³⁵⁶ By October 2017, MBSA together with Imam Yasir Lee joined an exhibition at Dong Eui University for its yearly event called International Day, which is to introduce cultures from all around the world to the masses. For the MBSA, the exhibition provided an opportunity to introduce Islam and Muslims to the people who visited the exhibition with the hope that it will help to diminish some misunderstandings about Islam and Muslims.³⁵⁷

5.4.4 Geumsaem Foreign Centre (GSFC)

The *Geumsaem* Foreign Centre (GSFC) was founded in 2011 by Zubair Lee, Muhammad Kim, and Musa Han Lee, and officially recognised by the Korean government in 2014 after the three founding members presented their planned activities for the GSFC to the government body in charge as a requirement for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to operate in South Korea. This procedure is quite important for NGOs as they will be able to receive financial support³⁵⁸ from the South Korean government if they register since an organisation needs funding in order to operate efficiently.³⁵⁹ The organisation was established with the hope that they will be able to stop foreign Muslims from converting to Christianity or sway from Islamic practices

³⁵⁵ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 11-12.

³⁵⁶ Ibid, 22.

³⁵⁷ Ibid, 70.

³⁵⁸ The financial support and funding are also applicable for KMF, while foreign NGOs like PUMITA and BMSA can apply for funding through the Busan Foundation for International Cooperation (BFIC), a cooperation under the South Korean government. They are also eligible to apply for funding from Busan Metropolitan City. Mohammed Saif interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi via Facebook Messenger on 22 September 2022.

³⁵⁹ Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin Mohd Ghazi, *Islam in South Korea...*, 89-90.

during their stay in South Korea. It is also aimed to cater to the needs of foreign Muslims. Zubair Lee took charge in helping foreign Muslims in matters related to their welfare and problems, while Muhammad Kim acts as a counsellor, and Musa Han Lee as a Taekwondo instructor.³⁶⁰

At the same time, *Geumsaem* acts as a problem-solver for foreign Muslims who have problems at their workplaces like factory, company, or fishery. The organisation also helps university students, catering to their accommodation, issues with the university and others. If there is a need for law practitioner advocates, *Geumsaem* will provide lawyers and try their best to help foreign Muslims in solving their problems.³⁶¹ *Geumsaem* is still active and with its headquarters set up inside the Al-Fatah Mosque beside the mosque's main entrance, it can be easily spotted and accessed by the foreign community.³⁶² From the interview with Syaikhoni, the organisation appears to have been so far successful in carrying out its mission, as he said that there is no conversion of foreign Muslims to Christianity since the establishment of the *Geumsaem* Foreign Centre.³⁶³

5.5 MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC CENTRES IN BUSAN

Mosques and Islamic centres are quite important in Islam as these are the places where Muslims gather and practise their faith. Moreover, they serve as gathering points for Muslims to socialise and get to know each other, especially in cities or towns where

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ Syaikhoni Jazuli interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Moroccan restaurant on 27 June 2018.

³⁶² Visit by researcher to *Geumsaem* office at Al-Falah Mosque.

³⁶³ Syaikhoni Jazuli interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Moroccan restaurant on 27 June 2018.

Muslims come from all around the world. Table 2 lists the main mosques and Islamic centres in Busan, South Korea.³⁶⁴

Mosques and Islamic Centres	District	Address	Telephone Number
Busan Mosque	Geumjeong	30-1, Namsan-dong, Geumjeong-gu, Busan	+82- 51- 518-9991
Babussalam Islamic Centre	Jeonggwan	2F 829, Jeonggwan-ro, Gijang-gun, Busan	01092940023
Al-Kausar Mosque	Noksan	180, Songjeong-gil, Gangseo-gu, Busan	No contact number
Al-Misabah Islamic Centre	Sasang	2F 34, Gwangjang-ro 37 beon-gil, Sasang-gu, Busan	+82 51-323-6194
Hidayatullah Mosque	Jangrim	3F 153, Jangrim-ro, Saha-gu, Busan	No contact number

Table 2: Mosque and Islamic Centres in Busan, South Korea established since the 1980s³⁶⁵

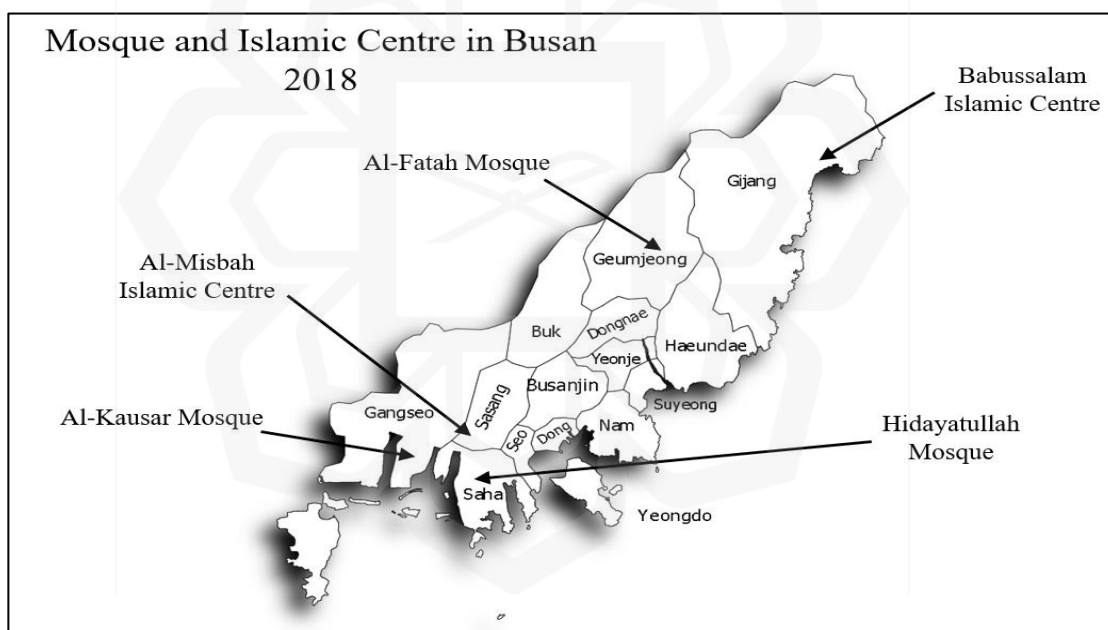


Figure 8: The map showing the location Mosques and Islamic Centres in Busan up to 2018³⁶⁶

³⁶⁴ Visit to mosques and Islamic centres in Busan by the researcher in 2018.

³⁶⁵ Visit Korea, (n.d.), "Prayer Rooms" via Visit Korea <https://english.visitkorea.or.kr/enu/ATR/SI_ENG_prayerList.jsp?gotoPage=10#> (accessed 5 May, 2020).

³⁶⁶ Figure 8 displays the location of mosques and Islamic centres in Busan available until 2018. The mapping was done by the researcher using information obtained during his visit to Busan. The map original source can be found at the following link: <https://paintmaps.com/blank-maps/507c/samples>.

Detailed information on these mosques and Islamic centres in Busan will be discussed as follows.

5.5.1 Al-Fatah Mosque



Figure 9: Al-Fatah Mosque Compound³⁶⁷

The construction of the Al-Fatah Mosque began in the mid-1970s, with a donation received from the Libyan ex-finance minister, Ali Fellaq, and it was completed in 1980. During its opening, 55 Muslim delegates from Islamic countries came to see the historical moment.³⁶⁸ The mosque is the second mosque³⁶⁹ built in South Korea and became an Islamic symbol in the south of the country. The Al-Fatah Mosque is also known as Dusil Mosque, where the name refers to the location of the mosque, i.e., at Dusil which is accessible via public transportation like the Busan metro train station

³⁶⁷ Figure 8 shows a picture of Al-Fatah Mosque and two-story building. This picture was taken during the researcher's visit to Al-Fatah Busan Mosque on 6 July 2018, where a conversion of a South Korean happened, and the researcher was asked to be one of the witnesses during the process of the *Shahadah* (profession of faith).

³⁶⁸ Ali An Sun Geun, *Islam Damai...*, 197.

³⁶⁹ Yoshi Nathania, "5 Masjid Besar do Korea Selatan yang Paling Populer, Megah Banget" *IDN Times*, 29 May, 2019, via IDN Times, <<https://www.idntimes.com/travel/destination/yoshi/masjid-besar-di-korea-selatan-yang-paling-populer/5>> (accessed 16 December, 2019).

(exit at Dusil station) and bus stop. Hence, the commute to this mosque is easier for Muslim workers and students. Besides, being regarded as a historical building, many Muslim tourists often come to visit this mosque.

The mosque was painted in white with a small dome at the centre, a minaret and consists of three floors, each with a different layout and function. The first floor of the mosque comprises a lobby, several rooms, and offices like the Imam's office, receptionist room and lecture room. The women's room on the first floor is attached with an ablution area and restroom. The second and third floors can be accessed either from inside or outside, which makes it convenient for visitors to access these floors from the first floor or the outer stairs. The second floor is the main prayer room for males, while the third floor is the praying hall for females. In terms of organisational structure, the mosque is regulated and operated by the KMF Busan branch.

Beside the mosque, a two-floor building owned by the mosque was planned to be used as offices. Currently the building is partly occupied and rented by a private kindergarten and several other parts of the building are rented to the locals. Hence, these rented buildings enable the mosque to acquire money to pay the expenses of the mosque including electrical and water bills.³⁷⁰ The mosque is surrounded by several buildings such as an apartment and two halal restaurants, namely Cappadocia Turkish Kebab House run by Sulayman, and Morocco Casablanca Restaurant run by the Moroccans. Apart from providing halal food for the locals and Muslim tourists, these restaurants also serve as places of social gatherings for Muslims. According to Syaikhoni, almost 20 churches are within the radius of the Al-Fatah Mosque.³⁷¹ For activities, these have

³⁷⁰ Junaidi Al-Fais interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 13 July 2018.

³⁷¹ During the researcher's visit, while traveling by bus and train in the city of Busan, churches can easily be spotted since they all have a very big cross erected on top of the churches.

been mentioned during the previous discussion on the KMF, which include preparing iftar during Ramadhan, Al-Quran recitation contest in 2017, Eid Festival, Islamic lectures, and language classes (Indonesian, Korean and Arabic) for the Muslims.³⁷²

5.5.2 Babussalam Islamic Centre, Jeonggwan



Figure 10: Babussalam Islamic Centre, Jeonggwan³⁷³

The Babussalam Islamic centre in Jeonggwan³⁷⁴ was established in 2011 after an influx of Indonesian workers to the area, and at that time, there were not more than 200 Indonesian workers working and living there.³⁷⁵ With the help from the KMF Busan branch under Zubair Lee at that time, they were able to rent the second floor of a building owned by a local South Korean to be used as a praying and gathering place for Indonesian workers. The Islamic centre is overseen mainly by Indonesian workers since the area is far from the main city; it is neither a tourist place nor near to any universities.

³⁷² Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 24-31.

³⁷³ Figure 9 shows a signboard of Babussalam Islamic Centre at Jeonggwan. This picture was taken during the researcher's visit to the Islamic Centre on 8 July 2018.

³⁷⁴ Visit by the researcher on 8 June 2018 and had an interview with Mr. Hary, a representative for the Jeonggwan Babussalam Islamic Centre.

³⁷⁵ Hary interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Jeonggwan Babussalam Islamic Centre on 8 July 2018.

Jeonggwan is a mountainous area where many heavy industry factories are located.³⁷⁶ The Islamic centre is located beside a main road surrounded by mountains and paddy fields. Next to the Islamic centre, there is a convenient store and in front of it is a Hyundai Oil bank petrol station.³⁷⁷ At the corner of the Islamic centre, the committee built a small mart to sell halal products from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Australia.

The Indonesian workers mostly work at automobile, paper, steel, and iron factories. According to Hary, a representative of the Centre, there are no South Korean Muslims living in Jeonggwan; hence, making the area exclusively an Indonesian place of gathering. Although he said that there are several Pakistani workers in Jeonggwan, they are mostly passive attendees at the Islamic centre. The Islamic centre does not have any appointed Imam like the Busan Mosque since they are all workers, but most of them are able to lead the prayer and voluntarily become the Imam during prayer times. However, they still have an organisational chart since they need to manage the Islamic centre, which include positions like president, treasurer, and secretary.³⁷⁸ The Muslim community in Jeonggwan is only able to gather at the Babussalam Islamic centre on weekends since they all work during the weekdays. Hence, most activities will be held on Saturdays and Sundays. Such activities are like Quranic recitation on every second week of every month and after night prayers, they will listen to an Islamic lecture given by invited guests, who could be either Islamic scholars or Indonesian workers who have knowledge on Islamic teachings. On Friday, since Muslims need to come to the mosque

³⁷⁶ Visit to Jeonggwan. 8 July 2018.

³⁷⁷ Observation during visit to the Babussalam Islamic Centre.

³⁷⁸ During the researcher's visit to the Babussalam Islamic centre, the organisational chart was vacant as the annual election of new members for positions at the Islamic centre was yet to be conducted. The previous president was named Badrus Surur, also known as 'Ketua Ta'mir'

for the compulsory Friday Congregational Prayer, only those who work close to the Islamic centre and those who have night shifts are able to attend the prayer.³⁷⁹

In terms of working condition, Hary stated that their South Korean employers are quite nice and tolerant towards Muslims. If the workers do their jobs and do not cause problems, their employers will treat them in a good manner. Furthermore, Hary said that the South Koreans at Jeongwan are welcoming and treat the community nicely. The police are also involved with the Muslim community in Jeongwan; they visit the Islamic centre every two months, giving lectures on safety measures and asking if there are any problems between the Muslim community and local South Koreans.³⁸⁰

5.5.3 Al-Kausar Mosque, Noksan



Figure 11: Al-Kausar Mosque, Noksan³⁸¹

³⁷⁹ Hary interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Jeongwan Babussalam Islamic Centre on 8 July 2018.

³⁸⁰ The visit by the police, as informed by Zubair Lee and Hary, was also meant to gather intelligence on Muslims who were living there in order to avoid any extreme views or suspicious activities. This was deemed as important in order to preserve peace there. It was also to avoid cases like the worker from Uzbekistan who stayed at the Gimhae area and posted about ISIS and his extreme views which caused a problem at Jeongwan.

³⁸¹ Figure 10 shows a picture of Al-Kausar Mosque at Noksan also known as Noksan Islamic Center. This picture was taken during the researcher's visit to the mosque on 27 July 2018.

The Al-Kausar Mosque was built in 2012 with the collaboration of foreign workers from four different Islamic countries, namely Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Indonesia.³⁸² That said, the biggest donation was from the Indonesian and Pakistani workers.³⁸³ The workers purchased the land in 2009 using the donation collected since early 2000. The construction process, however, was not smooth; they hired a local contractor to build the mosque, but the contractor did not build the mosque and ran away with the money. The police got involved but failed to catch the contractor; hence, another collection of donations began which finally ended with the completion of the mosque after three years at the cost of 500 million won. The mosque was built beside a hill and in front of the mosque, there is a Hyundai car workshop. The mosque is a two-story building, with a prayer room located at the second floor while the first floor has two rooms, a kitchen, and a small mart.³⁸⁴

According to Istantor, the manager of the Al-Kausar Mosque, since Noksan is situated close to four other neighbourhoods (Daejo, Gangdong, Myeongji, Garak), the Muslims from those areas also become attendees of the mosque, who are predominantly Indonesian workers, numbering up to 500. Meanwhile, attendees originating from Uzbekistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan amount to 500 people, and he believed that the number of Muslims from the neighbouring areas is around 1,000 people.³⁸⁵ He explained that the high number of foreign Muslims there is because the areas have a lot of manufacturing industries, where there is a Samsung factory, textile factories,

³⁸² Interview with Istantor from Indonesia who is the Manager of the Al-Kausar Mosque, Noksan on 27 July 2018. He has been working in Busan for 7 years. He came to the country for 2 terms of the working period and currently he is on the last term working in South Korea as the country introduced a new policy for foreign workers where they are able to come to South Korea using a working visa for 2 terms only, which accumulate to only 5 to 6 years of work.

³⁸³ The donation was also used by the locals to pay the monthly water and electrical bills of the mosque, which amounted to 1 million won.

³⁸⁴ Researcher visits the Al-Kausar Mosque, Noksan.

³⁸⁵ The number was estimated during the Eid festival gathering at the mosques.

automobile factories, fisheries since the area is close to the sea,³⁸⁶ and construction. Out of the 500 Indonesians who work in the Noksan neighbourhood, 10 of them are women with one of them married to a local Korean man, which led to his reversion to Islam and became the sole South Korean Muslim who lives in Noksan.³⁸⁷

The mosque acquires halal products from the KMF Busan branch and most of which are from Zubair Lee's cold storage. The Indonesians also set up a halal eatery for the Muslims there; hence, making it easier for them to consume halal food. Each Friday, the Friday sermon will be delivered by different Imams from different countries in their own mother tongue as most of the attendees cannot speak and understand English or Arabic. Hence, to ensure that the attendees understand the sermons, they have a rotation system in order to be fair to all. No da'wah activities are conducted by the Al-Kausar Mosque since they are all busy working. Although the mosque consists of people from different countries with different madhab, they do not have a problem with each other and peacefully co-exist. Most communication between the Muslim community in Noksan is in Korean as they have learned the language, making it the lingua franca for Muslims in the Noksan neighbourhood. Also, for the purpose of ensuring peace, the mosque has a tight relationship with the local law enforcement where they have activities and meetings almost every week to ensure no problem arises or if there are any problems, the police will offer their help.³⁸⁸

Regarding the relationship with the local people, several incidents happened during the early years where the locals called the police because the mosque became

³⁸⁶ According to Istantor, this is the most dangerous work as every year many Indonesian workers die while working at the sea due to the lack of safety measures and the rough conditions of the sea where the waves are often quite high.

³⁸⁷ Istantor interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Kausar Mosque on 27 July 2018.

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

crowded during the the weekend with people and motorcycles, as most of the Muslims go to the mosque during the weekend. This caused the locals to feel suspicious and uncomfortable. After the police came and explained to them, the locals understood and tolerated the situation up until now.

5.5.4 Al-Misabah Islamic Centre, Sasang



Figure 12: Al-Misabah Islamic Centre, Sasang³⁸⁹

The Sasang Islamic Centre was established in 2014 by Indonesian and Pakistani workers.³⁹⁰ The Islamic centre is rented on the second floor of a four-story commercial building in Sasang city. The Islamic centre consists of a prayer room, ablution area, kitchen and one room.³⁹¹ Surrounding the area are commercial buildings consisting of

³⁸⁹ Figure 11 shows a picture of Al-Misabah Islamic Centre at Sasang. This picture was taken during the researcher's visit to the mosque on 14 July 2018.

³⁹⁰ Interview on 14 July 2018 with Arif Anuar from Indonesia who came to Busan in early 2018 for work. He is the only available person whom the researcher was able to interview since it was a weekday when most of the foreign Muslims were working.

³⁹¹ Visit by the researcher on 14 July 2018.

restaurants, barber shop, marts, and others. According to Arif Anuar, an Indonesian worker, the Islamic centre does not have many attendees and Indonesians who frequently visit the Islamic centre are not more than 20 people. There are also several Uzbekistan nationalities who frequently visit the mosque, and some even stay at the Islamic centre without having jobs; thus, rendering their status in the country illegal.³⁹²

Indonesians and Pakistanis who attend the Islamic centre have a good relationship between them, and the same at the Al-Kausar Noksan Mosque. They respect each other's madhab and do a rotation for the Imam position and communicate with each other using the Korean language since they are unable to converse in English. Similar to other Islamic centres and mosques, they acquire halal products from the KMF Busan branch and Zubair Lee's cold storage. On weekends, several activities are often conducted by the committee of the Islamic centre, such as Al-Quran recitation, Islamic lectures by Imam Syaikhoni, and weekly routine activities with PUMITA Busan which include meetings and discussions.

³⁹² During the researcher's visit, an interview with an Uzbekistani failed since he did not want to be interviewed as he was currently staying in the country illegally.

5.5.5 Hidayatullah Mosque, Jangrim



Figure 13: Hidayatullah Mosque, Jangrim³⁹³

The Hidayatullah Mosque located in Jangrim was opened in 2016 in a rented building.³⁹⁴ It was acquired by foreign Muslims with help from Zubair Lee and is situated on the third floor of a commercial building in front of a main road. The mosque was proposed and set up by two Indonesians named Syaikhoni and Yanuar in order to help foreign Muslims in Jangrim to have a permanent place for prayers and gatherings. Imam Yasir Lee as the KMF Busan branch's representative is the manager of the mosque who oversees its management.³⁹⁵ According to Suryanto, the mosque was sometimes attended by 50 to 60 foreign Muslims especially during Friday Congregational Prayer, and it can reach up to 100 Muslims during Eid prayer.³⁹⁶ The majority are from Indonesia and only a few from Uzbekistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

³⁹³ Figure 12 shows a picture of Hidayatullah Mosque at Jangrim. This picture was taken during the researcher's visit to the mosque on 20 July 2018.

³⁹⁴ The place is rented for 500 thousand won. On the ground floor there is a restaurant, the first floor is vacant, while the fourth floor is occupied by Junior Chamber International Korea.

³⁹⁵ The researcher visited the mosque on 20 July 2018.

³⁹⁶ An interview with Suryanto had been conducted at the mosque on 20 July 2018. He is the committee member of the Hidayatullah Mosque, Jangrim and has been staying in South Korea for 10 years.

He also verified that among the 100 people, there are no Korean Muslims residing in Jangrim. For safety measure, they have a good relationship with the local police and the area is relatively peaceful without any confrontation with the local people. Here, the mosque also receives halal food supply from the KMF Busan branch. As with others, the mosque also has the same routine in organising events like Al-Quran recitation, gatherings, meetings and Islamic lectures.³⁹⁷

It is worthy to mention here that these Islamic centres and mosques are able to survive in South Korea thanks to their cooperation with the local authorities. Most interviewees like Zubair Lee, Hary and Istantor, highlighted that they have a good relationship with the local police which benefits the Muslims as this can hinder extremists from either among the Muslims or Christians from doing something to disparage the image of Islam and Muslims in South Korea. At the same time, by preventing the spread of extremist ideas among Muslims, it helps the Muslim community to survive and grow without having to suffer backlash from the Koreans. Moreover, with the absence of extremists within their ranks, Muslims in South Korea will be able to deepen their cooperation and unity. Hence, at the moment, generally the Muslim community in South Korea is able to live peacefully without fear of threats coming from South Koreans or Muslim extremists.

5.6 CONCLUSION

Prominent Muslim figures and organisations have done their best for the Muslim community in Busan, which has resulted in the growing number of mosques, Islamic centres, and *musallas*, as well as the increased number of Korean Muslims in Busan.

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

Their tireless effort has greatly contributed to the development of the Muslim community in Busan by providing places for worship, aid and solving problems faced by the local and foreign Muslims. The mosques and Islamic centres also have become a safe haven for foreign Muslims who came to South Korea by providing a temporary place to stay. Last but not least, one point to take note is that the contributions of the Indonesian community in Busan in comparison to other groups is the most visible. Not only did the Indonesians form Islamic organisations, but they also built mosques, Islamic centres and musallas, as well as involved in supplying goods to the Muslim community. For their unending support and involvement, this has given Islam a chance to survive and thrive in a non-Muslim country. The great contributions by the Indonesians can perhaps be traced to the spirit of Islam and Islamic brotherhood which Indonesians bring with them everywhere they go and have undoubtedly been very instrumental in the development of the Muslim community in Busan.

CHAPTER SIX

BUSAN MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN THE FACE OF CHALLENGES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Being a minority, be it religious or ethnic minority, is not always easy as the group is often subjected to the actions and desires of the mainstream population or majority. In this chapter, the challenges that are discussed in relation to the Muslim community in Busan are quite universal as they also happen to other Muslim groups in other places in South Korea like Seoul, Jeju, Gwangju, etc. The challenges can be divided into external and internal; the former refers to those coming from elements outside the community while the latter is from within the Muslim community itself. Moreover, this chapter examines the challenges and problems faced by the Muslim *da'i* in doing da'wah in Busan. These challenges are scrutinised to also understand how the community deals with the challenges and whether the problems persisted or were solved. At the same time, the researcher tried to come up with some suggestions and recommendations on how to cater to the problems. Hopefully, this will ease the problems and challenges faced by the Muslim community in Busan specifically and South Korea generally.

6.2 CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS FROM ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

Islam stresses on the importance of challenges in a Muslim's life and how to overcome them. The purpose of challenges and problems in life according to Islam is mentioned in the Al-Quran; Surah Al-Ankabut; verses 2 – 3:

“Do people think once they say, “We believe,” that they will be left without being put to the test?, We certainly tested those before them. And ‘in this way’ Allah will clearly distinguish between those who are truthful and those who are liars.”³⁹⁸

The verse mentioned that challenges are tests from God to differentiate the believers and unbelievers. Moreover, in another verse in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 155, God promised good tidings for those who stay patient in the face of challenges:

“And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits but give good tidings to the patient.”³⁹⁹

³⁹⁸ According to Al-Maududi: “When this thing was said, the conditions prevailing in Makkah were extremely trying. Whoever accepted Islam was made a target of tyranny and humiliation and persecution. If he was a slave or a poor person, he was beaten and subjected to unbearable tortures. If he was a shopkeeper or artisan, he was made to suffer economic hardships, even starvation. If he was a member of an influential family, his own people would tease and harass him in different ways and make life difficult for him. This had created an atmosphere of fear and fright in Makkah, due to which most people were afraid of believing in the Prophet (peace be upon him) although they acknowledged him to be a true Prophet (peace be upon him) in their hearts; and some others who believed would lose heart soon afterwards and would submit and yield to the disbelievers when they confronted dreadful persecutions. Though these trying circumstances could not shake the determination of the strong-willed companions, naturally they also were sometimes overwhelmed by an intense feeling of anxiety and distraction. An instance of this is found in the tradition of Khabbab bin Arat (may Allah be pleased with him), which has been related by Bukhari, Abu Daud and Nasai. He says, “During the time when we had become tired of our persecution by the mushriks, one day I saw the Prophet (peace be upon him) sitting in the shade of the wall of the Kabah. I went up to him and said, O Messenger of Allah, don't you pray for us. Hearing this, his face became red with feeling and emotion, and he said, the believers who have gone before you had been subjected to even greater persecutions. Some one of them was made to sit in a ditch in the earth and was sawed into two pieces from head to foot. Someone's joints were rubbed with iron combs so as to withhold him from the faith. By God, this mission will be accomplished, and the time is not far when a person will travel without apprehension from Sana to Hadramaut and there will be none but Allah Whom he will fear”. and “That is, this is not a new thing which you alone may be experiencing. The same has also been happening before you. Whoever made a claim to the faith, he was made to pass through trials and tribulations. And when the others were not given anything without the trial, you are in no way any special people that you should be favored and rewarded merely on verbal profession of the faith”. My Islam, Surah Al-Ankabut Ayat 2-3 (29:2-3 Quran) with Tafsir, (n.d.), via My Islam website <https://myislam.org/surah-ahzab/ayat-21/> (accessed 12 October, 2023).

³⁹⁹ According to Ibn Kathir: “Allah informs us that He test and tries His servants. Hence, He tests them with the bounty sometimes and sometimes with the afflictions of fear and hunger. The frightened and the hungry persons show the effects of the affliction outwardly and this is why Allah has used here the word ‘Libas’ (cover or clothes) of fear and hunger. He then explained whom He meant by ‘the patient’ whom He praised”. My Islam, Surah Al-Baqarah Ayat 155-157 (2:155-157 Quran) with Tafsir, (n.d.), via My Islam website <https://myislam.org/surah-baqarah/ayat-156/> (accessed 12 October, 2023).

The Al-Quran also assured that tests are given to those who are capable to deal with them. In Surah Al-Baqarah verse 286:

“Our Lord, and burden us not with that which we have no ability to bear.”⁴⁰⁰

These four verses in the Al-Quran inform human beings, especially the Muslims, that the challenges imposed are not to burden them but rather to test their faith in God, and for those who overcome the challenges will be rewarded for their perseverance and endurance. Hence, for Muslims, they are not supposed to feel feeble and dismal upon facing problems as they should trust that God will reward them at the end.⁴⁰¹ In line with this Quranic message, it is important for the Muslims in Busan to be patient with the external or internal challenges and try their best to overcome them and strive for the betterment of Islam and Muslims in the community.

6.3 EXTERNAL CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY MUSLIM COMMUNITY AND DA'WAH ACTIVITIES

Several external challenges have been examined to shed light on the problems faced by the local and foreign Muslim community in Busan. These external or outside community challenges are assessed through the lens of South Koreans as currently Islam and Muslims are seen in a negative light, as well as from the viewpoint of Muslims living in Busan. The prevailing negative view is mainly caused by biased

⁴⁰⁰ According to Ibn Kathir: “Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope. He gets reward for that (good) which he has earned, and he is punished for that (evil) which he has earned. “Our Lord! Punish us not if we forget or fall into error, our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which You did lay on those before us (Jews and Christians); our Lord! Put not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Pardon us and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. You are our Mawla (Patron, Supporter and Protector) and give us victory over the disbelieving people.” My Islam, Surah Al-Baqarah Ayat 286 (2:286 Quran) with Tafsir, (n.d.), via My Islam website <https://myislam.org/surah-baqarah/ayat-286/> (accessed 12 October, 2023).

⁴⁰¹ Khadijeh Abolmaalii Al-Husseini, Fazaleh Mirghafoorian, Sara Razian, “Strategies for Dealing with Problems from the Perspective of Islam”, *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*, 7 (10) (2020): 133-134.

propagandas of the Western media and several extremist groups who through their actions and extreme views have tarnished the image of the religion by cherry-picking some teachings of Islam which they think suit their agenda. Besides, the external challenges have rendered da'wah activities to be slow as the religion itself has been smeared with lies by those who are anti-Islam or anti-Muslim; hence, distancing the South Koreans from understanding the religion. Nevertheless, that said, it is important to uncover these problems in order to enable the community to face the issues and subsequently solve them.

6.3.1 Media and Christianity

Before discussing further on the challenges involving media and Christianity, it is necessary to look into the South Korean's view on Islam or the concept of religion itself. South Koreans are living in a materialistic and secular country with the majority of the people not associating themselves with any religion. Hence, most Koreans are atheists where they do not regard religion as important since they uphold a materialistic worldview⁴⁰². Moreover, they see religion as a private and individual belief which most try to avoid talking about. Hence, South Koreans are not comfortable being approached by strangers on the street who try to preach and invite them to any religion, either Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, or others. As a result, it is more difficult to do street da'wah in South Korea compared to European countries or even America.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰² Syaikhoni Jazuli interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Moroccan restaurant on 27 June 2018.

⁴⁰³ Statistically, in 2015, around 56 percent of South Koreans did not affiliate themselves with any religion and in 2010 around 46 percent did not affiliate themselves with any religion; thus, indicating a 10 percent increment within 5 years. L. Yoon, Population distribution in South Korea in 2015, by religion. Via Statista. June 21, 2022. <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/996013/south-korea-population-distribution-by-religion/>> (accessed 14 October 2022). Phillip Connor, 6 Facts About South Korea's Growing Christian Population. Pew Research Center. August 12, 2014. <<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/08/12/6-facts-about-christianity-in-south-korea/>> (accessed 14 October 2022).

Media, especially the Western media, is one of the mediums which spread negative propaganda towards Islam and Muslims. Since the Korean media use sources from American media, they also negatively report on Islam. Consequently, South Korean citizens develop negative views on Islam and Muslims, resulting from a long duration of exposure to systematic propaganda by the mainstream media, such as that owned by the Christian group like CTS TV⁴⁰⁴.⁴⁰⁵ Although history narrated the good relationship between Muslims and Koreans in the early dynasty like the Goryeo dynasty, many are oblivious about this, maybe because this history has never been taught or highlighted in the country's education syllabus. Even the recent history regarding Turkey, an Islamic country that helped South Korea during the Korean War (1950-53), did not lessen the negative views towards Islam and Muslims. The media apparently made no attempt to shed light on this relationship between Muslims and South Korea. In fact, the view on Islam and Muslims continued getting worse due to several incidents involving Muslims and South Koreans in the Middle East, as mentioned in Chapter Two,⁴⁰⁶⁴⁰⁷⁴⁰⁸ which was circulated in the South Korean media; hence, spreading the sentiment all across the nation.

Moreover, da'wah activities in South Korea is quite challenging as it is a non-Muslim homogenous country. The situation has in fact gotten worse over the years as

⁴⁰⁴ CTS TV stands for Christian Television System. The anti-Islamic propaganda by this TV will be uncovered under this sub-topic.

⁴⁰⁵ Chang May Choon "Many Koreans Have Big Misunderstandings About Islam,' Says A Muslim Convert in South Korea". The Straits Times. May 3, 2021. <<https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/many-koreans-have-big-misunderstandings-about-islam>> (accessed 21 January 2022)

⁴⁰⁶ Sohn, Jie-ae, Faraj, Caroline (23 June 2004). "South Korean hostage beheaded: Seoul reaffirms plans to send more troops to Iraq". Cable News Network. Seoul, South Korea: Time Warner <<https://web.archive.org/web/20040625225503/http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/06/22/iraq.hostage/>> (accessed 1 December, 2018).

⁴⁰⁷ James Brook "The Reach of War: South Korea; Hostage's Death Unleashes Mixed Emotions Back Home". New York Times. 24 June, 2004. <<https://www.nytimes.com/2004/06/24/world/the-reach-of-war-south-korea-hostage-s-death-unleashes-mixed-emotions-back-home.html>> (accessed 21 October 2018)

⁴⁰⁸ Moon Gwang Lip "Muslims here pray for safe homecoming of 22 hostages..."

Christianity in South Korea took a harsh stance towards Islam where most of the media, giant companies, and politicians are backed by Christian organisations like the Korean Christian Council. Hence, it is quite challenging for the Muslim community and da'wah activities to face these organisations or groups since they are quite powerful either in the government or private sector. Due to this reason, Muslim *da'i* normally tries to avoid preaching to South Korean Christians and focuses more on South Koreans who do not associate themselves with any religion. This is to avoid any unpleasant encounter with the Church.⁴⁰⁹

The reason for the hostile sentiment that surfaced between Christians and Muslims is almost known to all as there had been many religious wars and disagreements between them over faith in the past centuries; for example, the Crusade Wars. Moreover, the long history of the religious struggle and conflict against the Muslims in the West had also negatively impacted the views of South Korean Christians, causing them to also take a harsh stance towards Islam and Muslims due to the strong influence of the Western/Christian culture in the country.

In the meantime, the constant negative propaganda against Islam and Muslims launched by local and foreign media backed by Christian organisations had resulted in the growing Islamophobia⁴¹⁰ in South Korea, where hatred, fear, ignorance and prejudice against Islam and Muslims spread across the local society. Islamophobia started to root in the South Korean society in the early 21st century when Western countries began their anti-Islam propaganda, leading to wariness, intimidation, and vigilant actions by many against Muslims. Of all events, one incident that really

⁴⁰⁹ Bashir Kim, talk on Islam in Korea, Da'wah: Challenge and Opportunity. 12 October 2014.

⁴¹⁰ Islamophobia according to Collins online dictionary is 'hatred or fear of Muslims or of politics or culture'. Collins, Islamophobia <<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/islamophobia>> (accessed 1 December 2022)

intensified the Islamophobic attitude was the 9/11 event when the Western media blamed Islam and Muslims in general as the perpetrators that contributed to the event; hence, ignited discrimination towards Islam and Muslims throughout the world as well as in South Korea.⁴¹¹

Furthermore, Bashir Kim had said during an interview that the Christian missionaries have in their mission an objective to smear Islam and in doing so have been projecting negative views on Islam in the media. At the same time, they attempt to prevent any Islamic da'wah activities by alleging them as having perilous plans towards the South Koreans. They also took an aggressive stand towards Muslims, giving misinformation to the public about Islam through talks and broadcasts. According to Syaikhoni, the nearby church had even sent several Christian missionaries to the Al-Fatah Mosque and tried to invite Muslims there to Christianity.⁴¹² A similar attempt was recorded from an interview with Hary who maintained that sometimes the Islamic centre in Jeongwan was approached by South Korean Christians from nearby churches as they wished to convert Muslims there to Christianity via Korean language classes.⁴¹³ During an interview with Syaikhoni, he mentioned that during his da'wah work in Busan, he faced several challenges, which include South Koreans' misunderstanding of Islam, locals avoiding being approached by Muslims, and the fact that most South Koreans are atheists means a great difficulty in getting them to accept the religion, as well as confrontations with Christian evangelists.

⁴¹¹ Bashir Kim interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi via email on 28 September 2015.

⁴¹² Syaikhoni Jazuli interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Moroccan restaurant on 27 June 2018.

⁴¹³ Hary interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Jeongwan Babussalam Islamic Centre on 8 July 2018.

This action taken by the Church and Christian missionaries has since increased and become prevalent in South Korea as they begin to see Islam and the Muslim community's positive development as a threat, especially since Muslims have gained a foothold in the country and their number is gradually growing. As a result, the Christian groups started to make a few moves to invalidate the existence of Islam in South Korea by making use of the media. According to Zubair Lee, the conflict between Christian missionaries and Muslim *da'i* will persist as there are Korean Christians who have reverted to Islam, and similarly there are also foreign Muslims who have converted to Christianity.⁴¹⁴ In addition, the existence of mosques and Islamic centres in South Korea is significantly small with only around 20 mosques and Islamic centres in comparison to 77,000 churches available throughout the country.⁴¹⁵

The action taken by the Christian groups mostly involve the media as it is the main medium in South Korea to get information and news, with which they blatantly provoke and invoke fear among South Koreans that the country will in future be taken over by Islam and Muslims. One such instance that proved the Christian's commitment in the anti-Islam propaganda was when CTS TV (Christian Television System)⁴¹⁶ aired a television programme in 2008 about the danger of Islam in South Korea. In the programme, several contemptuous comments on Islam and the holy Al-Quran were exchanged between the hosts, where one of them claimed that the Islamic terrorist ideology would get a foothold in South Korea if Islam was allowed to be disseminated in the country. Hearing this hearsay and fallacy, the KMF had taken action by requesting

⁴¹⁴ Zubair Lee Interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi via Facebook Messenger on 28 March 2016.

⁴¹⁵ Chang May Choon "Many Koreans... The Straits Times. May 3, 2021. <<https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/many-koreans-have-big-misunderstandings-about-islam>> (accessed 21 January 2022)

⁴¹⁶ CTS TV, also known as Christian Television System, has been the main Christian propagation channel since 1994 with more than 10 million subscribers.

CTS TV to publicly apologise to the Muslim community, but the request was rejected.⁴¹⁷

The second confrontation was when a journalist of *Hankyoreh Daily*⁴¹⁸ wrote an article about Islam entitled “Looking on Islam with a Jaundiced Eye,” in which he interviewed several Islamic scholars enlightening the masses about the true teaching of Islam and tried to counter the groundless allegation by the Christians that South Korea would become a Muslim country by 2020. The article received backlash from the Christian groups who showed their outrage by verbally insulting the Islamic scholars interviewed in the article. Some Islamic scholars also received the same treatment when they tried to speak up about Islam or educate the South Koreans about the religion as the Christian groups will almost instantly launch a cyber-attack towards these scholars.⁴¹⁹

Another confrontation between Islam and Christianity happened when the largest Christian organisation in the country, the Korean Christian Council⁴²⁰ or KCC disapproved a programme broadcasted by SBS (Seoul Broadway Station) in 2008.⁴²¹ It was a documentary that explained the status of Jesus (P.B.U.H.) as a prophet in Islam, in which several Islamic scholars were invited for an interview. As a result, the scholars were threatened and severely condemned by the Christians while the KCC pressured SBS to instantly terminate the programme. The KCC also took additional action by producing a 10-minute video on the threat of Islam in Korea by listing the troubles

⁴¹⁷ Hee Soo Lee, “Two Contradictory...”, 3-4.

⁴¹⁸ *Hankyoreh Daily* is one of the daily newspapers set up in 1988 which is independent of government control that tries to bring unbiased news in contrary to those published in the mainstream newspapers controlled by the government.

⁴¹⁹ No scholar names were mentioned by Hee Soo Lee in his literature. Hee Soo Lee, “Two Contradictory...”, 3-4.

⁴²⁰ KCC is an abbreviation for the Korean Christian Council established in 1989 that actively preaches Christianity in South Korea with 12 million members comprising 69 denominations and 20 Christian organisations throughout South Korea.

⁴²¹ SBS or Seoul Broadway Station is one of the main broadcasting stations in South Korea.

caused by Muslim immigrants and the increased Muslim new-borns resulting from marriage between the immigrants and South Koreans, which they claimed will lead to breeding home-grown terrorists.⁴²²

The Christian groups are also greatly involved with the government policy and decision-making; thus, several projects or ideas related to Islam and Muslims will be sternly opposed by them claiming anything related to Islam will lead the country towards Islamisation. Since the Korean government has a strong economic relationship with the Middle East, there was an attempt to strengthen the relationship. However, this was stalled due to fierce opposition by the Christian groups. For example, during Lee Myung Bak's presidency (2008-2013), his administration in 2012 planned to launch an Islamic Finance System with the aim to bring in money from the Middle East which is rich with oil. The plan, however, failed due to the Christian lawmakers' strong opposition.⁴²³

Another discontentment of Christian groups towards Islam and Muslims can be seen when the government during Park Geun Hye's (2013-2017) presidency tried to introduce a Muslim-friendly policy and Korea as a Halal Hub to attract more Muslim tourists as South Korea had become a new terminus for Muslim tourists from all around the world. In 2015, 800,000 Muslim tourists visited the country and by 2019 the number exceeded 1 million⁴²⁴ because of the influence of South Korean popular culture together with the wide advertisements of interesting places like Jeju Island, historical monuments in Seoul and others, which attracted many. Consequently, this led to the

⁴²² Hee Soo Lee, "Two Contradictory...", 4-6.

⁴²³ Chang May Choon "Many Koreans... The Straits Times. May 3, 2021. <<https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/many-koreans-have-big-misunderstandings-about-islam>> (accessed 21 January 2022)

⁴²⁴ Salama, "Malaysia: Halal Development Corporation Berhad (HDC) Signs MoU with Korea Institute of Halal Industry (KIHI)," *Halal Focus*, 30 July, 2020, via Halal Focus, < <https://halalfocus.net/malaysia-halal-development-corporation-berhad-hdc-signs-mou-with-korea-institute-of-halal-industry-kihi/>> (accessed 14 August 2021)

introduction of a Muslim-friendly policy proposed by several provincial governments like Daegu, Iksan, Gangwon, etc.⁴²⁵

In the policy, they proposed that the government invest in halal markets and provide prayer rooms for the convenience of Muslim tourists. This sound proposal which will increase revenue to the provincial governments and local businesses received backlash from the conservative Christian groups, who opposed the idea and organised rallies in the provinces and came up with baseless accusations claiming that the proposed policy was part of an Islamisation process in the country. The opposition eventually led to the provincial governments like Daegu and Iksan to abandon the policy. The protest had attracted the KMF's attention, but they refused to make any statement on the matter as it involved the provincial governments and the biggest Christian organisation which they tried to avoid, i.e., Korean Christian Council. Any attempt to interfere by the KMF will further exacerbate the hostile situation.⁴²⁶

In a nutshell, these badgering acts by the Christian groups and media in the country will be a lengthy and tough battle for the Muslim *da'i* and *da'wah* organisations to endure. Hence, the *da'i* and Islamic organisations especially in Busan alike should prepare themselves to face the wall of resistance coming from the Christian groups. At the same time, they need to strive hard to uplift the discriminatory views directed towards Islam and Muslims by South Koreans as portrayed by the media and Christian groups. The Busan mosques and Islamic centres need to organise more mosque open days and invite the members of Christian churches to come and have a peaceful

⁴²⁵ Jung Min Ho, "Muslim-friendly policies to boost tourism face Christian backlash," *The Korea Times*, 20 March, 2016, via The Korea Times, <http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2016/03/113_200737.html> (accessed 16 August 2020)

⁴²⁶ Ibid.

discussion to clear all misunderstandings and come to an agreement for a peaceful co-existence in Busan in order to avoid unwanted conflicts in the future.

In the aftermath of all these events and incidents involving the media and Christian groups, it is interesting to see that some South Koreans have begun to seek information about Islam from authentic sources rather than blindly believing all the news and information about the religion conveyed by the Western and local media. Some stepped up their curiosity by visiting mosques for answers and the Muslim *da'i* took this opportunity to explain the misconceptions toward Islam. Furthermore, post 9/11, bookshops in South Korea started to receive volumes of books on Islam following the increased interest shown by the South Koreans to learn about the religion. Nonetheless, the majority's view on Islam and Muslims is still abysmal with the idea that Muslims are terrorists, and that Islam fosters violent behaviour in its teachings.⁴²⁷

6.3.2 Maltreatment of Muslims due to Ignorance, Prejudice and Discrimination

It is common for people to harbour hatred of something that they have no knowledge, either because of prejudice, ignorance, or lack of desire to learn. Under this sub-topic, the researcher investigated several issues pertaining to ignorance, prejudice, and discrimination among the local South Koreans, which might have affected the Muslims in the field of economy, social, education, etc.

In terms of economy, Muslims in South Korea are free to engage in business. One place renowned as a favourite spot for Muslim businesses is the Itaewon district in Seoul. Once a base of the American army during the Korean War, the area is crowded with foreign nationals from all over the world.⁴²⁸ For South Korean businessmen, the

⁴²⁷ Jiyun Camilla Nam, "Itaewon...", 48.

⁴²⁸ Hee Soo Lee, "Two Contradictory...", 7-8.

increased number of Muslim businesses in the area had left them with feelings of insecurity and discomfort. Most of them felt threatened with such development which can negatively affect their own economic survival, causing the negative feelings to brew against the Muslims, although they did not feel the same way towards other foreign businesses there.⁴²⁹

Meanwhile in Busan, since most Muslims who came to the city are mostly industrial workers who are not involved in business, the same sentiment among local businessmen was absent. For businessmen like Junaidi Al-Fais, he did not have any problem opening a business in Busan as he is one of the only two foreign businesses including the Moroccan restaurant there, compared to Itaewon where there exist many Muslim businesses. In an interview with Cappadocia's owner, Sulayman, a Korean Muslim, also mentioned he did not receive any problem from the locals and his eatery is well received by the locals. Apart from the low number of Muslim-owned eateries, maybe another reason is that he is a Korean, which explains why he experienced no discrimination or prejudice compared to foreign businessmen.

In the education system, South Korea is regarded as one of the most literate nations in the world with 99 percent of the population able to read and write. The education system is modelled after the American education system and this includes the distorted ideas about Islam in the school syllabus.⁴³⁰ Although there is no obstacle in learning Islam in South Korea, Muslims still face culture-related problems in schools. A report by *Yoon Won Sup* in *The Korean Times* stated that young Muslims face problems at schools, both primary and secondary levels. At government schools, they need to avoid the cafeteria since halal food is not provided and the same situation applies

⁴²⁹ Jiyun Camilla Nam, "Itaewon...", 53.

⁴³⁰ Hee Soo Lee, *the Advent...*, 223.

to those attending international schools, the majority of which are administrated by the Christian community.⁴³¹

Furthermore, many foreign children or students are bullied at school because of their different physical or facial appearance. This discrimination not only happens towards Muslims, but also other minority groups primarily due to South Korea being a heterogenous country. For example, a Nigerian Korean man named Han Hyun Min was discriminated at school by students and teachers alike because of his dark skin colour although he is a Korean national.⁴³² His story was narrated in *The Korea Herald*:

“On television shows, Han has frequently told stories of both the subtle and outright discrimination he has experienced growing up here. Friends’ parents would tell their children not to play with him. Insensitive kids would throw around racial slurs. Blatant stares and invasive questions filled his childhood. “There were times I wanted to hide in a hole,” he says. Each time, however, his mother would tell him, “You’re special.”⁴³³

In terms of social discrimination and ignorance, Muslim women receive most of the brunt as they wear the hijab and tend to stand out in a crowd. For example, when Samina Jin began to wear the hijab, she said that many Koreans would stare at her and one time she experienced an unforgettable incident when her hijab was pulled by a Korean woman which consequently made her feel unsafe and even thought about stopping wearing the hijab. However, during the incident, she learnt that some Koreans were appalled with the action and intervened, even asking the woman to apologise to Samina. Looking back at the incident, she maintained that it happened because the wearing of hijab is unfamiliar to the South Koreans, and some even associated it to

⁴³¹ Yoon Won Sup, “Muslim Community Gets New Recognition,” *The Korean Times*, 29 May, 2005, via Islam in Korea, <<http://www.islamkorea.com/english/articlean2.html>> (accessed 7 November, 2020).

⁴³² Romy Doo, “When Nigerian-Korean Model Han Hyun-Min Went Abroad for First Time,” *The Korea Herald*, 14 February, 2018, via The Korea Herald, <<http://m.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20180213000997>> (accessed 22 August, 2020).

⁴³³ Ibid.

terrorism which Samina saw as a sign of ignorance on the part of South Koreans about Islam.⁴³⁴ The same thing happened to Song Bo Ra,⁴³⁵ who recalled that when she first tried to wear the hijab, she was stared at by other South Koreans and even received insults where the latter targeted especially against Islam.⁴³⁶ The same situation was experienced by Lee Seul⁴³⁷ who married a Muslim man from Malaysia. As she put it,

“I will wear the hijab in Malaysia because no one will disturb me. But in Korea, people might...pull my hijab off, tell me I’m crazy, scold me...I’m not ready for that, I’m not so brave.”⁴³⁸

Socially, mixed marriages are commonly practised by Muslims in South Korea. Korean Muslim women tend to marry foreign Muslims who have come to work in the country, particularly from Bangladesh and Pakistan.⁴³⁹ The marriage of Korean women to foreign Muslims is seen as something negative by the locals in the country, including people in the Itaewon district⁴⁴⁰ as well as Busan. In the case of Samina who is living in Busan and married a Pakistani man, her family did not approve of her marriage and even disowned her, Samina did not give up in persuading her parents to accept her husband. Throughout the years, Samina constantly called her parents, visited them, and tried her best to get them to accept her spouse. At the same time, they showed good

⁴³⁴ Samina Jin interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 10 July 2018.

⁴³⁵ Song Bo Ra is a reverted Muslim since 2007 from Busan who is currently living in the Itaewon district. The large number of Muslims in Itaewon made her feel a bit safe wearing the hijab compared to in her hometown.

⁴³⁶ Chang May Choon “Many Koreans... The Straits Times. May 3, 2021. <<https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/many-koreans-have-big-misunderstandings-about-islam>> (accessed 21 January 2022)

⁴³⁷ Lee Seul became a Muslim in 2017 before she married Muhammad Khalid Ismail from Kelantan, Malaysia. They currently reside in Seoul and are actively involved with tourism activities in helping Muslim tourists with their stay in South Korea.

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

⁴³⁹ Samina Jin interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 10 July 2018.

⁴⁴⁰ Jiyun Camilla Nam, “Itaewon...”, 9.

behaviour as Muslims according to Islamic teaching, and at the end, her parents accepted her husband and have become very close to each other.⁴⁴¹

Moving to da'wah activities, some of the challenges faced in the propagation of Islam in South Korea are mainly because of ignorance and prejudice. Being ignorant about something can lead to misunderstanding and misinterpretation, which later breeds bias, discrimination, and hostility towards the matters that people are ignorant about. Although the South Koreans are literate, they fail to amply educate themselves about Islam, which led to the misconception and misunderstanding about the religion.⁴⁴² According to Hee Soo Lee, the misconception is mostly attributed to the media and the South Korean school syllabus:

“Islam and its culture, particularly the matter of polygamy, the status of Prophet Muhammad, militarism, Islamic fundamentalism, etc. are seriously distorted in school text-book and mass-media.”⁴⁴³

Maltreatment breeds from hatred which also comes from events that happened in the West and Middle East involving some extremist groups who call themselves Muslims, which increased the negative image of Islam in South Korea, such as the 9/11 incident in 2001 and the beheading of a South Korean citizen in Iraq in 2003.⁴⁴⁴ These incidents adversely affected the Muslims in Busan as the sentiment of anti-Islam and anti-Muslims amplified, especially in the early years of the 2000s. The hatred gave birth to prejudice and discrimination being projected towards the Muslims which in turn further alienated the Muslims from the locals. Additionally, this scenario seemed to have

⁴⁴¹ Samina Jin interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 10 July 2018.

⁴⁴² Bashir Kim interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi via email on 28 September 2015.

⁴⁴³ Hee Soo Lee, *the Advent...*, 223.

⁴⁴⁴ Already mentioned in chapter 2, *Sohn, Jie-ae, Faraj, Caroline (23 June 2004). "South Korean hostage beheaded: Seoul reaffirms plans to send more troops to Iraq". Cable News Network. Seoul, South Korea: Time Warner <. <https://web.archive.org/web/20040625225503/http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/06/22/iraq.hostage/>>* (accessed 1 December, 2018).

prompted a reaction from the churches where some Korean Christian evangelists, perhaps in the hope of the disparaging views might cause new converts to abandon Islam, went to the Al-Fatah Mosque to invite Muslims to Christianity.

In the early years of Islam in Busan, many South Koreans visited the Al-Fatah Mosque because during that time (1980 to 1990), the image of Islam was still well received since South Korea was depending on the projects contracted in the Middle East like oil refinery, construction, and others. Thus, the Middle East during this time was seen as the land of opportunity among South Koreans. However, the view changed after the wars that happened in the region led to the decreased number of South Koreans visiting mosques. The Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988)⁴⁴⁵ and then the Gulf War (1990-1991)⁴⁴⁶ gave negative perceptions toward Islam and Muslims as the wars brought instability to the region and became dangerous for the South Koreans to go and work there, and at the same time, caused them to perceive Islam and Muslims as violent. Another reason to explain the drop in the number of South Koreans visiting mosques is the influx of foreign Muslims into the country, causing Islam to be gradually seen as a foreign religion by the locals.⁴⁴⁷

Indeed, the struggle to eliminate ignorance and prejudice is a long and tough battle for Muslims in South Korea. As long as the South Koreans still follow the lead of the West in dealing with Muslims and keep using the media as propaganda to tarnish the image of Islam, the bias and discrimination will regrettably continue. Fortunately for Muslims, the millennial generation of South Koreans are more open-minded and

⁴⁴⁵ The Iran-Iraq War which began in September 1980 was known as the worst war after the World War II. It was caused by several reasons, namely ideological conflict, border dispute and the aggression of Iran after the Iranian Revolution in 1978. It finally ended in 1988 after the intervention of the United Nations. Will D Swearingen, "Geopolitical Origins of the Iran-Iraq War", *American Geographical Society*, 78 (4) (1988): 405.

⁴⁴⁶ Alastair Finlan, *The Gulf War of 1991*, (New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, 2008), 13-20.

⁴⁴⁷ Don Baker, "Islam Struggles...", 25-30.

some even try to shed light on the ignorance by visiting Muslim countries, interact through social media, and even make videos as YouTubers by introducing Islam to fellow South Koreans, which enable many youngsters to be more erudite about Islam and Muslims.

This trend, hopefully, will gradually restore the image of Islam and Muslims and enable the South Korean Muslims to be free from bias and discrimination. Once again, Muslim *da'i* and Islamic organisations should increase their efforts in re-educating the South Koreans by issuing leaflets, writing articles, journals and books on matters related to Islam and Muslims alike. Moreover, they also need to be involved on social media and video platforms by creating content on the daily routine of Muslims in South Korea, and introducing Islam in the easiest way possible to be understood by non-Muslims in the Korean language so that it can reach a wider audience in South Korea, especially for those who cannot speak English.

6.3.3 Halal Products and Muslim Dilemma

The challenges in terms of halal products are quite prevalent in South Korea since it is not easy to buy halal products in a non-Muslim country which is quite well-known for the usage of prohibited ingredients in Islam in food products like pork and alcohol.⁴⁴⁸ Moreover, halal meat and poultry are not easy to acquire as they need to be imported from halal certified companies in countries like Australia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. For those who live near the sea area like Busan, their situation is better since they have access to fresh seafood which can replace meat and poultry. According to

⁴⁴⁸ Jee Hwan Choe, Han Sul Yang, Sang Hoo Lee and Gwang Woong Go, Characteristics of pork belly consumption in South Korea and their health implication, *Journal of Animal Science and Technology*, 57 (22) (2015): 1-7. <<https://janimscitechnol.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40781-015-0057-1>> (accessed 23 August 2020).

Sulayman, Cappadocia's owner, in 2015, the community was blessed with the opening of a slaughterhouse in Busan rented by the KMF as mentioned in Chapter 4;⁴⁴⁹ however, it ended pretty soon as the cost of rent surpassed the profit.

Fortunately, in Busan, Zubair Lee and Muhammad Kim had opened a cold storage for imported halal products. The products they acquired are mostly beef and lamb from Australia, chicken from Thailand, and from Indonesia a wide variety of food including snacks, instant noodles, flavouring and others.⁴⁵⁰ However, the duo had a problem to cater with the demand as they did not have enough workers and the distance for deliveries is quite far stretching until the Seoul area which is more than 300 km of driving from Busan. The deteriorating health condition of Zubair Lee made it difficult for him to continuously be involved with the business; thus, forcing him to eventually close it down in 2021. The situation led to the Muslim community in Busan once again losing their main source of halal produces.

Upon being asked why South Korean companies did not take the opportunity to produce halal products, Zubair Lee said that although it is possible for companies in South Korea to invest in halal products like ramen or instant noodles for Muslim consumers and use the halal logo on their packaging, these companies are worried of a backlash where their products will be boycotted by the locals, especially the Christian groups, which will in turn affect their business. Hence, to avoid the boycott, they do not sell any halal products in the market, but they take the opportunity to produce halal ramen and export it to Islamic countries like Indonesia and Malaysia. Moreover, according to Zubair Lee, an institution like KIH, Korean Institute of Halal Industry

⁴⁴⁹ Sulayman interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Gijang cold storage on 3 July 2018.

⁴⁵⁰ Zubair Lee interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Gijang cold storage on 13 August 2018.

(established in 2013) does not help much since it is more business oriented instead of trying to solve the halal problem in South Korea despite specialising in research, consultation, and education related to the halal industry.⁴⁵¹ In addition, the institute is owned by a Christian group; hence, it is not surprising that it focuses more on generating revenue and profit via export activities rather than implementing research on halal-related matters for the benefit of the local Muslims.⁴⁵²

In Busan and Seoul, there emerged a trend where dishonest eateries and restaurant owners tried to trick Muslim tourists by placing the halal sign outside their premises while still serving pork and alcohol, which can be said is a sign of ignorance and disrespect for Muslims just for profit. Many tourists were unaware about this which caused them to enter these premises incautiously. Moreover, according to several Indonesian interviewees who did not want their name disclosed to avoid ramifications, said that even some Indonesian stalls that sell Bakso⁴⁵³ and noodles in Busan and Seoul are dishonest with the ingredients used, some of which are derived from pork and alcohol.⁴⁵⁴

Despite having problems and challenges in the acquisition of halal produces, Muslims in South Korea still preserve their faith by avoiding non-halal products. They even travel far to get the halal products and import or ask their friends or family members from their home countries to post the halal products they need. Many Muslim tourists also take extra care before coming to the country by bringing along halal canned food as staple food during their visit to South Korea. In this matter, Muslim organisations like KMF are supposed to plan for the future as they need to cater to the

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.

⁴⁵² Ibid.

⁴⁵³ Indonesian cuisine with soupy base.

⁴⁵⁴ This statement was also mentioned by Zubair Lee and Junaidi Al-Fais.

Muslims' needs. They can start a halal project by collecting donations to open an official halal factory or halal market, and even establish their own animal farm by renting or buying cheaper land somewhere in South Korea. Furthermore, it seems like KIHAI has begun their cooperation with Islamic countries in the halal industry which will likely help to develop this industry in South Korea. This is proven by the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Halal Development Corporation (HDC) where 120 companies in South Korea will get halal certified while 170 companies will be involved in halal industries ranging from eateries, spas, and manufacturing.⁴⁵⁵

6.4 INTERNAL CHALLENGES FACING MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN BUSAN

In terms of internal challenges, there are some that come directly from within the Muslim community itself. In discussing the challenges, rather than blaming certain individuals or groups, the aim is to shed light on the problems that happened, such as power struggle, lack of knowledge, extremism, and others so that solutions can be found in order for the community to strengthen itself. Several organisations in Busan that are mentioned here are the Korean Muslim Federation Busan Branch, and Busan Muslim Student Association. These organisations receive support from the KMF main branch in Seoul and international organisations like iERA in doing da'wah in Busan, and currently, the da'wah activities in Busan are being overseen by several important figures like Syaikhoni, Mohammed Saif and Samina Jin who tirelessly do their best to preach Islam among the people in South Korea.

⁴⁵⁵ Salama, "Malaysia: Halal Development Corporation Berhad (HDC)....."

6.4.1 Lack of Knowledge and Finance

Seeking knowledge is a must in Islam as enjoined by the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) upon Muslims:

“The seeking of knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim.” (Baihaqi, Mishkat)⁴⁵⁶

In light of the above hadith, it is obligatory for Muslims, male and female, to seek knowledge not only to enable them to lead a good life as Muslims, but also in inviting others to Islam.⁴⁵⁷ According to Ismail, at the beginning of the history of Islam in Busan, most newly reverted Muslims lacked knowledge especially on Islamic practices as there was no Islamic scholars who could teach them about Islam and no Imam to guide them.⁴⁵⁸ Because of this reason, they had to travel far to Seoul to acquire the knowledge about Islam, and later when Islamophobia was on the rise, the Muslims found themselves unequipped with knowledge to encounter the bias and prejudice. Moreover, since they did not learn much about halal and haram in Islam, they continued to eat pork and dog meat even in the Al-Fatah Mosque as they did not have the knowledge and guidance from anyone at that time as to what was allowed and what was not.

Yasir Lee shared the same experience with Ismail Poo Hwang where he testified that at that time (1980s), the South Korean Muslims did not practise the religion correctly as they did not have knowledgeable and qualified preachers who can help and guide them. Furthermore, he found that it was hard to do da'wah in Busan as he did not know much about da'wah. Being one of the earliest to revert to Islam, he added that there was no role model who could train him and several other Korean Muslims to

⁴⁵⁶ Muhammad Ali, *Manual of Hadith*. India: Curzon Press, 1978. P. 36.

⁴⁵⁷ Riffat Hassan, “Quranic imperatives on acquisition of knowledge”, *The Express Tribune*, 6 July, 2010, via The Express Tribune, < <https://tribune.com.pk/story/25866/quranic-imperatives-on-acquisition-of-knowledge> > (accessed 2 September, 2020).

⁴⁵⁸ Ismail Poo Hwang interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 29 June 2018.

become a *da'i*. Moreover, he maintained that while there were many foreign Muslims who came to Busan in the 1980s, they did not stay long for da'wah activities which explains the slow progress of Islamic da'wah in the city.⁴⁵⁹

Due to the lack of knowledge and guidance too, the second chairman, Kim Moo Sung, maintained that the KMF Busan branch had gone through a stagnant period in the 1980s where there were not many Islamic activities conducted by the organisation. The fact that Seoul has a greater number of Muslims and acts as the main centre of Islamic activities also means that similar activities was lacking in Busan.⁴⁶⁰ This was affirmed by Ismail Poo Hwang during an interview with him as he and several other South Korean Muslims had to regularly travel to Seoul for Friday Congregational Prayer and lessons on Islam and Arabic⁴⁶¹.

In terms of finance, Islam urges Muslims to acquire wealth in order to improve their lives as well as to get involved in da'wah activities. That said, there are guidelines that Muslims need to adhere to in possessing wealth and how to spend it as wealth can lead to greed.⁴⁶² Hence, to develop the community, the KMF should think of a way to increase the revenue for the betterment of the Muslims by possibly being involving in businesses like the halal industry and not to depend only on donations, charity, or Zakah. According to Ismail, the 1970s was a challenging decade for him and several other Korean Muslims as they struggled with the lack of funds.⁴⁶³

⁴⁵⁹ Yasir Lee interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 10 July 2018.

⁴⁶⁰ Kim Sung Soo, Review..., 5.

⁴⁶¹ Ismail Poo Hwang interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 29 June 2018.

⁴⁶² Harun Yahya, "The Urge to Accumulate Wealth", *Arab News*, 24 December 2015, via Arab News, <<https://www.arabnews.com/islam-perspective/news/855386>> (accessed 2 September 2020).

⁴⁶³ Ismail Poo Hwang interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 29 June 2018.

By the end of the 20th century, the community sometimes received donations from several Muslim countries in the Middle East like Saudi Arabia and others, which contributed to the development of the Muslim community in Busan. However, the sum received from the Middle Eastern countries subsequently decreased following several events, among which include the Iran-Iraq War, the American invasion of Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003), which were believed to be the reason for the shift of attention and priority from helping the minority Muslims to assisting the war-torn countries as mentioned by the Arab News:

“Afghanistan was also supported over the past decades with a number of projects, including in the humanitarian, health, education, WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene), and food security sectors. The total cost of these projects is more than SR1 billion.”⁴⁶⁴

From the abovementioned statements, it is worthy to note that the Muslims in Busan were aware of how important it was to gain knowledge and have sound finance not only to enable them to become better Muslims, but also to disseminate Islam to others. They admitted that in the early years, since they did not have enough funds, they were unable to invite any Muslim scholars to come to Busan. However, despite these early shortcomings, the Muslims in Busan persevered and although the situation later improved as many Indonesian scholars arrived in Busan, they are still in dire need of sustainable finance. For instance, the mosque currently is still depending on rent and donations. It is worth mentioning here that apart from the KMF Busan Branch, other Muslim organisations in Busan also survive mainly with donations and selling of halal products.

⁴⁶⁴ Rashid Hassan, “Saudi Arabia Provide 30M Grant to Support Afghan Humanitarian Fund”, *Arab News*, 09 June 2022, via Arab News, <<https://www.arabnews.com/node/2100196/saudi-arabia>> (accessed 2 December 2022).

6.4.2 Lack of Preparation and Manpower for Da'wah

In performing da'wah, it is very important for a *da'i* to equip himself with proper skills and sufficient knowledge. Yusof Estes, a prominent Muslim preacher once said that:

“We find today, many Muslims who just decide one day to tell the world about Islam. However, they are not even educated properly in Islam, nor do they have the training or experience nor many of the qualifications needed to do the job. Often times these people will do more damage than good and even cause serious consequences for themselves and others. Frequently these types deal with non-Muslims in very harsh tones and without the proper manners required by Islam. Some are misinformed about the meanings of verses in Al-Quran and teachings of the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) and due to this, they make Islam appear very difficult and sometimes even turn against other Muslims and in the end turn people away from the Deen of Allah (S.W.T.) through their rough and insensitive treatment.”⁴⁶⁵

In South Korea, the da'wah activities, as in some other minority Muslim countries, are not free from problems or shortcomings. One of them being the lack of knowledge about the local or Korean culture.

According to Syaikhoni, most *da'i* especially the foreign *da'i* were unprepared as they did not learn and study about Korean culture before coming to Busan. Due to the ignorance of the Korean culture, some of them in doing da'wah ended up offending the Koreans. They need to have wisdom and knowledge and know the ins and outs of the Korean culture as a way of doing da'wah smoothly.⁴⁶⁶ Moreover, many of them also did not learn the Korean language before deciding to come and give da'wah. Consequently, there exists a language barrier which makes it difficult for the *da'i* to deliver their da'wah effectively as most locals cannot converse in English.⁴⁶⁷ This situation was also mentioned by Imam Yasir Lee, who explained the problem as a

⁴⁶⁵ Yusof Estes, “Giving Dawah Without Knowledge: Dawah is Easy”, *Mission Islam*, (n.d.), via Mission Islam Website, <<https://www.missionislam.com/knowledge/dawahknowledge.html>> (accessed 14 October, 2022).

⁴⁶⁶ Ali An Sun Geun, *Islam Damai...*, 183.

⁴⁶⁷ Syaikhoni Jazuli interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Moroccan restaurant on 27 June 2018.

resultant of the foreign *da'is*' short stay in South Korea. He said that most foreign *da'is* came and preached for a short period of time; hence, did not contribute much to the development of da'wah in Busan. He affirmed that those who came to preach Islam should stay for a longer time in order to learn about South Korea and its culture, only then they will be able to carry out the da'wah effectively.

Moreover, the lack of manpower was quite a significant problem in Busan as the current active manpower is mostly the first generation of South Korean Muslims, around five to six people who are quite old and do not have much strength to be involved in physical activities, especially in giving da'wah to others. Hence, the KMF are lacking the manpower needed to do da'wah; thus, hampering the dissemination of Islam in South Korea.⁴⁶⁸ The number of second generation Korean Muslims is quite small, which is not more than 10 people who are busy with their own personal activities such as career, family and others; hence, do not help much in the work at the Busan Mosque and da'wah activities. Moreover, because of the individualistic behaviour of the South Korean society, most local Muslims do not get involved with the activities conducted by the mosques and Islamic organisations. This situation was attested by Zubair Lee, Yasir Lee and Syaikhoni.

In addition, the Korean pop culture was also pointed as a contributory factor in the difficulty of recruiting potential *da'i*. Many young Muslims are swayed from religious activities by the popular culture, and to avoid this, some South Korean Muslims had sent their children to further their studies in Muslim countries. For instance, Zubair Lee sent his son to Malaysia and similarly Basyir Kim⁴⁶⁹ from Jeju island did the same by sending his son to International Islamic University Malaysia.

⁴⁶⁸ Ali An Sun Geun, *Islam Damai...*, 244.

⁴⁶⁹ An Imam and sole Muslim in Jeju Island.

While such action is good to protect the young Muslim generation from destructive hedonistic influences, it decreases the number of able Muslims from this group who could assist the older generation in carrying out da'wah work. Despite this, it is hoped that in the long run, the efforts would bear fruits in the sense that the young generation after completing their studies would become more productive and efficient as *da'i* and Muslim leaders, serving their community to their level best.

6.4.3 Power Struggle, Disunity, and Individualistic Attitude

Power struggle in South Korea is quite rampant, especially in companies or workplace where competitiveness among the workers is a must. Not only does this lead to a workaholic environment, but also cultivates the 'brown-nosing' culture, referring to the inclination to please higher-ranking officers in getting promoted to higher positions which result in a cut-throat competition between employees.⁴⁷⁰ Tracking the work culture in South Korea as having originated from Japan,⁴⁷¹ *The Korea Herald* explains:

“It was the Japanese who spread the concept of ‘myeolsabonggong,’ which means ‘destroy your personal life and devote yourself for the betterment of your community.’ The concept encouraged men to sacrifice their personal life for the companies they worked for, and such a life was viewed as ideal and even honourable. Today’s work culture in South Korea certainly has traits that were influenced by this concept.”⁴⁷²

According to Muhammad Adam, a South Korean Muazzin,⁴⁷³ and Zubair Lee, this culture which is embedded in the Korean society has also been brought into the KMF

⁴⁷⁰ Claire Lee, “Origins of Korean Work Culture”, *The Korea Herald*, 16 January 2015, via The Korea Herald, < <https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20150116001008> > (accessed 3 September 2020).

⁴⁷¹ Ibid. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2015 had ranked South Korea as the second world worst workaholics because of the working hours. This workaholic culture was said to have been adopted by the people of South Korea during the colonial Japanese rule in the 20th century.

⁴⁷² Ibid.

⁴⁷³ Muhammad Adam interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 27 June 2018. Adam is one of the main Muazzin at the Busan Mosque.

and Busan Mosque management by the Korean Muslims. This is viewed dismissively since there is more than ever a need for unity among Muslims in South Korea as they are a small group, and a power struggle or competitiveness can lead to disunity and fellow Muslims will bear resentment towards each other. Zubair Lee mentioned that when he first became the President of the KMF Busan branch, some of the earliest South Korean Muslims tried to take him down and some even attempted to make the mosque as their own. They wanted to be able to have a stable source of income by having full control over the management of the KMF Busan and the mosque, which did not sit right with Zubair Lee and Muhammad Adam. Eventually, Zubair Lee resigned from the position after six years of hard work in 2016 after feeling exhausted by not having support from the community, especially from fellow Korean Muslims. Describing further, he explained that the problem in the KMF Busan branch had hampered his plan to work for the betterment of the community since there existed bureaucratic problems and corruption⁴⁷⁴ in the Muslim community in Busan⁴⁷⁵.⁴⁷⁶ However, he did not provide details to avoid any conflict that can smear the image of KMF Busan as a result from his exposure.

In addition, Zubair Lee stated that the feeling of individualistic and selfish attitude had hampered the development of the Muslim community in Busan. Many South Koreans who reverted to Islam tend to distance themselves from getting involved with the mosque and its activities. Among the common reasons given include that they are too busy and some preferred to stay in the closet by avoiding from being involved with the mosque in order to keep their identity as a Muslim secret. Consequently, the

⁴⁷⁴ Zubair Lee and Muhammad Adam had avoided to explain further on the issue.

⁴⁷⁵ Zubair Lee Dong Ha interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Gyeongju on 11 August 2018.

⁴⁷⁶ Zubair Lee claim was backed by Muhammad Adam, Muhammad Kim and several other individuals who did not want their name published.

number of South Korean Muslim attendees in the Busan Mosque, for instance, is greatly outnumbered by foreign Muslims as demonstrated during the researcher's visit where only three to five South Korean Muslims can be seen at the mosque even during the weekend.

Muhammad Adam hoped the young generation can work together and avoid the power struggle which brings more harm than good to the community. He also wished for more respectable and sterner leaders be appointed who can solve the corruption in the South Korean community in Busan. Moreover, it is quite important for South Korean Muslims to get involved with the mosque's activities and those organised by the KMF and be the backbone of these institutions for the betterment of the community. Equally crucial is for the ones who have been given responsibility to learn more about Islam to avoid prohibited acts such as corruption which can ultimately result in punishment from Allah S.W.T as mentioned in Surah Al-Rum; verse 41.⁴⁷⁷

6.4.4 Extremism

Extremism has tarnished the Islamic name for quite long now, particularly following the 9/11 incident. The extremist views of some Muslims have led many non-Muslims to perceive Islam as a violent and barbaric religion, although in actual sense, the extremists were generally ignorant of their own religion, and they were cherry-picking certain verses in the Al-Quran and Hadith mainly to fit their own agenda. Hence, the ones who receive the backlash are the majority of Muslims who oppose the extremist ideas with the minority of Muslims who live in non-Muslim countries like America, Britain and South Korea suffering the most. In the case of South Korea, some cases

⁴⁷⁷ *“Corruption has spread on land and sea as a result of what people's hands have done, so that Allah may cause them to taste the consequences of some of their deeds and perhaps they might return to the Right Path”.*

related to Muslim extremists and their vicious acts were highlighted by some Muslims during the researcher's visit to Busan where they expressed condemnatory remarks towards ISIS and other similar extremist organisations.

Another case of extremism faced by Muslims in South Korea is with regards to madhab affiliation. For example, in 2012, there existed a conflict, although not serious, when followers of two madhab collided at the mosque, namely Uzbekistan and Pakistan nationals, who practise madhab Maliki and Indonesians who are following madhab Syafii. Fortunately, the issue was resolved as both parties accepted their differences.⁴⁷⁸

Another incident was a terrorist-related issue that took place in Noksan, Busan where a non-Muslim tried to provoke the Muslims near the Al-Kausar Mosque by waving an ISIS flag. He was later apprehended by the police.⁴⁷⁹ Nevertheless, the fact that such incidents happened shows that while the Muslims in South Korea in general disassociate themselves from extremist groups, among the non-Muslim population there are some who have misunderstood Islam and Muslims. Apart from the distorted views of Islam and Muslims in the media, and the widely publicised tyranny committed by the extremist groups, the ill-feelings harboured by the non-Muslim population can perhaps be also attributed to a few isolated actions of Muslims in South Korea. For instance, in an interview with Zubair Lee, he narrated that there was an incident involving an Uzbek national who worked in Busan who posted in his Facebook about ISIS and voiced out extreme remarks. Concerned with his actions, a report was lodged by the Muslim community towards the individual which led to his arrest and was later deported back to Uzbekistan.

⁴⁷⁸ Istantor interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Kausar Mosque on 27 July 2018.

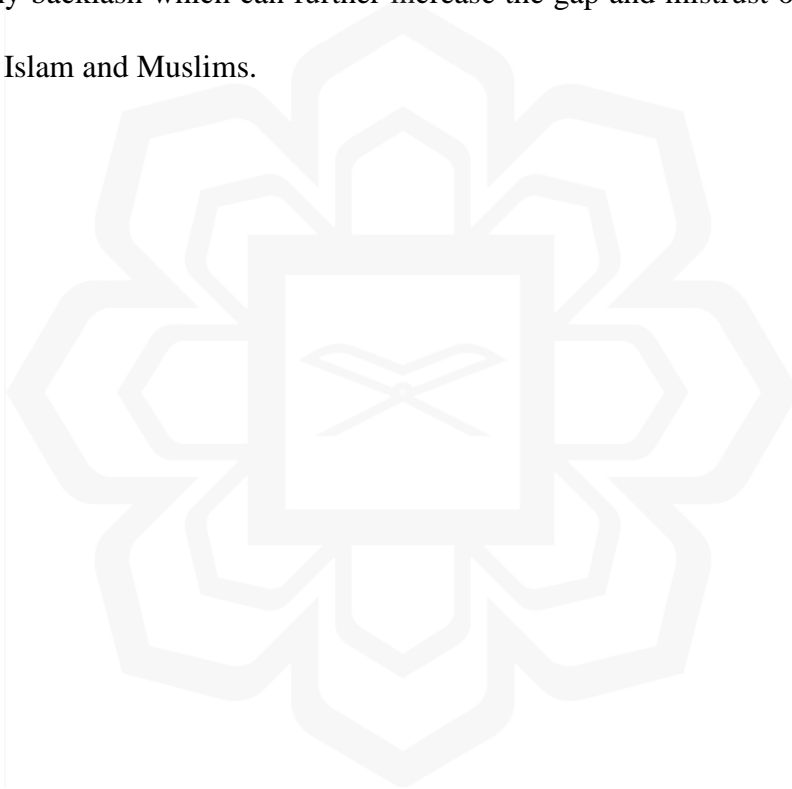
⁴⁷⁹ No date was mentioned by Istantor regarding this incident. Ibid. 27 July 2018.

The Muslim community in South Korea take every extreme view by fellow Muslims seriously as they want to preserve the peace and to avoid backlash from the locals. As mentioned in Chapter 5, most Muslims, either local or foreign, have a good relationship with the local authorities like police and immigration departments. This is to avoid any problems that might occur between them and the local non-Muslims from escalating further, which could greatly impact their small community. To avoid the same problem in the future, the Muslim community should emphasize to their members the need to maintain a peaceful co-existence in a non-Muslim country and avoid any actions that can provoke the local population. In addition, the Muslim countries through their embassy in South Korea need to strictly screen the nationals who apply to come and work in South Korea, and to remind them about the consequence of their actions which will not only affect the Muslim community in Busan but also tarnish their country's name as well as the image of Islam and Muslim Ummah as a whole.

6.5 CONCLUSION

Even though there are many challenges faced by local and foreign Muslims in Busan, the challenges are quite the same with what prevails not only in the rest of South Korea but also in other minority Muslim countries. The problems can be divided into external and internal, with external challenges from the media, Christianity, maltreatments, and the acquiring of halal produces. In the meantime, the internal problems include lack of knowledge and finance, lack of preparation and manpower in relation to *da'i* and *da'wah* activities, and also problems with extremism and disunity in the community itself. With all these problems present around them, hence, it is important for the Muslim community, local and foreign, who reside in South Korea to come together and resolve the problem hand in hand. It is important first and foremost to unite as a

minority, and from there the community should try to come up with solutions to their problems. For instance, in dealing with Christian missionaries and propaganda including the media, they can hold a dialogue between Muslim and Christian representatives and try to come up with certain agreements on a peaceful co-existence to avoid disparaging each other and celebrate the differences between the two religions. In terms of da'wah activities, it is important for the *da'i* to be more meticulous about what they say and need to understand the local culture before doing da'wah. This is to avoid any backlash which can further increase the gap and mistrust of South Koreans towards Islam and Muslims.



CHAPTER SEVEN

FUTURE PROSPECTS AND CONCLUSION

7.1 BUSAN MUSLIM COMMUNITY AND ITS FUTURE

An estimated 35,000 Korean Muslims were living in South Korea in 2000, while 10,000 in the Middle East were those who had reverted to Islam while working there. Ten years later, the number has shown an increment of 10,000 reverted which brings the total to 45,000. The increment showed that despite several events that happened, such as 9/11, the killing of South Koreans in Iraq (2003) and Afghanistan (2007), and the propagation made by the Western and South Korean media did not hinder some people to be curious about Islam and they started to learn about the religion. This made it possible for the additional 10,000 Muslims.⁴⁸⁰ Meanwhile, there are around 200,000 foreign Muslims from countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and others living, working, and studying in South Korea, which contributes to the development of Islam in the country through various ways. Moreover, as South Korea emerges as a top destination among foreign visitors due to the spread of popular Korean culture worldwide, the country increasingly becomes more Muslim-friendly especially to cater to the growing number of Muslim tourists from all around the world.⁴⁸¹ This in turn, works though subtlety in favour of Islam and Muslims in South Korea.

In early 1980, there were only around five to six South Korean Muslims in the city and the number increased significantly to 1,000 by the end of the 20th century, which was a result of the Middle Eastern construction and oil industry booming. In

⁴⁸⁰ Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi, (2016). Islam in South Korea: Progress and Challenges of Da'wah Activities since the 1950s. Master Thesis, International Islamic University Malaysia., 92.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid, 101.

2018, the number was quite the same but roughly only 100 South Korean Muslims stayed in contact with the Busan Mosque with 20 of them actively involved with the activities organised at the mosque.⁴⁸² As for now, there are about 20,000 foreign Muslims currently residing in Busan, with 12,000 of them from Indonesia while the rest are from Uzbekistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and others. Most of them came to work in the thriving industrial sector in Busan city.⁴⁸³ With the growing number of Muslims in Busan, a more stable and steady community is needed in order for the members to be able to lead their lives without much difficulty, and at the same to be able to disseminate Islamic da'wah to others. Thus, several factors need to be looked into and discussed as they could contribute to the betterment of the Muslim community in Busan.

7.1.1 Unity of Muslim Community

In terms of unity, many hope that Muslims in Busan are more proactive in helping each other. With only 20 to 30 active South Korean Muslims, it is impossible to make changes. However, if the 1,000 Korean Muslims start to come together and build their own business, education, and push for the betterment of the community, it will be a catalyst for the community to develop even further in the future. As mentioned in Chapter 6, the community itself needs manpower and even though the community receives strong support from foreign Muslims, the latter are mostly busy working; hence, they can only render their time on weekends and are unable to contribute more, especially since they are foreigners and do not have many privileges compared to the locals. Thus, it is very important for local Muslims, especially those who have the right to vote, to purchase land and get involved in business; for example, to build a

⁴⁸² Junaidi Al-Fais interviewed by Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi at Al-Fatah Mosque on 13 July 2018.

⁴⁸³ Ibid.

slaughterhouse, schools for Muslim children, and set up a halal store, market, storage, etc. In terms of struggle for power and corruption, the local Muslims should remind themselves of the teachings of Islam about their responsibility and the effects of corruption on themselves and society, and to be more trustworthy and compassionate with others.⁴⁸⁴

Compared to the local Muslims, it seems that foreign Muslims in Busan have more unification amongst them. Living in a foreign country has strengthened their bond which make it possible for them to come together for a common cause. The Indonesian workers and migrants in South Korea in particular are noted for their strong bonding or relationship. This is visible, for instance, in the establishment of several mosques and Islamic centres like Jagnim, Sasang and Noksan mosques and Islamic centres by the Indonesian community resulting from yearly donations. They also have a few very well organised organisations like PUMITA Busan, Salam Nuri and others. Furthermore, the premises under the Indonesians are well kept, tidy and clean with clear organisational charts posted from time to time, although the people responsible for the premises change every year.⁴⁸⁵ Hence, it is important for the local Muslims to learn from the foreign Muslims and avoid any confrontation amongst them for the future of the community. With unity in place, they should begin their plan to confront the misconceptions towards Islam and Muslims in a peaceful manner.

⁴⁸⁴ Muhammad Adam in his interview was really concerned about this as it will become a problem in the future if it is not solved and as shown in the case of Zubair Lee, these are the reasons why he left his post as president of KMF as he found it very tiring having to push for some agendas yet did not receive support from the committee members.

⁴⁸⁵ They will either vote or appoint new members yearly especially if the committee members end their work contract and need to return to their home country.

7.1.2 Misconceptions Towards Islam and Muslims

To ensure a brighter prospect for Islam and the Muslim community in Busan, misconceptions or misunderstanding among non-Muslim Koreans about Islam and Muslims need to be removed. Hence, the local and foreign Muslims should invest their time in spreading the correct information regarding Islam and need to be more proactive in dealing with the media and Christian groups; for instance, by inviting the Christians to the mosques and Islamic centres and giving lectures on Islam or organising a peaceful dialogue between the followers of the two religions so that any harassment or dissemination of false information about Islam and Muslims through the media would subside and eventually come to a halt. Hopefully, the Christian groups will be more open to Islam as South Korea has recognised Islam as one of the country's religions in 1967 under the Korean National Law^{486, 487}.

Moreover, the South Koreans also need to be educated with the long history between the Islamic world and the Korean Peninsula which is dated back to the era of the three main dynasties of Korea, including the trading activities and the establishment of the early Muslim community in the Korean Peninsula. In addition, in the 1950 Korean War, an Islamic country, namely Turkey, was involved in fighting alongside the South Korean army against North Korea. For the assistance, until now the South Koreans call the countries who helped during the war as '*Hyungjae*',⁴⁸⁸ as appreciation of their help. Hopefully, this information can enlighten both the locals and Muslims about Islam and

⁴⁸⁶ Sohn Joo Young, "Organisations and...", 2.

⁴⁸⁷ Although it is more to the economic strategy of the South Korean government to acquire projects in the Middle East, it can also be said as a blessing in disguise as it had legitimized Islam as one of the country's religions. Furthermore, since South Korea is in need of construction and oil projects, they have re-evaluated their policies towards the Middle Eastern countries by introducing two plans called 'energy diplomacy' which focuses on the acquisition of oil and gas projects, while the 'construction diplomacy' is to secure construction projects in the Middle East. Both are important for the South Korean economy. Niu Song, "Islam and South Korea's Middle East Diplomacy", *The British Association for Korean Studies*, vol. 16 (2015): 65-66.

⁴⁸⁸ *Hyungjae* means brother or sibling in South Korea.

Muslims in the country, and the latter will be treated better, like the case of Samina Jin and other Muslim women who wear their hijab will not be harassed by the locals because of their religion. If misconceptions about Islam and maltreatment of the Muslims by the non-Muslims can be halted, it will be of a greater help in developing Busan as the stronghold for Islam and the Muslim community because they will not receive or receive less opposition and confrontation from the locals when they try to introduce more mosques, Islamic centres, and halal products.

7.1.3 Busan as the Stronghold of Islam and Muslim Community

After the research, the researcher believes that it is possible for Busan to become the stronghold of Islam, following the steady increase in the number of South Korean Muslims, although not comparable to what happens in the West,⁴⁸⁹ where the conversion to Islam happens at a faster rate. In addition, the increased number of foreign Muslims working and studying in Busan has contributed to the growing number of mosques and Islamic centres. Some local buildings also provide a prayer room on their premises to cater to the rising number of Muslim tourists and students like hotels around Haeundae Beach (Haeundae Centum Hotel and Paradise Hotel Busan), universities like Dong-a University, Youngsan University, and Korea Maritime and Ocean University. Moreover, the Gimhae International Airport also provides a prayer room to ease not only Muslim tourists but also for tourists of other faiths.⁴⁹⁰

⁴⁸⁹ The number of Muslims in the West increased significantly especially after the 9/11 event where many reverted sayings that they wanted to know more about Islam after the event and to understand what the religion preaches. Lisa Chiu, (09 September 2021). “Millions in the U.S. Converted to Islam after 9/11, Meet One of Them”. CGTN, America. <<https://america.cgtn.com/2021/09/09/millions-in-the-u-s-converted-to-islam-after-9-11-meet-one-of-them>> (accessed 29 October 2021)

⁴⁹⁰ Imagine Your Korea, Prayer Room, https://english.visitkorea.or.kr/enu/ATR/SI_ENG_prayerList.jsp?areaCode=6&sigunguCode=&code3=&gender=&cid=&listType=&gotoPage=2 (accessed 29 October 2021)

Although the proposal of a Muslim-friendly policy in South Korea received strong opposition from the Christian groups, the South Korean government is still committed to continue the policy as it will increase their revenue from the tourism industry. This continuation and the efforts by the local premises will be a catalyst for Islam to root strongly in Busan, which hopefully will result in the city becoming one of the strongholds of Islam and Muslim community in the future. This in turn will make Busan a favourite tourist spot among Muslim tourists leading to not only more prayer rooms and halal eateries to be established in the city in the future but increase of revenue to the city dwellers. Hence, it is very important for the local Muslim community to start brainstorming on the future plan of Busan as a Muslim stronghold, such as purchasing land for farming and animal husbandry including a slaughterhouse. After that, they can begin with a halal mart and eateries. Moreover, the idea of setting up a farm and producing halal food, meat and poultry will enable Busan to become a halal hub that will provide these produces and sell them throughout South Korea. This will increase the economy of the Busan Muslim community which can help develop the community even more in the future. The benefits of such positive development are endless as it can also help the Muslim community to invest in an Islamic education system.

7.1.4 The Establishment of Islamic Education System

The establishment of an Islamic education system in Busan is important as it helps to nurture the future generation of Muslims in the city. Currently there is no formal Islamic education available to the Muslims there, which is quite a problem since the number of Muslims with children is on the rise, resulting from the growing number of inter-marriages between foreign and local Muslims. According to Samina Jin, she sent her children to a government school as she did not have other options, and this caused

inconvenience since the children cannot eat at the cafeteria as it serves mostly non-halal food. Even if she decides to send her children to an international school, the problem persists as most international schools are administrated by Christian groups.⁴⁹¹ Thus, it is imperative for the community to plan for the future by having their own school for Muslim children with blended learning of South Korean education syllabus and Islamic syllabus as preparation for them to be well-educated Muslims that can be trained to become future leaders and *da'i*. Since the Busan Mosque has a two-story building (beside the mosque), instead of renting it, it is better to convert it into an international school for Muslim children. According to Ali An Sun Geun,⁴⁹² he urged the KMF to establish an International Islamic School in South Korea as it is important to cater to the Muslim children's need for Islamic education.⁴⁹³ As for higher education, they need not worry as several universities in South Korea, like Seoul National University, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, and several other universities have introduced Islamic studies and Arabic language departments to cater for studies related to Islam and the Middle East.

7.2 CONCLUSION

The study is a continuation of the researcher's previous master thesis on Islam in South Korea, and is now focused on a specific area, namely Busan. It also stems from the researcher's interest to have a better understanding about the Muslim community and the relationship between local and foreign Muslims in South Korea, especially in the second largest city in South Korea, i.e., Busan, which is a topic that has not been

⁴⁹¹ Yoon Won Sup, "Muslim Community Gets New Recognition," *The Korean Time*, 29 May, 2005, via Islam in Korea, <<http://www.islamkorea.com/english/articlean2.html>> (accessed 30 October, 2021).

⁴⁹² Ali An Sun Geun is a Korean Muslim who wrote a master thesis on Islamic da'wah in South Korea.

⁴⁹³ Ali An Sun Geun, *Islam Damai...*, 231.

sufficiently covered in the existing literature compared to Muslims in Seoul. Hopefully, through this research, Muslims from all over the world will know that there are other Muslim communities in South Korea apart from that in Seoul. Additionally, this study will educate the international Muslim community about the problems and challenges facing the Muslims in Busan; hence, providing opportunities to the former to think of ways of how they can help their fellow brothers and sisters in Busan in case they choose to assist, so that the Muslims there will be able to thrive further. Besides, the researcher also wants to shed light on the contribution of foreign Muslims in Busan and how they are able to build a close-knit community with the spirit of brotherhood. Great contribution was made especially by the Indonesian community who are also of great help in assisting the researcher with this research by providing substantial information during the researcher's visits and interviews.

As a result, this research successfully identifies the underlying issues pertaining to the establishment of the Muslim community in Busan and able to recognise the factors for the amicable relationship between the local and foreign Muslims residing in Busan. Thus, the researcher was able to develop several chapters to address the research questions and problems. A long discussion was presented in this study highlighting the historical connection between Islam, Muslims, and Koreans throughout history, from the earliest dynasties of Korea through mainly trading activities. Furthermore, the study discovered the views of South Koreans towards Islam and Muslims relating to several events that took place in the Middle East, such as the Iraq-Iran and Gulf Wars and the beheading and kidnapping of South Korean Christian missionaries in Afghanistan and Iraq. In addition, the study uncovered the establishment of the Muslim community in Busan in length with the help of the first Muslim of Busan, Ismail Poo Hwang, together with several other prominent Korean Muslims in the city like Zubair Lee, Yasir Lee and

others. Moreover, the study successfully revealed the establishment of other mosques and Islamic centres that were established in the 21st century, mostly by foreign Muslim workers.

Next, the discussion deals with the relationship between local and foreign Muslims, which make it possible for the Muslim community in Busan to thrive today. It is a faithful relationship as the coming of foreign Muslims has lessened the burden of local Muslims, where some foreign Muslims have educated the locals with their knowledge of Islam while the locals help the foreign Muslims with their needs and problems while living in Busan. Additionally, the local Muslims even established an organisation called *Geumsaem* to help the foreign Muslims learn the Korean language and stay on the right path as the environment in a non-Muslim country like South Korea can sometimes lead Muslims astray from Islam. This finding has shown that local and foreign Muslims have a symbiotic type of connection where they are in fact in need of each other's support and help.

Then, the researcher was able to identify the prominent figures and institutions that have been involved in the building of the community in Busan, like Samina Jin, Ismail Poo Hwang, and Zubair Lee and their history of becoming Muslims. Moreover, the researcher discovered that the organisations involved with the Muslim community in Busan, namely the KMF Busan, PUMITA Busan, and BMSA, actively organise several activities every year, such as mosque open day, halal food festival, and others. In the latter part of the chapter, existing mosques and Islamic centres were listed and their history shared in this research.

Furthermore, several challenges were cross-examined, and suggestions were added in order to provide possible solutions to the challenges and problems. The challenges are divided into two categories; internal and external challenges, where

external challenges have much to do with problems outside of the community that can directly affect Muslims. For instance, challenges from the media and Christian groups who disseminate false information on Islam and Muslims, maltreatment towards Muslims, and halal-related issues. On the other hand, the internal challenges are from the community itself, which include lack of knowledge and finance, power struggle, extremism, and a lack of manpower. Exposing these challenges does not mean that the researcher tried to smear the Muslim community in Busan, especially in relation to the power struggle, but rather to shed light on these problems so that proper plans and preparations can be made for the betterment of the Muslim community and the prospect of Islam there in the future.

In conducting this study, various limitations have impeded this study. First and foremost is the language barrier where many sources are in the Korean language and the researcher did not have the ability to read and understand the sources. Therefore, most information gathered are from English literature which limited the acquiring of sources. Consequently, it was hard to conduct interviews as most of the interviewees cannot converse in English. Despite these shortcomings, the researcher was able to accumulate the much-needed information thanks to the assistance of some local and foreign Muslims in Busan who volunteered to become translators for this research, although at times they too encountered a few problems as they were not very fluent in English. Besides, the visit made by the researcher to Busan was quite short because of financial constraints as the researcher could only afford to stay for around 50 days, which was not enough. With the interviewees quite busy, especially the foreign Muslims as they work in the industrial line which only granted them a one-day break, the researcher had to wait until the weekend to meet most interviewees. Another limitation was the mosques and Islamic centres did not possess a proper record-keeping

system that recorded most of their history or kept important documents. When asked about records, the Imam of either the mosques or centres often said that they did not keep the records (maybe they did not want to reveal the documents and so they came up with this excuse); hence, most of the history came from interviews rather than written sources. In addition, not much written information could be found on organisations like KMF, BMSA, PUMITA etc., as their websites also failed to provide much detail.

It is advisable for future researchers who are interested to further follow up this area of research to travel to South Korea and try accumulating a lot of written sources, either through government documents, museum visits, mosques, and Islamic centres, and to carry out thorough first-hand research related to Islam and Muslims and be financially capable to stay more than three months to do more extensive research. In addition, it is important to start learning the Korean language as soon as possible if planning to do research in South Korea as it will be an added value in order to be able to converse with locals fluently. Hopefully, this research can serve as a foundation for those who want to study further on the Muslim community in Busan or South Korea in general. It is still a new subject to be discussed at the academic level as the existing studies and literature related to South Korea are mostly related to Seoul or South Korea in general. Thus, the researcher felt obligated to write on this topic especially when there is not enough literature; hence, hopefully this research will add to the gap on the study about Islam in South Korea. Moreover, this research also aims to serve as a guideline and offer valuable information about da'wah works in Busan, not only to researchers, but also to Muslims and non-Muslims in general, in understanding the history of Islam and the Muslim community in Busan, South Korea.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – COVER LETTER

PhD Thesis Interview

Dear valued interviewee,

I am currently pursuing a PhD degree at International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) in History and Civilization. My research deals with minority Muslims in East Asia focusing mainly on the Muslim community in Busan, South Korea. The purpose of the study is to understand the dynamic relationship between Korean Muslims and foreign Muslims in developing a community in the country. Hopefully the study will shed light not only on the existence of Islam and the development of a Muslim community in Busan, but also on the role and contributions of local and foreign Muslims. Your answers and opinions recorded in this interview are very important for the completion of the study. The researcher highly appreciates your time and effort in answering the questions. Your cooperation is highly appreciated.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Ahmad Faris Naqiyuddin bin Mohd Ghazi

PhD candidate in History and Civilization

International Islamic University Malaysia

APPENDIX B – LIST OF INTERVIEWEES SORTED BY COUNTRIES

A. South Korean Interviewees:

No.	Name	Remark	Date of Interview
1.	Zubair Lee Dong Ha	Retired Imam of Al-Fatah Mosque, Ex-KMF Busan Branch chairman, Gijang cold storage owner, <i>Geumsaem</i> member and Preacher	- 25 June 2018 - 9 & 11 July 2018 - 11 & 13 August 2018 Via Facebook Messenger - 26, 27 & 28 March 2016 - 1, 2, 5, 7, 19 & 22 April 2016 - 30 & 31 July 2016 - 25 & 26 August 2016 - 2, 6 & 28 March 2019 - 17 April 2019 - 14 September 2021
2.	Muhammad Adam	Muazzin at Al-Fatah Mosque and KMF Busan Branch member (Education coordinator)	- 27 June 2018
3.	Ismail Poo Hwang	Retired Imam of Al-Fatah Mosque, KMF Busan Branch member and Preacher	- 29 June 2018
4.	Muhammad Daniel Hoo Young	Working in Johor Bharu, Malaysia, reverted on 1 July 2018 during the researcher's visit to Al-Fatah Mosque	- 1 July 2018
5.	Sulayman	Cappadocia's restaurant owner	- 3 July 2018
6.	Muhammad Kim	Gijang cold storage worker and member of <i>Geumsaem</i>	- 10 July 2018
7.	Abdul Hakim Yeon Gil Joo	KMF Busan Branch member and Preacher	- 10 July 2018
8.	Yasir Lee Jong Eok	Imam 1 Al-Fatah Mosque, KMF Busan Branch member and Preacher	- 10 July 2018

9.	Samina Jin	KMF Busan Branch member and Preacher	- 10 July 2018
10.	Abdul Aziz	Secretary of KMF Busan Branch	- 10 July 2018
11.	Musa Han Lee	Member of <i>Geumsaem</i>	- 11 July 2018

B. Indonesian Interviewees:

No.	Name	Remark	Date of Interview
1.	Syaikhoni Jazuli	Imam 2 Al-Fatah Mosque, Ex-KMF Busan Branch chairman and Preacher	- 27 June 2018
2.	Junaidi Al-Fais	Muazzin 2 at Al-Fatah Mosque, businessman and member of PUMITA Busan	- 27 June 2018 - 13 July 2018 Via Facebook Messenger: - 19, 23, 27 & 28 January 2022 - 24, 26 & 27 February 2022 - 3 March 2022
3.	Yanuar Yudhi Isworo	Member of PUMITA Busan	- 29 June 2018
4.	Hary	Committee member of Babussalam Islamic Centre, Jeonggwan	- 8 July 2018
5.	Arifin	Member of Babussalam Islamic Centre, Jeonggwan	- 8 July 2018
6.	Badrus	Member of Babussalam Islamic Centre, Jeonggwan	- 8 July 2018
7.	Warsono	Member of Babussalam Islamic Centre, Jeonggwan	- 8 July 2018
8.	Arif Anuar	Member of Al-Misbah Islamic Centre, Sasang	- 14 July 2018
9.	Suryanto	Committee member of Hidayatullah Mosque, Jangrim	- 20 July 2018
10.	Eko	Member of Hidayatullah Mosque, Jangrim	- 20 July 2018
11.	Istantor	Manager of Al-Kausar Mosque, Noksan	- 27 July 2018

C. Sudanese Interviewees:

No.	Name	Remark	Date of Interview
1.	Mohammed Saif	Ex-President of BMSA	- 7, 28 July 2018 - 10 August 2018 Via Facebook Messenger and Kakao Talk - 24 & 28 March 2019 - 17 & 20 May 2019 - 24, 25 & 28 February 2022 - 11 March 2022 - 22 September 2022

D. Ethiopian Interviewee:

No.	Name	Remark	Date of Interview
1.	Ham Di	Member of BMSA	- 7 & 28 July 2018

APPENDIX C – LIST OF UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A. Interview questions for prominent Muslim figures in Busan:

1. Please introduce yourself.
2. Can you elaborate on the history of Islam and Muslims in Busan and how many Muslims are living in Busan right now?
3. When did you start getting involved with da'wah activities, and how did you propagate Islam?
4. Are you involved with organisations like KMF/PUMITA/Islamic Centre/Al-Fatah Mosque? Are you aware of the organisations' roles and contributions in spreading Islam in Busan?
5. How did the Muslim community in Busan develop from the beginning until now?
6. Are there any significant contribution made by the community to the local area?
7. Is the relationship between local and foreign Muslims in Busan strong and do they help and support each other?
8. What is the attitude of the non-Muslim Koreans towards the Muslim community in Busan? Is there any resistance or opposition from other groups specifically those of other religions?
9. What are the challenges or problems faced by the community?
10. What are the challenges faced by *da'i* in Busan?
11. What are your future hopes for this community and its role in spreading Islam?

B. Interview questions for South Korean Muslims:

1. Please introduce yourself.

2. Are you a born Muslim or a revert?
3. What was your religion before reverting to Islam?
4. How do you know about Islam?
5. Did you receive any objections when you reverted to Islam?
6. Did you receive any discrimination post-reversion?
7. Is there anyone close to you who is a Muslim?
8. Do you mingle with the foreign Muslim in Busan?
9. Does the presence of foreign Muslims in Busan help in deepening your understanding of and devotion to Islam?
10. Are you able to practise your religion freely?

C. Interview questions for foreign Muslims:

1. Please introduce yourself.
2. Where are you from?
3. How long have you lived in Busan?
4. What sector are you in (work or education)?
5. What is your biggest problem living in a foreign country?
6. Did you receive any discrimination at your workplace?
7. Do you mingle with South Korean Muslims in Busan?
8. Do the South Korean Muslims help you during your stay in Busan?
9. Do you help with da'wah activities?
10. Are you able to practise your religion freely?

D. Interview Questions for Local and Foreign Muslims:

1. Do you have difficulty performing religious duties like prayer or fasting?
2. Is it easy to acquire Halal food?

3. Have you experienced Islamophobia while living in Busan?
4. How bad was the experience?
5. How did you cope with Islamophobia?
6. Are there any other problems that you faced as a Muslim?

E. Interview questions related to da'wah Activities:

1. Are you involved in Al-Fatah Mosque activities?
2. Are you involved with any Islamic organisations?
3. Are you involved with the local community activities?
4. Are you involved in the Da'wah activities in Busan?
5. How do you help spreading Islam in Busan?
6. How many Koreans did you revert to Islam?
7. Did you encounter any opposition from others while doing da'wah?

F. Interview questions related to the cooperation between local and foreign Muslims:

1. Are you involved in developing the Muslim community in Busan?
2. How strong are the ties between local and foreign Muslims in Busan?
3. Does the community help each other in terms of the economy?
4. Does the community help each other in terms of education?
5. Does the community help each other in terms of religious practices?
6. Does the community help each other in terms of daily affairs?

G. Interview questions related to the future prospect of Islam in Busan:

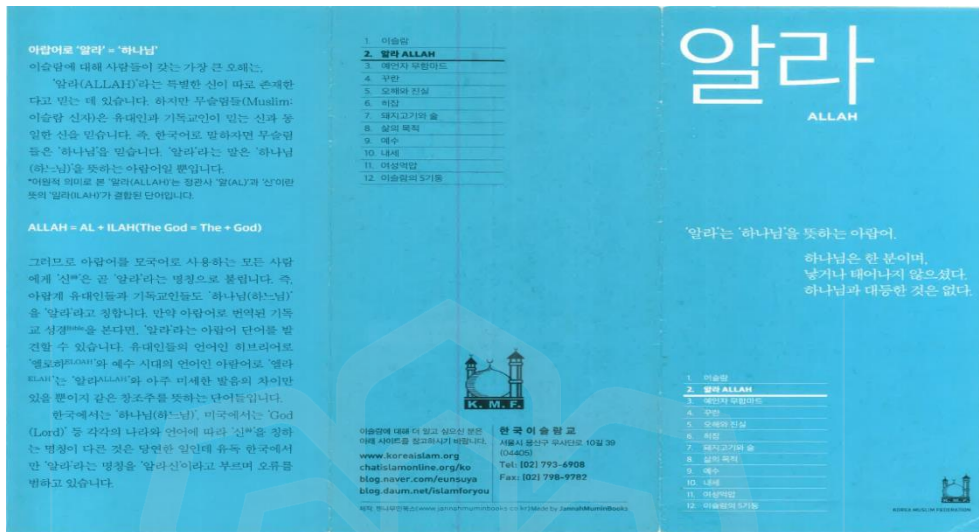
1. Is it possible for the community to grow bigger and stronger?
2. Will Islam have a great future in South Korea especially in Busan?

3. Can you share your opinion on the future prospects of Islam in Busan?



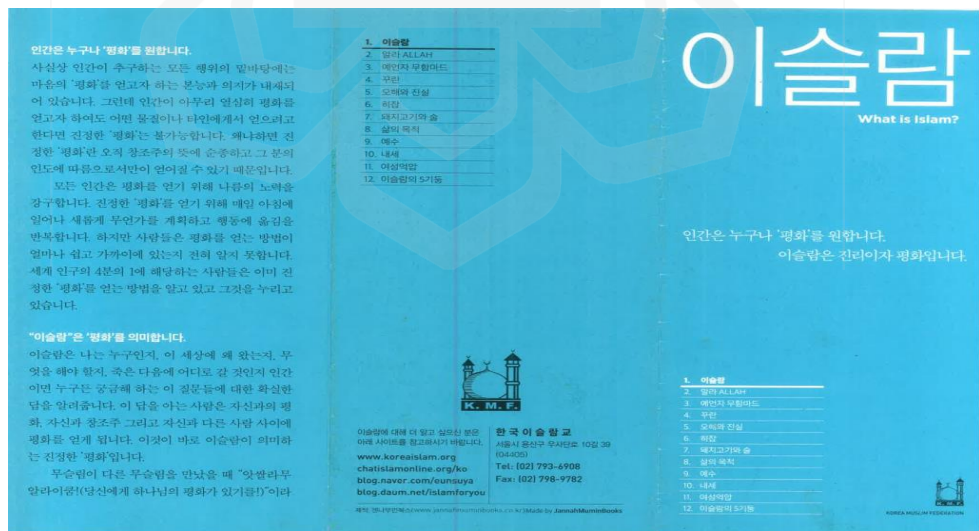
APPENDIX D – PAMPHLETS AND MINI BOOKS

Pamphlet 1 – Allah



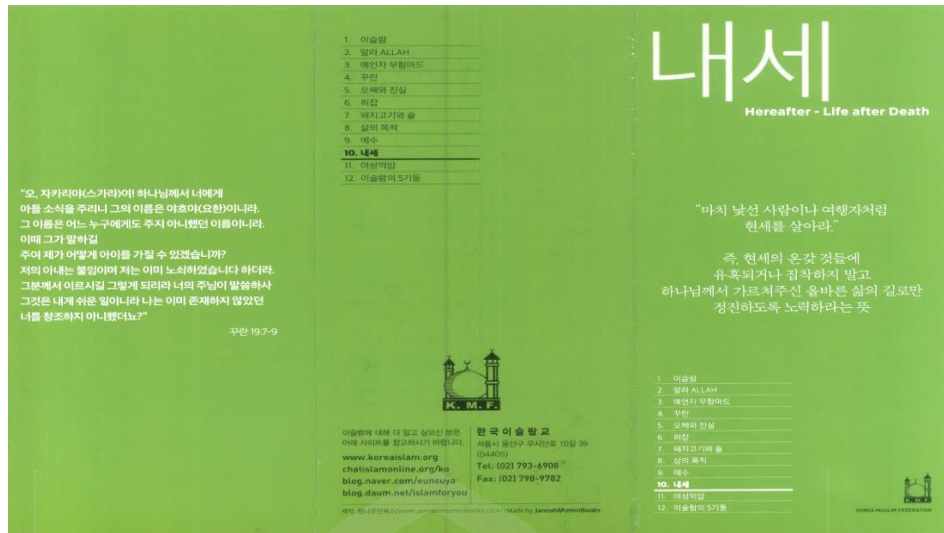
Source: Pamphlet given by the KMF Busan Branch committee during the researcher's visit to Al-Fatah Mosque

Pamphlet 2 – What is Islam?



Source: Pamphlet given by the KMF Busan Branch committee during researcher's visit to Al-Fatah Mosque

Pamphlet 3 – Hereafter – Life after Death



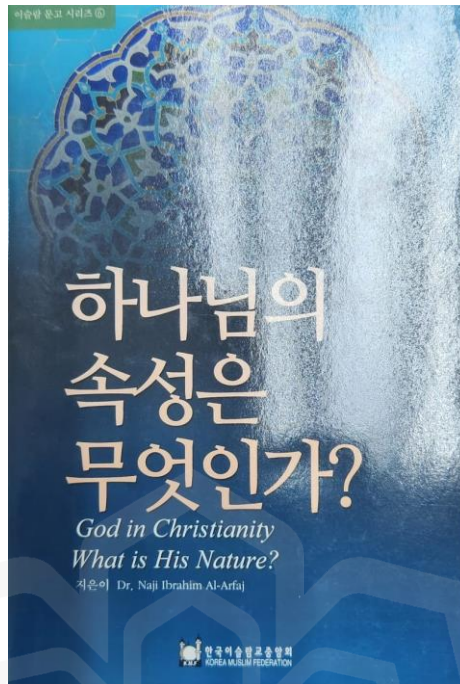
Source: Pamphlet given by the KMF Busan Branch committee during the researcher’s visit to Al-Fatah Mosque

Mini Book 1 – What is Islam?



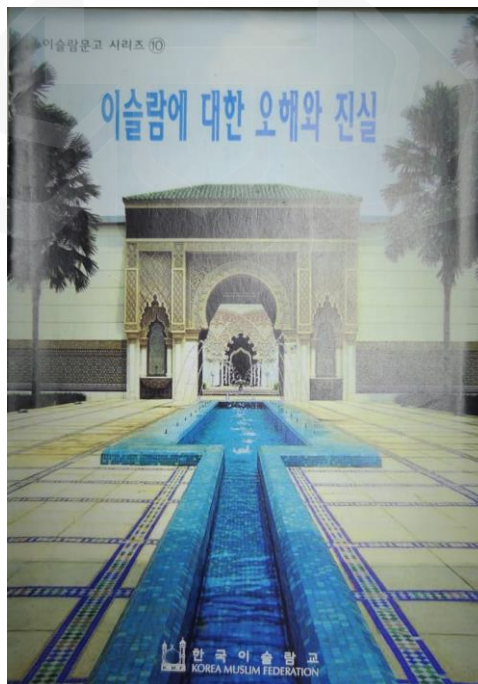
Source: Mini Book given by the KMF Busan Branch committee during the researcher’s visit to Al-Fatah Mosque

Mini Book 2 – *God in Christianity, What is His Nature?*



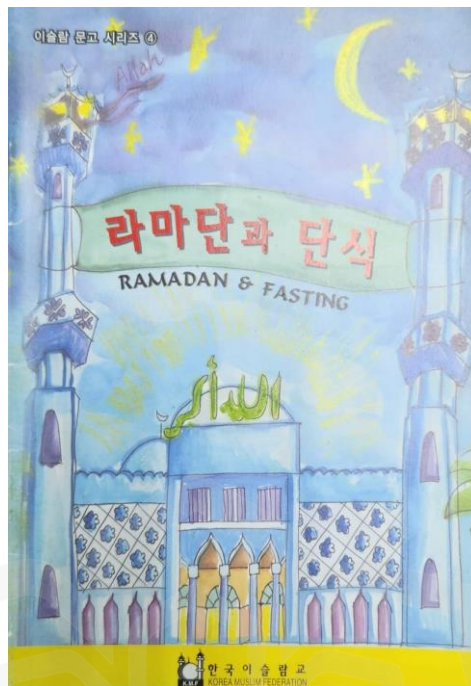
Source: Mini Book given by the KMF Busan Branch committee during the researcher's visit to Al-Fatah Mosque

Mini Book 3 – *Misunderstand and Truth about Islam*



Source: Mini Book given by the KMF Busan Branch committee during the researcher's visit to Al-Fatah Mosque

Mini Book 4 – Ramadan and Fasting



Source: Mini Book given by the KMF Busan Branch committee during the researcher's visit to Al-Fatah Mosque

APPENDIX E – PICTURES

Picture 1 – Ismail Poo Hwang and the researcher after the interview



Source: Picture taken during the researcher's visit to Al-Fatah Mosque on 29 June 2018

Picture 2 – Muhammad Daniel's reversion to Islam witnessed by the researcher



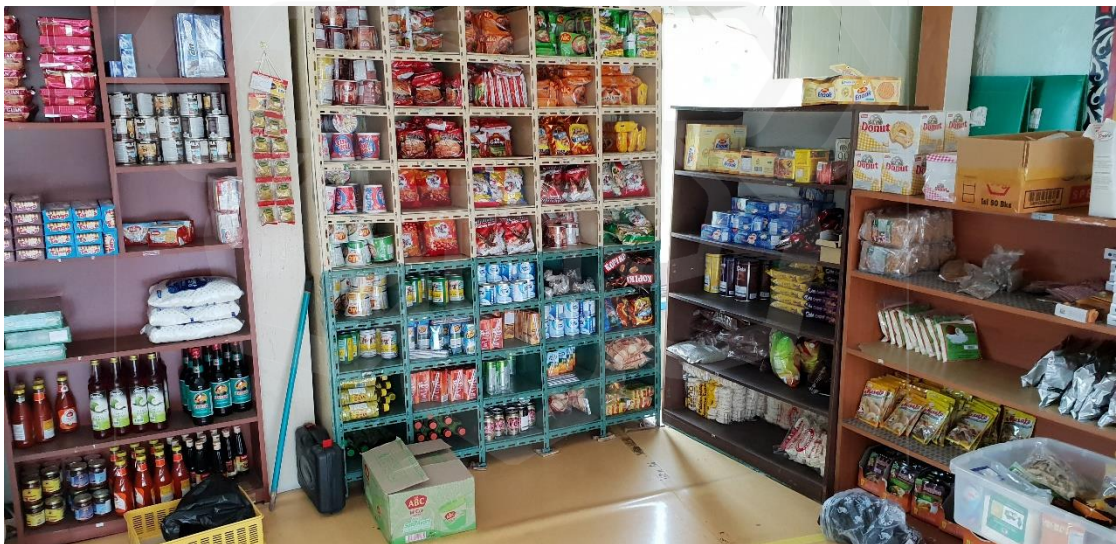
Source: Picture taken during the researcher's visit to Al-Fatah Mosque on 1 July 2018

Picture 3 – Congregational Friday Prayer Sermon delivered by Imam 2 of Al-Fatah Mosque, Syaikhoni Jazuli



Source: Picture taken during the researcher's visit to Al-Fatah Mosque on 6 July 2018

Picture 4 – Koperasi PUMITA at Babussalam, Jeonggan



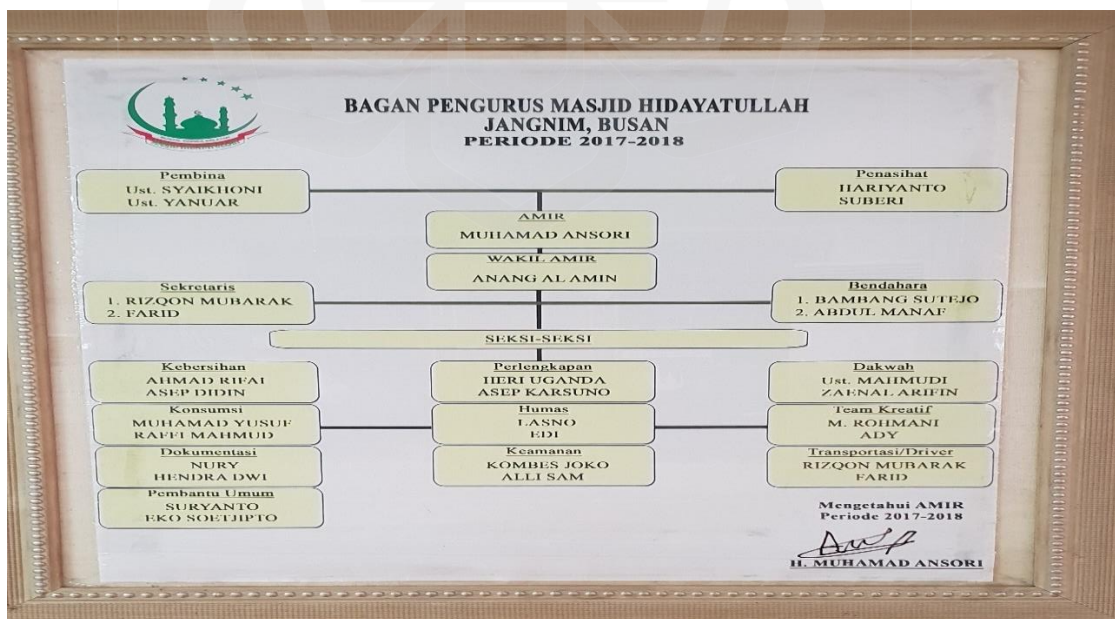
Source: Picture taken during the researcher's visit to the Babussalam Islamic Centre on 8 July 2018

Picture 5 – Musa Han Lee after the interview at Metlife Insurance Office



Source: Picture taken during the researcher’s visit to Metlife Insurance Office on 11 July 2018

Picture 6 – Organisation chart of Hidayatullah Mosque



Source: Picture taken during the researcher’s visit to Hidayatullah Mosque, Jangrim on 20 July 2018

Picture 7 – The white board showing the activities at Al-Kausar Mosque

PROGRAM - PROGRAM	Jum'at	TA'LIM DA'DA SUBUH
I). HARIAN 1. Ba'da SOLAT: Ri'adhus Sholihin 2. Ba'da Isya: Muroqat Al-Quran 3. Ba'da subuh: Hapalan Al-Quran II). MINGGUAN 1. Ba'da subuh: * Pembacaan Aemaul Husna * Belajar ilmu Tarwid. 2. JUM'AT AL-KAHFI 3. YASIN & TANCIL III) - BULANAN 1. Ba'da subuh: Khotmil Qur'an.	1) H. Purwadi 2) Rosyadi 3) M. Zaenul 4) M. Ridho	1) minggu: Istanko 2) senin: Mulyono parmin 3) Selasa: M. Ridho M. Nurahim 4) Rabu: H. Purwadi Jamar 5) Kamis: ADE Angga Wahyu. 6) Jum'at: M. Zaenul 7) Sabtu: Rosyadi

Source: Picture taken during the researcher's visit to Al-Kausar Mosque, Noksan on 27 July 2018

Picture 8 & 9 – The monument constructed for the fallen heroes from Turkey

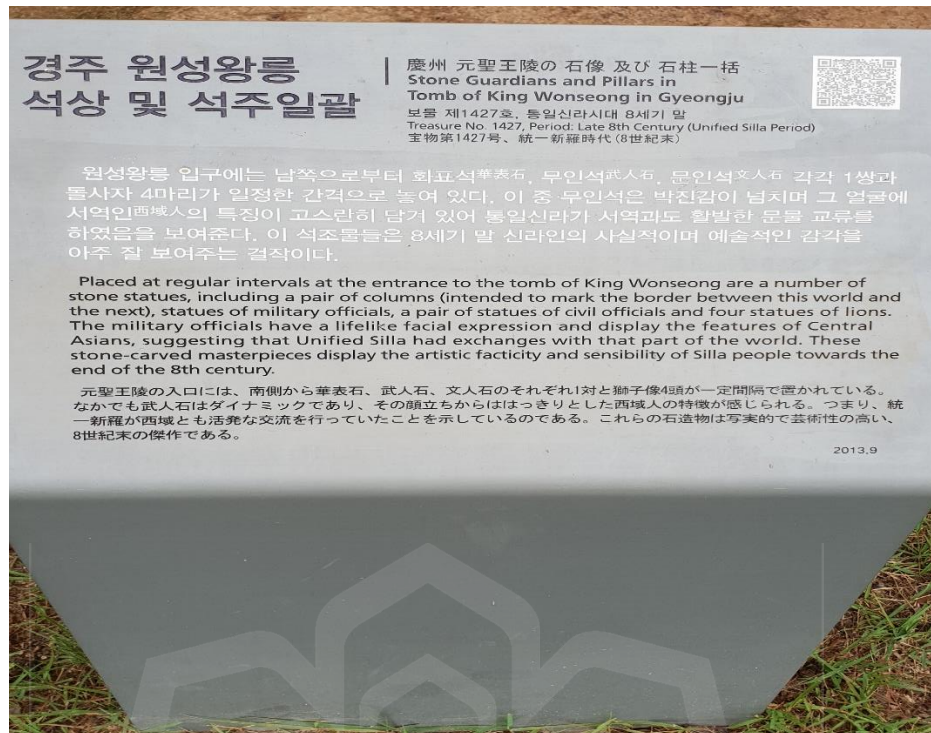




Source: Pictures taken during the researcher's visit to the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Busan, South Korea on 11 August 2018

Picture 10 & 11 – The statue is believed to be that of a Central Asian warrior, possibly a Muslim during the Silla dynasty because of its features, including a beard, headgear, and attire





Source: Pictures taken during the researcher's visit to the tomb of King Wonseong in Gyeongju on 11 August 2018