



**ISLAM IN SOUTH KOREA: PROGRESS AND
CHALLENGES OF DA'WAH ACTIVITIES SINCE THE
1950s**

BY

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to introduce Islam and Muslims in South Korea to non-Korean readers of history, especially given the increasing popularity of Korean culture, particularly in the music and entertainment industries. This study therefore provides insights into the existence of the Muslim community in South Korea, something that is unknown to many and also on the challenges and problems facing both Korean and foreign Muslims in South Korea. It has been more than half a century since the end of the Korean War in 1953 when Islam first established its foothold in South Korea, yet to date only about 0.02% of its population is Muslim (about 45,000 South Korean Muslims) while the number of foreign Muslims continue to increase, reaching about 200,000 in number. Using a qualitative approach and interviews with Korean Muslim individuals, this study provides information on how Islamic *da'wah* was carried out in South Korea, the factors contributing to the spread of Islam, and challenges facing the *da'i* in performing *da'wah*. Moreover, this study also provides information on several Muslim countries, Muslim organisations and the individuals involved in *da'wah* activities in South Korea, especially with regard to their efforts and contributions. Finally, this study highlights the prospects of Islam in South Korea and presents several suggestions on modern ways of carrying out *da'wah* in the country in the 21st century.

خلاصة البحث

يهدف هذا البحث إلى تقديم نظرة عن الإسلام والمسلمين في كوريا الجنوبية لقراء التاريخ من غير الكوريين تزامنا مع الاهتمام المتزايد بالثقافة الكورية خاصة في مجالي الموسيقى، والصناعات الترفيهية. كما توفر الدراسة لمحة عن تواجد الجالية الإسلامية في كوريا الجنوبية وهو الشيء الغير معروف لدى الكثيرين، وكذا التحديات والمشاكل التي تواجه المسلمين المحليين والأجانب على حد سواء في دولة كوريا الجنوبية. لقد مرَّ أكثر من نصف قرن على انتهاء الحرب الكورية سنة 1953م عند وصول الإسلام لأول مرة إلى كوريا الجنوبية. حاليا، يناهز نسبة أعداد المسلمين الكوريين 0.02 بالمائة من إجمالي عدد سكانه (حوالي 45000 كوري مسلم)، في حين يستمر تعداد المسلمين الأجانب في التزايد واصلًا إلى 200 ألف نسمة تقريبا. باستعمال طريقة البحث النوعي مع مقابلات مع مسلمين كوريين، فإن هذه الدراسة توفر معلومات عن كيفية انطلاق الدعوة الإسلامية في كوريا الجنوبية، والعوامل التي أسهمت في انتشار الإسلام، وكذا التحديات التي تواجه الدعوة الإسلامية. كما توفر الدراسة أيضا معلومات عن عدد من الدول الإسلامية، والمنظمات الإسلامية، والأفراد الذين ينشطون في مجال الدعوة الإسلامية في كوريا الجنوبية وخاصة فيما يتعلق بجهودهم وإسهاماتهم. أخيرا، تسلط الدراسة الضوء على آفاق انتشار الإسلام في كوريا الجنوبية، وتقدم عدد من الاقتراحات حول الأساليب العصرية لإنجاح الدعوة الإسلامية في القرن الواحد والعشرين.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Human Sciences (History and Civilization).

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DECLARATION

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The proposed study will shed light on the development of Islam in South Korea which has been overshadowed by Korean popular culture in recent times. This study will focus on the history of *da'wah*¹ activities in South Korea and the role of Muslim *da'i*² in spreading the teaching of Islam. The proposed period of study from 1950 up to the present day is crucial in order to understand the history of *da'wah* spanning from the 1950's and its progress and challenges until the early 21st century where Islam has faced, among others, challenges of modernity including the proliferation of Korean popular culture that has swept Korea and the world. Another challenge faced by Islam and Muslims in South Korea is the perspectives of non-Muslim Koreans towards them following the 9/11 incident in the USA.³ Further to this, there is also the challenge posed by the media in spreading negative propaganda on Islam, leading to a misunderstanding of the religion and causing Islamophobia. Hence, the Muslim *da'i*'s roles will be critically assessed. In addition, the study will also focus on the problems faced by the *da'i* themselves and the community of minority Muslims who reside in South Korea, comprising both local and foreign Muslims.

¹ *Da'wah* is an Arabic term for preaching; technically it means "to enable the continuity of Islam as the sole religion of Allah, that is, to establish, complete or perfect the din". Osman Chuah Abdullah, *Preaching to the Non-Muslim Chinese in Malaysia* (IIUM Press: International Islamic University Malaysia, 2002), 15.

² *Da'i* refers to one who relays the message to the people. (preacher) Sidi Gazalba, Zainab, "Introduction" in *Dakwah Islamiah Malaysia Masa Kini* (Bangi: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1993), 6.

³ On September 11, 2001, the World Trade Centre in New York City collapsed after being hit by hijacked airplanes and Muslims were blamed for this tragedy which made the whole world prejudiced towards Islam and Muslims including, those in South Korea.

First and foremost, it is important to note that there are two countries located in the Korean Peninsula; North Korea and South Korea. Historically, these two countries were once under the rule of the same dynasty, which was divided into two because of ideological differences. This has prevailed until today. Hence, it is very important to have an understanding of these two countries and the reasons why this study focuses mainly on South Korea.

The Korean Peninsula is a region situated in Far East Asia, located approximately 1,100 kilometres south of the Asian continent. Located at the 38th parallel latitude and south of China, North Korea dominates the northern part of the peninsula while South Korea extends from that area and includes the rest of the Korean Peninsula.⁴ The Korean Peninsula throughout her history has witnessed the rule of three great dynasties namely Silla, Goryeo and Joseon.⁵ From 1910 to 1945, the Korean Peninsula fell under Japanese occupation which later led to the great division of Korea into two after the Japanese surrendered.⁶

This tragic separation happened after the defeat of the Japanese in the Pacific War, where the northern part of Korea was occupied by the Soviet Union (USSR) while the US occupied the south.⁷ The separation of the Korean Peninsula was decided by the Allies at the Potsdam Conference in 1945.⁸ This division initialized a bad relationship between these two sister countries; dominated by the USSR's ideology of communism, North Korea became South Korea's enemy. Unlike the north, South Korea is a country that was built on capitalistic idea and the government implemented

⁴ Amanda Briney, "Tensions and Conflict on the Korean Peninsula," About Education, <<http://geography.about.com/od/northkorea/a/korean-conflict.htm>> (accessed 26 March, 2014).

⁵ Andrea Matles Savada, William Shaw, ed. *South Korea: A Country Study*, (Washington: DIANE Publishing, 4th edn., 1997), 7-9.

⁶ Noor Shuhana Azmhuri, *Tamadun Korea*, (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2004), 2.

⁷ Cath Senker, *North Korea and South Korea*, (New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, 2013), 8.

⁸ Amanda Briney.

an anti-communist stance. Later in 1948, an election took place in the south and the Republic of Korea was officially established while Syngman Rhee was selected as President of the newly founded South Korea. Later in the same year, the Communist Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with the approval of the USSR, formed a government led by Kim II Sung. The two Koreas were later involved in a tragic war in 1950 known as the Korean War.⁹

Consequently, South Korea has been chosen as the subject of this study because North Korea's adoption of Communism opposes the practice of religion and the country's strict Communism policy, where loyalty must be for the leader only, denotes that it is quite difficult for a religion like Islam, which calls for the worship of Allah (s.w.t) to be introduced and proliferated in North Koreans. Moving on to the proposed study, statistics have shown that the Muslims population has been growing at a steady pace throughout Asia¹⁰ and also in the west. This growth is the reason Islam continues to flourish and the number of Muslims increases every day. Surprisingly, although statistics shows that Muslims are increasing in numbers, the spread of Islam in East Asia is not that aggressive compared to other parts of the world. Islamic teaching is less attractive to the people of East Asian countries such as Japan and South Korea.

Although Islam is widely spread in South East Asia and the western parts of China, Islam is still religion that is alien to most South Koreans despite the arrival of Islam to the region in as early as the 11th century during the Goryeo Dynasty¹¹. The coming of more Arab traders to the region towards the end of the 11th century centred only on trading and not preaching or the spreading of Islam, thus resulting in only a fraction of Koreans converting to the religion. According to a survey carried out by

⁹ Cath Senker, 8.

¹⁰ Houssain Kettani, "Muslim Population in Asia: 1950-2020", *International Journal of Environmental Sciences and Development*, vol. 1, no. 2 (2010): 143-152.

¹¹ Yoon Kyung Sun, *Islam in Korea*, (Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1983), 21-22.

Houssain Kettani, the number of Muslims in South Korea, which consists of local and foreign Muslims from 1950 to 2009, is small in number and the conversion is rather slow in progress yet steady in terms of increment. He says, “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. It is estimated that the local Muslims numbered 45,000 while the foreign Muslims¹³ dominated at 190,000.

Islam started to spread in South Korea in the 1950s during the civil war that occurred in the Korean Peninsula between North Korea and South Korea. The three-year Korean War involved several other Communist countries and also the United Nations. Turkey at that time had joined the United Nations in support of South Korea and Turkish soldiers later resided in South Korea after the war, subsequently playing an important role in spreading Islam throughout the region¹⁴. The stationing of Turkish troops to defend South Korea brought significant changes to the country. Islam finally took its first step in establishing a foothold in this foreign country and the religion has continued to survive until now, even though it is still not well received by the locals. It took almost a decade for Islam to set its base in the Korean Peninsula while neighbouring countries such as China and Japan had already acknowledged Islam in the same amount of time¹⁵. In South Korea, Islam faced many challenges throughout the years due to the fact that the country was dominated by other known

¹² Houssain Kettani, 151.

¹³ The foreign Muslim population in South Korea consists of many nationalities which are mainly from countries such as Bangladesh, Indonesia and Pakistan. Several came from other countries like Malaysia, Uzbekistan and Middle Eastern countries like Saudi Arabia. Ben Jhoty, “Muslim community finds refuge in religion,” *The Korean Herald*, 21 September, 2001, Muslim Population, <<http://www.muslimpopulation.com/asia/Korea%20South/Muslim%20community%20finds%20refuge%20in%20religion.php>> (accessed 26 March, 2014).

¹⁴ Abdul Haq, *Gerakan Islam di Korea dan Indonesia*. (Yogyakarta: Bagian Penerbitan Dua Dimensi, 1985), 109-110.

¹⁵ The process of religious conversion to Islam in those countries had already started in the 11th century.

religions during that time such as Buddhism, Confucianism and Christianity. There were times when Islam expanded without any problem. However, there were also times where Islam descended in nature, causing da'wah activities to face a setback.

This research focuses on da'wah activities that occurred from the arrival of Islam during the 1950s until the 21st century in order to determine the reasons for the slow conversion of South Koreans into Islam and the progress and regress of da'wah activities. At the same time, the researcher will highlight problems faced by the Muslim minorities who reside in South Korea. Finally, in order to help enhance the da'wah activities in this country, this research will thoroughly examine several possible methods that would increase the productivity of da'i and introduce effective ways of doing da'wah.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this research is to determine challenges faced by Muslim minorities and da'wah activities in South Korea. Although Islam has been accepted as part of South Korea's religion and culture, it still has a long way to go and much hardship is yet to be overcome in order to attract the local population to embrace Islam. Therefore, a study on this matter is important in order to investigate the root problems of why Islam has not spread quickly enough and to suggest solutions on how to improve the methods of da'wah.

Islam is not a contradictory religion; it has been known to fulfil the needs of people. Therefore, to say that Islam cannot be practised by the Korean community is fairly illogical. Islam could be one of the leading religions in South Korea. Hence, the researcher found that it is important to cross examine the problems faced by Muslim

minorities and the da'i in South Korea in their practices and daily activities. For example, in terms of education, there is no restriction for minority Muslims to learn and go to school, all the way to institutions of higher learning. Islamic and Arabic studies are also available in universities like Myongi University. Moreover, politically, Muslims are not directly involved in the country's political activities, they merely live normal lives as businessmen, teachers, labourers or have other professions. While Muslims in South Korea seem to live their lives without much hassle alongside non-Muslims, there are some exceptions however, one being the negative treatment shown towards Muslim businesses. For instance, in the Itaewon district, Muslim businesses in the area are seen by non-Muslims as competition and hence; alienated by the latter. The perceptions and attitudes of non-Muslim South Koreans towards Islam and Muslims will be investigated, the reasons for their rejection of Islam will be analysed.

Furthermore, in order to counter those challenges, da'wah modules and the methods used by Muslim da'i in propagating Islam need to be re-assessed. This is because the methods used for da'wah by Muslim da'i could have influenced the acceptance or rejection of Islam in South Korea. Firstly, the organisations actively involved in da'wah activities should be listed and their *modus operandi* should be thoroughly examined. Secondly, we need to understand the extent other Muslim countries like Saudi Arabia and Malaysia have been involved in supporting da'wah activities in South Korea and their role in propagating the religion.

It is also worthwhile to identify similarities between Islamic teachings and Korean practices that could engage the interest of South Koreans towards Islam, such as the spirit of brotherhood and the show of respect to elders and each other. Presently, in Western countries such as the United States and European countries, there has been

significant increase in the number of people reverting to Islam. This increase continues every year, especially after the 9/11 tragedy. People started learning more about Islam despite all the negative propaganda that has been televised. This shows that human beings are curious by nature and therefore make the effort to know and learn something and to be enlightened, rather than just listening to and watching what has been broadcasted without further information. Thus, it is important to study if this situation also occurs in South Korea.

From the above discussion on the statement of the problem, the researcher developed four research questions that need to be answered:

1. What are the problems faced by Muslim minorities (local and foreign Muslims) in their daily life in South Korea and the view of non-Muslim South Koreans towards Islam and Muslims?
2. What are the problems faced by Muslim da'i in doing da'wah to local non-Muslim South Koreans and the possible reasons for the latter's slow conversion to Islam?
3. Which organisations and countries are assisting with da'wah activities in South Korea and the stance of the South Korean government towards Islam?
4. What are the possible methods that could be used by Muslim da'i for effective da'wah and to counter misunderstanding towards Islam?

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is conducted in order to gain insights regarding the situation of Islamic da'wah in South Korea and the challenges faced by Muslim da'i and minority

Muslims (local and foreign) in the country. This study will also identify the reasons why Islam is taking longer to spread in South Korea despite its existence in the country for more than half a century. Besides, there is insufficient discourse concerning the methods used by Muslim da'i to improve their da'wah techniques. Lack of newly developed methods in da'wah to attract South Koreans in gaining more understanding of Islam can be argued as one of the reasons for the slow rate of conversion. Furthermore, this research would objectively attempt to fill in the gap in this area of study, in which there is insufficient information and limited literature review on the aforementioned topic due to the lack of materials in English. Hopefully, this research could contribute in filling in the gap particularly for non-Korean readers.

Thus, this study will focus on the development of Islam and da'wah activities in South Korea and could provide significant contributions to the *Ummah* in pursuing the work of da'wah towards non-Muslims globally. Last but not least, it is to appreciate respectable scholars who have dedicated their writings in this field either through their books, journal articles or theses which have largely contributed to the understanding of Islam and Muslims in South Korea.

There are four main research questions raised by the researcher in order to make this study worthwhile. Based on the above research questions, the research on this topic will proceed with listing the objectives of the study, which are as follows:

1. To understand the current problems faced by minority Muslims (local and foreign) in their daily life in South Korea.
2. To highlight the challenges faced by Muslim da'i in propagating da'wah and the methods of da'wah that are being used.
3. To examine the progress and regress of da'wah activities in South Korea by looking at the involvement of Islamic organisations, Islamic countries and also

the South Korean government in their attitude towards Islam and Muslims in the country.

4. To discuss a number of possible ways to help increase the effectiveness of Muslim da'i in doing da'wah to local Koreans.

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

Almost every scholar who has written about Islam and Muslims in South Korea focuses on the arrival of Islam to the country in the past and present. A number of discussions exist regarding da'wah activities in South Korea, but they still lack explanations that can help in increasing the understanding of da'wah and Muslim da'i activities in South Korea. In other words, even though there are some scholars who have discussed da'wah activities in South Korea, the discussions merely scratch the surface of the topic and lack in-depth explanation. 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 will be based on materials in English only.

The first noteworthy literature in this field is an article written by Idris El Hareir and Ravane Mbaye entitled *The Spread of Islam throughout the World*.¹⁶ It mostly mentions the coming of Islam to the Far East region and the spread of Islamic culture in this area. Like other scholars' views, the arrival of Islam to this part of the world

¹⁶ Idris El Hareir and Mbaye, R. Different Aspects of Islamic Culture: *The Spread of Islam throughout the World* (Vol. 3). (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2011). 759-783.

was mainly related to trading activities. China actually became the gateway for Islam before it spread to Korea and Japan. Moreover, the authors discuss the spread of Islamic culture in Korea during this early period, like the lunar calendar system which was claimed by the official Korean historical documents as being based on Islamic astronomy and calendar.¹⁷ Other things introduced by Muslims to Korea were medicine and metal printing. This shows that Islam was not totally foreign in Korean history as it had already influenced the development of Korean culture before the 20th century. By the end of the discussion, the authors briefly mention the future prospects of Islam in South Korea and the focus on the anti-Islamic Western mass media propaganda. They present distorted ideas on Islam regarding the issues of polygamy, military activities, Islamic fundamentalism and many more in order to give a bad impression of Islam and Muslim peoples. The authors also mention that Islam and Confucianism, which were practised during the Joseon period have the same value systems; for example, the value of brotherhood. These discussions are crucial to this study, and helps the researcher to better understand the practices of South Koreans that are in line with Islamic teaching. However, it lacks discussion on da'wah activities and the organisations involved.

Korea: A Religious History by James Grayson classifies Islam as a new world religion when he wrote about Islam in Korea. Grayson comprehensively explains how Muslims came in contact with South Korea due to trade with China before the 15th century. The Koreans of this time were well aware of the practices of the Muslims but there is no record of local Koreans reverting to Islam. Furthermore, Grayson chronologically lists the activities that happened in the 20th century pertaining to Muslims' activities in South Korea with the involvement of countries like Malaysia

¹⁷ Ibid., 772.

and Saudi Arabia. He also mentions organisations such as the Korean Muslim Federation (KMF) which caters to the needs of newly reverted Muslims.¹⁸ At the end of his discussion on Islam in South Korea, he mentions other scholarly views about the slow growth of Islam in the country. The main reason preventing the reversion of Koreans to Islam is due to daily Islamic practices like performing prayers five times a day and Friday prayer.¹⁹ In relation to this point, the researcher will attempt to provide an explanation as to what extent Islam is seen as a burden, if any, by the South Koreans.

Abdul Haq (Je Dae Sik) wrote a book entitled *Gerakan Islam di Korea dan Indonesia*. In Chapter Four of this book, he writes extensively regarding Islam in South Korea starting with the arrival of Islam to South Korea and the development and progress of da'wah activities there. The author also attempts to elaborate on the meaning of effective da'wah and factors that could hinder the progress of da'wah. This book provides plenty of information needed for the researcher in order to understand the situation of da'wah in South Korea.²⁰ However, it is quite surprising that Abdul Haq does not provide any available references used in writing this chapter. Therefore, Abdul Haq's inadequate information on his sources makes some of his presented facts untraceable, especially with regards to effective da'wah programmes organized by some Muslim organisations such as the Korean Muslim Federation.

Don Baker, a scholar who has written on the history of Islam in Korea in his article; "Islam Struggles for a Toehold in Korea: Muslims in Land Dominated by Monks and Ministers," maintains that the slow spread of Islam is related to the fact that South Koreans only see Islam as a religion for foreigners, not for the locals. Most

¹⁸ James H. Grayson, *Korea – A Religious History*, (New York: Routledge/Curzon, 2002), 195-197.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 197.

²⁰ Abdul Haq, 111-124.

mosques in South Korea are filled with foreigners, thus making it harder for the Koreans to approach these institutions. In addition, the strictness of Islamic teaching was also pointed out as an excuse, in that the religion clashes with the norms of the South Koreans. According to the author, no effective measure has been taken by Muslim preachers to make the mosque an approachable place for the South Koreans.²¹ This research will also attempt to discuss this matter and provide a better solution in line with the spirit of brotherhood that is promoted in Islam so that the religion can be more receptive by the locals.

Another significant literature is written by Hee Soo Lee in his book entitled *The Advent of Islam in Korea*, which describes the organisations and da'wah methodology in South Korea. The book is not extensively informative as Hee Soo Lee partially discusses the establishment of the Korean Islamic Society and does not give much details pertaining to da'wah work in South Korea. However, he briefly mentions da'wah activities and claims that the misunderstanding of Islam is due to pro-Western education adopted by the South Korean government.²² His view on this matter does not go through extensive analysis and is left without sufficient information. This therefore leads to another question; how did Western education influence the South Koreans' view towards Islam to the extent that it has created a misunderstanding of the religion? Furthermore, Hee Soo Lee lists several challenges like the misconceptions towards Islam and financial difficulties²³ that have hampered the propagation of Islam in South Korea. This can actually help this research but unfortunately the material lacks in-depth explanation and discussion.

²¹ 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.

²² Hee Soo Lee, *the Advent of Islam in Korea; a Historical Account*, (Istanbul: Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture, 1997), 220-221.

²³ *Ibid.*, 223.

There is also another important article connected to this study, written by Fauziah Fathil entitled “Islam in Minority Muslim Countries: A Case Study on Japan and Korea.” In her article, Fauziah states the involvement of Muslim countries like Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and others in providing aid to the da’i and also their involvement in aiding organisations involved in da’wah activities like the Korea Muslim Federation (KMF). This elaboration is useful as it shows that there is direct support from local Muslim communities, which helps with the propagation of Islam in South Korea. Nevertheless, there is still insufficient information regarding the progress and regress of da’wah activities and on the involvement of these countries and Muslim organisations in these activities.²⁴ In addition, there is no information highlighting the South Korean government’s stance towards Muslim minorities in the nation. Furthermore, she mentions that “some people tend to point to the slow progress of da’wah of Islam in Korea. Unlike in some other countries where the number of Muslim converts reaches few thousands per year, the recorded number of new converts among the Koreans is low, most likely about a few hundred per year”²⁵. This is an important study in order to improve the da’wah activities in South Korea and assist the da’i to smoothly propagate Islam. In addition, this study also strives to determine how to tackle the problems faced by the Muslims and find ways to encourage non-Muslim Koreans to accept Islam as a way of life.

Azyumardi Azra in his book entitled *Jejak-jejak Jaringan Kaum Muslim: Dari Australia hingga Timur Tengah* briefly discusses the situation of Islamic da’wah in South Korea by emphasising situation in the 21st century. Azyumardi explains the problems faced by Muslims by stressing the 11 September 2001 incident and what

²⁴ Fauziah Fathil and Fathiah Fathil, “Islam in Minority Muslim Countries: A Case Study on Japan and Korea”, *World Journal of Islamic History and Civilization*, 1 (2) (2011): 134-135.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 136.

organisations like the Korea Muslim Federation have done in order to eradicate the negative effects produced by this tragedy. For example, Muslim women wearing the hijab are being gazed upon prejudicially by local Koreans when walking in the streets.²⁶ This book is useful in providing information related to situation faced by Muslims' in the 21st century but somewhat lacks in-depth elaboration on the subject.

Another significant work is an article written by Jiyun Camilla Nam, who critically discusses the Muslims' situations and problems in Itaewon²⁷. The article, entitled "Islam, Itaewon, Muslims and Koslims: Inter-cultural Dynamics in the Muslim Neighborhood of Seoul" provides useful information on the situation of Muslims in Itaewon where they are being treated negatively in economic matters as Korean residents see Muslims businesses as their rivals, whilst; they ignore the mushrooming of commercial activities by other foreign communities such as the Italians, Thais, etc. Unfortunately, this article fails to mention the underlying reasons for the negative attitude shown by the Korean residents and the author does not give any explanation about the Muslims' reaction to cope with this unwanted situation.²⁸ While the article is helpful in understanding why there is a clash between Islamic teaching and the local culture, it does not discuss much further on the similarities between the two, such as the spirit of brotherhood and respect for the elders. By providing additional information on Islamic teaching, it may help the Muslim da'i to establish a connection with the locals.

²⁶ Azywardi Azra, *Jejak-jejak Jaringan Kaum Muslim: Dari Australia hingga Timur Tengah*, (Jakarta: Hikmah, 2007), 35-38.

²⁷ Itaewon district located in Seoul, South Korea is a popular area for residents of Seoul, tourists, foreign expatriates and U.S. military personnel. Itaewon is an area that is largely populated by an international community, serving dishes from all around the world.

²⁸ Jiyun Camilla Nam, "Itaewon, Muslims and Koslims: Inter-cultural Dynamics in the Muslim Neighborhood of Seoul", *Situations*, Vol. 6 (winter, 2012): 52-54.

Regarding the Korean Muslim Federation (KMF), there is an informative article written by Abdul Rajiq Sohn Joo Young, the former President of the federation himself, entitled *Organisations and Activities of the Muslim Minority in Korea*²⁹. This article gives extensive information regarding KMF's activities. He also mentions the involvement of Malaysia in the organisations da'wah activities and its assistance to train the da'i. Moreover, the author also examines religious policies and the position of Islam in South Korea. This article provides substantial information pertaining to the organisation, but Abdul Rajiq Sohn Joo Young does not discuss further on the challenges faced by KMF in propagating the religion and also fails to mention the activities of Korean Muslim da'i and their role as fellow Koreans in correcting misconceptions towards Islam. However, he lists several main barriers that hinder the propagation of Islam such as the shortage of funds, misunderstanding towards Islam and others.

Lastly, Zeinab Hassan Ashry in her book *A Guide to Giving Da'wah to Non-Muslim*³⁰ has provided extensive important information about da'wah; its meaning, the methods and how to be a successful da'i. Moreover, the author also discusses the misunderstanding towards Islam and Muslims which she perceives as a threat to the da'wah activities. She lists several ways to counter these misconceptions, following which hopefully Muslims would shoulder this responsibility seriously in order to deal with the new millennium's challenges. However, Zeinab Hassan Ashry's book did not address the topic of da'wah in a minority Muslim country because the condition is different from a country dominated by Muslims. Nevertheless, her discussion on

²⁹ Sohn Joo Young, "Organisations and Activities of the Muslim Minority in Korea," (n.d.): 1-28. <www.world-dialogue.org/MWL/minority/C1430-M08-1.pdf> (accessed 3 March, 2014).

³⁰ Zeinab Hassan Ashry, "A Guide to Giving Da'wah to Non-Muslims," (n.d.). <www.muslim-library.com/dl/books/English_A_Guide_to_Giving_Dawah_To_Non_Muslims.pdf> (accessed 6 August, 2015).