



**Thesis by
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**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
(Ph.D.) OF KENYATTA
UNIVERSITY**

**The influence of interpretations of islam on
girls' access to secondary school education
in Mombasa and Kwale districts, Kenya**

2003



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**THE INFLUENCE OF INTERPRETATIONS OF ISLAM
ON 'GIRLS' ACCESS TO SECONDARY SCHOOL
EDUCATION IN MOMBASA AND KWALE
DISTRICTS, KENYA**



BY

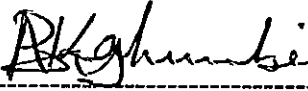
NEWTON KAHUMBI MAINA

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL
SCIENCES IN FULFILLMENT FOR THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D.) OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**

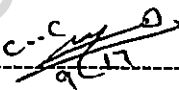
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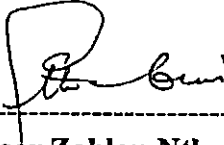
DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work. It has not been presented for a degree in any other university or for any other award.

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DEDICATION

**This thesis is dedicated to my children:
Diana and Collins**

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIM	African Inland Mission
AEO	Area Education Officer
AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
BER	Bureau of Educational Research
BERC	Basic Education Resource Centre
BoG	Board of Governors
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
C&PK	Colony and Protectorate of Kenya
CMS	Church Missionary Society
Cf	Confer compare
CSM	Church of Scotland Mission
CRE	Christian Religious Education
DC	District Commissioner
DEB	District Education Board
DEO	District Education Officer
EAMWS	East African Muslim Welfare Society
EDAR	Education Department Annual Report
ff	cross reference
GCE	General Certificate of Education
GoK	Government of Kenya
HH	His Highness
IIEP	Islamic Integrated Education Program
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPK	Islamic Party of Kenya
IRE	Islamic Religious Education
KCE	Kenya Certificate of Education
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KIE	Kenya Institute of Education
KNA	Kenya National Archives
KNEC	Kenya National Examinations Council
LEGCO	Legislative Council
LNC	Local Native Council
MP	Member of Parliament
MRC	Madrassa Resource Centre
NCEOP	National Committee on Education Objectives and Policies
n.d.	no date
NDP	National Development Party
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
P.b.u.h	Peace be upon him
PC	Provincial Commissioner
PCEA	Presbyterian Church of East Africa
PDE	Provincial Director of Education
PE	Physical Education
PEO	Provincial Education Officer
PO	Participant Observation

Q.	Qur'an
RECEAP	Report of the Education Commission of East Africa
RoK	Republic of Kenya
SDA	Seventh Day Adventist
TAC	Teachers' Advisory Centre
TSC	Teachers Service Commission
UFMM	United Free Methodist Mission
YMA	Young Muslim Association

ACRONYMS

DICECE	District Centre for Early Childhood Education
FAWE	Forum For African Women Educationalists
FEMSA	Female Education in Mathematics Project
FIMA	International Festival of African Fashions
KANU	Kenya African National Union
MEWA	Muslim Education and Welfare Association
MIOME	Mombasa Institute of Muslim Education
NACECE	National Centre for Early Childhood Education
NARET	National Association of Religious Education Teachers
NUKEM	National Union of Kenya Muslims
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WAMY	World Assembly of Muslim Youth

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Access:

Entry and opportunity of attaining secondary school education.

Conservatives:

Muslims who interpret religious teachings and social lore literally. They perceive women's roles as auxiliary or instrumental to the roles that men perform. Through literal interpretations of the teachings of Islam, conservatives maintain the *status quo* regarding the status of women in society.

Education:

Is the formal, non-formal and informal processes of acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes which take place in school, college or university.

Gender:

A social construction that denotes masculinity and femininity. It is used interchangeably with the term sex to denote male/maleness and female/femaleness

Islamic education:

Education that instills the beliefs and ideals of Islam which are found in the Qur'an and Hadith.

Muslim:

One who verbally and by actions professes Islamic faith, and whose life is regulated by the teachings of Islam as found in the Qur'an and Hadith.

Patriarchal Ideology:

Is a system of values beholden to religion and/or socio-cultural beliefs and practices, that confers power, authority, guardianship and headship to men. Patriarchal ideology leads to the domination of males over females in the political, social and economic spheres of life.

Purdah:

Is the practice of veiling in which Muslim women wear a head and face gear that also covers the arms and body upto the legs. This practice is symbolized by the *hijab*, *niqab*, *chador* or *burqa'a*.

Seclusion:

Is the practice of confining women to a private domain in their own company where men are not supposed to venture. This practice starts with the onset of puberty.

GLOSSARY

al:	the definite article corresponding to “the” in English.
al-fitna:	social disorder.
al-Haqq:	the Truth.
al-khul‘u:	wife’s right to divorce her husband by compensating him.
Ansar:	Supporters/Helpers; Muslims of Medina who helped and welcomed the Prophet and his followers from Mecca. This was during the period of persecution, when the Prophet migrated from Mecca during the Hijra.
asbab al-Nuzul:	circumstances (reasons) that led to the revelation of a particular verse (passage) of the Qur’an.
awrah:	parts of the body that are not supposed to be exposed.
bai‘at:	oath of allegiance.
baraza:	political meetings convened by the provincial administration.
bin (ibn):	son of.
binti:	daughter of.
buibui:	Kiswahili term for Muslim veil.
burqa’a:	see hijab.
chuo (pl. vyuo):	Qur’an school(s).
darasas:	seminars/sessions.
fajr:	early morning prayer.
fardh ayn:	obligatory acts.
fardh kifaya:	collective obligation.
faskh:	woman’s remedy to divorce under certain circumstances.
fatwa:	religious decree.
Fiqh:	literally, understanding; knowledge of the detailed laws of the shariah. that relate to people’s actions etc; Islamic Jurisprudence.
hadith (pl. ahadith):	a report, sayings of Prophet Muhammad; either his statement, or tacit approval
haidh:	menses.
hajj:	pilgrimage to Mecca, the fifth pillar of Islam, performed between the 9 th - 13 th of Dhul-Hijjah, the 12 th month in the Islamic calendar.
harambee:	Kiswahili for pooling resources together.
heshima:	Kiswahili for honor.
hijab:	a Muslim woman’s flowing outer garment that cover the head, body

	chest, arms, legs down to the ankle; veil.
hijra:	migration from a land where conditions prevent one from practicing Islam to where one is able to practice it.
iddah:	period of waiting that a widow or a divorcee must observe before she remarry
idd ul-adha:	the feast of Great Sacrifice that culminates the Haj festivities.
idd ul-fitr:	the festival of breaking the fast of Ramadhan.
ihram:	state of consecration entered into when one intends to perform hajj or umra. Certain lawful acts become prohibited, and for men they cannot wear stitched clothing.
i'jma:	consensus of the Muslim jurists qualified to make ijtilhad on sharia in any era after the death of the Prophet. It is the third source of sharia.
ijtihad:	the exertion of an effort by a qualified Islamic scholar to deduce an issue of law, where there is no clear specific in the Qur'an Hadith; it is independent reasoning.
imam:	leader of prayer in a mosque; political leader or a leading Islamic scholar; among the Shia, one of the descendants of the Prophet who holds religious and political authority and is divinely chosen.
isha:	night prayer
isnad:	chain of transmission
jahiliyya:	period of ignorance, used to refer to Pre-Islamic Arabia
jariya:	female slave
jihad:	exerting oneself in the cause of Allah; holy war.
jilbab (pl.jalabeeb):	see hijab.
Jumu'ah:	Friday; the day of weekly congregational prayer in a mosque.
kanzu:	typical outfit that resembles the cassock and worn by Muslim men.
ka'bah	house built by Abraham in Mecca and which Muslims face in prayer.
khalif (caliph):	successor of the Prophet.
khutba:	sermon.
madhabib:	schools of thought of Islamic law. The four major ones are Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali.
mahr:	dower/marriage gift.
matatu:	Kiswahili, literally three, refers to the public service vehicles that are smaller than omni-buses.
muhsanah:	fortress against Satan.
mutawa(in):	religious (moral) police.

- madrasa (pl. madaris): school where Islamic subjects like the Quran, hadith and Arabic are taught
- mahram (pl. maharim): relatives with whom one cannot contract a marriage
- mantiq: logic
- msamiati: the sum of words used in a language
- nahwu: grammar
- nashiz: recalcitrant (rebellious) man or woman
- niqab: see hijab
- nushuz: recalcitrance (rebellion)
- qadhi: judge
- qawwamun: guardian/protector
- qiyas: analogical deductions by which a law is extended from a case mentioned in the Qur'an or sunna to a case for which there is no specific text on the basis of the same effective cause for the law in both cases.
- Ramadhan: ninth month in the Muslim lunar calendar. Fasting from dawn to Sunset is obligatory during this month on healthy adult Muslims.
- Sahaba (sing. sahabee): Companions of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h)
- Sahabiyat: female Companions of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h).
- sahih: authentic; sound. In hadith terminology, it means a rigorously authenticated report whose isnad is connected, whose narrators are of good character and accurate memory, and which is free from hidden defects or contradiction with more authentic texts.
- salah (pl. salat): formal prayer(s) consisting of special wordings and special movements; obligatory five times a day on sane adult Muslims except menstruating women etc.
- saum: fasting; abstaining from food, drink and sexual intercourse from dawn to sunset.
- seerah: literally biography; biography of the Prophet.
- shamba: Kiswahili for farm/garden/estate/plantation.
- Sharia: Islamic law: the divinely revealed law contained in the Qur'an and sunnah. Covers issues of belief, devotional worship, personal interaction, commerce, criminal, constitutional and international law.
- Sheikh: literally an elderly man, tribal leader, a scholar, and spiritual guide (master) among sufis.
- Shia: literally faction, partisans; the main body of Muslims which regard Muhammad's son-in-law and cousin, Ali as the rightful successor of

	Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h).
shigar:	giving ones daughter in marriage without payment of dower.
shura:	consultative body.
sufi:	Muslim mystic.
sufism:	mystical interpretation of Islam.
sunna:	literally, a "way", way of life, actions and tacit approval and conduct of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h)
Sunni:	orthodox Islam. Followers of the Sunna, based on the example of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h) and the first four caliphs (successors) after the Prophet.
surah (pl. suwar):	literally, an enclosing wall, a chapter of the Qur'an.
tabi'un:	Successors of the Companions of the Prophet among second generation of Muslims.
tafsir:	Qur'anic exegesis; science of explaining the meanings of the Qur'an.
tariqa:	sufi path.
tassawwuf:	mysticism.
tawaf:	circumambulation of the Ka'ba.
ulama'a (sing. alim):	scholars.
ummah:	Muslim community.
umrah:	lesser pilgrimage; conducted any other time of the year other than the season of hajj. It includes fewer rites than hajj.
waqf (pl. awqaf):	endowment(s).
zakah:	annual obligatory alms given by Muslims possessing a fixed amount of savings and distributed among the poor and several other categories of recipients.

ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate the impact of the interpretations of Islam on girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts. The study shows that in principle, Islam grants equal rights to both genders. Hence the theory of intrinsic inferiority of the female gender is not supported by Islamic discourse or the biological differentiation between the sexes. The highly stereotyped imagery of a subordinated Muslim woman is perpetuated and propagated by [mis]interpretations of the teachings of Islam regarding the status of women in society. These [mis]interpretations are a product of, and beholden to culture proclivities of individual Muslims within particular socio-cultural milieus.

The study further demonstrates that Islam attaches equal importance to the education of girls as of boys. This implies that Islam is not the cause of gender imbalances in access to secondary school education. On the contrary, some [mis]interpretations of the teachings of Islam on the place and role of women in society influence the importance attached to the education of girls.

Within the context of the colonial Kenyan society, the study has demonstrated that the racial education policies influenced not only the development of Muslim education in general but that of Muslim girls in particular. It is evident that gender imbalances in education provision and opportunities existed during the colonial period. Largely, within the colonial context, the development of education tended to favour boys than girls. Therefore, girls' education did not develop at the same pace with that of boys'. The colonial education policies also reinforced some cultural beliefs, traditions and practices - that ascribed an inferior status to women - which were unfavourable to the education of girls. Hence, it is argued that the colonial legacy disadvantaged the development of Muslim girls' education. This has dogged and partly continued to shape the development of Muslim girls' education in the two districts.

The study further shows that as an Islamic tradition, *purdah* (veiling) is legitimised by the teachings of Islam. Seclusion of women on the other hand is not an Islamic practice, but a socio-cultural practice that is associated with Muslim communities. Female seclusion

does not derive its *raison d'être* from the teachings of Islam. Rather, it is a practice that is justified through misinterpretations of Qur'anic injunctions on veiling. Veiling and seclusion of women entail gender segregation in places of work, educational institutions, mosques and other social places. Depending on interpretations of Islamic sources, veiling, seclusion and gender segregation have implications on girls' access to secondary school education. In the midst of limited education opportunities and facilities for girls, some Muslims have an apathy towards non-Muslim schools or mixed schools without separate facilities for boys and girls. This is because of the Islamic teachings forbidding casual mixing of sexes.

Besides the interpretations of Islam, there are other factors that come into play, to influence a Muslim girl's access to secondary school education. These include: co-education, distance to school, school sponsor(s), *madrasa* (religious) education, poverty and the "hidden" curriculum. All these factors affect not only the girls' access to secondary school education, but also, retention and performance in examinations.

The study employed a conceptual paradigm from the three lenses of gender by Sandra Bem (1993). These are androcentrism, gender polarization and biological essentialism. The three lenses have been used to explain the reasons behind certain socio-cultural behaviour and mode of thought that predispose some Muslims either to favour or to be in disfavour of girls' education.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

That females, lag behind males in many levels of education in many developing countries is not debatable (UNICEF, 1992; Hyde, 1993). It is evident that gender inequality in education is reflected in lower enrolment rates, high dropout and wastage rates, repetition rates and lower levels of attainment and completion rates for girls (Hyde, 1993:101; Abagi *et al.*, 1997:4; RoK, 2002-2008:55). In Kenya, statistics reveal that completion rate for girls is lower than that of boys. For example, only 35 per cent of girls who enrolled in Standard One, compared to 55 per cent of the boys, completed their education in 1991. The primary school's completion rate for the 1997 cohort group was 45 per cent for boys and 43 per cent for girls (**Daily Nation**, 3/2/96, p.15; **Daily Nation**, 25/7/96, p.vi;13/11/2000, p.15). According to the 6th **National Development Plan** (1989-1993:28) only 34 per cent of the girls who enrol in Standard 1, complete primary school education compared to 48 per cent of boys. Completion rate for secondary school education cycle is also slightly lower for girls (75.5 per cent) than for boys [79.8 per cent] (RoK, 2001:37). This has been the case over the years. For example, in 1998, the completion rate at Form Four was 86 per cent for boys and 84 per cent for girls (**Daily Nation**, 9/10/2000, p.18). Generally, the depressed status of girls, vis-à-vis boys in the education system is further provided by the **1999 Kenya's Population Census** report. The report reveals that there are more girls than boys out of school, with participation, transition and performance rates of girls lagging behind those of boys (RoK, 2001:ix).

Notwithstanding the differences in completion rates between boys and girls, Kenya has achieved tremendous growth in education at all levels, since independence in 1963. The growth has corresponded with increased enrolment for boys and girls (RoK, 1976; RoK, 1984-1988, 1989-1993, 1997-2001; Eshiwani, 1985a; World Bank, 1989; GoK & UNICEF, 1992; Abagi, *et al.*, 1997:4). In spite of the growth, gender disparities exist at various levels of the education system, albeit with some regional variations. These disparities are reflected in literacy levels. While the level of literacy for males is 80 per cent, that of females is 60 per cent (Wanjama & Kimani, 1995:43). At the pre-primary level and particularly Standard One, boys and girls have equal participation and enrolment rates. However, girl's enrolment

dwindles as they climb the educational ladder. By the time they reach Standard Four, 50 per cent of the girls will have dropped out while 64 per cent will have dropped before completing Standard Eight (**Daily Nation**, 25/7/96, pp. vi-vii; 13/11/2000, p.15).

Latest statistics on primary school enrolment rates show that gender parity is almost attained. By 1998, there were 2,994,554 boys in primary schools against 2,925,721 girls. Girls accounted for 49.4 per cent of the primary school enrolment (RoK, 2000:36). Latest statistics on enrolment in secondary schools show that boys constitute 52.8 per cent, while girls, constitute 47.2 per cent (RoK, 2000:37). This demonstrates the existence of gender disparity at the secondary school level. The **1999 Population and Housing Census** report portrays the gender disparity in secondary schools. It shows that 458,136 boys were attending secondary schools against 403,064 girls (RoK, 2001:ix). The narrow gender gap in secondary schooling is caused by among other factors, the drop out rate for girls that outstrips that of boys. Statistics from Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) indicate that of the 76,126 girls who were admitted in Form One in 1991, only 62,383 sat for Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations in 1994. This implies that 13,742 or 18 per cent of the girls dropped out of school (**Daily Nation**, 3/2/96, p.15).

Gender disparity is more notable at the university level, where female enrolment dropped from 32 per cent in 1989 to a dismal 20 per cent in 1994 (Abagi, 1995:37; **Daily Nation**, 3/2/96, p.15). Female enrolment later shot up to 27 per cent in 1992/93 academic year (*ibid*, p.15). By 1998/99 academic year women comprised 30.5 per cent of the student population in the six public universities (RoK, 2000:40). In the 1999/2000 academic year, female students comprised 30.9 per cent of the total enrolment of 41,825 students in the public universities (*ibid*, p.40). This has improved a little bit to 31.7 per cent according to the 9th **Development Plan** (RoK, 2002-2008:55; cf., RoK, 2001:39). The case is different in private universities where gender parity is not only evident, but females are actually more than males. Female students form 54.5 per cent of the student enrolment in those universities (RoK, 2002:41). Girls are also grossly under-represented in other post-secondary school institutions and in science, maths and technology based courses (RoK, 1989-1993:202; RoK, 2002-2008:55).

Generally, female education in Kenya is more developed in areas that are more economically endowed especially those with greater agricultural potential (Kinyanjui, 1975a, 1975b; Krystall, 1976; Eshiwani, 1985a, 1985b; ILO, 1986; **Daily Nation**, 28/2/2000, p.21). These regions are Central, Nairobi, Eastern and Western provinces (see Figure 1). On the other hand, economically disadvantaged regions are also the most disadvantaged in female education. Most of these regions are located in the arid and semi-arid parts of the country that have poor agricultural potential. They include Coast and North-Eastern provinces and parts of Rift Valley Province such as West Pokot, Kajiado, Marsabit and Turkana districts. In Coast Province, most districts are disadvantaged, for example, Kwale; Kilifi and Tana River. There has been some resistance to schooling for girls in these areas owing to socio-economic factors and cultural practices, such as poverty, insecurity, gender role socialization and early marriages (Kinyanjui, 1975a, 1975b; GoK & UNICEF, 1992; Abagi, *et al*, 1997:5; **Daily Nation**, 23/4/94, p.15; 18/5/94, p.16; 13/7/96, p.18; 23/8/97, p.18; 1/3/99, p.23; **Sunday Nation**, 21/7/96, p.2). For example, in North Eastern Province the overall enrolment rates for boys and girls stand at 26.6 per cent and 25.2 per cent respectively. In the Rift Valley, boys' enrolment is 38.1 per cent, and girls' 36 per cent (**Daily Nation**, 13/11/2000, p.15). A focus on Coast Province may further highlight the issue.

The state of education in Coast Province could partly be explained by the colonial legacy. Generally, the development of Western education in Kenya during the colonial period was closely linked to Christian missions. To Christian missionaries, education was a means to an end. However, Muslims already had an established education system that predated the introduction of Western education by Christian missionaries. Muslims perceived missionary education as a bait to convert their children to Christianity. Therefore, they responded negatively to mission schools. Over the years, Muslims have lagged behind in Western education. This problem could be traced partly to the negative attitude of Muslims to missionary education (Bagha, 1974; Bagha, 1981; Mambo, 1981; Maina, 1993; Maina, 1995). Despite the shortcomings of missionary education, the role played by missionaries in the development of African education in Coast Province cannot be gainsaid. This was through the establishment of schools at a time when the Colonial Government had not taken the responsibility of building schools for Africans (Bagha, 1974; Bagha, 1981).

Other reasons behind the low educational status of Coast Province are shortage of schools, poverty and lack of infrastructural facilities such as electricity, easily accessible roads and water. All these impact negatively on educational performance (**Daily Nation**, 6/7/96, p.18). Financial problems encumber the development of education due to lack or shortage of essential facilities in schools, such as classrooms, laboratories, libraries, workshops, learning materials and textbooks, etc. (GoK & UNICEF, 1992, **Daily Nation**, 6/8/94, p.15; 3/9/94, p.16; 1/3/99, p.23).

In view of the educational situation in Coast Province, girls are arguably more disadvantaged than boys. For example, the overall enrolment rate for boys is 35.1 while that of girls is 31.7 (**Daily Nation**, 13/11/2000, p.15). Literacy levels for females, in the province, are lower than that of males. A case in point is Kwale District, where according to the 1988 **Kenya Rural Survey**, 35.25 per cent of women could not read and write compared to 27.99 per cent of men (GoK & UNICEF, 1992: 101-102). Furthermore, the disparity between male and female school enrolment and attendance in Mombasa and Kwale districts is quite large in all tiers of the education system. This disparity is reflected in low enrolment, participation and completion rates, and high dropout rate of girls in schools (Porter, 1990; GoK & UNICEF, 1992; RoK 1994-1996a, 1994-1996b; RoK, 1997-2001). In Kwale District, the participation rate for girls in primary school is 42 per cent, while the rate for secondary school is even lower than that of the primary (RoK, 1997-2001:38). Similarly, the percentage of girls who complete Standard Eight in the district is 34 per cent compared to 37 per cent for boys (**Daily Nation**, 9/10/2000, p.18).

Research indicates that among the factors that contribute to low educational opportunities for girls in Coast Province are socio-cultural practices. These include early marriages, female seclusion, teenage pregnancies, type of schools available for Muslim girls and poverty (Kenya, NGO, 1985; Wamahi, 1988; Wamahi, 1990; Porter, 1990; Porter, 1992; Momanyi, [n.d]; Olela, 1996). Despite these factors, the state of girls' education in Coast Province, especially the low enrollment in schools, high rates of dropout and poor performance in national examinations has over the years tended to be linked to the preponderance of Islam (Kinyanjui, 1975a, 1975b; Kenya NGO, 1985; GoK & UNICEF,

1992). However, in our earlier study (Maina, 1993), it is shown that Islam *per se* is not the cause of educational backwardness of Muslims in Kenya. Further, a study on primary schooling (among the Swahili Muslims) in Mombasa and Lamu districts by Momanyi [n.d.] re-emphasizes that Islam is not the cause for inequality in education between boys and girls.

Nevertheless, a study of girls' education in Muslim communities should take into consideration the interpretations of Islam on the place and role of women in society (Khalidi & Tucker, 1996). These interpretations are governed by the four sources of authority: Qur'an, *Sunna* (practices, conduct and way of life of Prophet Muhammad); the *ijma* (the consensus of the Muslim jurists) and *qiyas* (analogical deductions). The four sources provide a basis for interpreting and understanding the place and role of women in a Muslim society and their implications for girls' education (Khalidi & Tucker, 1996).

Owing to the four sources, there are two methods of interpretation: the traditional method and the moderate method. According to the traditional method, the various regulations and principles in the sources should be followed literally, exactly as they have been applied and systematized in the different law schools (*madhahib*) or schools of thought. For the moderate method, regulations and principles should be interpreted in accordance with the society's needs and values at a given time (Hjarpe, 1983:12-13). The two modes of interpretation regarding the place and role of women in Islam have a bearing on the education of girls in Muslim communities.

The interpretations of Islam should be linked to the analyses of the practices and institutions of Muslim communities within a given socio-cultural context (cf., Joseph, 1988:242). By corollary, the impact of interpretations of Islam on the education of girls in Kenya should be linked to the analyses of the practices and institutions of Muslim communities in Kenya. Some of these practices and institutions include, female seclusion, gender segregation, veiling (*pardah*) and marriage, all of which are related to the place and role of woman in Muslim communities.

Islam defines the roles of men and women (Q.4:34; cf., 2:233; 65:6-7). As a guardian of a woman, a man is to provide the economic and material needs of a family. On the other

hand, a woman should take care of the home and upbringing of children (Amin, 1975; Lemu & Heeren, 1978; Siddiqi, 1984; Siddiqi, 1992a; Mawdudi, 1995; Doi, 1996). Depending on interpretations, the status of a woman in Muslim communities could have implications on the education of girls. This is because girls' access to education depends, to a certain degree, on how cultural and religious beliefs define the role of women in society (Harfoush-Strickland, 1996:69). However, the teachings of Islam lay emphasis on the need for Muslim, males and females, to acquire knowledge and education. This is evident in some Qur'anic verses and *ahadith* (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad [p.b.u.h]; singular - *hadith*), as demonstrated in Chapter Three. Nevertheless, due to cultural influences, interpretations of Islam on the role of women in society could influence the importance attached to the education of girls.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Religious traditions, beliefs and practices influence the importance a society attaches to the education of girls. The religions cited are Islam, African Religion and Christianity. As an ideology, Islam regulates social relationships between the sexes and assigns roles to males and females. In view of the role of a woman in Islam, Islam could be perceived as influencing the education of girls.

Some studies on the influence of Islam on education of girls show that Islam is not the cause of the depressed situation of the education of girls in Muslim communities (cf., Nelson, 1984; Robertson, 1986; Hyde, 1993; Momanyi, n.d.). Other studies show that some Islamic traditions and attitudes on the role of women are to blame for the low status of education of girls in Muslim communities (cf., Kelly, 1984; Wamahiu, 1990; El-Sanabary, 1993). These traditions are not Islamic *per se*, but rather those that are culturally derived and clothed in religious language due to interpretations.

The divergent opinions among scholars regarding the influence of Islam on education of girls warrant a research inquiry.

1.3 Research Questions

Two broad questions have been posed:

- (a) What are the localized Islamic traditions and attitudes on the place and role of women that influence the education of girls in Mombasa and Kwale districts?
- (b) In what ways have those traditions and attitudes shaped the process and development of, and importance attached to girls' education among Muslim communities in Mombasa and Kwale districts?

The proposed study investigates the influence of interpretations of Islam on girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts, Kenya.

1.4 Research Objectives

- (a) To investigate the main trends in the development of Muslim girls' education in Mombasa and Kwale districts.
- (b) To examine the status of Muslim women in Mombasa and Kwale districts and assess its influence on girls' access to secondary school education.
- (c) To assess the influence of the practices of seclusion, *purdah* and gender segregation on girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts.
- (d) To evaluate the influence of co-education and other school-related factors on Muslim girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts.

1.5 Research Premises

- (a) The colonial legacy has partly shaped the development of Muslim girls' education in Mombasa and Kwale districts.
- (b) In Muslim communities of Mombasa and Kwale districts, some misinterpretations of the teachings of Islam on the place and role of women, constrain girls' access to secondary school education.
- (c) The practices of seclusion, *purdah* and gender segregation that hinge on interpretations of Islam on the place and role of women in society influence girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts.
- (d) Co-education, type of school, school's sponsor(s), facilities and distance to school could impinge on Muslim girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts.

1.6 Significance and Rational for the Study

This study will contribute to literature on Muslims in Kenya. It will also contribute to academic disciplines such as Islamic studies, gender studies, education, and minority community studies.

In Kenya, various studies on girls' education tend to generalize on the situation of Muslim girls (cf., Kinyanjui 1975a, 1975b; Krystall, 1976; Smock 1977; Eshiwani, 1985a; Riria-Ouko, 1986,1989). Studies that touch on education of Muslim girls among some Muslim communities, for example the Swahili (Strobel, 1979; Porter, 1990, 1992; Olela, 1996; Momanyi, n.d.) and the Adigo (Wamahiu, 1988, 1990) do not give a thorough scholarly attention to the influence of the interpretations of Islam on secondary school level of education of girls. The study will hopefully fill this gap.

Research reveals that education of women has multifarious benefits for policy implications, such as, improving maternal childcare, nutrition and health, reducing infant and child mortality rates, increasing life expectancy and women's economic opportunities and productivity (World Bank, 1989; Herz *et al*, 1991; UNICEF, 1992). The present study will provide data on the situation of secondary school education of Muslim girls in Kenya. The policy makers may use such data to formulate viable policies and intervention programmes that could promote Muslim girls' education, thereby bringing Muslim women into the mainstream of national development.

The study shows that Islam is not the cause of gender inequalities in access to education. On the contrary, it is the interpretations of Islam on the place and role of women that is the cause of gender inequality in education. These interpretations are linked to the analyses of the practices and institutions of Muslims within a given socio-cultural milieu.

In addition, the study has demonstrated that scriptures could be used to promote the well being of women or to subordinate them. Depending on interpretations, Islamic teachings that define the role of women in society could be used to promote or to demote girls' access to education.

This study offers insights into the interpretations of Islamic teachings on the place and role of women in society, which influence girls' access to education. These data are necessary for other scholars to research on the effect of interpretations of other religions, such as Christianity and African Religion, on girls' education.

1.7 Literature Review

For the purpose of this study, the review of literature has been done thematically. The literature comprises studies that generally deal with girls' education, and those studies that specifically deal with Muslim girls' education.

Some scholars opine that among some conservative communities, a strong marriage ethic and the roles of women as mothers and wives impact negatively on girls' education (Mbilinyi, 1969; Boserup, 1970; Trevor, 1975; Pala & Krystall, 1975; Smock, 1977; Eshiwani, 1985a; King & Hill, 1993; Deabster, 1995).

Boserup (1970) and Harfoush-Strickland (1996) argue that girls' education militates against their chance of marriage because of the males' deep-seated fear of marrying educated women. Pala & Krystall (1975) note that cultural expectations influence the educational position of women because parents fear that if a daughter is "too highly educated", she may find it difficult to find a husband or to be a "good wife". Mernissi (1987) and King & Hill (1993) see education beyond the acquisition of literacy as contrary to the need for women to become wives and mothers. Smock (1977) observes that formal education may be perceived as irrelevant or unsuitable for the lives that women would lead. She argues that education could make girls less willing to engage in the heavy labour and domestic chores that society and culture ascribe to them. On the other hand, according to Trevor (1975), marriage creates a dilemma for Muslim girls who in their devotion to their education pursuits might not want to get married. Deabster (1995) argues that socially constructed gender attitudes that are informed by the roles that society assigns to males and females generally influence the importance attached to the education of boys and girls. The present study shows that in Islam, marriage is a religious duty. It is a solemn covenant between God and human beings and therefore an act of piety for Muslims. Thus, a strong marriage ethic

exists among the Muslim communities of Mombasa and Kwale districts. The importance attached to marriage influences girls' access to secondary education. This is because some parents withdraw their daughters from school for early marriages.

Wamahiu (1988) contends that although women in Adigo society participate in both the private and public domains, their participation in the latter is limited due to lack of formal education. She further examines the status of Adigo women under Islam. In spite of that, she does not show how the teachings of Islam define that status and the subsequent effect on girls' education. In the same vein, Olela (1996) argues that Swahili women who believe the place of Muslim women to be in the private domain may not encourage their daughters in formal education. However, he does not show whether confining women to the private domain has any justification from the teachings of Islam. The two scholars posed two questions for this study. These are: what is the Islamic position on the place and role of women? How does that role influence girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts? In that regard, the present study shows that the teachings of Islam define the status of women. It is argued that Islam does not justify confining women to the private domain. The cases of Muslim women in the public domain in Muslim tradition offer ample testimony to the active participatory role of women in political and socio-economic aspects of life. Evidently, confining women to the private sphere is a product of misinterpretations (misunderstandings) of Islamic teachings. This impacts negatively on girls' access to secondary school education.

Sex-role socialization that shapes a society's attitudes toward girls and women influences girls' opportunities and access to education (Wamahiu, 1988; Callaway & Creevey, 1994). Callaway & Creevey (1994) argue that Hausa Muslim girls in Northern Nigeria are socialized to accept an inferior status in society vis-à-vis boys. The two scholars note that as girls grow, they are socialized to love domestic duties and aspire for roles as wives and mothers. Wamahiu (1988) sees sex-role socialization within the family and society as the cause of limited participation of Adigo girls in all levels of formal education system. However, she does not show whether this sex-role socialization has any relationship with Islam. It is argued in the present study that, in principle, Islam teaches about the equality of sexes. However, through sex-role socialization, women are depicted as subordinates.

Further, social norms on male domination reinforce the interpretations of Islam on male superiority, as Islamic teachings are [mis]interpreted to confer religious legitimacy to gender inequality. This influences girls' access to secondary school education.

School-related factors are constraints to female education. Don (1984), Robertson (1986), Herz, *et al*, (1991); Hyde (1993) and El-Sanabary (1993) argue that parental reluctance to send daughters to distant schools because of the physical and moral danger involved affects girls' education. Eshiwani (1985a) observes that parental concern for girls' discipline within the school contributes to low female enrolments in schools in Coast and North-Eastern provinces of Kenya. Other school-related factors which constrain a girl's education include: type of school (i.e. whether it is day or boarding, mixed or girls'); high cost of education; school facilities; courses offered and the "hidden curriculum"; shortage of female teachers and teachers' negative attitudes to girls' academic ability in some subjects such as mathematics and science (Mbilinyi, 1969; Robertson, 1986; Eshiwani, 1985a, 1985b; Obura, 1991; Hyde, 1993; El-Sanabary, 1993).

Eshiwani (1985a, 1985b), Porter (1992) and El-Sanabary (1994) contend that the "hidden curriculum" constrains girls' access to education. The "hidden curriculum" entails the ways that formal subject material is presented in the classroom, the teachers' interaction with students and the various portrayals of men and women in textbooks. Obura (1991) candidly details the portrayals of men and women in various primary and secondary textbooks used in Kenyan schools. She further shows that the way girls are portrayed in textbooks affect their education regarding their choices of subjects, performance in education and future careers. The effect of some aspects of the "hidden curriculum" on Muslim girls' access to secondary education has been discussed in the present study.

As a school-related factor, it is argued in this study that, the issue of a school sponsor may constrain Muslim girls' education. In a Muslim community, some parents are reluctant to send their daughters to a non-Muslim (Christian) sponsored schools for fear that their religious rights may not be respected in such schools. Such rights include attending school in *hijab* (veil) and fasting during *Ramadhan*. (Maina, 1995; Maina 1995b; *Daily Nation*, 5/3/93. Ambivalence towards girls' education may also stem from dressing mannerisms in

non-Muslim schools where the school uniform exposes the girls' heads, bosoms and leave hands bare (Nasiru, 1997: 72). The same applies where a Muslim girl is required to sport swimming costume in the presence of males (Porter, 1990; UNICEF, 1991). Such modes of dress contravene the teachings of Islam on chastity and modesty. The foregoing shows that there are factors within the school that influence girls' education. This study has evaluated the effect of some of the school-related factors on girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts.

Regarding religious influence on education, Mbilinyi (1976) argues that parental religious affiliation is related to the decision to educate children. In her study on "The Problem of Unequal Access to Primary Education in Tanzania", she found that Muslim households highly valued formal education for all children. We have borrowed a leaf from Mbilinyi's work and demonstrated that Islam lays emphasis on the need for Muslims to acquire knowledge and seek education. The importance that Islam attaches to education is evident from the various imperatives in the Qur'an and *Hadith*.

In her study of women's participation in non-formal education in Mombasa North, Juma (1991) observes that religious affiliation tends to hinder the formation of large and more viable women's groups. Although it was conducted in a predominant Muslim area, the study does not show the effect of Islam on the formation of women's groups. Furthermore, the work does not fall within the scope of the proposed study.

National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies - NCEOP (1976), Eshiwani (1985a), Shiundu and Karugu (1991), Juma (1994) and Deabster (1995) concur that teenage pregnancies are a major factor that contributes to high drop-out rates of girls either at the primary school or in secondary school. Porter (1990, 1992) and Momanyi (n.d.) observe that among the Swahili some parents withdraw their daughters from school at puberty for fear that they might become pregnant. Momanyi (n.d.) further notes that early marriages in Lamu District contribute greatly to dropping out of primary schools by Swahili girls. RoK (1987) and RoK (1997-2001) show that Kwale District experiences cases of high dropout of girls at primary and secondary levels due to pregnancy and early marriages. It is shown in this study that Islam places a high value on the chastity for both men and women. Although

data on Muslim girls who drop out of school due to pregnancies were not quantified, it is argued that the fear of girls getting pregnant while in school forces some parents to withdraw their daughters from schools. A situation where girls fail to secure places in single sex girls' schools influences their access to secondary school education and retention.

Studies that discuss Qur'anic education in Kenya show that women did (do) not have equal participation with men in formal Islamic educational institutions (Strobel, 1979; Wamahiu, 1988; Porter, 1990; Porter, 1992; Olela, 1996). Indeed, women who managed to gain access to Qur'an schools, for example, only acquired rudimentary education to enable them to recite the Qur'an, to perform prayer and to learn Arabic script. That the Qur'an schools have been a preserve of Muslim males could be discerned from KNA (PC/Coast/2/1/72) and Abreau's (1982) survey of the various Qur'an schools in the Kenyan Coast during the colonial period. Further, girls received their education at home under a male relative or trusted family friend. This education was suited for their roles as wives and mothers. Although Islamic educational institutions fall outside the scope of this study, seemingly, Muslim women were not getting equal opportunities in Qur'anic education. Since Islam underscores the need for all Muslims to acquire education, the disadvantaged position of women in Qur'anic education could be traced to other factors. These include co-education in Qur'an schools and lack of provision for Qur'an schools for girls.

Bagha (1974, 1981), Salim (1973), Wamahiu (1988), Strobel (1979), Abreau (1982), Porter (1990, 1992) and Olela (1996) offer a historical view of the development of Western education for Muslim girls in Kenya. Except for Bagha (1974, 1981), Abreau (1982) and Wamahiu (1988), the other studies that deal with the Swahili community trace girls' education to the 1930s. These studies show how the debate on girls' education polarized the Swahili community into those who were opposed to girls' education and those who supported it. The opponents of girls' education argued that it was a threat to the well being of the family and community. The advocates of girls' education like *Sheikh* al-Amin Mazrui considered it necessary to enhance the defined roles of girls as homemakers, wives and mothers. Abreau (1982) further discusses the efforts of various immigrant Asian Muslim communities in the development of education in Kenya. In addition, Abreau (1982) and Walji (1995) underscore the role and efforts of the late Aga Khan III, Sir Sultan Muhammad

Shah, in prioritising education for Ismaili girls. Although the historical data under review are narrow in scope, they have been used to examine the main trends in the development of secondary school education of Muslim girls in Mombasa and Kwale districts.

Research shows that female seclusion could either positively promote girls' education or hinder it. According to Boserup (1970), seclusion contributes positively to the education of girls. This is because in areas where there is a tradition of seclusion of women like in Muslim countries, there is a demand for women teachers, since custom requires that males and females should not casually intermingle. In these countries, female teachers should educate girls in segregated schools for girls. Citing Boserup (1970), Kelly (1984) argues that sex segregation may in some instances increase women's access to higher education because of the demand for professional women to serve as teachers for other women. El-Sanabary (1993) argues that, in Muslim countries of North Africa and Middle East, cultural values encourage women to enter professions that serve other women. She gives the example of medicine where, due to Muslim aversion to the treatment of female patients by male doctors, women are well represented. In this regard therefore, El-Sanabary (1994) argues that gender segregated schools and colleges have a positive effect on female access to education in Saudi Arabia.

Conversely, some scholars view the seclusion of Muslim women as a constraint to girls' pursuit for education. Momanyi (n.d.) argues that among the Swahili Muslims, seclusion impacts negatively on girls' education because some parents remove their daughters from school at puberty. Mahdi (1989) considers seclusion one of the practices that keep Muslim women ignorant. Herz, *et al* (1991) observe that seclusion hinders girls' education because some parents may feel obliged not to send girls to school after puberty unless the schools are segregated, located close to home, equipped with separate facilities for girls such as lavatories, and served by female teachers. On the other hand, Obura (1992) argues that the dress codes associated with seclusion and the segregation of sexes accentuates the marginalisation of Muslim women from the labour force and the public sector. We do not agree with Obura (1992). This is because while seclusion hinders women from actively participating in socio-economic activities, veiling enhances the movement of Muslim women in the public domain as shown later in Chapter Four.

The foregoing debate shows that seclusion could enhance female education. Equally, it could also act as an impediment to female education. The debate also shows that some scholars tend to view veiling and seclusion as two sides of the same coin. The different posturing among scholars on the effect of seclusion on girls' education necessitated the current study that aimed at answering two questions: what is the effect of gender segregated schools on Muslim girls' access to secondary school education? Are there Islamic teachings underlying seclusion and gender segregated behaviour? Since some of the authors mentioned tend to view seclusion as a general term that includes veiling, this study has maintained that seclusion and veiling are not necessarily synonymous. It is shown that while veiling is Islamic, seclusion of women, does not have any *raison d'être* from the Qur'an and *Hadith*. On the contrary, it is a cultural practice. Nevertheless, some people interpret Islamic teachings to legitimise seclusion. The effect is to exclude women from socio-economic and political spheres of life. In that case, seclusion impacts negatively on Muslim girls' access to education.

Various studies on Muslim communities underline the negative effect of *pardah* on co-education (Nath, 1978; Don, 1984; Robertson, 1986; Porter, 1990,1992; El-Sanabary, 1993; Tilak, 1993). The general opinion that emerges in these studies is that with the onset of puberty most Muslims view co-education as morally wrong. In this regard Porter (1990,1992) observes that Swahili parents are opposed to co-education lest their daughters become spoilt. Nath (1978) and El-Sanabary (1993) argue that in Saudi Arabia, co-education beyond kindergarten is opposed and considered morally wrong since it contravenes the teachings of Islam. Robertson (1986) states that seclusion of girls at puberty and objections to co-educational classes are some of the reasons that make rural Tunisian women not send their daughters to school. Don (1984) cites the shortage of single sex schools as a limitation to girls' opportunities in secondary school education in Malaysia. Tilak (1993) concurs with Don (1984) that Malaysian parents prefer to enrol their daughters in schools that are gender segregated. Consequently, some parents discontinue their daughters from attending co-educational secondary schools in favour of religious or Islamic schools. Nasiru (1997) argues that the indiscriminate mixing of boys and girls in co-educational schools in Nigeria is a factor behind the negative response of traditional

ulama'a (scholars, sing. *alim*) towards Western education. The works under review posed a question for the current study: what is the effect of co-education on Muslim girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts?

Olela (1996) observes that, co-education influences Swahili Muslim mothers' attitude and expectations for their daughters' formal schooling. He argues that conditions and requirements of Islam make co-education unfavourable to girls. Hence, girls who attend mixed schools are withdrawn or their schooling interrupted at puberty. Olela's study however does not examine the conditions and requirements of Islam that make co-education unfavourable. Hence, there is a need for the present study. We have argued that co-education impacts negatively on girls' access to secondary school education. This is mainly because parents are reluctant to send their daughters to mixed schools or co-educational schools without separate facilities for boys and girls. These facilities include: classrooms, lavatories and dining halls. To avoid girls interacting with male teachers, Muslim parents prefer their daughters to be taught by female teachers. All these are in view of the Islamic teachings that forbid casual mixing of sexes that may result into immoral sexual liaisons and teenage pregnancies. Thus, co-educating boys and girls, is religiously, morally and socially unacceptable to Muslims.

Patriarchal ideology - whose tenets are discussed under conceptual framework - limits Muslim girls' access to education. Al-Hasan (1995) shows how patriarchal ideology limits the social space of Muslim women in the Sudan. The effect is that boys in schools outnumber girls. Similarly, Wamahiu (1990) and Callaway & Creevey (1994) argue that, beliefs on male domination within a Muslim milieu and the Islamic emphasis on female submission and dependence limit Muslim girls' access to education. The views of Wamahiu (1990), Callaway & Creevey (1994) and El-Sanabary (1994) are subjective. This is in view of the Islamic teachings on equality of sexes that is discussed in Chapter Three. Further, El-Sanabary (1994) shows how Islamic ideology in Saudi Arabia is used to legitimise patriarchy. She argues girls' education is aimed at making them grow up in an Islamic way to fulfil their roles as homemakers, ideal wives and good mothers. On the same line of argument Momanyi (n.d.) observes that due to patriarchal ideology, Islamic teachings are misinterpreted to limit the education of Swahili girls to the domestic sphere. The studies

under review however do not show the basis for patriarchal ideology. We have argued that the basis of patriarchal ideology in Muslim communities are the socio-cultural norms on male domination which are used to mis[interpret] some Qur'anic verses such as 4:34 and 2:228. The interpreted verses sanction patriarchal power by entrenching the belief of male dominance. As a result, the role of women is interpreted to be restricted to the domestic sphere, thus restricting girls' education.

The debate on the influence of Islam on female education creates different opinions among scholars. Some scholars consider Islam the cause of low educational status of Muslim women (Kinyanjui, 1975a, 1975b; Kelly, 1984; Wamahiu, 1990; El-Sanabary, 1993). They observe that within an Islamic milieu, certain attitudes and traditions on the role of women in society inhibit the education of girls. Other scholars argue that Islam *per se* is not responsible for the low educational status of Muslim women. Rather, it is the socio-cultural conditions of particular historical moments in Muslim countries that constrain girls' education (Nelson, 1984; Robertson, 1986; Hyde, 1993; Momanyi, n.d.). In this debate, there are also scholars who seem to contradict themselves on the influence of Islam on girls' education by having the two variant opinions (Kelly, 1984; Wamahiu 1990; El-Sanabary, 1993). The variant opinions and apparent contradiction of scholars on the influence of Islam on girls' education created a case for this research.

Mahdi (1989) and Isa (1995) contend that some Muslim men use religion to deny women education. Mahdi (1989) further adds that denying women education is a ploy to keep them ignorant and therefore make women submissive to men. Olela (1996) argues that among the Swahili, some religious leaders justify the low status of women by citing verses such as 4:34 to deny women access to formal education and employment. Olela's contentions are unfortunate in view of the fact that religious leaders are the custodians of religious values. Hence, their interpretations are a product of culture and not Islam. The views of such religious leaders render their claim to religious authority nugatory.

Momanyi (n.d.) argues that some Islamic teachings on equality of education of both sexes are misinterpreted or misunderstood by Swahili Muslims. This hinders education of girls. This study however does not explain how Islam is used to deny women education. Evidence

adduced from the study shows that Islam makes education incumbent upon all Muslims (*vide infra*, Chapter Three). Oral information shows that some people misinterpret Islamic teachings on the status of woman to support the thesis of male superiority. This reinforces social lore on male domination over females, and that influences girls' access to education (*vide infra*, Chapter Three).

Girls' secular education is seen as undermining Islamic values. Juma (1994) observes that some Muslims consider girls' secular schooling to be destroying valuable Muslim traditions and that it also leads to sexual promiscuity, and practices that are unacceptable in Islam such as smoking and drinking. On the same line of argument Porter (1992) observes that among the Swahili Muslims, secular education is blamed for inappropriate gender relations. She adds that, secular education for girls leads to immoralities, among them drinking and dancing with men. This is probably due to exposure to ideas from other cultures. Olela (1996) on the other hand notes that Swahili Muslim mothers perceive formal education as having the potential to spoil girls since contact with Western ideas and values would make them adopt inappropriate behaviour like wearing short dresses and trousers, and promiscuous sexual relations. We do not wholly agree with observations made by Porter (1992), Juma (1994) and Olela (1996). This is because education in Islam is not dichotomised into religious and secular. Arguably, Muslims are not opposed to any type of education. The problem is not secular education, but rather what is associated with it, such as the un-Islamic influences discussed above. Though the Western cultural baggage accompanied Western education, the schooling system is not necessarily a conduit for transmission of social habits such as smoking, drinking and sexual promiscuity. However, from an Islamic perspective, the casual mixing of sexes in schools could provide an amiable environment for such social vices. Casual mixing of sexes refers to the incidental, irregular and carefree intermingling of sexes that Islam forbids (*vide infra*, Chapter 4.8).

From the foregoing literature review, we could conclude that much has been done on various aspects of Muslim girls' education. In the Kenyan situation, some studies on girls' education portray Muslims as disadvantaged. In secondary education, not much has been done on the influence of Islam on girls' education. The review also shows that three studies are apparently similar to the current study. These studies are: Wamahiu (1988), Olela (1996)

and Momanyi (n.d.). However, the current study is a departure from the three on the following points. First, Wamahiu's (1988) educational and anthropological study does not show clearly the influence of Islamic teachings in circumscribing the role and status of Adigo women and its effect on girls' education. Second, her study covers only two secondary schools within the study locale and therefore its findings could not be said to be a general representative of other schools in Kwale District. Undoubtedly, the situation of girls' education has appreciably changed since Wamahiu conducted her survey in 1985/1986. An update in the information of the situation of Muslim girls' education in Kwale District is therefore imperative.

On the other hand, Olela's (1996) and Momanyi's (n.d.) studies among the Swahili do not give a thorough attention to the effect of interpretations of Islam on girls' secondary school education. While Olela's study was confined to Mombasa, that of Momanyi was based on Mombasa and Lamu. Olela examines the socio-cultural and economic factors that influence mothers' expectations for their daughters' education attainment. Momanyi (n.d.) examines the effect of socio-cultural beliefs on primary schooling for boys and girls. The current study has investigated the interpretations of Islamic religious imperatives on the place and status of women and their effect on girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts. It is hoped that this study has filled some gaps of knowledge in the extant literature on Muslim girls' education in Kenya.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

Various concepts could be used to explain the situation of girls' education in Muslim societies. Some scholars argue that the depressed situation of girls' education could be explained by patriarchal ideology (cf., Schildkrout, 1982; Mernissi, 1987a; El-Sanabary, 1994; al-Hasan, 1995). These scholars trace the basis of this ideology to the teachings of Islam on male guardianship. These teachings are reinforced by societal traditions, beliefs and customs on gender identity and male domination (Rassam, 1984; Callaway & Creevey, 1994).

The teachings of the Qur'an designate men as the guardians of women. This guardianship ensues from the economic maintenance and protection that men are supposed to render to women. The Qur'an says in part:

Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means... (4:34; cf., 2:233; 65:6-7).

The Qur'anic teachings regulate relations in a Muslim family by granting men authority over women (Q. 4: 34; Idrees, 1980; Siddiqi, 1984; Mernissi, 1987b; al-Hasan, 1995; Mawdudi, 1995; Siddiqi, 1992a). However, this authority is not absolute. It has to be exercised within the confines of religion (Q.4:34; Lemu & Heeren, 1978)

Patriarchal ideology therefore delimits the division of labour within the household economy on the basis of gender. Since a man's role is to provide the economic and material support for the family, his domain is in the public. On the other hand, a woman's domain is the private one where she is to play the role of a mother and wife (Amin, 1975; Lemu & Heeren, 1978; Wamahiu, 1990; Siddiqi, 1992; Mawdudi, 1995; Doi, 1996).

The foregoing notwithstanding, there are no injunctions in the Qur'an or *Hadith* that render roles in the public domain more significant or superior to the roles in the private domain. In other words, the roles of women are not subservient to those of men. Similarly, Islamic teachings do not categorically restrict certain roles to men only and other roles to women only. The various roles that women performed in the early period of Islam as discussed in Chapter Three, bear testimony to the fact that there are no watertight delineations of roles in the public domain and those in the private one. Notably, the domestication of women's roles is a product of cultural norms and values that consider such roles less important to the roles men perform. This, then, is a product of patriarchal ideology.

Granted that patriarchal ideology delineates the division of roles on the basis of gender, there could be three possibilities, depending on interpretations. First, Muslim girls may either be denied the opportunities to seek education. Second, their education may be confined to the domestic domain to make them more useful as ideal wives, good mothers and successful homemakers (Carrol, 1983; El-Sanabary, 1994). Third, if the roles of women are thus circumscribed, girls' education could be aimed at meeting the various

needs for trained women to serve in stereotypical occupations such as teaching, nursing and secretarial.

Patriarchal ideology has its limitations in explaining the state of education of Muslim girls. This is because Islam lays emphasis on education of Muslims. Furthermore, the *shariah* grants a woman various socio-economic and political rights (cf., Amin, 1975; Badawi, 1983; Nelson, 1984; Wamahiu, 1990). Among these, is the right to education that should enable a woman to exercise the other rights.

In view of the shortcomings of patriarchal ideology, other concepts could be borrowed to explain the situation of Muslim girls' education. Bem (1993:2) has developed three concepts referred to as lenses of gender and which she defines as:

Hidden assumptions about sex and gender which are embedded in cultural discourses, social institutions and individual psyches in virtually all male dominated societies that invisibly and systematically reproduce male power in generation after generation.

These lenses are androcentrism, gender polarization and biological essentialism. The lenses reproduce male power in two ways. First, the discourses and social institutions in which the lenses are embedded channel females and males into different and unequal life situations. Second, during enculturation, individuals progressively internalise the lenses and this encourage them to build an identity that conforms with them (*ibid*, p.3)

Bem argues that the main feature underlying the concept of androcentrism or male centeredness is that men are at the centre of the universe and they describe reality from an egocentric or androcentric point of view (*ibid*, p.42). Hence, androcentrism is a perception that men are superior to women; that the males and male experiences are the reference points, the standard or norm for a culture. On the other hand, females and female experiences are deviations or inferior departures from the standard or norm set by men (*ibid*, p.41f). Further, men define everything they see in terms of the meaning or the operational significance that it has for them personally rather than defining it in its terms. In a male dominated household, a woman may be defined either in terms of her domestic and reproductive functions or in terms of her power to stimulate and gratify the male sexual appetite (*ibid*, p.42).

In principle, the teachings of Islam that should be reference points for a Muslim, stress on the inherent equality between the sexes (*vide infra*, Chapter Three). Hence, the concept of superiority of male over female as advocated by androcentrism cannot be supported by religious discourse. This is because there is a gamut of Islamic teachings in the Qur'an and *Hadith* literature on equality of man and woman, man-woman relationship in marriage and respect for women (mothers) that should be taken into consideration (Q. 2:178,187; 4:1,19; 17:23; 33:35; Lemu & Heeren, 1978; Badawi, 1983; Siddiqi, 1984; Mawdudi, 1995). However, various cultural values within a Muslim milieu could sustain the notion of androcentrism. This could further be given theological authentication through misinterpretations. The concept of androcentrism is thus reinforced by the cultural belief in male domination and superiority over females. The cultural face of male domination could lead to misinterpretations of such verses as Q. 2:228 that says: "...And women shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable. But men have a degree over them".

The "degree" mentioned above is that of responsibility. It is a degree of economic maintenance and protection. Owing to cultural inclinations, Q. 2:228, and others such as Q. 4:34 and Q. 65:7 could be interpreted and used to support the contention that men are superior to women.

The concept of androcentrism was used to test how community's beliefs and values on male domination are given a religious interpretation that impinges on secondary education of Muslim girls in Mombasa and Kwale districts. It is a fact that education is incumbent upon all Muslims. However, in a culture where girls are socialized to accept an inferior status, some Muslims ignorant of the teachings of Islam may consider the education of girls less important or of no significance. Moreover, if the roles of women are seen as auxiliaries to those of men, girls could be provided with an education that fulfils their ascribed and subservient roles in society, or their education is likely to be ignored altogether. On the other hand, Muslims who are aware of the Islamic injunctions on the need to educate both girls and boys will strive to do that, oblivious of the cultural demands that disregard girls' education.

The lens of gender polarization is the perception that women and men are fundamentally different from one another (Bem, 1993:2, 80). Bem argues that social life is linked to the distinction between males and females. This distinction permeates all aspects of human experience such as modes of dress, roles and ways of expressing emotions and sexual desire. Gender polarization delineates males and females and defines any person or behaviour that deviates from this delineation as problematic, religiously immoral, biologically anomalous or psychologically pathological (*ibid*, p.81). The concept of gender polarization could explain the effect of gender segregated behaviour and strictures of female seclusion on the secondary education of Muslim girls in Mombasa and Kwale districts.

In a Muslim society, gender polarization creates two different mutually exclusive domains for males and females. Some Muslims interpret religious teachings to advocate for complete seclusion of women and veiling. Gender polarization has serious implications on the education of girls. In a situation where girls have limited educational opportunities, due to shortage of single sex girls' schools, co-education is perceived as anathema due to Islamic teachings that forbid casual mixing of sexes (*vide infra*, Chapter Five). Consequently, some Muslim parents withdraw their daughters from mixed schools due to the casual mixing of sexes apparent in such schools. This denies girls education. If Muslim girls have to attend co-educational schools, then, such schools should have separate facilities for boys and girls. The strictures of *pardah* and propriety of dress required of a Muslim woman could limit girls' access to secondary school education. This is probable where there is shortage of Muslim sponsored schools or where there is fear that a Muslim girl who attends a non-Muslim school may have her religious rights curtailed. This situation obtains where a Muslim girl may not be allowed to adorn the *hijab*.

Finally, the lens of biological essentialism rationalizes and legitimises the other two lenses. Biological essentialism treats androcentrism and gender polarization as natural and inevitable consequences of the inherent biological natures of women and men (Bem, 1993:2). Through biological essentialism, social institutions are used to transform male-female differences into male advantage and female disadvantage (*ibid*, pp.177, 188). The concept of biological essentialism explains the existence of gender inequalities in the

provision of secondary school education in Kenya. Evidently, the development of secondary school education in Kenya tended to favour boys than girls. The government is partly culpable for gender inequality in the provision of secondary education. Limited educational facilities and opportunities have tended to disadvantage Muslim girls. This has hindered their access to secondary school education.

Within a Muslim cultural milieu, the three lenses (concepts) could lead to different interpretations of the teachings of Islam on the place and role of women in society. It is within that context that the concepts of androcentrism, gender polarization and biological essentialism have been used to provide a framework to analyse the impact of interpretations of Islam on girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts.

1.9 Scope of the Study and Research Locale

The geographical area for the study is Mombasa and Kwale districts of Coast Province (see Figure 1a). The two districts are geographically located near each other and share common boundaries (see figures 1b, 2 and 3). Mombasa District has an urban orientation but Kwale District is essentially rural.

Although there are no official statistics that could reflect religious breakdown, Mombasa District has been selected for its predominant Muslim population. The 1989 and 1999 population census reports do not give the ethnic composition of Mombasa District. Being an urban area and the second largest town and seaport of Kenya, Mombasa has a large migrant upcountry community that constitutes a part of the work force in various industries and government departments. Due to its cosmopolitan nature, the district has diverse Muslim groups both Sunni - for example, the Swahili - and Shia, e.g. the Ismailis, Bohras and Ithna' Asheris. The district has a high illiteracy rate among women. Girls' dropout rate is higher than the boys', a situation that could be attributed to influences such as early marriages (RoK, 1994-1996 b).

Statistics of the Muslim population of Kwale District, just like Mombasa, are non-existent. The two major ethnic communities in the district are the Adigo and Duruma. Apart from Arabs and Swahili, there are also pockets of sedentary up-country communities like the

Akamba in Simba Hills and the Luo and Luhya around Ramisi and Shimoni (RoK, 1987:5). Nonetheless, there is a predominant Muslim population in the district with unofficial estimates of the Adigo Muslim population as high as 90 per cent (Wamahiu, 1988:335). The Shia influence is seen in the construction of mosques and *madaris* (sing. *madrassa*) and Qur'an schools. Generally, formal education in this district is characterized by low participation and high dropout rates of girls, with a meagre 19 per cent of the girls who enrol in Class 1 completing primary school education (RoK, 1994-1996a: 56). Most schools in the district have a shortage of trained teachers. Equally, many schools have inadequate physical facilities such as good classrooms, desks, libraries, staff houses, dormitories and workshops for science and technical subjects. Other schools lack some of these facilities altogether (Wamahiu, 1988; RoK, 1987; RoK, 1994 -1996a; RoK, 1997-2001). Girls' formal education in Kwale is constrained by influences such as early marriages, roles of women, child labour, teenage pregnancies; and socio-economic factors such as poverty (Wamahiu, 1988; RoK, 1987; RoK, 1994-1996a; RoK, 1997-2001).

In this study, urban and rural settings have been used to show the correlation between girls' access to secondary school education and school-related factors. Schools in the urban areas of Mombasa have better educational facilities than the ones of rural Kwale. Regarding economic development, Kwale is a marginal district. Compared to Mombasa, Kwale is deficient in infrastructural facilities. The tarmac road network only serves the coastal belt. There is a shortage of fresh water resources and telecommunication facilities. Electricity is also inadequately supplied (RoK, 1997-2001:55-56). All these economic factors have a bearing on the development of education in the district.

While the distance from one secondary school to another in Mombasa is about 1 km to 3 km, the same cannot be said of the vast Kwale District. Availability and type of schools, educational facilities, distance to schools, and school sponsor(s) are some of the factors that generally influence girls' access to education (cf., Don, 1984; Kelly, 1984; Hyde, 1993).

The practice of Islam in Mombasa and Kwale districts is influenced by local Afro-Arab cultural practices among the Muslim communities. For example, in Mombasa some practices such as female seclusion are attributed to Arab culture. Early marriages are traced

to both African and Arab cultures. These practices influence communities' perception of girls' education. While communities in the rural areas are so much attached to their African traditions, the same may not be said of those communities in the urban areas, hence, the choice of an urban and rural setting. The practices of veiling and seclusion among Muslim communities are different. While in some Arab and Swahili communities in Mombasa, there is, absolute veiling, in others, such as the Adigo in Kwale, the veiling is not a symbol of seclusion (cf., Wamahiu, 1988:297). Accordingly, the current research reveals that the Islamic teachings governing gender segregation and veiling are lax in Kwale than in Mombasa.

The present study was confined to secondary schools because, in our opinion, the influence of Islamic practices on girls' education is more effective at secondary school level. This is because of the following reasons:

- a) In most cases, Muslim girls start practising *pardah* with the onset of puberty. From then onwards, gender segregation in schools and work places is supposed to apply. This period coincides with the one when girls are in the upper primary or at the lower secondary school level. Due to *pardah*, a girl may be withdrawn from school. (Porter, 1990; Porter, 1992; Don, 1984).
- b) With the onset of puberty, some Muslim parents are reluctant to send their daughters to co-educational schools due to the religious reasons underlying the intermingling of sexes. In addition, with a shortage of Muslim schools, some parents are uncomfortable to have their daughters in non-Muslim schools where they cannot be allowed to practise their religious rights such as wearing the *hijab* in school. These two factors influence the education of Muslim girls.

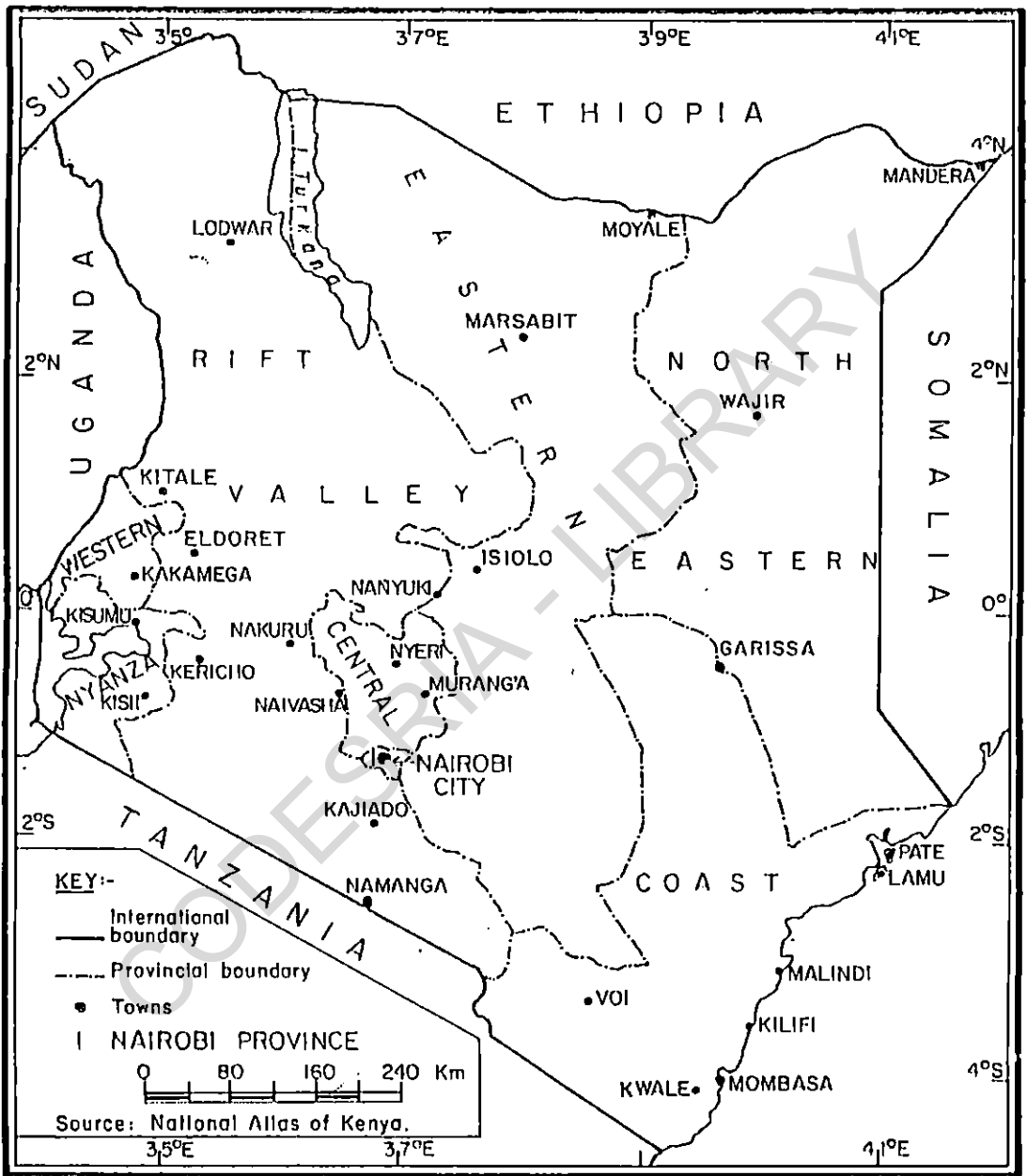
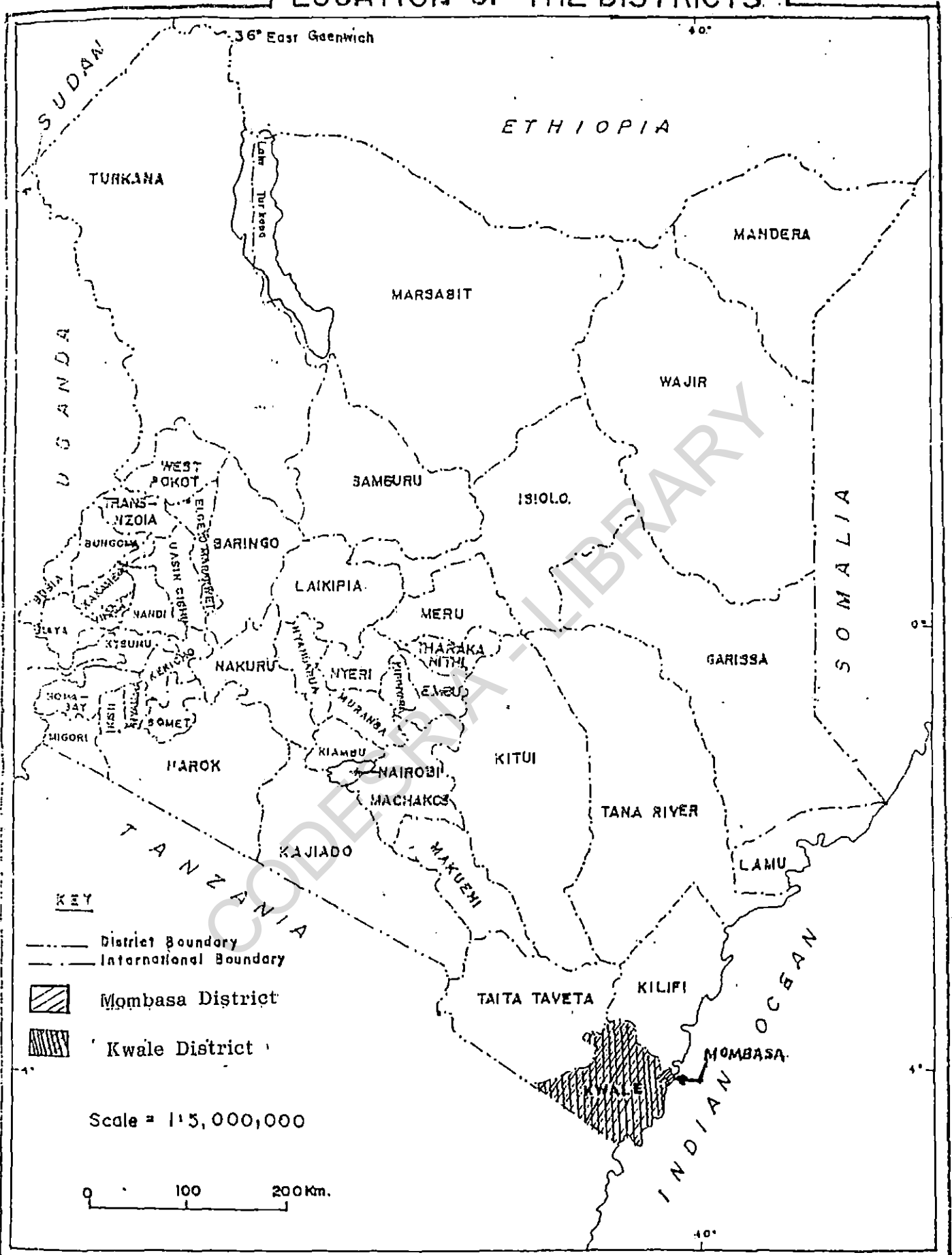


Figure 1.1 Administrative Boundaries of Kenya.

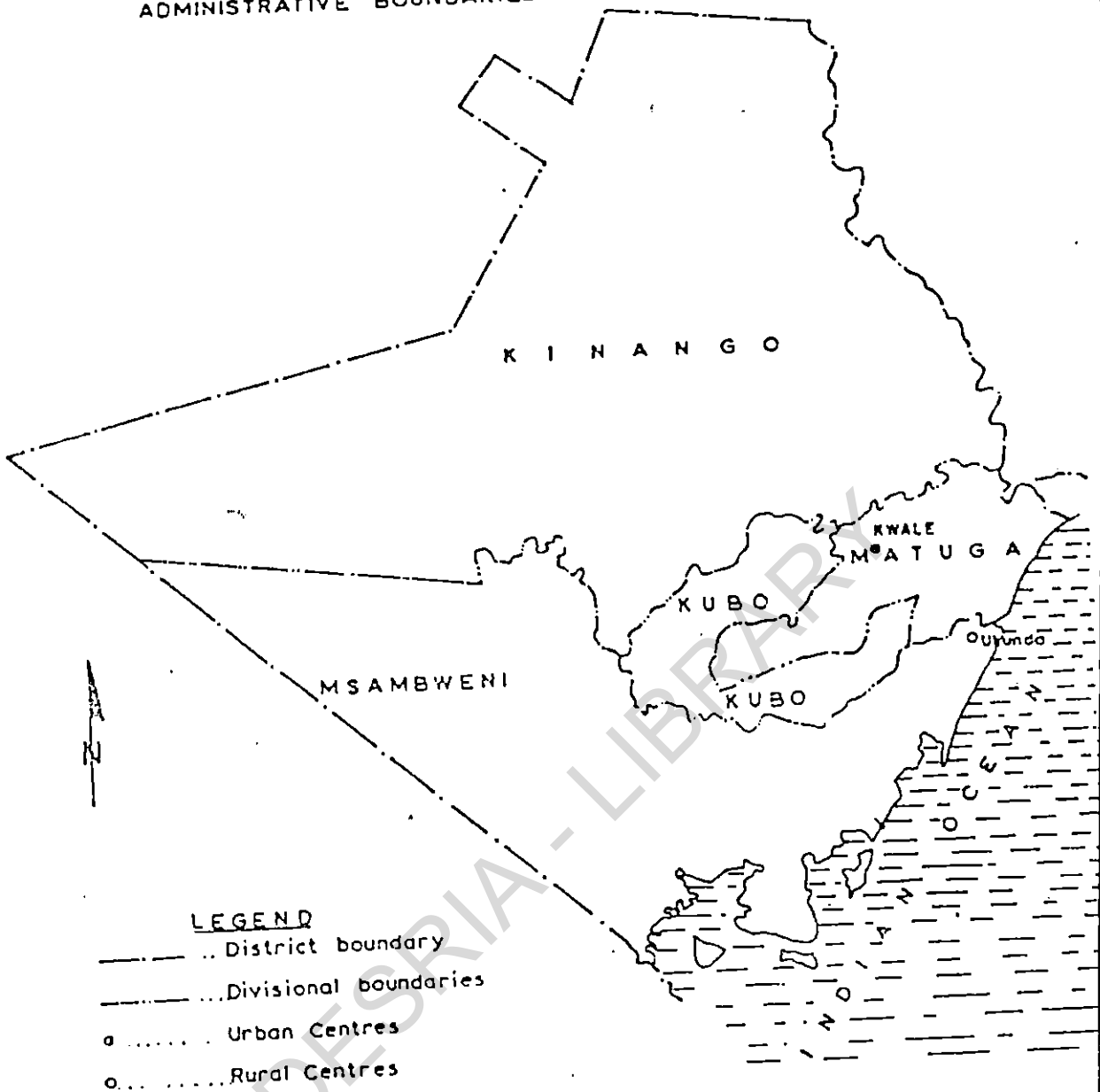
FIG. 1,b

LOCATION OF THE DISTRICTS



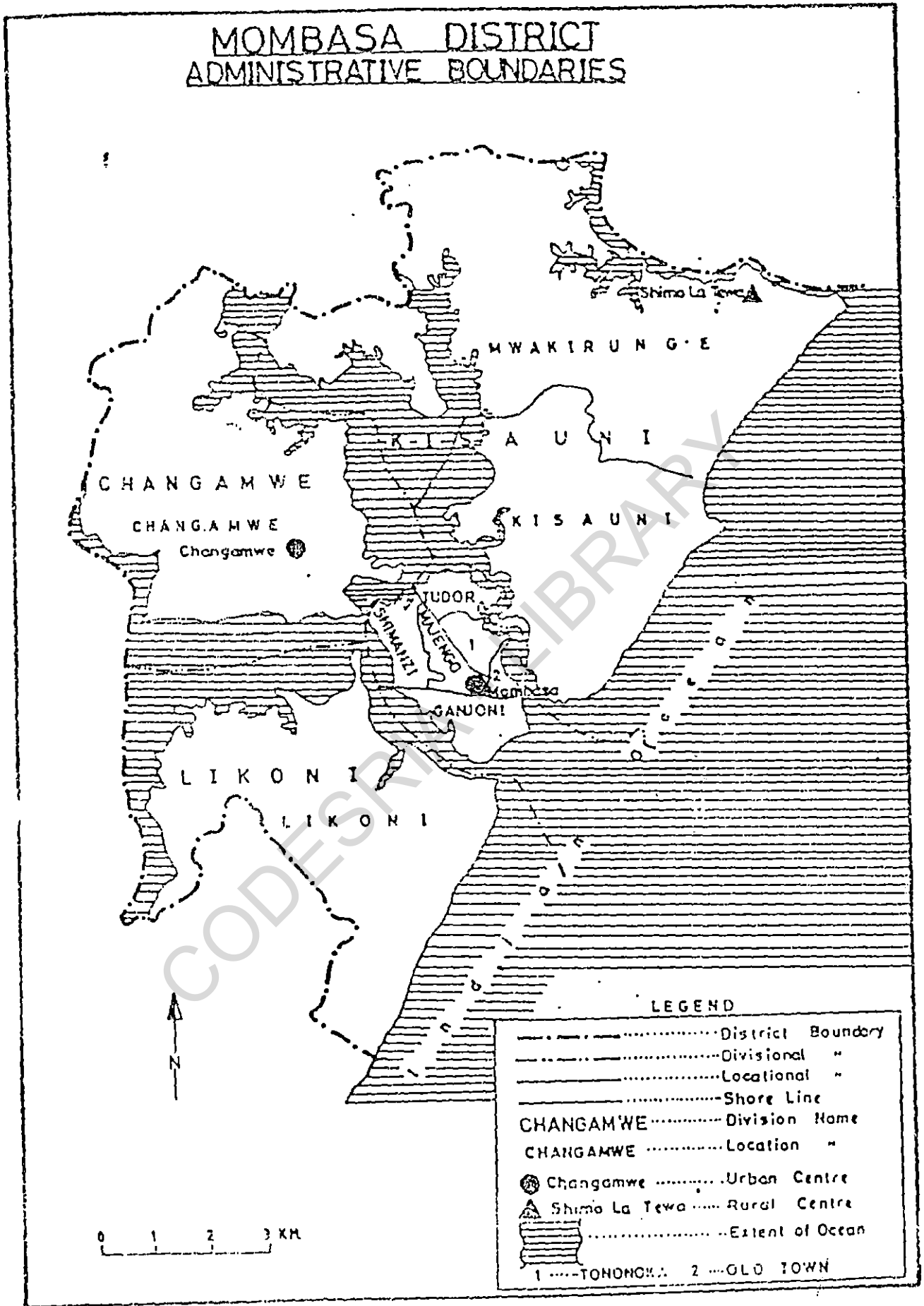
SOURCE: CCM, Kwale District Development Plan 1994 - 1996
and Mombasa District Development Plan 1994 - 1996.

KWALE DISTRICT
ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES



SOURCE: ROK, Kwale District Development Plan 1994 - 1996.

FIG. 3



SOURCE: ROK, Mombasa District Development Plan 1994-1996

1.10 Research Methodology

1.10.1. Field Research

(a) Area of Study

The field research was conducted in Kwale and Mombasa districts. Kwale District is divided into five administrative divisions namely: Matuga, Kinango, Kubo, Samburu and Msambweni. There are twenty-four locations and seventy-two sub-locations.

By the time of completion of the fieldwork in 1999, Kwale District had 28 secondary schools. These schools were distributed as follows: Matuga - 7, Kinango - 2, Samburu - 6, Kubo - 6 and Msambweni - 7 (see Appendix 1b).

Mombasa District has four administrative divisions namely: Island, Likoni, Changanwe and Kisauni. It is further divided into twelve locations and fourteen sub-locations. In 1999, there were 40 secondary schools in Mombasa District distributed as follows: Island - 29, Kisauni - 6, Changanwe - 3 and Likoni - 2 (see Appendix 1a).

(b) Selection and Classification of Schools

From the list of 68 secondary schools in Mombasa and Kwale districts - 28 for Kwale and 40 for Mombasa, the following procedure was used to select a sample for the study:

First, schools were classified into either public or private. Second, from the classification of private and public schools, girls' schools and co-educational (mixed) schools were selected. Third, girls' schools and mixed schools were classified further into boarding schools and day schools

The rationale for this classification was based on the following. First, secondary schools in Kenya are no longer classified as "Government Maintained, Aided, *Harambee* (Unaided) and Private schools". Rather, they are classified only as Private and Public.

Second, this study focused only on girls' schools and mixed schools. The latter were selected for the sample to find out how co-educational status of secondary schools affects Muslim girls' access to education. The teachings of Islam forbid casual intermingling of

sexes. Co-education in secondary schools where males and females are not segregated influences girls' access to secondary school education.

Finally, both boarding schools and day schools have a different impact on the education of girls. While boarding schools may provide a congenial learning atmosphere, they are also more expensive than day schools. Thus, some parents may not afford the fees. On the other hand, a day school impacts negatively on girls' education because of the daily commuting to and from school. Domestic chores interfere with a girl's school attendance and performance. Most parents weigh the physical and moral danger for educating a daughter, who has to commute for long distances to school, against the benefits and financial burden of her education.

(c) Sampling Procedures for Schools

Out of the 28 secondary schools in Kwale District, six are single sex, three each for boys and girls. These are Kwale High School, Mazeras and St. Mary's Seminary (private) for boys, and Matuga, Kichaka Simba and Mazeras Memorial for girls. The three girls' schools were purposively selected. Mazeras Memorial was later dropped from the sample. This was due to its closure following a fierce fire that gutted down a hostel and resulted into the deaths of over twenty-five girls on 27 March 1998. Following this tragedy, the school that was formerly known as Bombolulu, was closed down and re-opened in 1999 under its current name.

Initial information from education officers at the District Education Office Kwale, predisposed us to sample schools along the coastal belt. This was because this area is peopled by the Adigo who constituted a proportion of the Muslim population that formed the study group. From a list of 22 mixed secondary schools, the following were purposively selected. According to our judgement these schools represented the typical Muslim population that was the target of the study. The schools that were sampled were: Diani, Kaya Tiwi, Ng'ombeni, Ramisi and Waa secondary schools. All these schools are located within Matuga and Msambweni divisions, save for Kichaka Simba that is in Kubo division. Waa is one of the earliest secondary schools to be founded in the district. Established in 1970, it is one of the largest mixed schools with three streams. Ng'ombeni, Kaya Tiwi and

Diani are mixed day schools located along the main Likoni – Ukunda road. Ramisi, a former private school turned public in 1986, is a Mixed Day, and Boarding School for girls. Table 1a below illustrates the schools that were selected for the Kwale District sample. A total of seven schools were selected.

Table 1a: Selected Secondary Schools in Kwale District

Name of School	Type of School
Diani	Mixed Day
Kaya Tiwi	Mixed Day
Kichaka Simba	Girls' Boarding & Day
Matuga	Girls' Boarding
Ng'ombeni	Mixed Day
Ramisi	Mixed Day/Girls' Boarding
Waa	Mixed Boarding & Day

Source: Field Survey, Kwale District Secondary Schools, September 1998 - March 1999

In Mombasa District, most secondary schools are private and mixed day schools. In 1999, there were 40 secondary schools in Mombasa: 25 were private and 15 were public. Out of the 15 public schools, 6 are for boys and 4 for girls and 5 are mixed (see Appendix 1a). The four girls' schools are Star of the Sea, Coast Girls, Mama Ngina and Bondeni. The first three were purposively selected. Bondeni was left out as it was a fairly new school founded in 1996. By the time of the fieldwork, it was not offering a complete secondary school education cycle. Mama Ngina is the only boarding public secondary school. In the nineties, Star of the Sea was at the centre of a controversy pitting Muslim girls against the school administrators over the issue of the *hijab* (see Chapter Five). The other public school that was purposively selected, for its Islamic character, was His Highness (HH) The Aga Khan High School. It is sponsored by the Aga Khan Educational Services.

All the 25 private schools in Mombasa are mixed save St. Theresa's which is a girl's school. Within this category, Muslim sponsored schools were purposively selected. These are Burhaniyya and Jaffery, founded by the Bohra and Ithna' Asheri communities

respectively. Other schools are Memon sponsored by the Memon community, H.H. The Aga Khan Kenya Secondary sponsored by the Aga Khan Education Services and Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed al-Nahayan Technical and Secondary School, initially financed by the then Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi. These schools have more Muslim girls than other non-Muslim schools, and a strong Islamic influence that justified their selection. This influence is seen in the segregation of sexes in some of the schools. A total of 9 schools were selected for Mombasa District sample.

Table 1b: Selected Secondary Schools in Mombasa District

(a) Public Schools

Name of School	Type of School
Coast Girls	Girls' Day
H.H.The Aga Khan High	Girls' Day
Mama Ngina	Girls' Boarding
Star of the Sea	Girls' Day

(b) Private Schools

Burhaniyya	Mixed Day
H.H.The Aga Khan Kenya Secondary	Mixed Day
Jaffery Academy	Mixed Day
Memon	Mixed Day
Sheikh Khalifa	Mixed Boarding & Day

Source: Field Survey, Mombasa District Secondary Schools, Sept. 1998 – March 1999

(c) Selection of Respondents

The provincial administration in both Kwale and Mombasa facilitated the research. The letters of introduction to the various school heads from the DC's offices and from the Provincial and District Education offices in Mombasa and Kwale respectively were the starting point for the fieldwork. These letters enhanced accessing of official (Government) records and documents either in schools or at the Provincial Education Office in Mombasa and Kwale District Education Office.

The researcher sought the services of some Muslim institutions such as *madaris* and mosques, and educational officers to assist in the identification of Muslim respondents such as imams. Specifically, two Muslim *sheikhs* at Madrasatul al-Muminiin in Matuga were quite handy in the identification of potential respondents. There were four categories of respondents as follows:

(i) Head teachers and Class Teachers

This category comprised Muslims or (and) non-Muslims, males and females. Non-Muslim teachers acted as a control group. The head teachers and class teachers were selected for their knowledge of the schools (classes) they head. Data collected from the head teachers and class teachers were primarily on the background of the school; school (class) enrolment; performance of girls; repetition and dropout rates and factors within the school that contribute to girls' attrition. Contacts with head teachers helped to identify and establish contacts with household heads for sample selection. Sixteen head teachers were sampled, 7 for Kwale schools and 9 for Mombasa schools. Head teachers introduced the researcher to the class teachers.

Class teachers facilitated the identification of Muslim girls and boys in mixed schools and coordinated the administration of the questionnaire to the students in various classes. Class teachers provided information on Muslim girls' attitude and performance in education; classroom influences on girls' education, etc. For schools that have one stream, class teachers of Forms 1 to IV were purposively selected. In schools with more than one stream, 4 class teachers of the classes with most Muslim students were selected. In Muslim schools, one class teacher per stream was randomly selected to represent other streams within a given form (class). The sample size for class teachers was as follows:

(a) Mombasa District - 4 X 9 schools	=	36 teachers
(b) Kwale District - 4 X 7 schools	=	28 teachers
Total	=	64 teachers

(ii) Muslim Students

Muslim girls were selected from the various schools that formed the sample. They provided information on their family background; educational related problems that they face within the school and at home, their aspirations and perception of their status and roles in society. They also acted as contact persons for selection of households' heads. A systematic sampling technique was used to select Muslim girls in each class from Forms I to IV in the 16 secondary schools in Mombasa and Kwale districts. With the help of the class teacher and use of class registers, Muslim girls in each class were identified and numbered. A random sampling interval was used to select every 5th, 10th or 15th member depending on the population of Muslim girls. Through this procedure, 4 girls were selected per class. This was multiplied, by the number of streams, and the results for all classes added to give the sample size for each school as shown in Table 2a below.

Muslim boys in mixed schools were selected for the study. The basis of their selection was to provide information on their perception of roles that, males and females should play in society, their attitudes toward girls' education vis-à-vis boys'. This information was necessary in examining how socialization process within the context of Islam shapes males' attitudes toward females. A judgment method was used to select Muslim boys in each class and school selected for the study. Two boys i.e. the class prefect, monitor, etc, were selected in each class. The sample size is presented in tables, 2a and 2b below.

Table 2a: The Sample Size of Muslim Student Respondents for Selected Secondary Schools in Mombasa and Kwale Districts.

(i) Mombasa District

School	No. of Streams	Girls' Sample Size	Boys' Sample Size	Total Sample Size
Aga Khan High	4	48	24	72*
Aga Khan Kenya	2	32	16	48
Burhaniyya	2	32	16	48
Coast Girls	5	60	-	60*
Jeffery Academy	2	48	24	72**
Mama Ngina	2	36	-	36*
Memon	2	32	16	48
Sheikh Khalifa	2	32	16	48
Star of the Sea	4	48	-	48*
TOTAL		368	112	480

(ii) Kwale District

Diani	2	24	12	36*
Kaya Tiwi	2***	24	12	36
Kichaka Simba	1	16	-	16
Matuga	3	48	-	48
Ng'ombeni	2	32	16	48
Ramisi	2	32	16	48
Waa	3	48	24	72
TOTAL	15	224	80	304

Key: * Excludes Form I class; ** Includes Forms V & VI; *** Forms 3 and 4 had one stream each

Source: Field Survey, Mombasa and Kwale Districts' Secondary Schools, Sept. 1998 - March 1999

Table 2b: Summary of Sample Size of Muslim Student Respondents

District	Girls	Boys	Total
Mombasa	368	112	480
Kwale	224	80	304
Total	592	192	784

(iii) Heads of Household

Muslim household heads, males or females were selected for the study. For every 15th Muslim girl selected for the study, a simple random sampling method was used to select 1 head of household. In total 40 heads of households were selected, 25 in Mombasa District and 15 in Kwale District. Information gathered from this category of respondents was on their attitude towards boys' and girls' education; division of labour in the household economy; religious values, norms, customs, beliefs and practices that influence the educational status of girls, and problems encountered in educating girls.

(iv) Education Officers

This category comprised education officers whether Muslim or non-Muslim, male or female: District Education Officer (DEO), Area Education Officers (AEO) and inspectors of

schools, among others. Information gathered from this category focused on the general situation of education in Mombasa and Kwale districts; the situation of secondary education for girls and the influence of Islam on girls' access to secondary school education. Snowball approach was used. The key respondents were asked to suggest names of other individuals who could be sampled for this category of respondents. Ten Education officers were sampled, 5 each for Mombasa and Kwale districts.

(v) Muslim Leaders

This group of respondents in this category were imams of local mosques, *madrasa* teachers and officers of Muslim NGOs such as Muslim Education and Welfare Association (MEWA), Bilal Muslim Mission among others. Information gathered from Muslim leaders was on Muslims' attitude to education in general; problems that a Muslim girl experiences in a non-Muslim sponsored school; the place and role of women in a Muslim society; types of schools Muslim girls should attend; Islamic teachings on veiling and gender segregation etc. Snowball approach was used to select respondents for this group. Twelve Muslim leaders were sampled, 6 each for Mombasa and Kwale districts.

1.10.2. Library Research

Library research was used to augment the field data and archival data. Both primary and secondary sources of information such as journals, books, book articles, theses, etc were used. Library research was carried out in the libraries at Kenyatta University, University of Nairobi, and from the offices of the Rockefeller Foundation, Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), Women's Bureau, in the Ministry of Culture and Social Services, Cultural Centre of Islamic Republic of Iran and Jamia Islamic Centre, among others. Provincial Education Office, Mombasa, and District Education Office, Kwale provided data on the latest statistics on school enrolments and the number of schools in Mombasa and Kwale districts

Various school records such as class registers', school admissions' registers and records of achievement were examined. Other documents included schools' monthly returns to the Ministry of Education that show student enrolment and staff (teachers') establishment, and Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) past examination results for various schools.

These documents provided information on the proportion of Muslim girls in the school and class, enrolment, attendance and performance in national examinations.

1.10.3. Archival Research

Various archival documents were used to gather information. These documents were Provincial and District Annual Reports, Education Commission Reports, Education Department Annual Reports, Ministry of Education Annual Reports, District Handing Over Reports, Education Deposits, Inspection Reports, Political Record Book and Correspondence on Missions, Religion and Education, etc. Data from these documents were used in the analysis of the main trends in the development of Muslim girls' education in Mombasa and Kwale districts. The data were gathered from Kenya National Archives (KNA), Nairobi and KNA Provincial Records Office, Mombasa.

1.10.4. Methods of Data Collection

(a) Interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted with the help of closed and open-ended questions. Interviews were held with the various categories of respondents shown above. Information from interviews was recorded in note form. An interview guide was prepared for this purpose (see Appendix 3).

(b) Participant Observation

The researcher acted as a participant observer in individual classrooms when learning was in session. The head teachers and the subject teachers coordinated participant observation sessions. The sessions lasted for one to two hours depending on whether a lesson was a single or a double lesson. This method exposed the researcher to the learning situation (atmosphere), teaching methodology and the interaction of teacher with the students especially girls in a mixed school. This method was helpful in analysing the influence of the hidden curriculum on girls' education.

(c) Questionnaire

The questionnaire method (see Appendix 3) was used to supplement the interview method. The questionnaires were administered to the five categories of respondents by the

researcher. The questionnaire was an effective method of gathering data from the students. Class teachers assisted in the administration of the questionnaires. Eight hundred copies of the research questionnaire were administered. In some cases, the questionnaires were followed by an in-depth interview schedule where clarification was deemed necessary.

1.11 Data Analysis

Field notes that were in Kiswahili were translated into English and transcribed. Data from the field research were analysed to discover categories and underlying themes. Archival data, field data and library data were analysed through coding categories that separated materials of a given objective from the other. With the help of statistical tables, the data were classified according to their subject content, then synthesized and interpreted accordingly. The findings were arranged thematically and used to test the premises. The results were presented in chapters that constitute this study.

1.12 Limitations of the Study

The study relied heavily on questionnaires especially to gather data from students, class teachers and education officers. The enormous number of student respondents made the questionnaire the most effective method of gathering data from the students. In some schools especially in Mombasa, questionnaires were administered to the students who were left on their own to fill them during their free time with arrangements to collect them later. To a greater extent, this process depended on the good will and the co-operation of the head teacher or class teacher who coordinated the exercise and acted as the link between the researcher and the students. In the long run, some questionnaires were lost and others misplaced.

In some schools, half-hearted assistance (co-operation) from some head teachers denied the researcher access to vital information and documents. In the Star of the Sea and Aga Khan High schools, the principals insisted that the schools' monthly returns to the Ministry of Education are classified documents.

In spite of the research permit and letters of introduction from relevant government authorities, suspicion towards the researcher caused unnecessary delays. In some private

schools, initial negative attitude was a drawback in conducting the research. At Jaffery Academy, the school administrator had to seek and wait for the advice of the management board of the school to authorize the researcher to conduct the study in the school. In this regard, the questionnaire had to be screened. This kept the researcher on hold for one month. Similarly, at the Star of the Sea, the questionnaire for the class teachers and students went through a screening process by a team of Muslim teachers. This was aimed at certifying the "appropriateness" of the research questions to the student respondents. According to the Principal, the process was necessary to discard any suspicions by the students toward the researcher. It was revealed that the past controversy between the school administrator and Muslim students over the issue of the *hijab*, (see Chapter Five), is the root of suspicions. To avoid such a controversy, participant observation sessions were not conducted at the school.

Islamic teachings that govern segregation of sexes and the interaction of females with non-*mahram* men were a hindrance to interviewing some female respondents. It became extremely difficult to interview some female respondents especially in Mombasa. In case of questionnaires, some female respondents had to seek permission from their husbands (guardians) before filling them. Likewise, it was difficult to arrange for interviews without the knowledge or permission of the husband or male guardian.

Transport problems and lack of easy accessibility to some interior parts of Kwale were a hindrance to the researcher. Coincidentally, most schools sampled for the study were located within the coastal belt that is well served by an efficient road system. The exception to this is Kickaka Simba located in Simba Hills in Kubo division.

The limited scope of this study is clear. Not all schools within the study locale were covered. There was a financial implication to that due to limited resources. Some schools that were initially sampled for the study were not covered in the field survey. The case in point was Mazeras Memorial (formerly Bombolulu Girls). The school was closed down in 1998 following a fire tragedy. By the time the fieldwork was completed, the school was still closed.

The teachers' national strike over better remuneration package that took place in October 1998 paralysed learning in many public secondary schools. Under such circumstances, fieldwork had to be temporarily stopped during the period of the strike.

1.13 Synopsis of the Study

This study is divided into six chapters. Chapter One is introductory and deals with the nature of the study. Chapter Two investigates the development of Muslim girls' education in Mombasa and Kwale districts from the colonial period to the present. This has been discussed within the general context of the development of Muslim education. Chapter Three examines the status of Muslim women in Mombasa and Kwale districts. In addition, it has assessed how this status influences Muslim girls' access to secondary school education. Chapter Four assesses the effect of seclusion, *purdah* and gender segregation on girls' access to secondary school education in the two districts. Chapter Five evaluates the effect of school-related factors on Muslim girls' access to secondary school education in the two districts. These factors are: co-education, school sponsor, curriculum, distance to school, type of school and school facilities, poverty and the "hidden curriculum". Finally, Chapter Six offers a summary of the entire study, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further study.

CHAPTER TWO

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MUSLIM GIRLS' EDUCATION IN MOMBASA AND KWALE DISTRICTS FROM THE COLONIAL PERIOD TO THE PRESENT

2.1 Introduction

The development of Muslim girls' secondary education is discussed against the backdrop of missionary education and the response of Muslims to that education. Christian missionaries introduced Formal Western education in Kenya. However, it should be noted that, before the coming of the missionaries and the introduction of formal Western education, Muslims in Kenya had their system of education. This was Islamic education that was imparted in various institutions such as mosques, *chuo* (pl. *vyuo*) or Qur'an schools. Missionary education was largely evangelical in nature. Thus the response of Muslims to this education to a larger extent determined the course of development of Muslim girls' education. The same could be said of the general development of Muslim education in Kenya as a whole. This chapter examines the introduction of formal Western education by missionaries and the Muslim response to that education, beginning with Mombasa District (cf., 2.3) and later in Kwale District (cf., 2.4). Our opinion is that the response of the Muslims to missionary education shaped the course of development of Muslim girls' secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts.

2.2 Christian Missionaries and the Introduction of Formal Western Education in Kenya

The inception of Christianity in Kenya could be traced to the period under the Portuguese rule along the East African coast in the 16th and the 17th centuries. Evidence of this early presence of Christianity is to be seen from the information on the pioneer Portuguese missionary called St. Francis Xavier. He is reported to have stopped at the coastal town of Malindi in 1542 on his way to Goa, India, as the Vicar Apostolic of the Indies. He held some fruitful conversations with the Muslim leaders of Malindi (Barrett, *et al*, 1973). Further evidence of the presence of Christianity is in Mombasa where the Gospel was preached in 1564 through the orders of the Portuguese viceroy of India. Similarly, in 1567, the Augustinian priests established a monastery in Mombasa (Temu, 1972; Barrett, *et al*, 1973). The priests later shifted base to the northern coastal towns of Lamu, Pate and

Faza, where they established a short-lived Christian community. In 1607, another group, the Order of the Brethren of Mercy arrived in Mombasa (Barrett, *et al*, 1973:21).

Although they were pioneers of Christianity in East Africa, a number of reasons explain why the Portuguese efforts at implanting Christianity were largely unsuccessful. Thus, the almost 200 years (1498-1698 AD) of Portuguese rule along the East African coast were characterized by decay of the once flourishing towns, plunder of local resources, aggression, iniquities and administrative abuses (Were & Wilson, 1972; July 1992). Consequently, the Portuguese administrators were hated and despised by the local people. The Portuguese did not establish amicable relations with the people of the East African coast who in turn refused to recognize the suzerainty of the Portuguese rulers. On their part, the Portuguese secluded themselves in their living quarters, built churches served by their chaplains (Were & Wilson, 1972). These chaplains were not trained missionaries and hence they did not bother to engage in proselytism. Records show that the Portuguese were not keen on evangelism (Freeman-Grenville, 1967:136). Attempts by the Portuguese to implant Christianity turned a cropper because they concentrated their efforts among the largely Muslim population of the coast, who did not respond to the Gospel. The Portuguese empire declined and eventually collapsed. This was due to internal weaknesses occasioned by corruption, ruthlessness, brutality and greed all; of which provoked hostility and rebellion. In addition, rivalry from other European powers such as Britain and the Netherlands undermined and weakened the Portuguese power. The decline and eventual fall of Portuguese rule sounded a death knell to the first evangelical Christian mission along the East African coast.

The year 1844 was a turning point in the history of Christianity in East Africa. This year witnessed the coming of Dr. John Ludwig Krapf, a German Lutheran missionary working under the auspices of the CMS (Church Missionary Society). Dr. Krapf arrived at Mombasa to begin Christian evangelical work. Before this, he had worked among the Galla in the Shoa Province of Ethiopia for five years. His coming to East Africa was in the hope of reaching the Galla from the South. Johann Rebman, also of German CMS later joined Krapf. The two established a CMS station at Rabai Mpya near Mombasa in 1846. The two missionaries set a precedent and soon other missions followed in their

footsteps. For example pioneer, United Methodist Free Mission (UMFM) missionaries, Thomas Wakefield and Charles New established a mission station at Ribe in 1861, Ganjoni (Mazeras), Chonyi and Jomvu in 1876. Later in 1885, the Methodists took the Gospel to Golbanti in Tana River and Lamu (Barrett, *et al*, 1973; Mutua, 1975; Nthamburi, 1982).

The Holy Ghost Fathers, a mission from France, established mission stations at Mombasa, Bura among the Taita in 1891, and Limuru in 1899 (Barrett, *et al*, 1973:31). Elsewhere, the Italian Consolata Fathers established mission stations in Kiambu, Limuru and Mang'u. The English and later Dutch Mill Hill Fathers established themselves in Western Kenya from Uganda while the German Neukirchen Mission established mission stations in Tana River and the surrounding areas. Other Christian missions were: the American-led African Inland Mission (AIM), which came to Kenya in 1895 and started a mission station in Ukambani and later moved to Kijabe. The American Seventh Day Adventists (SDA) and the Quakers moved into Nyanza, while the Methodists from their base at Ribe, moved to Meru (Anderson, 1970:15; Sifuna, 1990: 113; Maina, 1993:82-83). With the presence of these mission groups in Kenya, Christian evangelical work started in earnest.

The establishment of the Christian missions was accompanied by the building of schools. School were built to complement the missionary work as the new converts to Christianity had to be taught how to read and write. Schools were meant to provide literacy to readers and catechists. Reading and writing skills were imperative to those preparing for baptism and for understanding the Bible. Missionaries used those who became literate to spread the Gospel. Hence the school became an integral part of the missionary work as expressed by the sentiments of a missionary:

If we had a nation with formal education, able to read and write, my plans for mission work would be different. But now I am convinced that the opening of schools is our main task. I have a low opinion of Christians who are not able to read their Bible. The smallest school child is a missionary with grown-up (sic) which would not exist without a school (cited, Maina, 1993:95).

Missionary education and evangelisation were two sides of the same coin. That is, missionaries combined the two roles of winning the souls of Africans to Christ and

educating the Africans. Krapf, the pioneer missionary, confirmed this by describing himself as:

Neither a soldier, nor a merchant, nor an official employed by the Arabian nor British Government; nor a traveller, nor a *mganga* (medicine man), But a teacher, a book man (cited, Furley & Watson, 1978:69).

True to this argument, the founding of the Rabai mission by Krapf and Rebman became a turning point in the development of formal Western education in Kenya. The Rabai mission consisted of a school founded in 1847, where the local Miji Kenda community learnt reading and writing skills in preparation for baptism. Krapf translated parts of the Bible into Kiswahili and Miji Kenda dialects to serve as reading materials for catechumen. Missionary education was therefore a means to an end. It was a means to attain evangelism and proselytism.

Apart from education, other activities that were an integral part of the missionary work were equally geared to converting people to Christianity. For example, in the provision of medical services, missionaries preached to the people first before attending to them. A case in point was Rev. W.E. Taylor, a medical missionary who ran a small dispensary in Mombasa in which those who sought treatment had to listen to the Gospel lessons before being treated (Temu, 1972:45). This shows that the ultimate goal of the missionaries was to spread the Gospel.

Education was an instrument of evangelisation and conversion to Christianity. Therefore schools were meant to isolate prospective adherents from their societies, to instil upon them beliefs and patterns of behaviour demanded by Christianity (Strayer, 1971:186). Education was equated with Christianity and civilization. Education was a means of countering the allegedly negative effects of civilization. Missionary education and schools acted as baits for conversion to Christianity. One example suffices to illustrate this scenario. Among the first schools to be established in Mombasa was Buxton High school. This school was named after Sir Thomas Buxton, an influential CMS secretary. Ms. M. Bazette opened the school in 1893 to offer multi-racial education (Stovold, 1946:45). Buxton was sponsored by the CMS and its aim was to attract children to the church in return for Western education. Its curriculum shows that the school was religious oriented.

The scripture was one of the examinable subjects and the English language Bible was one of the main textbooks. The student population consisted of Europeans, Parsees, Indians, Swahili, Persians and Africans from the immediate coastal hinterland (Strayer, 1971:248). In 1893, the scriptural teaching disenchanted the Muslims and Indians, to which Ms. Bazette reacted:

The Bible lesson which I have always sought to make a part of our program has often aroused discussion, sometimes much ridicule or opposition from these bigoted little Arabs who think that they have a perfect right to propound their opinions and condemn all we say as lies and are in their eyes most important young men (Strayer, 1971:250f).

In 1907, the religious teaching at Buxton again incensed the Indian pupils who formed the bulk of the student body. Indian parents claimed that the missionaries had distributed copies of the Bible in Gujerati language to their children. As a result of this incident, the Indian population of Mombasa petitioned the colonial government to establish a secular school for their children. After almost one and a half decades of waiting, the Colonial Government opened Allidina Visram School, for Asians in 1921 (Strayer, 1971:261; Mambo, 1980:110). This school was named after the Indian merchant prince, Allidina Visram, who donated to the Colonial Government Sterling Pounds 50,000 to build a school for Indian children (Anderson, 1970:72).

In spite of the discontent that religious instruction provoked at Buxton, Mr. W.E. Parker who took over as the principal in 1897 did not relent. He categorically admitted: "My wish is to win the people's souls" (Strayer, 1971:249). The CMS mission insisted on religious instruction as a condition for those who wished to learn the English language and other subjects in the school. Though this was the understanding between the mission and the pupils, in 1908, pressure was brought to bear on the Principal to conduct purely secular classes without religious instruction for Muslims - Swahili and Arabs. His refusal to oblige led Muslims to opt out of the school altogether (Strayer, 1971:250; Maina, 1993:98-100).

Missionary education was equally tied to the religious beliefs and ideals of denomination. Children who attended a particular school sponsored by a particular denomination had to subscribe to the religious requirements and beliefs of that denomination (Bagha, 1974:66). For example, the Roman Catholics had a principle of "Catholic schools for

Catholic children conducted by Catholic teachers” (Bagha, 1981:139). This principle continued to guide the educational policy of the Catholic Church for a long time. In the 1950s, this policy was quite entrenched in the Catholic schools. This is because it was held that catholic schools where catholic principles and discipline permeated the educational system were essential for the survival of the Catholic Church:

We must have a school as catholic as possible so as to fulfill our task... The children must ... live as far as possible in a catholic atmosphere, under teachers who are practicing Catholics” (Bagha, 1981:139).

This rigid education policy discouraged non-Catholics especially Muslims from attending Catholic schools. The same rigid policy was followed in Protestant schools. Protestant missions aimed at running institutions in which Christian teachings and influences were dominant. They opposed Christian students training alongside their Muslim counterparts, even in government owned institutions. Bagha (1981:140) summarizes this contention:

The Coast Missionary Council strongly urge that there be no attempt to combine the training of Africans and Arabs in one institution in the (Coast) province. Our missionaries feel so strongly about this that they would not encourage their peoples to attend normal school where they would be exposed to Muslim influence... every endeavour should be made to secure a principal who could not be a stumbling block to Christian pupils.

The educational policies of the missionaries therefore were aimed at promoting particular beliefs of a denomination. These policies tended to preclude Muslims from joining the mission schools, since the schools were prejudicial to Muslim religious beliefs. Muslims did not have much to gain in an educational system where their religious interests were not promoted and safeguarded (Maina, 1993:101-102).

The curriculum of the mission schools was confined to the 4 Rs - Reading, Religion, Writing and Arithmetic (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/3). Religion was the most important subject as reading the Bible was an integral part of the curriculum that was accompanied by religious songs and hymns. Thus, missionary education was evidently religious in content and oriented towards evangelism. On their part, missionaries saw a danger inherent in divorcing secular education from moral and religious instruction. Moral and religious instruction was important for Africans to supplant traditional beliefs and customs (Bagha, 1974:138). Muslims as a result perceived this type of education as a means of converting their children to Christianity. They therefore shunned the mission schools since they were not fulfilling their material and educational needs (Maina, 1993:102).

Christian missionaries developed education in Kenya single-handedly until 1911 when the Colonial Government established Department of Education. Since then, the government took over the responsibility of directing educational policies. The establishment of a Department of Education was the brainchild of the Frazer Education Commission of 1909. Frazer who had had a long experience of education in India was appointed the Education Advisor to the governments of British East Africa in 1908. It is in this capacity that he produced the 1909 report (Anderson, 1970:36). The Frazer report recommended the appointment of a Director of Education and the establishment of a racial education system for: Europeans, Asians and Africans. He recommended an academic education for Europeans and Asians, and an industrial and technical education for Africans. He argued that technical education was important to utilize the talents of manual labour inherent in the African race (Anderson, 1970; Sifuna, 1990). These talents could be exploited to produce cheap labour to avoid the government's over dependence on the more expensive Asian labour. The Frazer report further recommended the education of the Africans to be under the domain of the missionaries. In his view, "education of any kind, industrial or technical was mischievous without morality and should therefore be accompanied by religious instruction to instil Christian values" (Sifuna, 1990:106). Industrial and technical education was considered important for manual vocations to fight idleness. To this end, the first African school offering technical and industrial education was opened in Machakos in 1913 (Anderson, 1970:38).

Consequent to the recommendations, J.R. Orr became the first Director of Education and the racial segregation in education in Kenya began. The educational segregation dovetailed with each racial group in its particular role that were aimed at fulfilling the needs of the racially stratified colonial society. The racial education policies presumed that Africans were inferior vis-à-vis other races on the gradation of social progress. Africans were considered as retarded and incapable of intellectual effort and deficient in constructive power with lower educable capacity (Mutua, 1975:3). This mentality gave rationale for the provision of an industrial, non-academic education to Africans. In this regard, Africans were trained to be menial workers, while Asians were trained for middle cadre jobs to become lawyers, doctors, accountants, traders and minor administrative assistants. The Europeans on the other hand, were being prepared for leadership. Hence

they got the best education in terms of subsidies, facilities and teaching staff. In most cases, this was done at the expense of the educational needs for the other two races.

The government expenditure on education during the colonial period was weighted towards European education and Asian education in that order. This was an open government policy that was duly confirmed by assertions of government officials. For example, in 1927, the Director of Education noted that: "it is the aim of the government to pay the greatest attention to the European children and to get the right spirits into the schools" (Bagha, 1974:104). In 1936, Sir Allan Prin, in his "Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the financial position and system of taxation" repeated the same sentiments. He said that the greatest attention must be paid to European education for the future development of the country (Maina, 1993:117). In this regard, schools for Europeans were highly equipped with separate house blocks, matron's accommodation, expensively equipped classrooms, lecture halls, laboratories, and expensive sports' facilities, etc. The teaching staff was primarily university graduates. These schools received generous building grants and were highly subsidized by the government (*ibid*, p.117).

The Phelps-Stokes Commission of 1924 pointed out the discrepancies concerning government's expenditure on education. This commission was sponsored by an American foundation of the same name, and the British Government (Osogo, 1971:113). It had noted the inadequacy of the amount allocated to each race in 1924, relative to the population. The allocation in Sterling Pounds for the education of each race was the following: African - 37,000; Asian - 11,600 and European - 24,000. This translated into 20 cents for the Africans and shillings 40 for the Europeans. As a result, the Commission had recommended a uniform system of funding mission and government schools, with increased grants-in-aid administered by the Department of Education (Sifuna, 1990: 127).

In spite of the establishment of the Department of Education, African education was largely in the hands of the Christian missions. The Report of Education Commission of East Africa Protectorate (RECEAP) 1919, recommended African education to be left in the hands of the missionaries (KNA, PC/Coast/1/4/9). Five years later in 1924 came into

place the Education Ordinance that was supposed to end the dominance and control of African education by the missionaries. The 1924 Education Ordinance brought the appointment of a central committee for each of the three races to advise the government on matters of education of the races in the country. This ordinance was repeated in 1931. Under the 1931 Education Ordinance, the central committees were replaced with the advisory councils each for African, Arab, Asian and European education. The role hitherto played by the central committees was then taken over by the advisory councils (Otiende, *et al*, 1992:47). In spite of these efforts, for the better part of the colonial period, the missionaries held a tight grip on the provision of African education in Kenya. This arrangement did not spare the African Muslims who were so classified by race. Regarding provision of education, areas inhabited by African Muslim population essentially fell under the domain of the missionaries. This could be said of districts such as Mombasa, Kwale and Lamu. Although the government wanted to have a control over the provision of education, mission schools largely served these areas.

Within the racial educational system, Muslims straddled the two racial groups: Asians and Africans. Asians as already pointed out, were racially privileged than their Arab and African counterparts who were in the lower echelons of the racial strata. Asians had better education facilities than Africans and Arabs. Before 1919, Arabs and Africans were classified under the same racial group, but RECEAP (1919) raised them to a higher racial status. It also recommended an education system for four racial groups: Europeans, Asians, Arabs and Africans, as opposed to the three (Europeans, Asians and Africans) recommended earlier by the Frazer report. Regarding the Arabs and Swahili the report had this to say:

The commissioners thought that both Arabs and Swahili might attend the same schools; added to that could also be the local Baluchi population who are mainly the descendants of mercenaries employed by the sultans of Muscat (1919:6)

Endowed with wealth and racial privileges, Asian Muslims set up committees for the schools they established. This community perceived education as a means of preserving their cultural heritage. Asian Muslim groups like the Bohras, Ismailis and Ithna' Asheris established schools in virtually all the urban centres inhabited by members of their communities. These schools were well staffed, equipped and maintained, offering religious and secular education (Maina, 1993). These schools were financed through

modest fees paid by the parents, public subscription and generous donations from philanthropic individuals. These individuals included Taria Topan, a wealthy Ismaili Khoja from Zanzibar, Allidina Visram, the merchant prince of Mombasa and various members of the influential Bohra family of Karimjee Jivanjee (Anderson, 1970:72). For the Arabs, the colonial government established schools that were outside the domain of the missionary control. However, the Arabs' response to these schools was largely negative, at least that was the situation in the first two decades of the twentieth century.

2.3 Trends in the Development of Muslim Girls' Education in Mombasa District to 1963

This section discusses various aspects of the development of Muslim girls' education in Mombasa District. These are the Qur'anic system of education, Arab and Swahili girls' education, Asian girls' education and African education.

2.3.1 The Qur'anic (Islamic) System of Education and Its Implications on Girls

The development of Muslim girls' education in Mombasa District cannot be treated in isolation from the overall development of Muslim education. This is because any discussion on the development of Muslim girls' education could be incomplete without a mention of Islamic education. Islamic education was offered in Qur'an schools and it was an important religious component of Muslim education. Indeed, even with the introduction of formal Western education, Qur'anic instruction played a significant role in boosting the enrolment in schools that Muslims attended.

It has already been pointed out that for a long time before the coming of the Christian missionaries, Muslims in Kenya had their education system. This was Islamic education that was different from formal Western education.¹ After the early period of socialization that took place from the period of 4-6 years, Muslim boys and girls attended *chuo*. In a *chuo*, they learnt to recite the Qur'an, write Arabic letters and were introduced to the basic notions in *Hadith* and *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence). Boys and girls studied together

¹ For details on the features of Islamic education see Maina, 1993. "Muslim Education in Kenya with Special Reference to *Madrasa* System in Nairobi". Unpublished MA thesis, Kenyatta University. pp.56-73.

in a *chuo*, but there were separate *vyuo* for boys and girls. Basically, the *chuo* was a preserve for boys as evidently seen from the number of *vyuo* that dotted Mombasa in 1925. All the 23 Qur'anic schools catered for 548 boys (Abreau, 1982:49-50). The predominance of the *vyuo* as an institution for boys was quite evident even after the introduction of formal western education. The *vyuo* continued to play an important role in the education of Muslim children not only during the colonial period but even today. For example in 1945, out of a total population of 6,600 Arab children of all ages in Mombasa, 5,180 attended 34 Qur'an schools. The attendance of the *vyuo* shows clearly that boys outnumbered girls. One thousand and four boys attended *vyuo* against 422 girls (KNA, PC/Coast/ 2/1/72). The sheer numbers of girls in Qur'an schools vis-a-vis boys could largely be attributed to illiteracy and ignorance of the need to educate girls.

The *vyuo* limited girls' access to education because girls were likely to be withdrawn after puberty. Girls only acquired rudiments of literacy in Arabic and Qur'an recitation to enable them to read and write and offer the daily prayers. Apparently, girls did not pursue education beyond the *chuo*. On the other hand, boys could attend mosque *darasas* (seminars or sessions) for advanced study in *Hadith* and *Fiqh* (Salim, 1973; Strobel, 1979). In certain cases, Muslim girls largely acquired their education at home under a male relative, a trusted family friend or an educated woman who was well schooled in religious matters (Strobel, 1979; Porter, 1990, 1992). The education of a girl within the home environment entailed learning how to offer prayers, reciting the Qur'an, reading and writing and performing other religious rituals, cooking and other domestic work.

The education offered in a *chuo* tended to favour boys than girls. Probably, this was due to lack of separate facilities for boys and girls, poverty and ignorance of the parents on the need for further education of girls. Although it was important for girls to learn the rudiments of their religion, the parenting roles of girls later in life superseded other aspects of a girl's life, like pursuing education. Education at home was meant to instil the merits and virtues of marriage. The attitude to a girls' education cut across the various Muslim groups. Some of these groups were very conservative regarding offering religious education to girls. Among the Memons, a Sunni sect from the Indo-Pakistan sub-

continent, girls remained at home. Even religious education for Memon girls came much later (Abreau, 1982).

The need to instil religious beliefs of their communities made Muslims in Mombasa to establish their *vyuo*. The Bohras, a Shia Muslim community, and the Memons established *vyuo* where their children learnt the rudiments of their faith. The Bohra community established the Burhaniyya Bohra School in Mombasa in 1890 for religious instruction. The school was run through donations and subscriptions and its committee registered as Daudi Bohra Educational Society in 1938 (Abreau, 1982:71). The Ithna' Asheris another Shia sect founded a religious school in Mombasa in 1904. This school was also financed through donations and contributions until 1930 (*ibid*, p.74).

The limited opportunities of girl's education in the *vyuo* seem to have been replicated with the introduction of formal Western education. It took a long time before the secular education for girls captured the interests of some Muslim groups especially among the Arabs and Africans. This is evident from early education reports of the colonial government that hardly mention the need for education of Muslim girls (Porter, 1992:127). The apathy of these Muslim groups toward secular education could be explained by the fact that this education was tied to the missionary goals of evangelism and conversion, mentioned earlier and discussed later in this chapter. Let us now turn our attention to the various Muslim groups, Arabs and Swahili, Asians and Africans, to examine how they catered for the educational interests of girls.

2.3.2 Education of Swahili and Arab Girls

Before discussing the education of Swahili and Arab girls, it is necessary to define Arabs and Swahili. This is because the Arabs and Swahili were grouped together as a race. The racial stratification and placement had implications on the provision of education in colonial Kenya. The term Arab is used in this study to denote the descendants of the Arabs and Shirazi (Persians) who migrated to the East African coast from Arabia, Yemen, Hadramaut and Persian Gulf. These people brought Islam to the coast from the 9th century AD. They intermarried with the local, largely Bantu people and this resulted into an Afro-Arab (Shirazi) community called the Swahili (Salim, 1973).

Probably, owing to their Afro-Asiatic seemingly Arabian (Persian) heritage and the politics of racial stratification, the Swahili suffered an identity crisis during the colonial period. Then as of today, there was (is) a problem of defining a Swahili. A number of scholars have defined the Swahili (see, Prins, 1967; Salim, 1973, 1976; Allen, 1993). Salim (1976:67) defines the Swahili speakers as the twelve tribes who have an admixture of African and Shirazi elements. Among them are the nine tribes that are: Wa-Mvita, Wa-Jomvu, Wa-Kilifi, Wa-Mtwapa, Wa-Pate, Wa-Faza, Wa-Shaka, Wa-Bajuni and Wa-Katwa. Allen (1993:3) identifies the Swahili as African descendants of the original Arab or Persian-Arab settlers living on the East African coast, whose common language is Kiswahili - a Bantu language with Arabic loan words.

The Afro-Arabian (Shirazi) heritage had social, political and economic implications on the placement of the Swahili in the colonial society. Some Swahili held on to their Arabian (Shirazi) origin because it guaranteed them a higher racial status and privileges that were not available to Africans. These privileges included exemptions from some taxes such as Hut tax paid by Africans, better jobs and terms of service in government positions, and better education facilities (Salim, 1976). For purposes of education as previously noted, the Swahili were classified as Africans. This changed in 1919, under RECEAP when they were grouped together with Arabs. This means that for the better part of the colonial period, the Swahili attended the same schools with Arabs.

The Colonial Government used the terms "native" and "non-native" for purposes of legislation to distinguish one group of people (tribe) from the others. The term native was pejorative as it implied inferiority in culture, civilization and progress in relation to non-natives (*ibid*, p.69). Thus the colonial government contended with an arduous task of where to place the Swahili and Arabs, that is, under natives or non-natives. The Swahili provided arguments to prove how they were similar to the "superior" Arabs. The Arabs on the other hand argued that they were indeed better than the Swahili and as such they were not to be grouped together with Swahili and other Africans. Due to their higher racial status, the Arabs did not want to be classified as natives, as they had a low opinion of Africans (Mambo, 1980:210).

The abolition of slavery and slave trade along the East African coast in 1907 had precipitated an economic decline for the Muslim Swahili and Arabs. This prompted Muslim leaders from the Coast to petition the Colonial Government to provide formal western education to pull these communities out of their economic difficulties. Sir Ali bin Salim, assistant *liwali*² for the coast had suggested the establishment of education for Arabs to assist them to earn a living. Since the claims for compensation to the slave owners were delaying, a need was felt to establish an Arab school in Mombasa to utilize some of the vote for compensation (see Salim, 1973:148; Strobel, 1979:174; Bagha, 1981:163; Maina, 1993:124). The British Government paid Sterling Pounds 40,000 as compensation to the former slave owners (KNA, PC/Coast/1/4/8). Accordingly, an Arab school was started in Mombasa in 1912 and officially opened in 1913. Its aim was to train clerks, minor officials, teachers and agricultural overseers for government service as it was envisaged by the Director of Education who observed in 1917:

The intelligence of the young Arab and better class Swahili is beyond doubt, and if properly educated they would prove a great help in the development of the Coast; as supervisors of native labor on plantations they would be of great service if trained, they know the language, and the Arabs have a certain gift of handling the natives (KNA, PC/Coast/1/4/8).

The Department of Agriculture established an agricultural experiment farm at Mazeras that was put at the disposal of the school for the training of Arab boys in agriculture. Unfortunately, the response was very poor, such that by 1914, the school could not muster more than 24 pupils in its roll (Bagha, 1974: 108-109; Maina, 1993:119-120). Outside Mombasa, a second school for the Arabs was opened in Malindi in 1919. This was Ali bin Salim Boys' School, so named after its benefactor Sir Ali bin Salim the assistant *liwali* for Mombasa.

Before 1930, there was no school for Arab and Swahili girls. In spite of the establishment of the first Arab boys' school in 1912, very little was being done about the formal western education of girls. In the first decade of the twentieth century, Muslim Arab leaders and the colonial government officials did not support the education of girls. For example, J.R.

² *Livalis* and *mudirs* were official representatives of the Sultan of Zanzibar along the Coast. During the colonial period, under the British administration, they were local government officials appointed as headmen and magistrates. They presided over various legal matters, especially those regarding the Muslim personal law.

Orr, the Director of Education and C.W. Hobley, the Provincial Commissioner (PC) for Mombasa did not even consider the possibility of secular Western education for Muslim Arab girls (Strobel, 1979:103). This kind of attitude was not unusual in a racially stratified society. From the beginning of the second decade of the 20th century, government officials seem to have had an interest only in the education of Asian girls. The Education Department Annual Report (EDAR) of 1925 reported this concern:

Considerable improvement is required in the education of Indian girls. The removal of immature girls at 13 and 14 years of age for marriage militates against the progress of the race, as the standard of any race is measured by the standard of its women (KNA, EDAR, 1925:11)

The colonialists' attitude to Arab girls' education, and to a greater extent that of the African girls', was a product of the colonial economy where the Africans were considered as "hewers of wood and drawers of water". For the Africans, education was meant to train them for menial jobs. Since men were seen as breadwinners and the sole providers for the family, boys were to be provided with an industrial and technical education for menial jobs. The economic needs of women and children were to be taken care of by men. This erroneously implied that girls did not deserve to acquire formal education. Among Muslims, there were leaders with different shades, some of who subscribed to the school of thought that was not in favour of educating girls. In this category were politicians who were the beneficiaries of the colonial largesse. Such leaders did not want to be seen to be contradicting official government policy regarding the education of girls. Therefore, they expressed their apathy towards education of girls. Among these leaders was Sir Ali *bin* Salim. While giving his evidence to the 1919 Education Commission of East Africa Protectorate, Sir Ali *bin* Salim said of girls' education:

Very few Arab girls are taught the Qur'an. I am not in favour of general education for women. They are not ready. The general feeling will be against educating the whole of women. But daughters of rich Arabs are sometimes educated (RECEAP: 18)

Ali *bin* Salim's views to the Commission could be described as personal and may not have reflected the general views of the Arab-Swahili community. We could only conjecture that his reference to "general education" meant either secular education or education in a mixed school. However, it is obvious from his contentions that among other factors, the dire economic condition of the Arabs was a factor in the education of girls. We should remember that during the first two decades of the twentieth century, many Arabs had not acquired formal Western education. Therefore, it could be foolhardy

to expect men who were ignorant of the benefits of Western education to advocate the same for girls. Advocacy for Western education was initially addressed for Arab boys. This was to change in the thirties when girls' education was considered important. The role of the Arab elite such as Sir Ali bin Salim, in advocating for the education of Arab boys should be seen in that perspective.

Sir Ali *bin* Salim was one of the leading lights and most influential figures in the Arab community of his day. He enjoyed a high status and profile in the colonial society. He had served as an assistant *livali* for Mombasa, first Arab nominated member of the Legislative Council (Legco) and Senior *Livali* for Coast. As such, his opinions on issues of girls' education were bound to influence greatly the course of development of Muslim (Arab) girls' education. Yet, Sir Ali bin Salim's commitment to the development of Western education for Arabs did not have any equal in the history of Western education in Coast Province during the colonial period. It was through his efforts and influence that the two Arab boys' schools at Mombasa and Malindi were founded. In his speeches that explained the virtues of Western education and the needs of the Arabs to seek education, Salim did not pay any attention to the education of girls.³ Other Muslim leaders who realized the need to educate girls, felt that girls' education should be limited in scope and only confined to domestic subjects. Such leaders included Haidar bin Mohamed Mandhry, an Arab trader from Mombasa and Hamed bin Mohamed Imam Timamy, an interpreter in the High Court. While giving evidence to the Education Commission of East Africa Protectorate, Mandhry said of girls' education:

If proper girls' schools with women teachers existed, I would send my daughters, but girls must not be taught the same level with boys. They should not be taught high class Arabic. Only primary and domestic education is suitable for girls (Strobel, 1979:103).

The fact that Sir Ali *bin* Salim and other opinion leaders supported girls' education that was limited in scope influenced the development of education for Arab girls. Moreover, they also influenced the education of non-Arab Muslim girls, especially among Africans. It could be argued that the attitude and factors that had hindered the provision of Qur'anic education to Muslim girls mentioned earlier on, had now come to haunt the provision of

³ See for example his speeches during the Prize-giving Day at Ali bin Salim School in Malindi in 1931 and the Third Annual Speech Day at Coast Secondary School (Shimo-la-Tewa) in 1935 (cited in Bagha, 1974:225; Maina, 1993:130f).

Western education to Muslim (Arab) girls because in both, there were no proper schools for girls.

In the early 1920s, the attitude of government officials to education of girls somehow changed. Writing about Arab education in 1923, the Director of Education called for compulsory education for both sexes for all races. Concerning Arab education, he remarked "... I feel that the education of Arab girls should be commenced immediately without delay" (KNA, PC/Coast/1/4/8). The only hindrance that stood in the way of commencement of girls' education was lack of separate facilities for boys and girls. Due to the teachings of Islam that forbid casual mixing of sexes, the Arabs could not approve co-educating boys and girls. Yet the government was not ready to shoulder the financial responsibility of putting up separate educational facilities for boys and girls. Towards the end of the 1920s, there was a general feeling for the need to educate girls alongside boys. In his annual report of 1928, the Chief Inspector of schools said: "the training of the Arab youth should go hand in hand with that of girls and women. But the formal schooling of girls seemed a remote possibility" (KNA, C&PK, EDAR, 1928) because the government was not ready to shoulder the burden.

The attitude of the Muslim Arabs to girls' education in the 1920s was accentuated by the indecisiveness to the social changes brought by the Europeans. Acts such as drunkenness, dancing and disobedience among the Arab youth were seen as manifestation of changes brought by Europeans. These were acts alien to the Muslim culture and were perceived as a threat to the well being of the family and community (Strobel, 1979:103). Under such circumstances, very few Arabs took their daughters to school. In the minds of some Muslims, Western education for girls, due to extraneous influences, would damage family prestige since girls were bound to be spoilt by the new ideas and thus behave inappropriately (Porter, 1990). Secular Western education was the handmaid of Western influences that could lead to a disintegration of morality among girls. Not even the establishment of a boarding school for girls in Zanzibar could assuage the fears of Muslim conservatives on the danger inherent in secular education for girls. Boarding schools devoid of moral teachings were seen as instrumental in encouraging bad moral behaviour as girls moved around in cars and learnt how to write amorous love letters to

boys. Commenting about boarding schools for Muslim girls, a reader was quoted in *Al-Islah* as saying:

There is no place for such a school in Mombasa, for our women bring shame upon us through the adoption of the 'modes of civilization'. They cut their hair [short] they wear [European] dresses and ride cars as much as 30 miles just as European women do, and their husbands do not stop them - such is the extent of the grip of 'civilization' upon them (Salim, 1973:163, citing, *Al-Islah*, 5/9/32).

Evidently, the debate on whether to provide Muslim girls with Western education or not, polarized the Arab-Swahili community. On one hand, there were those who were opposed to secular education simply because of its Western influences. On the other hand, there were those who felt that in spite of the decay of the Muslim culture occasioned by the onslaught by the Europeans, it was unwise to leave the education of girls to the mercy of missionaries whose objective was to convert Muslims to Christianity. This latter group realized the need for educating girls in a Muslim school.

One of the most ardent supporters of girls' education was Sheikh al-Amin *bin* al-Mazrui (1897-1947). He was widely read and versed in the ideas of Middle East reformist scholars like Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani (1839-97), and his two disciples, Muhammad Abduh [1849-1905] and Rashid Rida [1865-1935] (see Hourani, 1970; Salim, 1973; Maina, 1993). Sheikh al-Amin embarked on transmitting his ideas through journalism. Like his mentors in the Middle East, he set to reform Islam through journalism. He published two periodicals *Al-Saheefa* and *Al-Islah* that were the channels of his reformist ideas (Salim, 1973:160-61).

Sheikh al-Amin criticized Muslims for aping useless practices of the Europeans like football, golf, playing the stringed instrument, dance and studying art. About women, he said:

We want to imitate Europeans, to civilize our women, to be like their women... [But] the education that the European women have to keep house and to clean, to raise children of good health, manners and character, and the skill they have in hand- work and cooking, all these we do not see as things to civilize our women (cited, Strobel, 1979:104-105).

Sheikh al-Amin was cautioning the Muslim community, as shown below, that not all the practices emanating from the Europeans were beneficial to the Muslim women. The attributes of Western education and those of an educated European woman were good but the danger was, Muslims were likely to perceive everything European as good for them.

This was not the case according to Sheikh al-Amin. In the area of education, he deplored the inadequacies of the Qur'an school, which he felt required reform. He stressed the need for Muslims to develop their schools rather than entrusting the education of their children to the mission and government schools. It is in this connection that Sheikh al-Amin championed for the establishment of Muslim schools to address the inadequacies of the mission schools and the insufficiency of government schools. Through his efforts, Muslim schools were founded. These include the Ghazali Private School (Madrasiat-Ghazali) that is discussed later in this section. Other Muslim schools similar to Madrasat-Ghazali were founded in Mombasa in the late forties and fifties. These were al-Madrasiatul Arabiyyah al-Islamiyyah, Madrasatul Falah and Khadija Madrasa, etc. These *madaris* offered an integrated religious and secular curriculum (Maina, 1993:160-163).

Sheikh al-Amin appealed to Muslims to send their daughters to a Muslim school. This was important if girls were to avoid bad European influences in mission schools that estranged them. By so doing, Muslims would be restoring their religion and culture. He lamented over the neglect of women and girls' education:

We have let them wear European clothes without saying a word. They thought it was a good thing, and proceeded to cut their hair in European style, and when they saw that they were not criticized, they dressed the children in European caps. And now others are going to the mission to study English and we are silent.... If we continue like this... It will not be surprising if those who are going to the mission enter a church! Then we will come to know the results of neglecting our affairs, and then we will regret it, "for remorse is the grandchild" [the inevitable result] (cited, Strobel, 1979:104).

Earlier on, we had mentioned about the debate surrounding the provision of education to Arab girls. In the Arab community, there were those opposed to girls' education and those who advocated it. The advocates of girls' education felt that it could enhance their roles in parenting and homemaking through developing various skills such as literacy, sewing, knitting, cooking, ironing and baby-care. It is in this regard that Sheikh al-Amin argued for a "relevant" type of education for girls to become effective mothers, since "a healthy society depends on healthy parents especially the mothers" (Maina, 1993:155). Sheikh al-Amin argued that providing girls with education would not weaken but strengthen the home. He said that if a Muslim girl were trained in home making and childcare like a European woman, she would acquire the necessary skills and cultivate good character (Strobel, 1979:106). Through invoking the traditions of the Prophet, Sheikh al-Amin used religion to justify the need for girls' education:

The Prophet himself says that women and men both should be educated. In fact educating one woman is worth educating ten men, because she passes on her good character to her children. An uneducated woman will not encourage her child to go to school. But even a woman who knows only the Qur'an is better than a totally uneducated woman. Also, a man should take pleasure in his wife's betterment. The Prophet says that better than worldly comfort is a good wife. If she is a fool, she will not know how to make a happy house for him, or know the rights of her husband (cited, Strobel, 1979:106).

Sheikh al-Amin was not opposed to secular Western education *per se*. On the contrary what he was opposed to, were the mal-practices of the mission schools of converting Muslim children to Christianity. He urged Muslim parents to take their children to school arguing that secular education did not conflict with Islamic culture (Maina, 1993:156-157). Sheikh al-Amin cited heavily from the *ahadith* to underscore the need for Muslims to educate girls. This was in so far as the education was in conformity with the teachings of Islam. He emphasized the need to build a "girls' school before outsiders built it for us" (Salim, 1973:164). He expressed the need to take girls to a Muslim school and the dangers inherent in denying them education:

We will be aiding our girls to join the mission school, where most students come to read. And those poor people do not know that they have put their children in Hell for missions do not open schools except to trap Muslims into becoming Christians. To send a child to [mission] school is the worst sort of crime (cited, Strobel, 1979:105).

The dawn of female education in Mombasa came in 1930s. The parents of Arab Boys' School mooted the issue of providing education to Arab girls. There was a precedent elsewhere in East Africa. This was government Arab Girls' School in Zanzibar. The success of Arab school in Zanzibar inspired greatly the Arabs of Mombasa to offer education to their daughters. This school was opened in 1927 with an enrolment of 16 girls. Within a period of six months, the enrolment had risen to eighty pupils (Strobel, 1979:107; Maina, 1993:134f). The school curriculum emphasized on domestic skills such as needlework, cookery, childcare, hygiene, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, Islamic religious subjects and Arabic. The school maintained strict separation of sexes. By 1932, some of the graduates of the school had moved to Mombasa and were married to prominent Arabs (Strobel, 1979; Maina, 1993).

Thus, the 1930s marked the establishment of the first school for Arab girls along the Kenyan coast. In this respect, the Arab Girls' School in Zanzibar influenced greatly the development of girls' education among the Muslims of Mombasa. Following the Zanzibar precedent, 6 girls out of 26 applicants were admitted to Arab Boys' School,

Mombasa, for experimentation in 1936, for Qur'anic instruction. The big number of applicants testified to the growing need of Muslims (Arabs) to provide Western education to their daughters (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/39; Maina, 1993:135). This development was not without some opposition from some quarters. By clinging to their culture, those opposed to secular education for girls associated it with European influences.

Opposition notwithstanding, in 1936, Arab girls were also admitted to Ghazali Private School. These girls were daughters of elite Arabs and the teachers of the school. This school had been opened in 1933 through the efforts of Sheikh Abdallah Ghazali, a former student of Sheikh al-Amin. It had an integrated curriculum of secular and religious subjects. Boys and girls attended this school but they were segregated by sex (Strobel, 1979; Porter, 1992). Ghazali Private School became the launching pad for the education of girls in Mombasa. The school left a lasting legacy on the development of girls' education in the Arabo-Swahili community of Mombasa (Porter, 1992:140). As a result of this initiative, calls to provide Arab girls with education gained momentum with the Colonial Government joining the fray. In pursuance of this cause, in 1937, the Acting Director of Education proposed the commencement of a special school for Arab girls in Mombasa (KNA, EDAR, 1937). Shariff Abdullah *bin* Salim who served as the elected member to the Advisory Council on Arab Education and a member of the committee of Ghazali Private School, talked of this development:

They wanted to start this girls' school, so the government brought it before the Committee (the Advisory Council on Arab Education) ... that wanted to start this girls' school They knew some of our ... members would object to it. Because some old people who were there said the girls would be better... educated than the boys because boys play out very much and girls are always home. They will study more at home and they will get education better than the boys and the girls will refuse to marry the boys. Some of the committee members (said this). The old man, Sir Ali bin Salim ... objected to it but then he was defeated. That's how it started (Porter, 1992:141-42).

It could be noted that despite the change of attitude by the Colonial Government in favour of girls' education, Sir Ali *bin* Salim was still opposed to girls' education. His ideas however were contrary to those of the community that at this time was gearing towards establishing schools for girls. It was not a wonder [as earlier mentioned] that he never supported girls' education while he supported that of boys with gusto.

On 25 July 1938, the government absorbed the Ghazali Private School into the newly established Arab Girls' School. Sheikh Ghazali agreed to the merger so long as instruction in Arabic and Qur'an was part of the subjects taught in the school. A European lady assisted by two Arab mistresses headed the Arab Girls' School. It started off with 122 pupils on the roll with an attendance of 110 (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/47). Twenty-five girls who had been attending Qur'an classes in Arab Boys' School were transferred to the new school. In addition, the boys of Ghazali School were absorbed into Arab Boys' School. The Arab Girls' School was housed in a building owned by the *Waqf*⁴ Commissioners (KNA, EDAR, 1938). The committee of the school incorporated some members of Ghazali School, who included Shariff Abdullah, Mbarak bin Ali Hinawy and Sir Ali bin Salim (Porter, 1992:142).

The school's curriculum included domestic science, Arabic, Kiswahili, English and Physical Education (PE) among other subjects. Teaching of academic subjects was conducted in the morning and PE in the afternoon. Afternoons were also reserved for religious instruction in the Qur'anic schools for some parents who insisted that their daughters should have more religious education. Some families also refused to have their daughters join the Arab Girls' School unless they had completed Qur'anic school by which time they had committed the entire Qur'an to memory. This left the girls with very few years for which to attend secular school, because at puberty they were again withdrawn from school. Religious instruction in this respect took its toll on the secular education of girls. Some parents felt that their children should have enough grounding on matters of Islam and that the few lessons on religious instruction that they received in secular school were not enough. It is in this context that the *vyyuo* continued to play an important role in the education of the Muslims in spite of the introduction of Western education. The centrality of the religious instruction is underlined by the fact that majority of the parents made it a condition that they could only send their children to the secular school if there was Qur'anic instruction. Indeed, the absence of Qur'anic instruction in the curriculum of Arab schools was considered as one of the reasons for the initial poor response of Arabs to Western education.

⁴ Plural *awqaf*; religious endowment for public utility objects such as mosques, educational institutions, roads, hospitals, hostels etc.

The introduction of Qur'anic instruction in Arab schools in Mombasa and Malindi in 1924 led to a marked increase in enrollments (Maina, 1993:125). For example, the roll of Arab School, Mombasa rose from 92 to 130 and that of Malindi, from 22 to 100 (Salim, 1973:152). The introduction of religious instruction in secular school had far reaching implications for the development of Western education not only in Mombasa but also other parts of the Coast Province like Malindi and Kwale. The District Commissioner (DC) for Mombasa in his annual report of 1934 succinctly put it this way:

In Mombasa itself, the roll at the Arab School steadily increases year by year The new method of Qur'anic instruction has made its appeal and the anxiety of parents to take advantage of the facilities offered is one of the satisfactory features of Coast education (KNA, DC/MSA/1/3).

The improvement of school attendance and enrollment owing to the introduction of religious instruction proves that the Arabs and Swahili were not opposed to Western education. What they were opposed to was secular education devoid of Islamic (religious) element.

Meanwhile, with the absorption of Ghazali Private School, Ghazali, the principal was given a post in the Arab Boys' School while his wife Zainab *binti* Adam Musa became one of the teachers of Arabic at the Arab Girls' School. The other teacher was Zainab Ahmed Matano who was recruited by the Education Department as the first female teacher for Islamic religious instruction (Otiende, *et al*, 1992). Ghazali was well versed in Arabic and he taught it at both the Arab Girls' School and the Arab Boys' School. Arab Girls' School was considered as having very good prospects in developing into an excellent institution for the education of Arab girls (KNA, DC/MSA/1/4). Later developments of this school bear a clear testimony to that fact. In 1955, four new classrooms were built and an opening ceremony officiated by Lady Baring (wife of the governor). The school's growth in the 1940s and 1950s is an expression of its popularity and the growing demand for girls' education among the Arabs (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/95). Within a period of twenty years from 1940, to the dawn of Kenya's independence, attendance increased four-fold. With an enrolment of 114 students in 1945, the number increased to 172 in 1949; 220 in 1952 and 880 in 1962 (Strobel, 1979:112). To ease the pressure off the Arab Girls' School and its counterpart Arab Boys', Tudor Mixed School

was opened in 1952. The Arabs, however, opposed co-educating boys and girls. The school was therefore split to form Tom Mboya Primary School for boys and Mbeheni Girls' School was started (Porter, 1992:148).

There was a growing demand for the provision of Arab girls with education from the 1930s onwards. This was a great step forward for the Arabo-Swahili community. This demand was prompted by the realization of the benefits of Western education, a realization that however was not commensurate with the government's provision for the much-needed education. During this time, the government's concern for the education of the Arab girls, bordered on empty rhetoric. Due to economic reasons, the government was no longer in a position of putting up more schools for Arab girls. The Director of Education categorically put it by stating in 1938: "it is quite impractical for us to consider the establishment of a girls' school" (Bagha, 1981:170). As a result, there was a shortage of schools for girls and this was compounded by the fact that Arabs could not allow their daughters to join mixed schools (KNA, PC/Coast/1/4/8). This was due to the casual intermingling of sexes mentioned above, and discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

In the 1950s, media campaigns were stepped up focusing on the need to educate Arab girls. The benefits of Western education were there for all to see. While in the 1930s, girls were educated for better motherhood, and parentage, in the 1950s education was seen as means to employment (Strobel, 1979:114; Porter, 1992:152). There was a need in the Arab community for women professionals such as doctors, nurses, midwives and teachers, to serve fellow women. In addition, there was a need to educate girls who could become future wives of the educated Arab boys. This was due to a general public feeling that the educated Muslim Arab boys would prefer to marry educated girls, coupled with the fear that the boys would choose wives from outside of the community. Educating boys and not girls was bound to strain the family cohesion: "we are creating a disunity between the male child and the female members of his household - a barrier to family life" (Strobel, 1979:109). The belief that educating girls would disrupt the family, an argument which was used in the twenties to deny girls education, now worked to the advantage of girls' education. Furthermore, it was proved beyond any reasonable doubt that even girls who sought Western education came out with their reputation unscathed. A combination

of these factors made leading Muslims such as Mbarak *bin* Ali Hinawy to send their daughters to school and other parents followed suit (*ibid*, p.109).

As the demand for secular education in the Arab community increased, the Arabs did not object to the education of girls so long as they acquired it in their own schools. They agreed on co-educational up to the age of 12, but after that custom and religion dictated that girls should be segregated and be instructed by women teachers. This provision became a big hindrance to girls' access to education especially at secondary level, by which time they had already reached age of puberty. In the rest of the African Muslim community, most of the village schools were co-educational and for the Asian Muslims, there were separate primary schools for boys and girls. But for the Arabs, the shortage of women teachers and single sex schools for girls implied that on reaching puberty, girls dropped out of school unless they attended the only Arab girls' school in Mombasa (KNA, EDAR 1954). This implies that Arabs were not opposed to education *per se*, but rather where it was acquired. That could explain why there were fewer Arab girls than boys at both primary and secondary schools in 1954 as reflected in the enrolment of girls in Table 3. The table shows that the total number of girls in secondary schools, both Government and Aided was 4, compared to 86 for boys. It also shows that the total number of girls in all schools was 422 compared to 1,661 boys. Girls constituted about 25 per cent of all students enrolled in schools.

Table 3: Enrolment in Various Arab Schools, 1954

SCHOOL LEVEL	GOVERNMENT		AIDED		TOTAL	
	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS
PRIMARY	1,505	407	70	11	1,575	418
SECONDARY	86	2	-	2	86	4
TOTAL	1,591	409	70	13	1,661	422

Source: KNA, C&PK, EDAR, 1954.

In spite of the growing demand for the education of Arab girls, no secondary school was established for them before 1963. The pretext the Colonial Government used for not establishing a secondary school for Arab girls was that the numerical increase in enrollments of Arab girls in primary schools did not seem to justify a secondary school of

their own (KNA, EDAR, 1955). Obviously, the reason why there were fewer girls in primary schools was because these schools were mixed. Yet the government did not establish single sex schools for girls. On the other hand, there were two secondary schools for Arab boys by 1959 (KNA, EDAR, 1959). The absence of a secondary school for Arab girls meant that girls who qualified and were interested in pursuing secondary education had to join one of the aided Asian secondary schools such as Indian Girls' High School or Star of the Sea (Bagha, 1981). For example in 1955, two Arab girls were attending Indian Girls' Secondary School and in 1956, ten were attending the secondary section of Star of the Sea (KNA, EDAR, 1956). But majority of the Arab girls attended Star of the Sea School which had twenty girls out of a total of twenty four in 1958, and twenty four girls out of a total of thirty in 1959 (KNA, EDAR, 1958 & 1959).

The period 1958-1959 witnessed increased enrolment of Arab girls in primary schools. There were 42 girls for every 100 boys and 43 girls for every 100 boys in primary schools in 1958 and 1959 respectively. Table 4 shows that the total number of girls in primary schools in 1958 and 1959 was 736 and 803 respectively. The total number of boys in the same period was 1,750 and 1,816. The percentage of girls enrolled in primary schools in 1958 and 1959 was approximately 30 per cent of all students.

Table 4: Enrolment in Arab Primary Schools, 1958 & 1959

TYPE OF SCHOOL	1958			1959		
	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
GOVERNMENT	1,604	667	2,271	1,687	740	2,427
AIDED	146	69	215	129	63	192
TOTAL	1,750	736	2,486	1,816	803	2,619

Source: KNA, CPK EDA, 1958 & 1959.

Despite these increases, the overall enrolment in Arab schools attest to the fewer number of girls, vis-à-vis boys in primary and secondary schools. The situation in secondary schools was worse. Table 5 shows that in 1958, there were 24 girls and 224 boys while in 1959, there were 30 girls and 269 boys in Arab secondary schools. The enrolment of Arab girls represented a paltry 9.6 per cent and 10 per cent in 1958 and 1959 respectively. The under representation of Arab girls in secondary schools in Mombasa, continued until the

dawn of Kenya's independence in 1963. It was only a minority of Swahili and Arab girls who received primary and secondary education.

Table 5: Enrolment in Arab Secondary Schools, 1958 & 1959

TYPE OF SCHOOL	1958			1959		
	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
GOVERNMENT	222	-	222	267	-	267
AIDED	2	24	28	2	30	32
TOTAL	224	24	248	269	30	299

Source: KNA, CPK EDAR 1958 & 1959

2.3.3 Education of Asian Muslim Girls

From the beginning, the Asians were interested in primary schooling for their sons to develop literary skills after which they joined family businesses. This was because Asians were essentially a trading community. The first school for Asian boys was opened in Mombasa in 1918. This school built by the Ismaili community started with 122 pupils on the roll with classes from sub-standard to Standard IV. It offered free tuition. Initially, it received a generous grant from Ismaili philanthropists: Allidina Visram and Suleiman Virjee, and later from H.H. The Aga Khan, the spiritual leader of Ismaili Muslims. By 1925, the school catered for Cambridge preliminary classes and had an enrolment of 132 pupils (Abreau, 1982; Walji, 1995).

Asian Muslims were the pioneers in the field of Muslim girls' education. The Ismailis are credited with being the first Muslim sect to start a school for girls. This school was started at Mombasa in 1919. Over the years, its enrolment grew tremendously. Starting with an enrolment of 119 pupils, this figure went down to 110 pupils in 1925 but picked up in later years. In 1928, there were 155 pupils; 191 in 1929, and 234 in 1930. Enrolment shot to 258 pupils in 1931 (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/81; see Table 6 below). The school provided education on a variety of subjects that included English, Geography, History, Gujerati, Religion and Needlework (Abreau, 1982:59).

The Ismailis were among the first Muslim group to provide girls with formal Western education. This was at a time when other Muslim groups had not started to offer formal Western education to girls. The founding of the Ismaili Girls' School in 1919 owes a lot

to the inspiration of H.H The Aga Khan III, Sir Sultan Muhammad Shah, who underscored the need for Ismailis to educate their daughters:

More attention should be paid to the education of girls as the responsibility of motherhood is to fall upon them. If the mother is not educated, it will be harmful for the child. It is incumbent to educate them and without it nothing can be achieved. To remain ignorant is foolish! (Abreau, 1982:58).

The Ismaili Girls' School had 131 pupils in 1928, 143 in 1929, and 180 in 1931 (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/81; see Table 6). In line with providing the Ismailis with adequate education, other schools for boys and girls were established in the 1930s. Aga Khan Boys' and Aga Khan Girls' schools were founded during this time. H.H. The Aga Khan Girls' school offered primary education for girls only. It admitted girls of all ages from sub-standard to school certificate. Ismaili girls who wished to pursue secondary education attended Government Indian Girls' School. By 1942, Aga Khan Girls' school had 284 pupils on the roll with an actual attendance of 265, and by 1945, the average on the roll had gone up to 356 (KNA, DC/MSA/1/5; PC/Coast/2/10/32). In 1930, the Governor of Kenya Colony and Protectorate opened The Aga Khan Boys' School was (KNA, DC/MSA/1/3; PC/Coast/2/1/21). By 1938, The Aga Khan High School for boys was providing, in one building, elementary, primary and secondary education. But the numbers in the secondary section were small (KNA, DC/MSA/1/3). In his report of 1934, the PC lauded the work of the Ismailis in the provision of education: "the schools of H.H. the Aga Khan flourished. At the boys' school, the number on the roll in December 1934 was 286 and at the girls' school there were 219 on the roll" (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/3).

By 1953, the Ismaili community opened a new education complex called the Aga Khan School. The building which was opened by the Governor had 1,600 pupils with four separate schools as follows: 556 pupils in the boys primary and secondary schools; 382 pupils in the girls' primary school and 86 pupils in the secondary school (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/84).

Education according to the Aga Khan was important to remove women from the various prejudices that en-shackled them. It was an instrument for fighting ignorance. While arguing for the advancement of women, he observed in 1918:

No progressive thinker of today will challenge the claim that the social advancement and general well being of communities are greater where women are least debarred,

by artificial barriers and narrow prejudices from taking their full position as citizens (Walji, 1995:5).

Besides his dedication to the cause of education, the Aga Khan was devoted to the freedom and equality between the males and females. He stressed the need for equality between the sexes during his Golden Jubilee in 1936:

The responsibility before God for prayers, for action and for moral decisions is the same for men and women according to the Prophet's holy message. Pious and believing Muslims who really wish to understand the holy message of the Prophet... should immediately set to work with the object of bringing about the full and legitimate evolution of Muslim women in Islamic society so that they can honestly hold their own with men (Edwards, 1996:7)

The Aga Khan saw education as the channel through which Ismaili women could attain equality with men. He further stressed the need for the education of the girl child to achieve this equality, in the following words:

If a man had two children, and if he could only afford to give education to one, I would say that he must give preference to the girl. The boy can go and labour but the girl cannot. Even in the upliftment of the country the education of girls is more important than the education of boys. The male can bend his energies to manual effort for reward, but the girls' function is the maintenance of home life and bringing up of children. Her influence in the family circle is, therefore, enormous and the future of the generations depends upon her ability to lead the young along the right paths and instruct them in the rudiments of culture and civilization (Walji, 1995: 5; Edwards, 1996:7).

Generally, the Aga Khan considered education the instrument of advancement for his followers. Education became his clarion call. In his speeches, he repeatedly said: "knowledge is the only talisman by which good could be distinguished from evil" (Edwards, 1996:87). He sponsored and built schools for Ismailis and stressed at every opportunity, the importance of education for his community and other Muslim communities. For example, through the various organizations he patronized, the Aga Khan, tried to assist other Muslims to uplift their educational standards. The East African Muslim Welfare Society (EAMWS) was one such organization whose object was to uplift the educational standards of Arab and African Muslims through donations to schools, bursaries and payment of teachers. By extolling the needs and virtues of formal Western education, the Aga Khan III was challenging the Ismailis and other Muslims to stake their rightful place in Kenya's socio-political and economic dispensation. Both Aga Khan III and his successor were obviously aware of the economically disadvantaged position of many Muslims especially the Africans. This could have been one of the reasons for the launching of EAMWS. Indeed, the Aga Khan III had a clear vision of improving the socio-economic situation of African Muslims. This is evident in his financial contribution

towards the establishment of Mombasa Institute of Muslim Education (MIOME). The failure of the African Muslims to take the advantage of the education offered at MIOME was a big disappointment to the Aga Khan who later withdrew his financial support to the institution.

Other reasons that made Muslim Arabs and Africans not to take advantage of MIOME were the following. Low intake and turn out of Muslims in primary schools. MIOME offered technical education and most Arabs and Africans preferred academic education. The payment of school fees which discouraged many Muslims. Finally, Islamic education was absent from the curriculum of MIOME (KNA, ED. 1/2561; Salim, 1973:211; Bagha, 1981:172-173; Maina, 1993:139-141).

Due to the Aga Khan, the Ismailis had a broader outlook on life. This made them to express the concern of the obsolete methods of teaching Islamic religion applied in Qur'anic schools and advocated the teaching of religion in a way related to modern needs (Maina, 1993:122). Through the financial support from the Aga Khan and individual Ismaili philanthropists, the Ismailis were able to acquire a relatively high standard of education. The Aga Khan III influenced Ismailis to seek higher education and professional studies. The money subscribed to the value of diamonds of his Diamond Jubilee weighing ceremony was used in a project of putting up clinics and schools. As mentioned earlier, schools were built and opened for girls e.g. Ismaili and the Aga Khan girls' schools. This project had been started with the proceeds from his Golden Jubilee (Edwards, 1996:168). He also gave financial support to Muslim universities such as Al-Azhar in Cairo, and fought hard for the creation of others. For example the Aga Khan III was one of the founders of the Muslim University of Aligarh in India (Walji, 1995:15). Besides, he was one of the main financiers and architects of MIOME that was envisaged as a future university for Muslims in East Africa. He called for higher standards for students and teachers in Ismaili schools (Abreau, 1982:69; Edwards, 1996:88).

Due to the concern for his community, the Aga Khan urged his followers to discard old and obsolete customs and practices, and adopt the nationalities of their host countries. He further appealed to the Ismailis to adopt local customs of their host countries, and speak

the languages of the local people while retaining their religious beliefs. In this, he set a precedent and pace as he dressed in European fashions, spoke fluently in French, Italian, Spanish, German, English and several Asian languages and other local languages of the countries he visited (Edwards, 1996:86; Walji, 1995:8). At a conference held at Evian in France in 1952, he urged the Ismaili to adopt Western ways of life and women were advised to wear European clothes. It was also decided to encourage the use of English, hence the abolition of Gujerati in Ismaili schools (Abreau, 1982:57; Walji, 1995:6-7). It is within the spirit of modernization that there was an effort to do away with conservatism that was apparent with other Muslim groups. Undoubtedly, Islamic teachings are not opposed to modernization so long as it is within the Islamic framework (cf., 13:11). In this case, adoption of European dress per se in some cases may not be un-Islamic like putting on a tie and a suit for men. However adopting a female European dress in public that does not comply with the conditions of a modest dress (*hijab*) will be un-Islamic.

The Aga Khan was equally against the seclusion of women and called for a reform regarding their status. He argued:

How can we expect prayers from the children of mothers who have never shared or even seen the free, social intercourse of modern mankind?... This terrible cancer must either be cut out, or the body of Muslim society will be poisoned to death by the permanent waste of all the women of the nation (Edwards, 1996: 83-84).

Notwithstanding his call and financial support for education of all Muslims, the Aga Khan III (and by extension, his successor) insisted that Ismaili women should discard the veil in favour of European dress. Something needs to be pointed out in that regard. The veil is the ideal dress code for Muslim women (33:53, 59; *vide infra*, Chapter Four). Therefore, discarding the veil is contrary to the teachings of Islam. A European dress could be appropriate to a Muslim woman if it accords her honour, respect and dignity. Otherwise, clothes that reveal the body's features are forbidden in Islam. On the other hand, while seclusion hinders women from participating in socio-economic and political activities, the veil as pointed out earlier (cf., *vide infra*, Chapter Four) should enhance the daily movements of women in the public space.

The Aga Khan III's appeal to the Ismailis to adopt local customs and languages was to enable his followers to be accepted by the local people. At the same time, Western

education was to enable Ismailis to retain their privileged status in the colonial stratified society. We should point out that the Aga Khan was very pro-Western in his approach to issues affecting his community. This was possibly due to his Euro-Asiatic heritage. He was a dedicated Anglophile and a great admirer of the British throne. The Euro-Asiatic heritage of the Aga Khan III, and his successor, Karim (Aga Khan IV) is apparent. Both leaders married European women, were British citizens and were also heavily decorated, being recipients of various medals under the British crown. Besides, both Aga Khans had invested a lot in Britain, France and Switzerland (Edwards, 1996).

The inspiring leadership of Aga Khan III continued with his successor and grandson, Karim Aga Khan IV, who took over the leadership of the Ismaili community in 1957. Karim continued with the policies and mission of his grandfather, which successfully guided the Ismaili community to greater heights in education, health and economic development. During his tour of East Africa at the age of 17, while addressing Ismaili leaders, he had extolled the need for an all-round education for the Ismailis (*ibid*, pp.198-199).

Like his predecessor, Karim was insistent on the un-Islamic stance that Ismaili women should discard the veil, safe for areas like Pakistan, where he advised women to wear head scarves if the practice prevailed (Edwards, 1996:277). He equally urged the community to offer education for boys and girls alike. According to him, it was through embracing of Western education that the Ismailis were able to discard some cultural traditions, practices and beliefs that militated against the education of girls. However, his call for the Ismaili to discard the veil should be understood from the Aga Khan IV's high regard and admiration of the Western culture. This was due to his parental heritage, residence, marriages and investments in the West, which have been mentioned above. His stance on the veil, just like that of his predecessor, was controversial and out-rightly anti-Islam. The significance of the veil is already underlined and we do not need to belabour the point.

Apart from the Ismailis, the other two Asian Muslim groups which seemed to have done a lot in education of their communities were the Ithna'Asheris and the Bohras. The Ithna'Asheris founded a primary school in Mombasa in 1930. This school offered free

tuition and had classes up to standard IV. It provided a secular and religious education, and subjects such as Urdu, English and Gujarati were taught. Emphasis was laid on the education of girls who studied up to standard IV while the boys beginning from 1930 studied up to standard II. Boys were largely confined to the Qur'anic classes. By 1933, the school had an enrolment of 86 girls and 57 boys (see Table 6). In 1938, standard III classes for boys were introduced, and by 1951, there were 65 boys against 62 girls on the roll (Abreau, 1982:71-72). In 1954, the Deputy Governor, Sir Fredrick Crawford opened another school for the Ithna'Asheris (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/90).

Table 6: Enrollment in Various Asian Muslim Schools in Mombasa, 1928-1938 & 1945

School	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1945
Ag.Kh. Boys	-	-	-	-	251	260	286	300	278	301	291	388
Ag.Kh. Girls	-	-	-	-	172	210	219	-	210	237	236	356
Ismaili Girls	131	143	-	180	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ismaili Boys	155	191	234	258	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ithna'A Sch.	-	-	-	B-37 G-18	-	B-57 G-86	B-46 G-61	B-31 G-63	B-33 G-61	B-47 G-69	B-56 G-75	B-82 G-40
Burhaniyya	-	-	-	-	-	-	B-79 G-96	B-81 G-106	B-81 G-20	B-85 G-110	B-95 G-120	B-118 G-112

Key: Ag. Kh. - Aga Khan B-Boys G-Girls

Source: KNA, Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, Education Department Annual Reports, 1928, 1929, 1936, 1937, 1938; DC/MSA/1/4 (Mombasa District Annual Reports) 1931-1940.

In the later part of the 1930s, the Bohras whose primary concern was to provide religious education to their children started three schools. The first was the Zanabia Madrasa opened in 1938. This school offered free education and was housed in one of the mosques. It was run privately and never got grants from the Colonial Government. The subjects taught were Qur'an, Gujarati, Arithmetic and English. There was an enrolment of 12 boys and 20 girls in 1940 and by 1949 the school offered education to 60 pupils in standard I-III. The second school for the Bohras was opened in 1939. In 1946, it went up to standard III with an enrolment of 254 pupils. Two more classes were added in 1949 and by 1961 the school had attained a full status of a primary school (Abreau, 1982:74-75). The third school was Burhaniyya Bohra School opened on Tudor Road, Mombasa by the Governor in 1958 (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/107).

Evidently, the three Asian Muslim communities did a lot towards the education of girls early in the twentieth century. This was at a time when the other Muslim groups were still dragging their feet in the provision of girls' education. The efforts of the Asian Muslims earned them praise from the Colonial Government. In his 1925 report, the Director of Education commented on these efforts: "In Indian education great credit is due to the various religious sects which have founded schools throughout the country, especially for the education of Indian girls" (EDAR 1925, cited in Bagha, 1974:98).

Mombasa District Annual Report of 1952 highlighted the efforts and progress made in the field of education. The report singles out the part played by the Ismailis and the Ithna' Asheris: "two of the Asian communities are taking vigorous and effective steps themselves to remedy the shortage of facilities for Asian schooling" (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/81). The picture discerned of the three Asian Muslim communities was a big contrast with the rest of the Muslim groups as reported again by the PC for Mombasa in his annual report of 1954: "while the three sects of the Shia branch of Muslims have organized to provide facilities for education of their children none of the Sunni sects have yet managed to do so" (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/84).

Indeed, the role of the Asian Muslims in the provision of education, not only for their communities but also for other Muslim groups was unparalleled in the entire period under colonialism. The case of the Ismailis under the Aga Khans, as already pointed out, is enough evidence. It was through the munificence of the Ismailis and the Bohras that the proposal of the establishment of MIOME saw the light of the day. The Aga Khan III gave a personal donation of Sterling Pounds 100,000 and the Bohras subscribed Sterling Pounds 50,000. Other donations were from the British Government, Sterling Pounds, 100,000; the Sultan of Zanzibar, H.H. Seyyid Sir Khalifa *bin* Harub, Sterling Pounds, 100,000 and the Kenya Government, Sterling Pounds 50,000. MIOME was designed to provide technical and vocational education for East African Muslims. It was a joint venture between Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. Opened in 1951, MIOME was unable to fill its positions with Muslim students and had to admit a small number of non-Muslims. Consequently, it lost its inter-territorial status and became known as Mombasa Institute of Education. At independence, it became known as Mombasa Technical

Institute. Today, it is called Mombasa Polytechnic (KNA, ED.1/2561-2564; ED. DEP.1/3310; MIOME Prospectus, 1952; Maina, 1993).

Other schools that were established for Asian girls include Goan High School, which was built in 1932 in Mombasa. It was built on land donated to the Goans by Sir Ali bin Salim. It started as a pre-secondary school institution but after a few years, it started recruiting secondary classes (Bagha, 1981:153). On the other hand, an Asian lady started Valentine High School for Asians who could not secure places in government schools. Generally, the Asian community did a lot towards ameliorating the shortage of schools (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/81). Girls who graduated from the various primary schools and who aspired for secondary education joined Indian Girls' High School and the Star of the Sea. The former is today's Coast Girls' High School. The Government Indian Girls' School was opened in 1934 and accommodated 350 girls. (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/3). In 1909 the White Sisters established the Star of the Sea complex constituting a convent, nursery, primary and secondary schools. Initially, it admitted European, Asian, Seychellois, Japanese, Chinese and Anglo-Indian children, but the majority were Roman Catholic Goans (KNA, DC/MSA/1/4; PC/Coast/2/1/84; Bagha, 1981:157). By 1952, the primary and secondary section of the school provided education for a mixed number of Asian Muslims, Arabs and Goans (KNA, DC/MSA/1/6).

Generally, the 1950s witnessed an increased pressure to provide secondary education for Asians. Just like for the Europeans, the government largely provided secondary education for Asians. In 1935, there were 5 secondary schools that prepared Asian pupils for Cambridge School Certificate (Sifuna, 1990:141). The government's role in the provision of Asian education is evident. On the advice of Dr. F.J. Harlow, the colonial technical education advisor, two technical high schools for Asians were started in Mombasa and Nairobi. By 1960, these schools had a total enrolment of 1,035 students preparing for school certificate and City and Guilds Examination (Anderson, 1970:73). To express the racial privileges the Asians enjoyed, by 1957, Asian pupils who failed to pass the secondary school selection test were provided with two years "Secondary Modern Course". Again, before this, in 1956, due to the recommendations of the Willoughby Committee for the establishment of a technical and commercial college, the

Royal Technical College, Nairobi was opened incorporating Gandhi Memorial Academy. This was provided merely for the Asian community to encourage the development of arts, science and commerce. Between 1957-58, 50 per cent of the student population at the Royal Technical College, Nairobi, was Asian. The same could be said of the Kenya Polytechnic opened in 1961. It had a large population of Asians (*ibid*, p.74)

2.3.4 Education of African Muslims

It has already been mentioned that the education of Africans remained largely in the hands of the missionaries. This was therefore the case for the education of African Muslims in Mombasa and elsewhere in Kenya during the colonial period. A discussion of the education of African Muslims in Mombasa and elsewhere in Kenya during the colonial period cannot be separated from the activities of Christian missionaries. Due to the vocational and the evangelical nature of the education that Africans received, they opposed missionary education. Western education however had some premiums for those who acquired it. Literacy was necessary to secure jobs as clerks, minor administrative assistants and messengers from the settlers. Missionaries also motivated Africans to seek education by giving the educated responsibilities and material benefits. Consequently, Africans developed some interest in Western education. The missionaries on their part took advantage and created a demand for education. Africans built "bush schools" or village schools around the mission centres, with teachers being provided by the missionaries. "Bush schools" were for catechising and very little secular teaching took place. In addition, the teachers received their training from the missionaries, some of whom lacked training in education. Therefore, the "bush schools" offered little or very elementary education and were classified as elementary schools (Anderson, 1970:16). Above the "bush schools" were the central schools that aimed at the completion of the primary school course. These schools provided education that could lead to a course in teacher training or admission into a secondary school. One could join the Native Industrial Training Depot at Kabete for a combined course of general or vocational training for a two- year course.

There were a number of missions that operated in Mombasa. These were the CMS, Roman Catholic, Salvation Army, SDA and the UFMF. Since missionary activities were tied to the provision of education, missionaries contributed enormously to the development of African education. This was through the establishment of primary and secondary schools in Mombasa and other districts of Coast Province during the colonial period (Bagha, 1981:134). Largely, the Catholic and the CMS missions fundamentally provided education of Africans in Mombasa. For example, the CMS ran the school at Buxton founded in 1898 and the one at Frere Town. By 1945, the Buxton School had 303 boys and 97 girls, and it had classes up to standard IV. The Holy Ghost Fathers run a mission school at Makupa. In 1936, this school had 200 pupils on its roll of whom half were girls. By the same year, the SDA run a sub-elementary school at Changanwe with 19 boys and 7 girls on the roll (KNA, DC/MSA/1/4). By 1945, the roll at Makupa School had gone up to 191 boys and 105 girls, while Frere Town had 100 pupils (KNA, DC/MSA/1/5).

Unlike the Asian and Arab Muslims, whose schools were established by the Government, African Muslims did not have a choice as they had to cope with mission schools. Due to the fear of conversion to Christianity, African Muslims generally shunned and opposed mission schools due to their evangelical nature. The missionary factor in African education continued throughout the colonial period. Indeed, as late as 1956, Mombasa DC writing to the Provincial Education Officer (PEO) expressed fears of the African Muslim society. He noted that a number of Muslim children did not go to school because the parents were afraid that their children would be subjected to Christian influence in both the mission schools and the District Education Board (DEB) schools (KNA, DC/MSA/2/8/3). DEBs were established by the Kenya Education Ordinance of 1934, and operated in various parts of the country. Their responsibilities included handling of scholarships, grants and fees, setting salary scales, managing the leasing of plots for development of schools and keeping a register of schools (Sifuna, 1990:129). DEB schools were expected to be impartial in that they were not supposed to subject pupils to any undesirable religious influences. African Muslims preferred DEB schools to mission schools as they (Muslims) could make alternative arrangements for their children to be taught religious instruction there.

The education facilities for Africans in Mombasa during the colonial period were entirely limited and inadequate. There was no government African school in Mombasa in 1945 and Muslims continued to rely on mission schools (Bagha; 1974:137, 1981:134). By 1951, the three main schools providing primary education for Africans (inclusive of Muslim Africans) were the Roman Catholic Mission School at Makupa, CMS Buxton and CMS School Kisauni. The three intermediate schools for Africans were DEB Tudor, CMS Buxton and Roman Catholic Mission School Makupa (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/81; PC/Coast/2/1/107). Elsewhere, the first African Muslim school was opened in Kisauni, with land and buildings donated by a benefactor. This was Khadija Muslim School opened in 1958 (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/107). The distribution of schools by race in Mombasa in 1958 clearly demonstrates that education facilities for Africans were grossly inadequate (see Table 7). Table 7 shows that Africans had the poorest educational facilities, if the type of schools is taken into consideration. This is because there were no government maintained schools but only aided and unaided schools. Further, the table shows that Africans had fewer schools compared to other races, considering that the African population was larger than that of other races.

Table 7: Number of Schools in Mombasa by Race in 1958

CATEGORY AND TYPE OF SCHOOL	EUROP.	ASIAN	ARAB	AFRICAN	TOTAL
GOVERNMENT					
Primary	1	8	2	-	11
Secondary	-	3	1	-	4
Teacher Training	-	1	1	-	2
TOTAL	1	12	4	-	17
AIDED					
Primary	-	8	1	11	20
Intermediate	-	-	-	3	3
Secondary	-	4	-	-	4
TOTAL	-	12	1	14	27
UNAIDED					
Primary	1	1	-	2	4
Secondary	1	2	-	-	3
TOTAL	2	3	-	2	7

Source: KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/107, Mombasa District Annual Report, 1958.

Inadequate facilities for the education of African Muslims in Mombasa reflected the situation elsewhere in the country where the missionaries controlled the education of Africans. The ultimate goal of missionary education was to make the African a better Christian. Basic education was therefore emphasized. Post-primary education was not encouraged since it could alienate the Africans by making them unable to relate with the rank and file (Sifuna, 1990). Generally, it was because of the inadequacies of the missionary schools that Africans started their schools through the independent school movement. In 1901, John Owalo founded the first independent school in Nyanza. Later, independent schools sprung up in other parts of the country especially in Central Province in the period between 1920 and 1940 (see Furley & Watson, 1978:174-175; Lugumba & Ssekamwa, 1973:10; Sifuna, 1990:119-120).

Besides the establishment of independent schools, Africans took another initiative in developing education. The initiative that was offered by the Local Native Councils (LNCs) became another step in redressing the imbalances of missionary education. The LNCs were established in 1924 virtually in every district, as a policy by the Colonial Government for separate development. They were mandated to vote tax levy for local projects and to set up schools outside the domain of the missionaries. The LNCs became the avenues through which proposals of the Africans on matters of education could be channelled to the government (Sifuna, 1990:135; Otiende, *et al*, 1992:51). Thus, as LNCs developed throughout the colony and protectorate of Kenya, education became one of their main concerns. With support from the LNCs, schools for Africans were established in Narok (1922), Kericho (1925), Kajiado (1926), Tambach (1928), Loitokitok (1929), Kakamega (1932), Kagumo (1934) and Pumwani, Nairobi in 1935 (Sifuna, 1990:135; Otiende, *et al*, 1992:135).

Before 1957, there was only one African secondary school in Mombasa and Coast as a whole. This was Coast Secondary School, Shimo-la-Tewa. This school was established on 1 October 1931 (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/15; EDAR, 1931). Its opening was a milestone and a significant development in the field of Western education for Africans (and Arabs) in Mombasa (Salim, 1973:52; KNA, EDAR, 1931). The school's curriculum was based on the Cambridge Local Examinations. Additional subjects such as bookkeeping and

typewriting were taught (Otiende, *et al*, 1992). The school offered boarding facilities to encourage Arab communities to take their boys to school (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/15). However, due to the insignificant numbers of Arabs, Swahili children were admitted (KNA, DC/MSA/1/4; EDAR, 1935). Coast Secondary School drew most of its students from Arab School, Mombasa whose buildings it inherited. With the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, the school buildings were requisitioned by the military for use as hospital. The pupils were shifted to the Arab School to which secondary classes were added. From 1946, the buildings were used to house the first government African boarding secondary school of Mombasa and Coast Province (KNA, EDAR, 1946; Bagha, 1981:169). Before independence in 1963, Tudor Secondary School founded in 1962, was the only other African secondary school established by the government in Mombasa (Bagha, 1981:235).

The consequences of limited and inadequate education facilities were that the education of African Muslims lagged behind that of other races. This situation was not unique to the African Muslims. A cursory view of African education during the colonial period reveals this scenario. Under the missionaries, the development of secondary education for Africans was generally slow. There were only 51 junior secondary schools for Africans in the whole country by 1947 (Sifuna, 1990:149). In the same year, there were two government and four missionary senior schools. Out of the four, only two, i.e. Alliance High School and Holy Ghost Mangu went up to school certificate level. The two schools prepared boys who joined Makerere College in Uganda. The first secondary school for Africans was Alliance High School. It was founded in 1926 by the alliance of Protestant churches: CMS, AIM, UFMM and Church of Scotland Mission (CSM). Maseno and Yala were opened as junior schools in 1938 and 1939 respectively. In 1939, there were four secondary schools for Africans: Alliance, Holy Ghost Mang'u, Maseno and Yala (*ibid*, p.132). This number increased to 11 in 1948 (C&PK, 1960:2; Sifuna, 1990:132).

The overall view of secondary education for Africans thus put into perspective, something should be said of the provision of girls' education among Africans. Generally, in the formative period of the development of Western education, missionaries and colonial administrators had little interest in the education of girls. They perceived girls'

education in line with the future roles of girls as mothers and wives. This implies that during much of the colonial period, African girls were provided with an education that was tailored towards their parenting roles. Girls were provided with basic literacy and numeracy skills. They largely learnt subjects that emphasized health, nutrition, cookery, needlework, childcare, etc. (Juma, 1994:176-177). This type of education could not prepare girls for prestigious and better-paid jobs and occupations that men had in the settler economy (Robertson, 1986:93).

From 1945 onwards, there was marked growth in girls' education. This was brought about by the need to fill various positions in the colonial wage economy with educated women. Nevertheless, female attendance in schools remained relatively low compared to that of males. Prior to independence, girls formed about 25 per cent of school-going African children (Juma, 1994:178). This shows the education of African girls during the colonial period was under developed. The overall school attendance of African children as shown in table 8 attests to the under representation of girls in the education system.

Table 8: Female and Male Attendance in Schools in 1953

Primary	1 Years	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years
Male	71,229	50,822	41,694	39,127
Female	28,279	18,223	12,934	10,115
Intermediate	5 Years	6 Years	7 Years	8 Years
Male	20,134	14,152	8,263	5,440
Female	4,629	2,814	1,760	955
Secondary	9 Years	10 Years	11 Years	12 Years
Male	2,072	946	398	298
Female	347	108	25	11
Post Secondary	13 Years			14 Years
Male	31			18
Female	-			1

Source: Shepherd, N.E 1955. *African Women in Kenya*. Nairobi, Department of Community and Rehabilitation (Mimeograph), cited in Juma, 1994:178.

Despite the under representation of African girls in the schooling system, it is noteworthy to mention a few names which crusaded for the education of girls during the colonial period. It was through the efforts of some committed women missionaries that some schools for girls were started. Cases in point are the works of Marion Stevenson at Tumutumu, Miss Appleton at Butere CMS station, Miss Moller at Ng'iyia and Ms. Mary

Bruce, a one time headmistress of Alliance Girls' High School. These were some of the female missionaries who concentrated in providing education to girls. Marion Stevenson started work at Tumu Tumu in Nyeri in 1912. By 1926, she had developed a central school with eleven out-stations and sixty out-schools (Anderson, 1970: 27).

Missionaries did little, if any, regarding the education of African Muslim girls. A case in point to illustrate the situation of Muslim girls was Mvita African School, a non-denominational school opened in 1953. This was a mixed school catering for Muslims and non-Muslims. With a student enrolment of 253 pupils, 105 were Muslims, out of which 23 were girls. There were 148 non-Muslim pupils, out of which 29 were girls (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/90). Education of African Muslim girls just like that of their Arab counterparts was largely underdeveloped. Mombasa District annual report of 1958 shows that there were 2,615 boys in various primary schools compared with 748 girls (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/107). The report however does not offer any figures for enrolment in secondary schools. Unlike boys' education that benefited from the few, albeit inadequate facilities, the government and the missionaries, did not start a secondary school for Muslim (African) girls in Mombasa District within the period under discussion. Hence girls' access to secondary school education was greatly hampered by lack of facilities (schools).

The inadequate education facilities had another implication for the development of education for African Muslim girls in Mombasa and other districts in Coast Province. This was the dropping out of school by African Muslim girls at puberty due to lack of, or shortage of girls' schools. This could partly explain why their numbers were fewer in secondary schools. The shortage of single sex schools continued to plague girls' access to education at all levels, sub-standard, primary, intermediate and secondary. This was an issue of concern for African Muslim leaders. In the DEB minutes for Mombasa and Kwale of 28 April 1960, the Director of Education explained this concern:

The Muslim member, supported by other African members were anxious that girls should receive education in special schools. I am personally of the opinion that the demand for separate schools arises out of the fact that Asian and Arab children are segregated into sexes so far as primary and intermediate schools are concerned and they see no reason why the African should also not receive the same facilities (KNA, DC/MSA/2/8/8, ED. 3/4).

To conclude this section, we can observe that the overall development of education in Mombasa in the colonial period favoured boys more than girls. This is the picture that is discerned not only for the education of African Muslims but also for their Arab and Asian counterparts. The number and types of schools both secondary and primary, and the enrollments, clearly show that the secondary education of Muslim girls was underdeveloped.

2.4 Development of Formal Western Education in Kwale District to 1963

During the colonial period, as of today, the Adigo and Duruma mainly inhabited Kwale District. The Duruma inhabited the interior of the district while the Adigo inhabited the coastal strip. The latter were primarily Muslims as aptly described by the DC for Kwale in 1926 and again in 1927: “the Wadigo are for the most part Mohammedans (sic) ... majority living on the coast and gravitate toward Islam” (KNA, DC/KWL/1/12; DC/KWL/1/13). Sperling (1993:198) notes that by the end of the nineteenth century, majority of the Adigo had been Islamicized. By the late eighties, unofficial statistics considered the community to have been over 90 per cent Muslim (Wamahiu, 1988:335).

The spread of Islam among the Adigo went hand in hand with the establishment of *vyuo*. The provision of *vyuo* commensurated with the increasing population of the Adigo Muslims. The first *chuo* was opened at Tiwi in 1890s and by 1910, there were many *vyuo* in Digoland that provided instruction in Islamic religion (Sperling, 1993:201). Before the establishment of Qur’anic schools among the Adigo, some families sent their children to Mombasa and other coastal towns for Qur’anic instruction. Otherwise the pupils could visit teachers in those towns for basic literacy in Islamic religion (*ibid.*, p.201). It should however be noted that during the early days of the development of Islamic education among the Adigo, the *vyuo* were dominated by males as few girls attended. Invariably, females learnt rudiments of Islamic learning such as prayers through their husbands or male relatives (Wamahiu, 1988:188-190).

Christian missionaries penetrated Kwale District, and like in the rest of the country, the provision of education accompanied evangelisation. The main mission stations that operated in the district were UFMF, CMS and the Roman Catholic. These missions

established various village or "bush schools". The UMFMM whose basis was at Mazeras founded a school at Ribe in around 1864. Later in 1894, Mazeras Central School was started (Nthamburi, 1982:91). The two schools ranked as some of the earliest schools in Kwale District. In later years, the Methodist mission founded several bush schools at Bofu, Pemba, Nunguni and Mgandini. The CMS ran two schools at Golini and Ngonzini while the Roman Catholics operated two schools at Samburu Location (KNA, DC/KWL/1/10; PC/Coast/2/10/23; EDAR, 1927,1928). Other early schools in the district were established at Gasi and Vanga in July 1920. At Gasi the attendance was good and at Vanga it was better until the most unfortunate accident when the schoolmaster accidentally killed the *liwali's* only son and the school was closed. It was re-opened later in late 1920s, with poor attendance (KNA, DC/KWL/1/5).

In 1921, Coast Technical School - Waa, was opened as a school for all African peoples of the Coast Province. The establishment of this school was in line with the policies of the Colonial Government to establish industrial and vocational schools to equip Africans with training for trade and crafts (Mambo, 1980:119f). The initial response of the Adigo and Duruma to Western education could be described as negative. The lethargy could be seen in the way the Adigo responded to the opening of the school at Waa and the Duruma's response to the mission schools of UFMFM as observed in the annual report of 1921:

It was hoped that the opening of the Coast Technical School would prove an attraction, and the local tribes would evince some desire for education. On the contrary, it was only for constant exhortation that the Wadigo could be induced to send their children at all and the beginning of each new term invariably finds the gaps in the rank of the local pupils. This is more regrettable when one considers the large number of other tribes who offer themselves for instruction with utmost eagerness... the same irregularity of attendance is noted amongst the Waduruma at the schools of the United Methodist Mission (KNA, DC/KWL/1/7).

The Adigo did not express any interest in Waa School when it was opened. This really discouraged the head teacher who could have easily filled the school with Luo and Kikuyu pupils from Mombasa who were eager to be admitted to the school. However, he wanted to give the local people an opportunity. The negative response of the Adigo meant that when the school opened its doors, it had a heavy preponderance of the same upcountry pupils, since the Adigo could muster only a few boys. This was only possible

after much considerable pressure was employed and constant reiteration of the benefits the Adigo could reap from the school (KNA, DC/KWL/1/7).

The negative response of the Adigo to Western education was not far-fetched. The same was happening in Mombasa where Muslims responded negatively to missionary education. The fear of religious instruction and its concomitant conversion to Christianity made the Muslim Adigo to shun missionary schools. Due to these fears, there was irregular attendance of missionary schools (KNA, DC/KWL/1/16). There was a general feeling among the colonial administrators that once these fears were dispelled, there could be a possibility of a positive response (KNA, DC/KWL/1/8). It is the fear of religious instruction in mission schools that made the Adigo to demand for Qur'anic instruction. Subsequently, the introduction of Qur'anic instruction in the curriculum of some of these schools popularised Western education. For example, at Vanga School, Qur'anic instruction led to an increase in the school attendance (KNA, DC/KWL/1/14).

The increased popularity of Western education that was prompted by the introduction of Qur'anic instruction in schools proves that the Adigo inclined more towards Islamic education. Qur'anic instruction in school could not satisfy the increased demand for Islamic education in the period between 1930 and 1940. This demand led to an increase of Qur'an schools that were established in virtually all villages (Sperling, 1993:203). Elsewhere, at the Coastal Technical School Waa, by 1923, the Adigo's suspicions about schooling began to wane and the local populace began to appreciate the school more and more. By 1931, a large number of Adigo children were admitted to the school and this in itself was a proof that: "the Adigo were not averse to education" (KNA, DC/KWL/1/9).

In spite of these positive developments, opposition to Western education in Kwale District continued unabated especially among the Duruma and to a greater extent the Adigo. By 1937, very little progress was being made among the Duruma. Lack of attendance in schools in Duruma area discouraged the Holy Ghost Mission and the SDA who wanted to open schools (KNA, DC/KWL/1/23). Reporting about this scenario in 1938, the Kwale DC noted: "The proportion of children attending schools is lamentable and the number of those who are irregular in their attendance most depressing" (KNA, DC/KWL/1/24).

In 1935, Coast Technical School Waa was closed down due to economic reasons. The school never fulfilled the expectations for which it was founded. It could not meet the challenge of providing training for lucrative trades and crafts. It was taken over by the Holy Ghost Fathers for five years with a promise of grants-in-aid from the government, of Sterling Pounds 500 per month (KNA, DC/KWL/1/21). Upon the mission's take-over, the school changed its name to St. George's School Waa, with an agricultural bias (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/35). Five years later in 1940, an incident took place that underlined the long-standing apprehension of Muslims over missionary education:

Twenty-six of the local boys attending St. George's School Waa ran away in June as a result of agitation caused by one or two who stated that Mohammadan pupils were required to eat out of cooking pots in which pork had been prepared. The majority returned eventually but their action interfered considerably with progress of education (KNA, DC/KWL/1/26).

In the meantime, other schools were founded in Kwale District. In 1928, there were three government schools. These were Coast Technical School Waa, Kwale School and Vanga School. Kwale School was opened in 1925 as a feeder school for Waa (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/29; PC/Coast/2/1/32). There were also several village schools in Kwale, Kinango, Vanga and Msambweni, and others ran by the missions among the Duruma. All these schools provided elementary education for boys (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/23). For a long time, Coast Technical School was the only school in the district that provided primary education. In 1948, by which time it had changed its name to St. George's School Waa, it offered a junior secondary school education, besides training in carpentry and masonry. At the end of 1949, it was closed down and shifted to Mwabaya Nyundo in Kilifi District. This means that there was no secondary school in Kwale District in 1950. The transfer of St. George's School Waa was partly attributed to the Digo's apathy to missionary education. In the year the school was shifted, the DC had this to say: "it is a struggle to keep the lamp of education alight at all in Kwale District, and it will be many years before there can be any question of mass education and mass literacy" (KNA, DC/KWL/1/26).

The response of the Adigo to missionary education is attributed to the evangelical nature of that education. As a result, the missionary activities were exclusively confined to the Duruma in the interior. Even there, the establishment of schools by the Roman Catholics,

Methodists and the CMS was an unpopular venture as the response of the Duruma was poor. The Inspector of Schools report of the UFM schools (1929 - 42) said this regarding the Duruma: "... the people have shown complete indifference to education and ignored the facilities offered by the mission ... the Waduruma appear to be backward people with little desire for progress" (KNA, PC/Coast/2/10/23).

This stereotypical statement expresses the frustration of the colonial administrators who entrusted the missionaries with the provision of education to Africans. The missionaries, in this regard, did not respect the religious heritage of the Duruma.

The first intermediate schools for classes from standards V and VI were opened in 1952 at Kwale School and Mazeras. In 1956, Waa Intermediate School was opened and this added the number of intermediate schools in the district to three (KNA, DC/KWL/1/27). Meanwhile, there was no secondary school in the district in spite of the growing demand for one (KNA, DC/KWL/1/26). Boys who sought secondary education had either to attend Kilifi Secondary School or Shimo-la-Tewa Secondary School (KNA, DC/1/27). Lack of secondary school in Kwale District was a true reflection of the colonial educational policies where limited educational facilities were offered to Africans. Budgetary allocations for education were heavily weighed against Africans in favour of Europeans and to a lesser extent the Asians.

2.4.1 Development of Girls' Education in Kwale District to 1963

Formal Western education for girls in Kwale District did not develop at the same pace as that of boys. The general negative attitude that met the inception of missionary education affected girls as well as boys. Girls' education was initially considered susceptible to alienate girls from their culture and society, and inculcate in them a sexual immorality. Schooling was seen as creating role conflict that could lead to wrong socialization of girls (Wamahiu, 1988:210).

The first signs of girls' education in Kwale District appeared in 1931. During this period, girls from the Duruma community were offered elementary education. In the eight village schools with an enrolment of 339 pupils, a third of the student population was girls. This

was an encouraging development in a community that seemed to be generally opposed to missionary education (KNA, DC/KWL/1/17). In 1939, two girls were attending Waa Village School and five were attending Vanga School (KNA, DC/KWL/1/25). Women were also attending classes where they were being taught elementary hygiene, care of infants and sewing by the wife of a community worker (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/50).

In the 1940s however, the education of girls was still at a low ebb. There was not much improvement on the gains of the 1930s. This is captured by the annual report of 1947:

There was no improvement in the number of girls attending school. One reason put forward why more (girls) do not attend is the extreme youth of some of the teachers, resulting in parental fear that the girls will be interfered with (KNA, DC/KWL/1/26).

Between 1940 and 1953, only a handful of girls attended primary school in the district.

The meagre number of girls in school in 1953 made the DC to comment:

The Adigo and the Duruma are still reluctant in sending their girls to school and the number of girls attending schools from this district is therefore very small. There is no girls' school in the district, and I do not think there will be need of one for some time (KNA, DC/KWL/1/27).

These observations reflected official government policy that was not in favour of educating girls or even starting a girls' school. Further evidence to this is seen in the Kwale African District Council meetings: "although it was agreed that education of both boys and girls was desirable, the difficulties from their point of view outweighed the advantages" (cited, Wamahiu, 1988:209).

The reasons that worked against sending Adigo children to missionary schools hindered the education of girls. Like in the rest of the country where the education of Africans was under the missions' domain, education in Kwale District was mainly under the missionaries. Together with the fact that the Adigo opposed missionary education, the government did little to establish schools outside the domain of the missionaries. This could be interpreted as conspiracy between the government and the missionaries.

The reluctance of Adigo to send girls to school was due to a number of reasons. These include lack of separate facilities for girls in mixed schools and the evangelical nature of missionary education. For example, there were calls for a girls' secondary school, but the government was indifferent towards establishing such a school. The pretext was that a

secondary school for girls was not urgent considering the few numbers of girls who attended primary schools (KNA, DC/KWL/1/27).

Although, there was an overall demand for education in the second half of the 1950s, this demand was taking a very slow pace. The benefits of education were stressed in the chief's *barazas* (meetings) in order for the parents to take their children to school and to retain them. This was because, 75 per cent of all children who completed their first year of schooling did not continue in subsequent years. At the end of 1957, a campaign was launched to have more girls in school. A target of five girls for each small school and ten girls for each large school was set for 1958. These efforts did not bear fruits owing to the reasons discussed above. In 1958, four girls from Kwale were admitted at Ribe Girls in Kilifi District for secondary education, since there were no secondary or intermediate schools in Kwale District. These girls formed a part of the 181 successful candidates who sat for the Common Entrance Examinations in 1957 (Wamahiu, 1988:211). By 1959, plans were afoot to begin a girls' intermediate boarding school (KNA, DC/KWL/1/27).

To conclude this section, it is noteworthy that the history of Western education in Kwale District in the colonial period shows clearly that the education of girls terribly lagged behind that of the boys. While, for example, there were four intermediate schools for boys in 1958 that absorbed 173 boys, no such a school existed for girls. Even the earlier plans to establish a boarding school for girls were unsuccessful (KNA, DC/KWL/1/27). Available data do not give the breakdown of the girls who were enrolled in schools, that is, whether they were Muslim Adigo or Duruma, but it is obvious that opportunities for girls were generally limited. Thus, as we enter the sixties, on the eve of independence, there were no secondary schools for boys and girls in Kwale District.

2.5 A Survey of the Development of Secondary School Education in Kenya from 1963

At independence in 1963, the racial pattern of education in Kenya ended. Pupils from all races could join schools of their choice so long as they were qualified (RoK, 1964:5; KNA, DC/MSA/2/8/11). This was in the spirit of racial harmony and integration that was recommended by the Kenya Education Commission Report of 1964 (herein referred to as **Ominde Report**). Consequently, all schools opened their doors to children of all races.

Former European and Asian schools whose names carried the colonial racial baggage were changed. In Mombasa for example, Arab Secondary School became Khamis Secondary School after its benefactor Khamis bin Juma (KNA, DC/MSA/2/8/11). Indian Girls' School Mombasa, became Coast Girls' School; Goan High School became Sacred Heart. Elsewhere in Nairobi, the exclusive European schools such as Duke of York became Lenana High School, while Prince of Wales became Nairobi School. The spirit of integration witnessed more and more Africans joining the former European and Asian schools some of which became high cost schools at independence. By 1966, 30 per cent of the enrolment in these schools was African and in 1969, the percentage of Africans had risen to 65 per cent (Otiende, *et al*, 1992: 89).

The end of racial segregated education system at independence ushered a new classification of schools. There were three categories of schools: maintained, assisted and unaided (Kinyanjui, 1988). Each of these categories of schools had a different fund or resource allocation from the government or none at all. The maintained schools were highly subsidized by the government. They were the best schools in the country. Assisted schools were former *harambee* schools that were later taken over by the government and assisted in the procurement of books and teachers, and the provision of some facilities like laboratories. These schools were of average quality and ranked second to maintained schools.

Unaided schools were either the self-help *harambee* (community initiated) schools or the private schools. They received no assistance from the government regarding teachers or other funds. *Harambee* schools were founded with the hope that the Government would ultimately take them over and start offering them some assistance. These schools charged high fees, while their physical facilities like classrooms, laboratories, library and learning materials were largely wanting. As a result, these schools offered poor quality education and owing to their inadequate facilities and untrained teachers. The students performed poorly in national examinations as compared to those in the maintained and assisted schools (*ibid*, pp.12-13). For example, in 1970, the percentage of students from maintained schools who, passed examinations increased by 65 per cent whereas the percentage of passes from the *harambee* schools dropped to 30 per cent (Maleche, 1975:7).

On the other hand, there were private schools whose main motive for existence was profit. Some private schools provided excellent education by offering many subjects and extra-curricular activities, with good learning and living conditions. Others limited their operations by teaching the basic minimum subjects, thus avoiding offering science subjects because of the expensive overhead costs such subjects entailed (Kinyanjui, 1988).

To remove the apparent inequities and inequalities between secondary schools, the classification of schools into maintained, assisted, and unaided was removed. This came into effect with the introduction of the 8-4-4 system of education in 1984. Presently, schools are classified as either "public" or "private". In principle, the government provides teachers and other financial support to all public schools on an equal footing. Further, public schools are categorized as national, provincial and district. This categorization is dovetailed with the quota system in education. Accordingly, the eighteen national schools in the country admit about 1,500 students from all over the country. They also have a provincial stream for admitting students from within the province. Provincial schools admit 85 per cent of their students from within their host districts, and 15 per cent from other districts within the province. District schools on the other hand draw their students entirely from their host districts.

On the eve of independence, the Kenya African National Union (KANU) appointed **Griffith's Report** of 1962 recommended prioritising the development of secondary education high level manpower among Africans (*ibid*, p.77). Similarly, the 1962 Hunter Report, had recommended developing secondary education to accommodate primary school graduates and to produce manpower required in various professions in the civil service, agriculture, industry, commerce and teaching. The **Ominde Report** equally recommended the expansion of secondary education, with due regard to the anticipated national demands for skilled and trained manpower.

From 1963, onwards there was increased popular demand for secondary education. To consider this demand, the government embarked on massive expansion of secondary education from 1964 onwards. In 1965, 57 new Form I places were created by the Ministry of Education in maintained schools and 100 more in *harambee* schools that were

started by local communities. The phenomenal growth in secondary education in the four-year period from 1964 -1968 illustrates the government's commitment to the expansion of secondary education. Within this period, the number of schools increased by 51 per cent and that of Form I places by 41 per cent (RoK, 1965:2). In numerical terms, Form I intake doubled from 8,956 to 15,169 (Sifuna, 1990:165). The growth and expansion of secondary education within the five-year period from 1966 - 1970 are expressed in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Growth of Secondary School Education, 1966-1970

YEAR	AIDED SCHOOLS		UNAIDED SCHOOLS		TOTAL	
	SCHOOLS	PUPILS	SCHOOLS	PUPILS	SCHOOLS	PUPILS
1966	199	41,227	266	21,966	400	63,193
1967	206	49,488	366	39,291	542	88,779
1968	232	56,546	369	44,815	601	101,361
1969	263	65,644	431	49,602	694	115,246
1970	331	74,561	498	52,294	783	126,855

Source: RoK, Ministry of Education, Annual Report 1970:5

The importance the government attached to the expansion of secondary education is reflected in the expenditure for education in the 1st Development Plan Period, 1966-1970. During this period, secondary education took the most development expenditure, that is, Kenya Pounds 5,127,000, which was almost 58 per cent of the total education expenditure of Kenya Pounds 8,841,000 (*ibid*, p.165). The government's emphasis on secondary education is equally evident in the 2nd Development Plan Period 1970-74. Within this period, the secondary education expenditure took 43 per cent of the total education budget. Equally, much attention was paid to the expansion of forms V and VI. This expansion was such that, within the ten-year period, from 1964 - 1974, the enrolment in these classes increased by nearly 68 per cent (*ibid*, p. 165).

The increased demand for secondary education meant that the government could not meet all the demands. In the education sector, to fill that void, a wave of *harambee* secondary schools were established through out the country by means of self-help. *Harambee* was independent Kenya's clarion call for people to pool their resources for rapid socio-economic development. Nowhere else was this spirit of *harambee* manifested better than in the development of secondary schools. *Harambee* schools offered an answer to the insatiable quest for secondary education that could not be fulfilled by the government. These schools absorbed many primary school-leavers who could not secure places in the limited Government schools. To this end, 50 and 30 *harambee* secondary schools were established in 1964 and 1965 respectively (Otiende, *et al*, 1992:93). With time, the number of *harambee* secondary schools outstripped government schools. For example, there were 266 *harambee* secondary schools compared to 199 government secondary schools in 1966. This figure went up to 366 *harambee* secondary schools against 206 government secondary schools in 1967. Similarly, in 1970 there were 498 *harambee* secondary schools against 331 government secondary schools (RoK, 1970:5; Otiende, *et al*, 1992:93). In the same year, *harambee* schools accounted for 62 per cent of the total number of secondary schools and for 41 per cent of all students (Maleche, 1975:4). The rapid expansion of *harambee* secondary schools in the five-year period from 1966 to 1970 is also illustrated in Table 9. *Harambee* schools are presented in the table as unaided schools.

The spirit of *harambee* was therefore contributing more to the expansion of secondary education than the government in the first two decades after independence. For example in 1971, there were 478 *harambee* secondary schools out of a total of 809 schools; and in 1979 they numbered 1,319 out of 1,737. As a result of the *harambee* spirit, the growth of secondary schools rose by 115 per cent between 1971 and 1979 (Bogonko, 1992:83). It is true to say that without *harambee* schools very few people could have had the opportunity of acquiring secondary school education. This was in spite of their low quality education as earlier observed.

The colonial education policies had a long-lasting impact on the development of secondary education for Muslim girls not only in Mombasa but also in other districts in Coast Province such as Kwale. At independence, with the exception of North-Eastern

Province, Coast Province inherited fewer schools than other areas of the country. Table 10 there were fewer schools in Coast Province in 1967. There were 15 maintained, 3 assisted and 16 unaided schools in Coast Province (RoK, 1967:45). The province had a total of 34 schools compared with Central Province which had 134; Eastern 75, Nairobi 61; Nyanza 81, Rift Valley 75 and Western 81.

Fewer secondary schools in Coast Province implied fewer enrolments for both boys and girls in all types of secondary schools. The few *harambee* secondary schools in the province perhaps indicate that the spirit of self-help that led to the development of these schools in other parts of the country was not as intense in Coast Province as it was in other provinces. *Harambee* schools, as noted before, were important as they filled an educational vacuum since the government could not provide all the required needs for secondary education. We can therefore argue that underdevelopment of *harambee* school movement during the first years of independence was a great drawback to the development of secondary school education in Coast Province. This is in view of the role the *harambee* schools played in the development of education in Kenya. This situation affected the development of secondary education for girls.

In spite of the expansion in secondary education, it may be argued that girls' secondary education was not developing concurrently with that of boys'. This was mainly because, at independence, the education of girls emerged from a depressed situation that was a product of the colonial legacy. The enrolment of African girls in secondary schools in 1965 as illustrated in Table 11 shows how girls were outnumbered by boys at all levels of the secondary school education. The table further shows that the number of girls in secondary schools tended to decrease upwards as they climbed the educational ladder. This means girls were mainly confined to the lower rungs of secondary school education.

Table 10: Number of Secondary Schools by Category, 1967

Province	Maintained	Assisted	Unaided	Total
Central	41	3	90	134
Coast	15	3	16	34
Eastern	25	-	50	75
Nairobi	16	13	32	61
N. Eastern	1	-	-	1
Nyanza	29	-	52	81
R. Valley	30	1	44	75
Western	29	-	52	81
TOTAL	186	20	336	54

Source: Extracts, KNA, RoK Ministry of Education Annual Report, 1967

The structural organization of secondary schools also tended to disadvantage girl's access to secondary school education. In the past, there were more aided schools for boys than were for girls. For example in 1968, there were 143 aided secondary schools for boys against 61 for girls, while 28 were mixed. In 1977, the number of boys' schools rose to 200, against 107 for girls, while 65 were mixed (RoK, 1978:27; Eshiwani, 1985b:17; Riria-Ouko, 1989:27). This trend continued into the 1980s when the classification of schools into maintained, assisted and aided was scrapped. The structural organization of secondary schools favoured boys than girls because Aided schools provided quality education at a lower cost than unaided (Eshiwani, 1985b:17). In the same vein, more girls than boys attended boarding secondary schools. In 1977, 79 per cent of all girls' schools were boarding compared to 43 per cent of the boys'. The high percentage of boarding schools limited girls' access to secondary school education. This is because, boarding secondary schools are more expensive than day schools, hence fewer girls than boys could afford to go to school (RoK, 1978:27; Eshiwani, 1985b:17; Riria-Ouko, 1989:27). Nonetheless, the disadvantages of boarding schools should not in any way override their advantages in promoting girls' education. This is the case where distance to school is an issue of concern. Boarding schools in this regard are seen as important in allaying the

parents' fears for their daughters' security to and from school. This is discussed in Chapter Five.

Table 11: Secondary School Enrolment 1965: Africans and Non-Africans

CLASS	AFRICANS			NON-AFRICANS			GRAND TOTAL
	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	
Form 1	11,917	3,295	15,212	1,943	1,823	3,776	18,978
Form 2	7,120	1,832	8,952	1,841	1,748	3,584	12,536
Form 3	3,884	702	4,586	1,725	1,449	3,174	7,760
Form 4	3,049	715	3,764	1,696	1,325	3,021	6,785
Form 5	503	79	582	394	154	548	1,130
Form 6	269	35	304	308	109	417	721
TOTAL	26,742	6,658	33,400	7,907	6,603	14,510	47,910

Source: RoK, Ministry of Education, Annual Summary 1965:25

Although the education of girls was generally depressed at independence, from 1963 onwards, secondary education for girls developed rapidly. The increased enrolment and representation of girls in secondary school in Forms I to IV, though it had not surpassed that of boys, was due to the increasing enrolment of girls in unaided, largely *harambee* secondary schools. In 1973, 53 per cent of all girls attended *harambee* secondary schools. This proportion constituted 17 per cent of all students enrolled in secondary schools. This was a marked growth considering that in 1968, 39 per cent of girls attended *harambee* schools, constituting 10 per cent of all students in that year (Krystall, 1976:4).

Girls' enrolment in secondary schools has increased tremendously since 1963 to-date. This is an increase of almost 150 per cent, from 37,528 students in 1970 to 154,847 students in 1979 (Eshiwani, 1985b:19). In 1963, girls constituted 32 per cent of secondary school enrolment. This went up to 33 per cent and 40 per cent in 1973 and 1977 respectively (Eshiwani, 1985b: 19). The rapid growth in girls' enrolment in secondary schools from 1963 to 1986 is illustrated in Table 12. The growth rate was arrived at, by calculating the percentage increase (differences) in enrolments within a given period (year), over the total, multiplied by a hundred.

Between 1963 and 1967, the annual growth rate for girls' enrolment in Form 1 was 35.4 per cent as compared with 26.7 per cent for boys. This trend continued in the second half of sixties and early seventies. In 1968 and 1972, the annual growth rate of girls' enrolment was 12 per cent compared to 7 per cent for boys (Kinyanjui, 1975a:24). This impressive growth in enrolment in the seventies, and to a larger extent in the early 1980s is partly attributed to the large number of girls who attended unaided schools.

Table 12: Female Enrolment in Secondary Schools, 1963-1986

Year	Boys Appr.	Girls	Total Appr.	% Girls (Fm. 1-4)	% Girls (Fm. 5-6)
1963	20,600	9,567	30,100	32	23
1964	25,200	10,710	35,900	30	23
1965	34,700	13,256	48,000	28	20
1966	46,800	16,391	63,200	26	20
1967	66,400	22,387	88,800	25	21
1968	75,200	26,159	101,400	26	21
1969	83,100	32,160	115,200	28	22
1970	89,300	37,526	126,900	30	22
1971	98,000	42,743	140,700	31	23
1972	111,300	50,615	161,900	32	24
1973	117,200	57,543	174,800	33	24
1974	128,700	67,111	195,800	35	25
1975	138,000	81,259	217,400	36	26
1976	-	103,665	280,388	37	28
1977	-	122,756	320,310	38	27
1978	-	144,723	361,622	40	28
1979	-	154,847	384,389	39	27
1980	-	169,401	407,322	42	-
1981	-	167,925	410,550	41	-
1982	-	177,685	429,225	41	-
1983	-	199,550	493,710	40	-
1984	-	214,596	510,943	42	-
1985	-	167,174	437,207*	38	-
1986	-	189,394	458,712*	42	-

*There was no Form 1 classes in 1985 and no Form 2 classes in 1986 owing to the introduction of the 8-4-4 system of education in 1984

Sources: RoK National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (NCEOP) 1976a:117; Eshiwani, 1985b:11; Bogonko, 1992:85.

Between 1980 and 1986, the percentage of girls in secondary schools ranged between 38 per cent, to 42 per cent. The growth in enrolment of girls' in secondary schools continued in the 1990s. The percentage of girls in secondary schools during this period is thus illustrated in Table 13: 42.8 per cent in 1990; 43.6 per cent in 1991; 43.8 per cent in 1992; 44.4 per cent in 1993 and 45.7 per cent in 1994. The enrolment of girls in secondary schools rose by 4.1 per cent from 632,388 in 1995 to 658,253 in 1996, a

percentage of 46.4 (RoK, 1997:198). Girls' enrolment rose, from 46.7 per cent in 1998 to 47.2 per cent in 1999. This is despite the marked decline of the overall student enrolment by 8.8 per cent, from 700,538 students in 1998 to 638,509 in 1999 (RoK, 2000:37). Currently, the enrolment of girls in secondary schools stands 47.2 per cent. This shows that at the national level, enrolment of girls in secondary schools has almost reached parity with that of boys.

Despite the near gender parity, regional disparities exist in the provision of girls' education. There is a strong correlation between socio-economic development and girls' access to secondary school education. As pointed out in chapter one, areas with high economic potential such as rich agricultural production, employment opportunities, and industries, have a higher proportion of girls in both primary and secondary schools, than the less economically endowed districts (Kinyanjui, 1975a; Krystall, 1976; Eshiwani, 1985b; Riria-Ouko, 1989; GoK & UNICEF, 1992; **Daily Nation**, 23/4/94, p.14). Areas with higher proportion of girls in secondary schools include Nairobi, Central Province, parts of Eastern Province like the Meru districts, and parts of the Rift Valley and Western provinces. On the other hand, semi-arid and arid areas such as North-Eastern and some parts of the Rift Valley and Coast provinces have relatively lower number of girls in secondary schools. Within the context of this study, Mombasa is an economically high potential area, while Kwale is an agricultural marginal district. Bearing that in mind, we now examine the development of Muslim girls' secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts from 1963 onwards.

Table 13: Enrolment in Secondary Schools by Form and Sex, 1990-1999

1990	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Per cent%	Total	Grand
Male	96,079	91,482	83,334	82,800	57.18	353,695	Total
Female	74,992	69,615	60,172	59,987	42.8	264,766	618,461
1991							
Male	95,511	89,181	82,749	78,347	56.3	345,788	614,161
Female	76,126	70,651	64,139	57,457	43.6	268,373	
1992							
Male	97,267	91,209	84,429	80,467	56.2	353,372	629,062
Female	78,081	72,774	66,189	58,646	43.8	275,690	
1993							
Male	81,543	73,125	72,647	67,881	55.6	295,196	531,342
Female	69,560	61,158	55,467	49,961	44.4	236,146	
1994							
Male	90,774	87,993	79,067	78,605	54.3	336,439	619,839
Female	78,140	76,549	66,328	62,383	45.7	283,400	
1995							
Male	96,360	88,737	82,623	74,087	54.05	341,807	290,581
Female	83,650	75,961	69,876	61,876	45.9	290,581	
1996							
Male	97,394	93,526	83,902	78,104	53.6	352,926	658,253
Female	85,917	81,444	71,924	66,042	46.4	305,327	
1997							
Male	98,487	95,539	89,365	80,457	52.9	363,848	687,473
Female	88,614	86,856	79,496	68,659	47.07	323,625	
1998							
Male	102,449	98,066	90,293	82,632	53.3	373,440	700,538
Female	92,813	86,922	77,781	69,492	46.7	327,098	
1999							
Male	86,318	92,072	83,032	75,938	52.8	337,360	638,509
Female	80,434	83,392	72,811	64,512	47.2	301,149	

Source: RoK, Economic Surveys, 1995:181; 1997:198; 2000:37.

2.6 Development of Muslim Girls' Secondary School Education in Mombasa District from 1963

The development of Muslim girls' secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts cannot be discussed in isolation from the general development of education in the two districts. This is because statistics on enrolment are categorized on gender and not otherwise. Hence to discuss Muslim girls' education, we need first to analyse the statistics that dwell on enrolments of boys and girls in various schools in Mombasa and Kwale districts.

As an urban district, Mombasa has always had more private schools than government or *harambee* schools. The history of Western education in Mombasa, does not show the existence of *harambee* secondary schools. On the contrary, private secondary schools proliferated in the '70s and the '80s and fulfilled an educational need that was served elsewhere in the country by *harambee* secondary schools. The development of private schools went hand in hand with that of government schools, but the former surpassed the latter. Table 14 shows that there were 22 secondary schools in Mombasa in 1970. These could be broken down as follows: 6 maintained schools catering for 2,836 boys and 763 girls; 3 assisted schools with 593 boys and 585 girls, and finally, 13 private schools with an enrolment of 1,165 girls against 2,836 boys. The table further shows that there were more private schools than either maintained or assisted schools.

The total number of girls in secondary schools in 1970 was 2,513 against 5,744 boys (RoK, 1970:56). That is, about 30 per cent of all secondary school students, were girls. Therefore, the number of secondary schools favoured boys than girls. In all categories of schools girls, were outnumbered by boys, save in the assisted category, where their number seems to have achieved parity with that of boys. Under maintained schools, only Coast Girls offered facilities for girls. Otherwise, most girls attended private secondary schools. This situation could not augur well for the development of girls' education. This is because, private schools were generally more expensive than maintained or assisted schools. As such, not many parents could afford to educate their daughters in these schools. Table 14 further shows that the number of girls in schools decreased as they

went up the educational ladder, with the higher rungs recording decreasing number of girls. This shows that by the time a given cohort reached Form IV, many girls in the cohort had been lost from the education system and very few continued with education past Form IV.

Despite the imbalances in the provision of education, the government did not establish more schools for girls. The picture of a depressed situation in girls' education was not unique to Mombasa District. This situation as illustrated elsewhere, (*vide supra*), was reproduced in the whole country where the structural organization of secondary schools tended to favour boys than girls. In the seventies, secondary school education in Mombasa grew almost by 20 per cent. From an enrolment of 8,257 students in 1970, the number of students in secondary schools rose to 10,321 in 1979. Enrolment figures for boys rose from 5,744 in 1970 to 6,441 in 1979. This was a growth rate of 11 per cent. Within the same period, girls' enrolment rose from 2,513 to 3,880. This was a growth rate of 35 per cent (RoK, 1970, 1979). Therefore, it is concluded that although girls were generally fewer than boys in schools, the education of girls grew at higher rate than boys'.

The high enrolment rates of girls in schools could be explained by the introduction of free primary education in 1974. This meant that more girls could go to school. This boosted girls' access at the primary tier and its effect was felt in secondary schools where more girls gained access. An analysis of enrolment figures in various classes in all categories of schools from 1974 to 1979 show that the rate of wastage affected boys and girls equally (see Table 15). Nevertheless, fewer girls than boys advanced their education beyond Form IV. The national examination sat at Form IV seems to have been taking its toll on girls. Furthermore, there were fewer places for girls in Forms V and VI, a factor that could explain the low enrolment of girls in these classes. This situation was not unique to schools in Mombasa. It was replicated in the entire country as evidenced in the Ministry of Education annual reports of the '70s and '80s.

The 1980s witnessed private secondary schools taking a more significant role in secondary school education in Mombasa District. There were 19 private secondary schools in 1980. Then, as of today, most schools were mixed day. For example, in 1980,

out of the 9 maintained schools, only one, Shimo-la-Tewa offered boarding facilities. There was no boarding school for girls then, and throughout the decade, boys continued to outnumber girls in schools (RoK, 1980). This trend continued into the '90s, a factor that is demonstrated by enrolment in selected public secondary schools in 1997 (see Table 16).

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Table 14: Enrolment in Secondary Schools in Mombasa District by Form, Category and Gender, 1970

TYPE OF SCHOOL	No. of Schools	Form 1		Form 2		Form 3		Form 4		Form 5		Form 6		TOTAL		GRAND TOTAL
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
MAINTAIN.	6	534	190	527	182	501	172	477	160	156	27	120	32	2,315	763	3,078
ASSISTED	3	157	155	173	133	132	155	131	143	-	-	-	-	593	585	1,178
UNAIDED	13	841	385	819	379	720	298	456	103	-	-	-	-	2,836	1,165	4,001
TOTAL	22	1,532	730	1,519	694	1,353	624	1,064	406	156	27	120	32	5,744	2,513	8,257

Source: RoK, 1970. Ministry of Education, Annual Report.

Table 15: Enrolment in Secondary Schools in Mombasa District by Form, Category and Gender, 1974 - 1979.

TYPE OF SCHOOL & YEAR	Form 1		Form 2		Form 3		Form 4		Form 5		Form 6		TOTAL		GRAND TOTAL
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
1974 AIDED	704	372	699	371	674	361	631	295	194	35	159	22	3,061	1,456	4,520
UNAIDED	1,065	586	881	445	686	334	644	289	53	15	56	14	3,385	1,683	5,068
TOTAL	1,769	958	1,580	816	1,360	695	1,275	584	247	50	215	36	6,446	3,139	9,588
1975 AIDED	699	354	699	361	679	361	641	348	200	28	173	36	3,091	1,488	4,579
UNAIDED	1,089	548	817	418	707	336	633	282	59	30	55	12	3,360	1,626	4,986
TOTAL	1,788	902	1,516	779	1,386	697	1,274	630	259	58	228	48	6,451	3,114	9,565
1977 AIDED	704	405	694	370	698	354	679	332	193	68	187	55	3,155	1,584	4,739
UNAIDED	1,304	784	1,084	645	745	422	634	321	63	27	56	37	3,886	2,236	6,122
TOTAL	2,008	1,189	1,778	1,015	1,443	776	1,313	653	256	95	243	92	7,041	3,820	10,861
1979 MAINT.	545	325	558	312	540	314	523	271	159	49	182	73	2,507	1,344	3,851
ASSISTED	143	84	151	89	155	86	148	86	-	-	-	-	597	345	942
UNAIDED	858	649	868	598	803	495	686	402	47	19	75	28	3,337	2,191	5,528
TOTAL	1,546	1,058	1,577	999	1,498	895	1,357	759	206	68	257	101	6,441	3,880	10,321

Source: RoK Ministry of Education Annual Reports, 1974, 1975, 1977 and 1979

Table 16: Enrolment in Selected Public Secondary Schools in Mombasa, 1997

SCHOOL	Form 1			Form 2			Form 3			Form 4		
	Boys	Girls	TOTAL	Boys	Girls	TOTAL	Boys	Girls	TOTAL	Boys	Girls	TOTAL
SACR. HEART	53	29	82	43	49	92	45	41	86	41	51	92
A. KHAN HIGH	90	88	178	90	68	158	73	64	137	83	70	153
CHANGAMWE	51	61	112	70	56	126	63	51	114	44	60	104
LIKONI	84	64	148	79	59	138	61	60	121	70	51	121

Source: Monthly Returns CP/EST/4, Provincial Education Office, Mombasa 1998

The predominance of private schools in Mombasa continued unabated in the 1990s. The prevalence of private schools that go by the more appealing name of academy has given many parents a chance to enrol their children in these schools. Wealthy parents and expatriates prefer the high class private schools that provide an alternative curriculum - like the British General Certificate of Education (GCE) - to the 8-4-4 system (**Daily Nation**, 20/1/96, p.22).

The field survey in this study revealed that, out of 40 secondary schools in Mombasa in 1999, 25 were private and 15 public (see appendices). Out of the 15 public schools, 5 are for boys while 4 are for girls. The girls' schools are Coast Girls, Star of the Sea, Bondeni Girls and Mama Ngina. Apart from Mama Ngina, the rest of the schools are day. Boys' schools are Khamis, Shimo-la-Tewa, Serani, Allidina Visram, Tudor and Mombasa School for the Physically Handicapped. Virtually all the private schools are mixed day, save for Sheikh Khalifa which is mixed day and boarding School.

Notably, various Muslims' religious communities established some of the private schools to cater for the children of their members. For example, the Memon and the Khoja Shia Ithna'Asheri communities run Memon High School and Jaffery Academy respectively, while the Bohras run Burhaniyya. Memon was founded in the early eighties (O.I, Field Survey). Jaffery Academy comprising nursery, primary and secondary schools was started in 1988 (O.I, Field Survey). There are other Muslim sponsored schools, for example, Sheikh Khalifa bin al-Nahayan Technical and Secondary School. This school was built through the munificence of Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed al-Nahyan, the then Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi. Others are Aga Khan High School and Aga Khan Kenya Secondary School managed by the Aga Khan Education Services. While the former is a public school, the latter is private. Even though these schools are founded and sponsored by Muslims, they admit non-Muslims. Over three-quarters of the student population in these schools are Muslim, thus the non-Muslims are a minority (see Table 17a & b). On the other hand, public schools such as Mama Ngina, Coast Girls and Star of the Sea do not have large population of Muslim students as the private schools mentioned above. An examination of the enrolment in private and public schools reveals the number of Muslim students in these schools (Table 17a & b).

Table 17: Enrolment in Secondary Schools in Mombasa District by Form and Gender, 1998/1999.

(a) Public Schools

School	Class	Boys	Girls	Total	Muslim Boys	Muslim Girls	Total Muslim	%Muslim Girls
Aga Khan High	Form 2	110	54	164	49	15	64	28
	Form 3	109	61	170	47	21	68	34
	Form 4	83	64	147	41	28	69	44
	Total	302	179	481	137	64	201	36
Coast Girls	Form 2	-	221	221	-	105	105	48
	Form 3	-	184	184	-	106	106	58
	Form 4	-	185	185	-	95	95	51
	Total	-	590	590	-	306	306	52
Mama Ngina	Form 1	-	68	68	-	-	-	-
	Form 2	-	83	83	-	24	24	29
	Form 3	-	82	82	-	22	22	27
	Form 4	-	80	80	-	19	19	24
	Total	-	313	313	-	65	65	27
Star of the Sea	Form 2	-	153	153	-	72	72	47
	Form 3	-	157	157	-	58	58	37
	Form 4	-	142	142	-	49	49	35
	Total	-	452	452	-	179	179	40

(b) Private

Burhan- iyya	Form 1	22	17	39	17	10	27	59
	Form 2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Form 3	37	19	56	25	9	34	47
	Form 4	45	38	83	15	22	37	59
	Total	104	74	178	57	41	98	55
Jaffery Acad.	Form 1	31	27	58	31	27	58	100
	Form 2	27	28	55	27	28	55	100
	Form 3	25	28	53	25	27	52	96
	Form 4	26	22	48	23	22	45	100
	Form 5	18	12	30	18	12	30	100
	Total	127	117	244	124	116	240	99
Sheikh Khalifa	Form 1	38	22	60	38	22	60	100
	Form 2	41	30	71	41	30	71	100
	Form 3	35	18	53	35	18	53	100
	Form 4	33	36	69	33	36	69	100
	Total	147	106	253	147	106	253	100

Source: Field Survey, Mombasa District Secondary Schools, September, 1998 - March 1999.

Private schools range from the "high cost" to "low cost" ones. The high cost schools have excellent physical facilities. A school like Sheikh Khalifa has three laboratories for biology, chemistry and physics. It also has a well-equipped library and a multi-purpose

Catholic children conducted by Catholic teachers” (Bagha, 1981:139). This principle continued to guide the educational policy of the Catholic Church for a long time. In the 1950s, this policy was quite entrenched in the Catholic schools. This is because it was held that catholic schools where catholic principles and discipline permeated the educational system were essential for the survival of the Catholic Church:

We must have a school as catholic as possible so as to fulfill our task.... The children must ... live as far as possible in a catholic atmosphere, under teachers who are practicing Catholics” (Bagha, 1981:139).

This rigid education policy discouraged non-Catholics especially Muslims from attending Catholic schools. The same rigid policy was followed in Protestant schools. Protestant missions aimed at running institutions in which Christian teachings and influences were dominant. They opposed Christian students training alongside their Muslim counterparts, even in government owned institutions. Bagha (1981:140) summarizes this contention:

The Coast Missionary Council strongly urge that there be no attempt to combine the training of Africans and Arabs in one institution in the (Coast) province. Our missionaries feel so strongly about this that they would not encourage their peoples to attend normal school where they would be exposed to Muslim influence... every endeavour should be made to secure a principal who could not be a stumbling block to Christian pupils.

The educational policies of the missionaries therefore were aimed at promoting particular beliefs of a denomination. These policies tended to preclude Muslims from joining the mission schools, since the schools were prejudicial to Muslim religious beliefs. Muslims did not have much to gain in an educational system where their religious interests were not promoted and safeguarded (Maina, 1993:101-102).

The curriculum of the mission schools was confined to the 4 Rs - Reading, Religion, Writing and Arithmetic (KNA, PC/Coast/2/1/3). Religion was the most important subject as reading the Bible was an integral part of the curriculum that was accompanied by religious songs and hymns. Thus, missionary education was evidently religious in content and oriented towards evangelism. On their part, missionaries saw a danger inherent in divorcing secular education from moral and religious instruction. Moral and religious instruction was important for Africans to supplant traditional beliefs and customs (Bagha, 1974:138). Muslims as a result perceived this type of education as a means of converting their children to Christianity. They therefore shunned the mission schools since they were not fulfilling their material and educational needs (Maina, 1993:102).

Table 18: KCSE Candidate Entry For Selected Secondary Schools in Mombasa District, 1989 - 1998

(a) Public Schools

School	Year	Entry	Boys	Girls	Muslim Boys	Muslim Girls	Total Muslims	% Muslim Girls
Mama Ngina	1991	73	-	73	-	17	17	23
	1992	72	-	72	-	15	15	21
	1993	81	-	81	-	21	21	26
	1994	80	-	80	-	20	20	25
	1995	78	-	78	-	18	18	23
	1996	72	-	72	-	21	21	29
	1997	70	-	70	-	18	18	26
Coast Girls	1994	190	-	190	-	99	99	52
	1995	192	-	192	-	107	107	56
	1996	195	-	195	-	115	115	59
	1997	194	-	194	-	116	116	60
	1998	190	-	190	-	93	93	49
Star of the Sea	1989	145	-	145	-	39	39	27
	1990	150	-	150	-	48	48	32
	1991	143	-	143	-	54	54	38
	1992	169	-	169	-	57	57	34
	1993	172	-	172	-	70	70	41
	1994	166	-	166	-	62	62	38
	1995	148	-	148	-	63	63	43
	1996	155	-	155	-	67	67	43
	1997	143	-	143	-	61	61	43

(b) Private Schools

School	Year	Entry	Boys	Girls	Muslim Boys	Muslim Girls	Total Muslims	% Muslim Girls
Burhaniyya	1989	60	-	-	-	-	46	-
	1990	83	60	23	35	15	50	65
	1991	78	39	39	26	24	50	62
	1992	38	17	21	15	18	33	86
	1993	49	26	23	21	16	37	70
Sheikh Khalifa	1989	67	37	30	37	30	67	100
	1990	70	35	35	35	35	70	100
	1991	70	48	32	48	32	70	100
	1992	73	34	39	34	39	73	100
	1993	68	34	34	34	34	68	100
	1994	64	28	36	28	36	64	100
	1995	43	27	16	27	16	43	100
	1996	61	35	26	35	26	61	100
	1997	69	43	26	43	26	69	100

Source: Field Survey, Mombasa District Secondary Schools, September 1998 - March 1999.

It can be concluded that in Mombasa, the trend in girls' secondary education has been one where Muslims tend to take advantage of the existing places in Muslim sponsored schools. Generally, the non-Muslim sponsored schools record lower enrolment of girls than the Muslim sponsored ones. Muslim sponsored schools provide a more congenial atmosphere for Muslim girls, because their religious interests are taken care of in these schools more than in the non-Muslims schools. This aspect is discussed later in Chapter Five. Let's now turn our attention to Kwale District and examine whether the situation is the same regarding girls' education.

2.7 Development of Muslim Girls' Secondary School Education in Kwale District From 1963

It has been pointed out that there was no secondary school in Kwale District in the colonial period, either for boys or girls. The first secondary school for boys was Kwale High School, founded in 1965, while that of girls was Matuga established in 1967 (KNA, RoK, 1967). Thus, the overall development of secondary education in this district took a very slow pace.

In 1970, there were only six secondary schools in the district: two maintained, and four unaided (*harambee*). The maintained schools were Kwale Boys and Matuga Girls. The others were Kinango, founded in 1969; Taru, founded in 1970; and Simba Hills and Waa, both founded in 1970. While Matuga offered advanced level classes for girls, there was no school for boys offering an equivalent. Nevertheless, enrolments in the four unaided secondary schools in 1970, show that very few girls attended school. That is, 30 girls out of 366 boys, a meagre 8.2 per cent as indicated in Table 19. The table also shows that in the unaided school category, there were no girls in attendance in Forms III and IV. The percentage of girls attending secondary schools in Kwale District in 1970 was 28.2 per cent.

Table 19: Enrolments in Secondary Schools in Kwale District by Form, Category and Gender, 1970.

	No. of schools	FORM 1		FORM 2		FORM 3		FORM 4		FORM 5		FORM 6		TOTALS		
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Total
Maint.	2	80	37	80	38	70	37	70	34	-	12	-	-	300	158	458
Unaid.	4	217	26	93	04	22	-	34	-	-	-	-	-	366	30	396
Total	6	297	63	173	42	92	37	104	34	-	12	-	-	666	188	854

Source: Extracts, RoK. Ministry of Education Annual Reports 1970:56,59,61.

Table 20: Enrolment in Secondary Schools in Kwale District, by Form, Category and Gender, 1972

Type of school	No. of schools	FORM 1		FORM 2		FORM 3		FORM 4		FORM 5		FORM 6		TOTALS		
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Total
Maint.	3	80	40	80	40	80	38	77	39	-	35	-	16	317	259	576
Private	1	30	-	30	-	30	-	30	-	-	-	-	-	120	-	120
Unaid.	6	138	43	116	31	93	18	32	-	-	-	-	-	383	92	475

Source: Extracts RoK, Ministry of Education, Coast Province Education Office Annual Report 1972

In 1972, as evidently shown in Table 20, there were 10 schools in Kwale District: 3 maintained, 1 private and 6 *harambee*. The maintained schools had an enrolment of 259 girls against 317 boys. The only private school was St. Mary's Seminary for boys. The *harambee* schools had a total enrolment of 383 boys and 92 girls. Thus, the under representation of girls is quite evident. Most of the *harambee* schools were in the process of development as only one offered a complete secondary school education cycle.

In 1973, only three schools in the district were single sex. These were Kwale and St. Mary's Seminary for boys, and Matuga for girls. Three *harambee* secondary schools were established in 1976. These were Mazeras, Msambweni and Lukore (RoK, 1976:38). In 1977, the number of *harambee* secondary schools had increased to seven. These were Ng'ombeni, Mazeras, Msambweni, Taru, Simba Hills, Lukore and Kinango. The number rose to nine in 1979 with the addition of two more schools. It should be noted that the development of *harambee* schools in the district between 1972 and 1977 seemed to have been slow because some schools were changing status from *harambee* to "assisted".

Generally, the development of secondary education in Kwale District in the 1970s and 1980s was quite sluggish. In 1980, the district could boast of only, four government maintained secondary schools (RoK, 1980:80). These were Kwale, Matuga, Waa and Kinango. In the same year, there were only two private secondary schools. Besides St. Mary's Seminary, there was Ramisi, a mixed school established and financed by Ramisi Sugar Company.

The slow pace in the development of secondary schools in Kwale District affected the development of girls' secondary school education. Matuga remained the only secondary school for girls until 1981 when Bombolulu was founded. Kichaka Simba was established as the third school for girls in 1987. Hence, in the eighties, there were three secondary schools for girls and two for boys. The rest of the secondary schools were co-educational or mixed. The enrolment of girls in the mixed schools was minimal compared to that of boys. A closer look at the student enrolment of various schools as shown in Table 21, sustains this argument. That many schools were co-educational then, as of today, show that the economic status of the people could not allow them to build single sex schools because of the financial implications. In that case, mixed schools were considered to be

more economical. The impact of such schools on girls' access to secondary education is discussed in Chapter Five.

The development of secondary school education in Kwale District like in the rest of the country, tended to favour boys than girls. The distribution of student enrolment in both maintained and *harambee* secondary schools is a testimony to the dichotomy in opportunities and access to secondary school education for boys and girls. The overall picture that is discerned of secondary education in the district in the seventies is one where girls were under represented in all types of secondary schools. Nonetheless, the secondary education for girls grew at higher rate or margin than that of boys'. Between 1970 and 1975, secondary education grew by 42 per cent. That is from an enrolment of 854 pupils in 1970 to 1,469 in 1975. Within the same period, girls' education grew by 61 per cent. With an enrolment of 188 in 1970, the number of girls increased to 483 in 1975. The same period witnessed the number of boys in secondary schools grow by 32 per cent, that is, from an enrolment of 666 in 1970, to 986 in 1975. Similarly, between 1975, to 1979, girls' secondary education grew by 22 per cent and that of boys by 21 per cent. With an enrolment of 600 in 1977, the number of girls went up to 766 in 1979 while that of boys increased from 1,374 to 1,745 within the same period. Thus, it could be concluded that, in spite of the glaring gender disparities in secondary school opportunities, the number of girls in secondary schools grew at a faster rate than boys.

Table 21. Enrolments in Secondary Schools in Kwale District by Form, Category and Gender, 1975 – 1979

	FORM 1		FORM 2		FORM 3		FORM 4		FORM 5		FORM 6		TOTAL		
1974	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	GRAND TOTAL
Aided	112	92	97	84	98	44	94	40	-	35	-	32	401	327	728
Unaided	186	34	135	28	122	24	99	09	-	-	-	-	542	95	637
Total	298	126	232	112	220	68	193	49	-	35	-	32	943	422	1,365
1975															
Aided	111	92	111	90	80	30	80	40	-	35	-	35	382	372	754
Unaided	153	39	176	25	147	20	128	25	-	-	-	-	604	111	715
Total	264	131	287	115	227	102	208	65	-	35	-	35	986	483	1469
1977															
Aided	107	87	112	90	138	90	104	86	-	35	-	33	461	386	882
Unaided	331	73	283	64	150	27	149	15	-	-	-	-	913	179	1,092
Total	438	160	395	154	288	117	253	101	-	35	-	33	1,374	600	1,974

Source: Extracts, RoK, Ministry of Education, Annual Reports 1974, 1975, 1977.

1979	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	G.Total
Maint.	180	103	112	89	111	90	156	88	25	26	37	33	621	429	1,050
Assist.	223	91	210	72	238	62	176	48	-	-	-	-	847	273	1,120
Unaided	93	33	59	11	75	17	50	03	-	-	-	-	277	64	341
Total	496	227	381	172	424	169	382	139	25	26	37	33	1,745	766	2,511

Source: Extracts, RoK, Ministry of Education, Annual Report 1979

The 1980s witnessed a rapid growth in secondary education in Kwale District. The number of secondary schools in the district grew to 28 by 1999 (see Appendix). This rapid growth coincided with the introduction of 8-4-4 education system in 1984. There was a need for more *harambee* secondary schools to fulfil the demand for secondary education created by many primary school-leavers.

The minutes of the meeting of Kwale DEB of 23 December, 1985 approved the opening of a number of secondary schools. This was subject to the fulfilment of the basic requirements. These schools were: Kaya Tiwi in Tiwi location; Kikoneni in Kikoneni location; Ndavaya in Ndavaya location; Kichaka Simba and Mwaluvanga in Lukore location and Mkongani in Mkongani location. It was also recommended that *harambee* streams to be started in all maintained schools. In this regard, all *harambee* secondary schools were to start an extra Form I stream in 1986 (DEB Minutes, CZ/8/2). Following these recommendations, the following secondary schools were opened in the second half of 1980s: Kaya Tiwi in 1986; Kichaka Simba in 1987; Kikoneni in 1988; and Burani in 1989. More schools were founded in the 1990s. Among them were Mwananyamala, 1993; Mwaluphamba, 1994; Golini, 1995; Mnyenzeni, 1996 and Samburu, 1997. In spite of the role they were playing in the provision of education, the *harambee* schools lacked qualified teachers, physical facilities such as science laboratories and even boarding facilities. Thus, they offered an inferior type of education compared to the maintained schools.

Out of the 28 secondary schools in the district in 1999, six are single sex. These are Kwale, Mazeras and St. Marys' schools, for boys, and Matuga, Kichaka Simba and Bombolulu for girls. The remaining 22 schools are mixed. Bombolulu changed its name to Mazeras Memorial School in 1998, following a tragic fire in the school that killed over 25 girls on March, 27 1998 (*Daily Nation*, 27/3/98, p.1). As a result, the school was closed down, to be reopened later under its current name. A Commission of Inquiry was set up to investigate the cause of the fire but its findings were not made public. It should however be noted that despite the growth in secondary school education in the '80s and the '90s, girls continued to be outnumbered by boys in secondary schools.

By the time the fieldwork in this study was completed in March 1999, Kwale District had 28 secondary schools. These were distributed in the five divisions as follows: Kinango 2; Samburu 6; Kubo 6; Matuga 7 and Msambweni, 7 (see appendix). Of the 28, only one school is private, that is, St. Mary's. The rest of the schools are public. Ramisi, formerly a private school, became public in 1992.

All along, our discussion has been confined to the general situation of girls' education. To discuss the status of Muslim girls' secondary school education in Kwale District, the following schools were sampled for the study: Diani, Kaya Tiwi, Kichaka Simba, Matuga, Ng'ombeni, Ramisi and Waa. The rationale for the choice of these schools is discussed in Chapter One. However, we need to mention that, to get a clear picture of Muslim girls' access to secondary schools, there was need to concentrate on the areas that are predominantly Muslim. This is because, most schools in Kwale are district schools therefore, they draw their students from the surrounding areas. In addition, most of these schools are either day, or day and boarding combined. This implies that they serve the surrounding communities. In other words, the schools are within easy reach especially for day scholars. From the sample, it is only Kichaka Simba which is located in the interior, the rest of the schools are located along the coastal strip. This is an area with fairly good infrastructure owing to the beach hotels that are frequented by tourists. In the sample, Matuga is the only provincial school while the rest are district schools. Diani, Kaya Tiwi and Ng'ombeni are mixed day schools. Ramisi is a mixed day and boarding school, (for girls), while Kichaka Simba is a boarding and day school for girls.

To examine Muslim girls' access to secondary school education in Kwale District, we have tabulated the enrolments of students in the seven schools. This is necessary to derive conclusions on whether Muslims have taken advantage of the opportunities offered in the secondary schools to educate their daughters. Table 22 shows student enrolments in the seven schools at various dates between September 1998 and March 1999.

Table 22: Enrolment in Selected Schools in Kwale District by Form and Gender, September 1998 - March 1999

SCHOOL	CLASS	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	MUSLIM BOYS	MUSLIM GIRLS	TOTAL MUSLIMS	%MUS. GIRLS
MATUGA	Form 1	-	116		-	48	48	37
	Form 2	-	136		-	50	50	48
	Form 3	-	121		-	58	58	32
	Form 4	-	129		-	41	41	39
	TOTAL	-		502		197	197	40
K.SIMBA	Form 1	-	34	34	-	5	5	15
	Form 2	-	44	44	-	4	4	9
	Form 3	-	50	50	-	2	2	4
	Form 4	-	27	27	-	9	9	33
	TOTAL	-		155	-	20	20	13
DIANI	Form 2	46	22	68	36	16	42	73
	Form 3	43	29	72	36	22	58	76
	Form 4	25	10	35	17	8	25	80
	TOTAL	114	61	175	89	46	135	75
KAYA TIWI	Form 1	37	28	65	35	25	60	89
	Form 2	37	24	61	32	22	54	92
	Form 3	26	23	49	24	23	47	100
	Form 4	22	18	40	21	15	36	83
	TOTAL	122	93	215	112	85	197	91
WAA	Form 1	73	51	124	52	41	93	80
	Form 2	75	53	128	57	40	97	75
	Form 3	58	63	121	39	41	80	65
	Form 4	55	55	110	34	37	71	67
	TOTAL	261	222	483	182	159	341	72
NG'OM-BENI	Form 1	49	48	97	40	41	81	85
	Form 2	65	33	98	61	29	90	88
	Form 3	59	41	100	52	35	87	85
	Form 4	43	57	100	36	47	83	82
	TOTAL	216	179	395	189	152	341	85
RAMISI	Form 1	25	27	52	18	10	28	30
	Form 2	37	46	83	17	21	38	46
	Form 3	27	50	77	17	27	44	54
	Form 4	34	43	77	16	13	29	30
	TOTAL	123	166	289	68	71	139	43

Source: Field Survey, Kwale District Secondary Schools, September 1998 - March 1999.

Matuga is one of the oldest and the biggest schools in the district. It has three streams and offers full boarding facilities. Being a provincial school, it draws its student population not only from Kwale District itself but also from other districts within Coast Province. It is shown in Table 22 that there is a fair representation of Muslim girls in Matuga. The enrolment of Muslim girls in the school was 197 out of a total student enrolment of 502. Thus, Muslims comprise 40 per cent of the school population, while non-Muslims make up the rest (60 per cent). Being one of the well-established schools in the district, Matuga has excellent facilities and qualified teaching staff comprising mainly university graduates and diploma holders. It is one of the best schools regarding performance in national examinations as the KCSE results show (see Chapter Five; Table 26a). Matuga is located within a Muslim locality. The small number of Muslim girls in the school could probably be explained by the fact that they do not meet the qualifications for admission. Due to its status as a provincial school, Matuga must be a highly competitive school to secure admission. It is unfortunate that the number of Muslim girls in this school, which is one of the best in the district, is considerably small.

Kichaka Simba the other girls' school that was selected for this study is a small school with one stream. Muslims are a minority, comprising on average only a meagre 13 per cent of the total student population. This perhaps could be explained from the fact that the school is located in the interior, far away from the Muslim populated coastal strip. Majority of the students are from the immigrant interior communities like the Kamba who have settled in the locality, Kikuyu and Luo.

The other secondary schools, viz: Diani, Kaya Tiwi, Waa and Ng'ombeni are predominantly Muslim in enrolment. In these schools, non-Muslims are a minority. The percentage of Muslim girls in these schools is quite high. Diani with 75 per cent, Kaya Tiwi, 91 per cent, Waa 72 per cent, Ng'ombeni 85 per cent and Ramisi 43 per cent. Remarkably, the enrolment shows that Muslim girls have almost gained parity with boys in access to these schools. Indeed in a school like Ramisi, despite the low enrolment of Muslim girls, there are more girls than boys. Likewise, in Ng'ombeni, there are more Muslim girls than boys in some classes. This indicates that the Muslim community

around these schools has taken advantage of the available opportunities to educate their daughters.

Kichaka Simba and Matuga have had a small enrolment of Muslim girls over the years. The other schools have been registering comparatively big numbers of Muslim girls. This could be deduced from the list of entry of candidates into the KCSE national examinations over the years as indicated in Table 23 below.

Table 23: KCSE Candidate Entry for Selected Secondary Schools in Kwale District, 1989 - 1997.

SCHOOL	YEAR	ENTRY	BOYS	GIRLS	MUSLIM BOYS	MUSLIM GIRLS	TOTAL MUSLIM	%MUSLIM GIRLS
K.Simba	1995	22	-	22	-	4	4	18
	1996	24	-	24	-	6	6	25
	1997	12	-	12	-	2	2	17
Matuga	1989	110	-	110	-	27	27	25
	1990	118	-	118	-	43	43	36
	1991	122	-	122	-	36	36	30
	1992	114	-	114	-	36	36	32
	1993	118	-	118	-	32	32	27
	1994	125	-	125	-	41	41	33
	1995	110	-	110	-	46	46	42
	1996	110	-	110	-	35	35	32
	1997	107	-	107	-	31	31	29
Ramisi	1997	40	21	19	5	7	12	37
K. Tiwi	1989	28	19	9	18	9	27	100
	1990	27	16	11	16	11	27	100
	1991	14	10	4	10	3	13	75
	1992	33	21	12	21	11	32	92
	1993	20	13	7	11	6	17	86
	1994	26	19	7	19	6	25	86
	1995	21	13	8	11	8	19	100
	1996	60	32	28	25	27	52	96
	1997	39	15	24	14	23	37	96
Waa	1992	135	97	38	52	25	77	66
	1995	133	78	55	44	40	84	73
	1996	155	110	45	38	43	81	96

Source: Field Survey, Kwale District Secondary Schools, September 1998 - March 1999.

2.8 Summary and Conclusion

Christian missionaries introduced Western formal education in Kenya. Right from its inception, missionary education was evangelical in nature. In Mombasa and Kwale districts, most Muslims responded negatively to missionary education because of its evangelical nature. The response of Muslims to missionary education meant that missionaries abandoned some of the Muslims areas like Kwale District, in favour of up-country destinations. Hence, the initial response to missionary education determined the pace at which formal Western education in the two districts developed. This is because by the time there was mass re-awakening for the need for Western education, there were limited facilities that could hardly meet the high demand.

The colonial education policies hampered the development of Muslim education partly because of the racial policies governing the provision of education. In that regard, Muslim areas of the Coast Province remained largely in the hands of the missionaries. That the colonial education policies favoured some Muslim groups is quite evident. This was the case with the Asian Muslims and Arabs and Swahili. The Government established schools for these two groups but not with the African Muslims whose education remained largely in the domain of the missionaries. African education was under-developed at the expense of the European and Asian education. Therefore, the racial education policies stunted the growth of education for the African Muslims in Kwale and Mombasa districts during the colonial period. The same applied to the Arab education since the government did not establish enough schools to meet the demands for Arab education. Under these circumstances, girls' education was doubly affected. With seemingly limited education facilities and opportunities, not much attention was paid to the education of Muslim girls. The exception, were the Asian Muslims especially the Ismailis who made equal efforts to educate boys and girls. This was possible because Asians had the economic resources required to finance the establishment of schools. In addition, they were racially privileged in the colonial society. This gave them an edge over Africans in terms of social amenities and job placement in the colonial wage economy. The Ismailis were ahead of other

Muslim groups due to the munificence of the Aga Khans who contributed enormously to the establishment of schools.

Within the colonial context concerning the education of Muslim girls, it is only possible to talk of elementary education and not primary or secondary education. The colonial policies did not promote the education of Muslim girls. At the formative period of Western education, both in Mombasa and Kwale districts, some Muslim groups were apathetic to educating girls. This apathy was beholden to some cultural beliefs, traditions and practices that prescribed the role of women in society. However, there were individuals who advocated for formal Western education for Muslim girls as a way of promoting their roles in marriage and parenthood.

The apathy towards girls' education was reinforced by the colonial educational policies. This implied fewer education facilities and opportunities for Muslim girls. A combination of these factors led to under-development of education of Muslim girls in the two districts. The situation was worse in Kwale District, on the eve of independence, as there were no schools for girls either at the intermediate or secondary level. Secondary school education for girls could not thrive where there were no primary and intermediate schools. In Mombasa, a combination of racial privileges and wealth assured the Asian Muslims of a few secondary schools for girls.

In both Mombasa and Kwale districts, the post-colonial era created an enabling environment for the development of secondary schools for girls. Nonetheless, due to the many years of under-development during the colonial period, the growth of girls' education could not match that of boys. The prevailing situation on access to secondary schools clearly shows that there are more boys than girls in schools. Nevertheless, secondary education of girls in Mombasa and Kwale districts has grown at a faster rate than boys'. Within this context, Muslim parents have taken advantage of existing facilities and opportunities in secondary schools to take their daughters to school. There are more Muslim girls in the private Muslim sponsored schools than in the public schools especially in Mombasa. This seems to suggest that Muslims are suspicious about their daughters attending non - Muslim sponsored schools. This attitude is a product of the

colonial legacy. It could therefore be concluded that the colonial legacy has partly shaped the development of Muslim girls' education in Mombasa and Kwale districts.

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CHAPTER THREE

THE STATUS OF MUSLIM WOMEN IN MOMBASA AND KWALE DISTRICTS AND ITS INFLUENCE ON GIRLS' ACCESS TO SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

3.1 Introduction.

In Chapter Two, we examined the development of education in Mombasa and Kwale districts from the colonial period to the present. It was revealed that although enrolment of girls in secondary schools has risen over the years, it has not surpassed that of boys'. Access to secondary schools for Muslim girls and retention therein, has not achieved parity with that of boys'. The concern of this chapter is to examine how the social status of Muslim woman as envisaged by the teachings of Islam and the concomitant traditions and value systems influences girls' access to secondary school education in the two districts.

3.2 The Status of Muslim Women: The Islamic Ideal Versus the Muslim Practice.

The basis for understanding the status of Muslim women is the injunctions of the Qur'an, the *Hadith* and subsequent legislation resultant from the interpretations of the Qur'an and *Hadith* (Keddie & Beck, 1978:25). These interpretations are the basis of *i'jma* and *al-Qiyas*. The Qur'an, *Hadith (Sunna)*, *i'jma* and *al-Qiyas* are the fundamental sources of the *sharia*. The four sources contain information that could be used to construct an Islamic viewpoint on the status of women. The two primary sources of Muslim conduct, that is, the Qur'an and the *Hadith* are susceptible to interpretations (Khalid & Tucker, 1996). Interpretation of the Qur'an is fundamental to Islamic faith because some verses are ambiguous and thus subject to various interpretations. For example, some verses that relate to gender such as 4:24 and 4:34 attract different interpretations. Some people, variously interpret some verses dealing with proper dressing for women (Q.24:30-31) as veiling, while to others, these verses only imply modest dressing (Wadud-Muhsin, 1992:73; Khalid & Tucker, 1996:10).

Interpretation is important since, it is through it that Muslim scholars arrive at *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) that leads to *al-Qiyas* that is the fourth source of Islamic law. Nevertheless, while some scholars' view (re) interpretation of the *sharia* as necessary,

others oppose it in that, what is from Allah is immutable (Callaway & Creevey, 1994:174,180). In Sunni Islam, interpretation of the Islamic law largely depends on individual scholars or jurists, the law schools they subscribe to, and time and place (Sule & Starratt, 1991:30; Mikhail, 1979:15). These schools are Shafi'i, Maliki, Hanafi and Hanbali for Sunni Islam, and Jafari for the Twelver Shi'a Islam.

Subject to the interpretations of the Qur'an and Islamic law, there are three main schools of thought regarding the status of woman in Islam. The traditionalist school has very restrictive notions toward women. This school purports that Islam forbids any changes in sex roles. The modernist school argues that in Islam, there is an avenue for better status of women, equality of sexes, protection and mobility (Joseph, 1988:241; Sule & Starratt, 1991:30). The third school of thought is a halfway house between traditionalists and modernists. Basically, the view of the status of woman in Islam depends to a greater extent on "the scholar consulted, the country or culture observed and the century or decade represented" (Sule & Starratt, 1991:30).

Interpretations of the Islamic sources notwithstanding, a discussion on the status of woman in Islam should also take into account local lore and values. Ideally, most local customs are tolerated and respected as social laws if they do not contradict the principles of Islam. Therefore, in most parts of the Muslim world, the status of women reflects these customs rather than the precepts of the *sharia* or the Qur'an (*ibid*, p.31). Despite that, Islam is an ideology and a system of beliefs and values that prescribes gender relations and the role of women in society (Nelson, 1984). This implies that Islam is a significant factor in determining the status of woman. It shapes her socio-economic and political aspects of life. Let us now examine how these aspects of life, as envisaged by the teachings of Islam, shape the status of woman.

3.2.1 The Socio-economic Dimension of the Status of Woman in Islam

3.2.1.1 Sexual Equality

The Qur'an and *Hadith* contain materials that could be used to advance the theory of equality of sexes, and at the same time, that of the superiority of man over woman. In examining the issue of sexual equality in Islam, the two theories listed above will be

discussed concurrently where possible. To a greater extent, these theories rest on the interpretations of Islam.

In principle, the Qur'an and *Hadith*, visualize equality between sexes. A keen look at the various verses of the Qur'an shows this inherent equality. A woman is equal to a man in that both are intrinsically created equal and from the same soul and substance:

O mankind! Reverence your Guardian - Lord, who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, his mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women (4:1; cf., 49:13).

The Qur'an disabuses women of the various practices that de-humanized them during the days of ignorance. These practices were female infanticide in which baby girls were buried alive. There was no restriction on polygamy and other types of marriages that disadvantaged women. Women were treated as minors and chattels that could be inherited. The dawn of Islamic era ended those practices. It is true that considered from the backdrop of some of these pre-Islamic practices, Islam gave rights to women that were hitherto unknown (Siddiqi, 1992a; Doi, 1996). For example the Qur'an assails the pre-Islamic Arabs' conception and treatment of the girl child:

When news is brought to one of them, of (the birth of) a female (child), his face darkens, and he is filled with inward grief! With shame does he hide himself from his people, because of the bad news he has heard! Shall he retain it on (sufferance and) contempt, or bury it in the dust? Ah! What an evil (choice) they decide on? (16:58-59; cf., 81:8-9).

The Qur'an further reproves the pre-Islamic behaviour of men who tormented, maltreated and inherited women against their wishes:

O ye who believe! ye are forbidden to inherit women against their will: Nor should ye treat them with harshness, that ye may take away part of the dower ye have given them - except where they have been guilty of open lewdness; on the contrary live with them on a footing of kindness and equity... (4:19).

With such an attitude towards girls and women, the Qur'an unconditionally states that the rights granted to man and woman are similar: "... and women shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable; but men have a degree over them (2:228).⁶ The status of man and woman before God is the same (9:71-72). The role of

⁶ The words men have a "degree over them" may be translated and interpreted differently by Qur'an commentators. Abdullah Yusuf Ali regards it as "degree of advantage". Muhammad Asad uses the words: "men have precedence over them". But majority of the commentators, e.g. Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din al-Hilali and Muhammad Muhsin Khan, talk of a "degree of responsibility".

women in the process of revelation is acknowledged (48:25). There is equality in the moral and spiritual development: "If anyone - male or female - does deeds of righteousness and have faith, they will enter heaven, and not the least injustice will be done on them" (4:124).

The Qur'an portrays the equality of man and woman before God regarding the execution of their religious obligations. These obligations include obligatory prayer (2:110), pilgrimage (3:97), fasting (2:183), payment of obligatory alms (2:110), and observance of fundamental articles of faith (4:136). However, a woman is obligatorily exempted from the five daily prayers and fasting during her monthly periods and the period of blood coming out immediately after delivery. There is optional exemption for fasting during pregnancy, and child nursing. The latter, is the period of confinement, that is, approximately forty days after childbirth. While a woman may postpone fasting to a later day, until she is physically healthy, it is not obligatory for her to make up for missed prayers (Badawi, 1983:14; Abdalati, 1985:78), i.e not obligatory and is not even *sunna* (optional)

Women are equal partners in the endeavours to ensure the success of Islam on earth. The Qur'an shows that man and woman will earn rewards in the hereafter, not because of their sex but in accordance with the way they practice the principles of Islam: "...to men is allotted what they earn, and to women what they earn" (4:32). The Qur'an further says:

For Muslim men and women - for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in charity, for men and women who fast (and deny themselves), for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise - for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward (33:35 cf., 3:195; 4:124; 16:97; 9:71-72; 43:70).

The Qur'an gives accounts of examples of women who earned spiritual prosperity through their efforts and others who acquired it through special gifts from God (Siddiqi, 1992a:18). These women were the mother of Moses (28:7), Mary the mother of Jesus (3:42; 66:12), and the wife of Pharaoh (66:11).

The potential equality between sexes is expressed in the concept of vicegerency (caliphate). Vicegerency is a duty conferred to males and females. This means that every Muslim male and female is expected to carry Allah's will on earth:

Allah has promised to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds that He will, of surety, grant them vicegerency in the land, just as He granted to those before them ... (24:55).

Punishment and retribution for wrongdoing, are dispensed equally to the wrong doers both men and women. Punishment for a thief is the same, that is, amputation of hands (5:38); flogging with a hundred stripes for fornication (24:2). The principle of *lex talionis* applies to both men and women. If a man kills a woman, he would be killed in retaliation; if a woman kills a man, she would be killed in retaliation:

O ye who believe! The law of equality is prescribed to you in cases of murder: The free for the free, the slave for the slave, the woman for the woman. But if any remission is made by the brother of the slain, then grant any reasonable demand, and compensate him with handsome gratitude. This is a concession and a mercy from your Lord (2:178).

Chapter 5 verse 45 is more emphatic on retribution:

We ordained therein for them: "Life for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and wounds equal for equal". But if anyone remits the retaliation by way of charity, it is an act of atonement for himself ...

Man and women are equally guilty for the fall (2:35-36; 7:19-24; 20:117-123). By holding both Adam and Eve accountable for the first sin, the Qur'an deviates clearly from the popular Biblical belief and Judeo-Christian tradition that portray woman as the cause of malediction and wickedness. This means that in Islam both men and women are held accountable and responsible for their actions (53:39). Nobody should be punished for the sins of another (53:38). In any case, the concept of original sin and by extension, universal redemption is non-existent in Islam. Adam and Eve were forgiven after sinning against God (2:37).

Potential gender equality is expressed in the *Hadith* literature. The sayings of the Prophet about equality between sexes complement the Qur'an on the same. In an environment that was riddled with ill treatment of the female gender, Muhammad (p.b.u.h) approved rights for women and girls and sanctioned their equal treatment. In a *hadith* narrated by Anas bin Malik, the Prophet is reported to have said the following concerning the girl child:

Girls are models of affection and sympathy and a blessing to the family. If a person has one daughter, God will screen him from the fire of hell owing to

his daughter; if he has two daughters, God will admit him to Paradise; if he has three, God will exempt him from the obligations of charity and *jihad* (Kanz al-'Ummal, p.277, cited, Siddiqi, 1992a:16).

The Prophet impressed upon Muslims to be considerate to girls regarding bringing them up and their equal treatment with boys. He is reported to have said: "the best of your offsprings are the sheltered girls", and "the best of your children are the girls" (cited, UNICEF Cairo 1985:16). In another *hadith* recorded in Abu Dawud and Hakim and reported by Ibn Abbas, the Prophet said:

If a daughter is born to a man and he brings her up affectionately, shows her no disrespect and treats her in the same manner, as he treats his sons, the Lord will reward with Paradise (cited, Badawi, 1983:15; Siddiqi, 1984:18; Siddiqi, 1992a:15; Mawdudi, 1995:201).

The prophetic departure from the pre-Islamic treatment of the girl child is shown in the way he favoured girls over boys, out-rightly. In a *hadith* transmitted by Muslim, the Prophet is reported to have said: "man of whom only daughters are born, and he brings them up properly, the same daughters will become a covering for him against hell (cited Mawdudi, 1995:2002)

He further expressed the need to show unrestrained love and affection to all children even if they were only girls, for one to earn eternal rewards. In a *hadith* transmitted in Hakim, the Prophet said:

That who has been catering for three daughters shall go to Paradise. His listeners inquired: "what if they were two?" He said: "even if they were two". They asked: "what if she were one?" He said: "Even if she were one" (cited, UNICEF, Cairo 1985:18).

The general attitude of the Prophet to girl child was demonstrated by the enviable way in which he related to his daughter Fatima. In equality between men and women over their religious obligations, the *Hadith* literature reinforces the Qur'an. In a *hadith* recorded in **Sahih Muslim**, and reported by Umar, the Prophet is reported to have said:

Islam is - that you attest that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad (p.b.u.h) is the messenger of Allah, that you keep up prayer, pay poor due, keep fast of *Ramadhan* and make pilgrimage to the House provided you have means of making journey to it (cited, Chaudhry, 1991:157).

Like the Qur'an, the *Hadith* emphasizes on equality between the sexes on punishment and retribution (Doi, 1996:135-36). In a *hadith* recorded in An-Nasai and reported by Abu Bakr, the Prophet wrote to the inhabitants of Yemen:

Whoso kills a believer unjustly will suffer retaliation for what his hand has

done unless the relatives of the murdered man consent otherwise. And therein it was: A man shall be killed for (the murder of a woman). And therein it was: For (the murder of) a life, there is a blood-wit of 100 camels, 1000 dinars on the owner of gold (cited, *ibid*, p.156).

According to some scholars, the sex equality discerned by Islam is that of complementary roles. It takes cognisance of the natural biological and sexual differences and abilities that cause different sex roles. Men and women complement one another, each sex -performing its role for the well being of society. Ideally, each sex compensates for the shortcomings in the other (Siddiqi, 1992a). According to Siddiqi (1992a:20) and Chaudhry (1991:160), equality between sexes should be confined to rights and responsibilities for each sex as underlined by the Qur'an (2:228; 4:34; 7:189; 30:21; 51:49).

Opponents of equality of sexes argue that it is due to responsibilities that man is superior to woman. They argue that woman is not equal to man because: "nature has ordained different spheres of activities for them. If the roles assigned to them by nature are different then men and women are unequal" (Chaudhry, 1991:160).

Proponents of the superiority of men over women cite the Qur'an to justify their claims. The argument being, although men and women have similar rights according to chapter 2:228, "men have a degree over women". Differences abound regarding scholars' interpretations of this "degree". Some see this degree as indicative of the superiority of men over women. Siddiqi (1992a:20) argues that the superiority of a man over a woman relates to the political and domestic fields. According to him, this superiority is not natural and does not mean inherent inferiority of women. Abdalati (1977:177) holds the same view by observing that, the "degree" should not be interpreted as a sign of supremacy and superiority of man over woman. Mernissi (1996:67) observes that the degree has an economic justification, since men provide for the families. She further notes that according to 4:34, women are incapable of providing for their needs. Other scholars argue that, making men a "degree" above women over guardianship does not imply a generalized superiority of men over women (Wamahiu, 1990:17). In that case, if a husband is unable to provide maintenance and security to the wife, then he should renounce his claim of this "degree" over her (*ibid*, p.17). This is because the Qur'an is not

categorical that man is superior to woman. Mawdudi (1995:193), notes how this degree operates:

This works on the foundation that the biological and psychological differences between man and woman do exist; it keeps those differences as they are; and it employs those differences for determining their place and responsibilities in social system.

Wadud-Muhsin (1992) observes that chapter 2:228 has been interpreted to imply that a degree exists between all men and all women in everything. She argues that, this verse should be interpreted within its context and the subject of discussion, which in this case is divorce. Men could pronounce divorce arbitrarily. The husband is the one responsible for maintaining the woman during the waiting period (*iddah*),⁷ so he has the first option to rescind the provision of divorce (Asad, 1980:50). Interpreting this verse outside the context and subject of divorce renders a nullity all the verses of the Qur'an and *ahadith* that speak of the equality of sexes (Wadud-Muhsin, 1992:68).

Other Qur'anic verses that are fundamental to the debate on the superiority of men over women relate to economic maintenance and protection (4:34); reasoning and argumentation (43:18); law of inheritance (4:11-12, 176); polygyny [polygamy] (4:3), divorce (2:228-235; 4:35, 130; 33:49; 65:6) and the view that the testimony of one man is equivalent to that of two women in a court of law (2:282). The issues of some of these verses have been mentioned earlier and others will be alluded to later in this chapter. However, it is important to provide some details about some of the verses at this juncture.

Chapter 4:34 is interpreted by the traditional exegists to mean the superiority of men over women to the extent that since man is the provider and protector of woman, the latter should be obedient to the former. As discussed later in this chapter, this verse has been used, to justify the chastisement of a wife by her husband. Above all, the verse has been used as Islamic basis to render women into a secondary and subservient position vis-à-vis men in some Muslim countries (Ammah, 1992:82). On the other hand, modern exegists

⁷ There are two types of *iddah*. *Iddah* of divorce and that of widowhood. The *iddah* of divorce (2:228) is three months that correspond to three monthly periods of menstruation (purity). But for those women who do not menstruate (because of old age or other reasons), then it is 3 months (65:4). *Iddah* for a pregnant woman is until she delivers (65:4). Its purpose is to ascertain the possibility of pregnancy and hence the paternity of the unborn child. It also gives the couple time to reconsider their decision and possibly resume their marriage. The *iddah* of widowhood (2:234) is four months and ten days that correspond with four alternate periods of menstruation and purity combined.

have argued against the authoritative interpretation and manipulation of this verse arguing that men have been endowed with the economic responsibilities over women because of the biological composition of the genders. The argument is that, between a man and a woman, the latter is the only one who is capable of bearing children. Hence she should not be overburdened with other responsibilities of provision and sustenance (*ibid*, p.82).

Chapter 2:282 should be understood in the context of pre-Islamic Arabia where women rarely participated in the public affairs of the community. So they may not have had enough exposure to public issues. It could be argued that, “the Qur’an was, and is, therefore, emphasizing the correctness of testimony rather than the number who gave testimony” (*ibid*, p.78).

It has been mentioned at the beginning of this chapter that cultural lore and values influence interpretations of Islamic sources on the status of woman. Consequently, field research reveals that some of the verses mentioned above are [mis]interpreted to imply that men are superior to women (Mwalupa, OI, 30/9/98; Mambo, OI, 25/9/98). These views reflect the cultural perceptions of male dominance and not Islamic teachings. The same could be said of oral information that attests that a woman cannot be equal to a man since Eve (Hawa) was created from the rib of Adam (Ali, OI, 9/2/99). This argument has no justification from the Qur’an which is categorical that man and woman were created from the same soul (4:1; 23:12-14). Yet due to interpretation the Islamic teaching that shows that man and woman were created from the same nature has been thrown out of the window in favour of the rib theory. One wonders why the proponents of the superiority of men over women do not see the superiority of women in the rib theory. They could equally argue that the rib from which Hawa was created is superior to the clay from which Adam was created!

There is no inference that man was created before woman or that woman was created from man (Hassan, 1996:383). Nevertheless, the *hadith* literature apparently supposes that a woman was created from the rib of man. According to Hassan (1994:21), there are six *ahadith* attributed to imams al-Bukhari and Muslim which: “state that woman is either created from the rib or is like a rib that is crooked and can never be straightened”.

Incidentally, the six *ahadith* are attributed to one narrator, that is, Abu Hurairah. The “rib theory” cited by respondents therefore emanates from such *ahadith*. In one of those *ahadith* recorded in **Sahih al-Bukhari** (vol.4, p.346), the Prophet said:

Treat women nicely, for a woman is created from a rib, and the most curved portion of the rib is its upper portion. So, if you should try to straighten it, it will break, but if you leave it as it is, it will remain crooked. So treat women nicely.

Three versions of the above *hadith*, narrated by Abu Huraira, are recorded in **Sahih Muslim** (vol.2, p.752). The theme of this *hadith* is mainly to caution men on how to treat women. This is quite evident from the work of Al-Ghazali (1058-1111 AD) a leading Muslim philosopher and theologian. In his *magnum opus: Ihya Ulum ad-Din (The Revival of Religious Learning)*, he stresses on the *ahadith* on rib theory by saying: “a wife is like the crooked bone by the side of a husband. If you go to make it straight, it will break. If you leave it as it is, it will be more crooked”. It should be noted that al-Ghazali was sounding a warning to the men who in a fit of anger are likely to injure their wives. This implies that his allusions to the bone (rib) were not meant to show that a woman is inferior to man.

Despite the foregoing, there is differing opinion regarding the “rib theory”, to the effect that the *ahadith* do not refer to the creation of Adam and Eve *per se*. The teaching that should be derived from these *ahadith* is that men are supposed to treat their wives justly and with due consideration due to their constitution or physiology. This means that, the “rib theory” should be taken metaphorically (figuratively) and not literally, because it makes it clear that women are like ribs, not that they have been created from the ribs (Khan, 1995:30-31). Even if the rib theory as per the *hadith* was to be taken literally, it does not have any effect on the status of woman. This is because the same *hadith* enjoins men to treat women nicely. This implies that men should treat women nicely, the way they would like women to treat them.

The foregoing discussion shows that due to cultural underpinnings the Qur'an can be interpreted by those ignorant of the teachings of Islam to support the theory of superiority of man over woman. It is in this context that the *hadith* can be misinterpreted to support male dominance. A *hadith* that borders on misogyny and recorded by Bukhari could be

cited to express predominance of men over women in the hereafter. According to this *hadith* narrated by Usama, the Prophet said:

I stood at the gate of Paradise and saw that the majority of the people who entered it were the poor, while the wealthy were stopped at the gate (for their accounts). But the companions of the fire were ordered to be taken to the fire. Then I stood at the gate of the fire and saw that the majority of those who entered it were women (Sahih al-Bukhari, vol.vii, p.94).

The Qur'an (cf., 3:195; 4:32; 33:35) is categorical that a person's rewards will be determined by individual efforts in fulfilling the principles of Islam regardless of whether one is male or female. Apparently therefore, this *hadith*, may be seen to be weak by some people. It is noteworthy that the above *hadith* does not say that a woman will be put into hell fire because of her gender, but because of her wrong doings. The Prophet said that the majority of those in the hell fire will be women. This is something that had been revealed to him by God, as a consequence of their deeds.

It is worth noting that a rigorous process was involved in the codification of the *hadith* literature. To ascertain the accuracy of a *hadith* one of the methods used in *Hadith* criticism was to compare a certain *hadith* with a related text of the Qur'an. One of the general rules that could lead to the rejection of a *hadith* was if it contradicted the clear and obvious meanings of the Qur'an (Azami, 1977:72). Similarly, a *hadith* could be rejected and considered weak owing to defect in the narrator. According to Ibn Hajar (733 - 852 AD), one of the greatest scholars of *Hadith*, a *hadith* could be considered weak if the narrator was of the sixth to eighth grade and lower. His grading system that had twelve levels considered a *hadith* spurious if its narrator was ranked in the twelfth grade (*ibid*, pp.59-64). *Ahadith* could also be considered weak due to the discontinuity of the *isnad* (chain of transmitters) and incidental reasons. The latter refers to reversion in the naming of authority. This is where a *hadith* was attributed to someone else other than its real narrator, or reversion in the name or in the text by reversing the arrangement (*ibid*, p.66).

The foregoing shows that the significance of *ahadith* should not be held with the same weight. These are particularly the ones that seem to contradict the text of the Qur'an, and those containing exaggerated, contradicting and ridiculous statements attributed to the

Prophet, among others (see, *ibid*, p.72). Such *ahadith* could do much harm by distorting the essence of the Islamic message. It is such *ahadith* that are cited with relish by the opponents of equality of sexes to justify their arguments thus subscribing to the notion of superiority of males over females.

Proponents of the superiority of men cite a *hadith* that implies that women are deficient in knowledge. This *hadith* recorded in **Sahih al-Bukhari** and **Sahih Muslim** is narrated by *Abu Said al-Khudri* who reports that the Prophet had come out for either *idd ul-adha* or *idd ul-fitr* towards the praying place and passed some women. He said:

O assembly of women, give alms and verily I see majority of you as the inmates of Hell". They asked: "O' Messenger of Allah, for what?" He said: "You often take a curse and are ungrateful to companions. I have not seen ones lacking mind and religion taking the mind of the serious man away than one of you". They asked: "And what is the defect in our religion and intelligence, O' Messenger of Allah?" He said: "Is not the attestation of a woman like half of the attestation of a man?" "Yes", they said: And that is on account of her short intelligence. He said: "Does she not, when she menstruates, desist from praying and fasting?" "Yes", they said. He said: "That is on account of her defect in religion" (cited, Chaudhry, 1991:165).

The above *hadith* may be seen as having negatives overtones regarding the intelligence of a woman. Yet, it also indirectly point out a woman's witticism by the rejoinder: "I have not seen ones lacking mind and religion taking the mind of the serious man away than one of you".

Despite the foregoing, the *Hadith* could be used to demonstrate that a man's eternal rewards will be increased manifold if his wife was pleased with him and prayed for him:

Among his followers, the best of men are they who are best to their wives, and the best of women are they who are best to their husbands... to each of such women is set down the reward equivalent to the reward of a thousand martyrs (Siddiqi, 1984: 17-18)

On being challenged by Umar why women's rewards are ten times greater than men's, the Prophet replied:

Do you know that woman deserves greater reward than man? For verily, Almighty Allah exalts the position of a man in heaven, because his wife was pleased with him and prayed for him (*ibid*, p.17-14).

Clearly, some Muslims interpret the Qur'an and *Hadith* to support the argument that man is superior to woman. This notion of superiority stems from the belief that God gives men leadership and that is why they have been designated as guardians of women.

3.2.1.2 Education

The pursuit of knowledge and education was an important component of the revelation of the Qur'an. This is clearly shown by the first revelation (96:1-5):

Proclaim! (or read) in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher; who created –
created man, out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood: Proclaim! and thy
Lord is the most bountiful - He who taught (the use of) the pen - taught
man that which he knew not.

These verses are challenge to Muslims to take to literacy. The importance attached to education in Islam could be discerned from the Qur'an and *Hadith*. The Qur'an contains verses and expressions that stress the need for Muslims to acquire knowledge and seek education. These verses and expressions are ubiquitous in the Qur'an. A few examples could offer some explanations. Swearing by the pen highlights the value and dignity of knowledge (68:1-2). God is presented as the source of knowledge - wisdom - (2:269). Knowledge is identified with those who fear Allah (35:28). It is lack of true knowledge that makes people to revile the true God (6:108). Those who lack knowledge are ranked lower than the ones who possess it (39:9). Possession of knowledge and faith are prerequisites for the religion of Islam (58:11). It is knowledge that makes human beings superior to other creatures (2:31-34). It is instructive to note that the Qur'anic verses that enjoin Muslims to seek education, for example 3:18 and 58:11, are not gender specific. This implies that education is meant for all regardless of sex.

Just like the Qur'anic verses, *ahadith* contain messages that extol the importance of knowledge: "the men of knowledge are the inheritors of the prophets" and "he dies not who seeks knowledge" (cited, Maina, 1993:43). There is no limit in pursuance of knowledge and education. In this respect, in a *hadith* recorded by Ibn Majah, the Prophet urged Muslims to "seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave".

The *Hadith* literature also expresses the virtues of knowledge. In a *hadith* recorded in Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah, the Prophet is reported to have said: "the word wisdom is the lost property of a wise man so he has a better right to it" (*Mishkat ul-Masabih*, 1993, vol. 1, p.135). Similarly, the *hadith* shows that the pursuit of knowledge is far superior to

religious devotion. In a *hadith* recorded by Darimi and reported by Ibn Abbas, the Prophet said:

To listen to the instructions of science and learning for one hour is more meritorious than attending the funerals of a thousand martyrs, more meritorious than standing up in prayer for a thousand nights (cited, Maina, 1993:45).

According to a *hadith*, acquisition of knowledge is part of one's faith since it enhances one's devotion to God. In a *hadith* recorded in Tirmidhi and reported by Sakhbarah al-Azdi the Prophet said: "Whoever searches after knowledge, it will be expiation for his past sins" (Fazlul-Karim, 1997, Al-Hadis, vol.2).

The *Hadith* express the Prophet's high regard for education. It is with this regard that he made education obligatory to all Muslims, regardless of sex. This is illustrated by one of his oft-quoted *hadith* recorded by *ibn* Majah. Anas reported the Messenger of Allah saying:

The seeking of knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim and the imparting of the knowledge to the non-deserving is like putting on necklaces of jewels, pearls and gold around the necks of swine (Mishkat-ul-Masabih, Vol.1, p.136).

Islam's attitude to female education could be gathered from *ahadith*. In a *hadith* reported by Abdullah bin Masoud, the Prophet said:

If a daughter is born to a person and he brings her up, gives her a good education and trains her in the arts of life, I shall myself stand between him and hellfire (Kanz al-'Ummal, p.277, cited, Siddiqi, 1992a:16).

Parents who pay attention to the education of daughters will earn rewards in the hereafter. In a *hadith* recorded in **Sunan Abu Dawud and Sahih Muslim** and reported by Anas bin Malik, the Prophet is reported to have said: "whoever brings up three girls, teaches them culture and good manners, marries them and treats them well, for him is paradise" (**Sahih Muslim** [Summarised] cited, Chaudhry, 1991:119). The same applied to education of slave girls. The Prophet instructed Muslims to educate slave girls and then emancipate them. A *hadith* recorded by Bukhari and Muslim says:

If a person has a slave girl, then he educates her liberally and trains her in the best manner and culture, then he sets her free and marries her, he has a double reward [from his Lord]" (**Sahih al-Bukhari**, vol.1, p.788).

It is therefore evident that the Prophet's positive attitude towards the girl child was a complete departure from the abuses that were meted on her during the days of *jahiliyya* (ignorance). This attitude was generally extended to entire women's folk as expressed by

the Prophet's teachings on equality between men and women in education. He entertained questions and inquiries from men and women alike (Siddiqi, 1992). The *sahabiyat* who learned the Qur'an requested the Prophet to set aside additional time to teach them so that they could catch up with men. The Prophet obliged and spared time to instruct women whenever he felt that they were getting a raw deal (Ibrahim, 1987; Ahmed, 1992). According to **Sahih al-Bukhari**, Abu Said al-Khudri reported that some women complained to the Prophet:

Men are always gathered in your presence, and we cannot benefit. Therefore, appoint one day for us. So the Prophet fixed one day for them, during which he would go to them and listened to their problems, gave solutions and instructions regarding their religious, social and family obligations (**Sahih al-Bukhari**, vol.1, p.78).

Men were instructed to teach their wives about religion. It is recorded in **Sahih al-Bukhari** and reported by Malik *bin* Huwayrith that there was a time the Prophet stayed with young men for some days acquiring knowledge from him. On their departure he instructed them: Return home to your wives and children and stay with them. Teach them (what you have learnt) and ask them to act upon it" (Chaudhry, 1991:123; Doi, 1996:139).

In another similar *hadith*, the Prophet sanctioned the marriage of a woman to a man who had nothing to offer in dowry. He instructed the man to teach the woman some verses of the Qur'an that he knew and that sufficed for dowry (**Sahih al-Bukhari**, vol.7; cf., Chaudhry, 1991:121; Doi, 1996:139).

The Prophet's value for education of women is not only evident from the advice he gave men about their wives, and daughters, he also set a good example. He encouraged his wife Hafsa to continue with education that she had disregarded when she married him. He requested Shifa *binti* Abdillah who taught writing and reading skills to teach Hafsa: "would you not teach Hafsa calligraphy as you taught her how to write?" (Ibrahim, 1987:33; Al-Faruqi,1991:37). He also told Ayesha: "O Ayesha make knowledge and the Qur'an your slogan" (Ibrahim, 1987:33). Muhammad also used to send teachers to instruct women. It is reported by Umm Atiyyah from **Sahih Bukhari** that when the Prophet went to Medina, he ordered the Ansar women to gather in one house for purposes of instruction. He sent Umar to instruct them in Islam (Chaudhry, 1991:123; Doi,

1996:139). The Ansar women were well known for their incisive inquiry and spirit of learning (Siddiqi, 1992a:18).

The importance the Qur'an and *Hadith* attach to education prompts the various schools of law to opine that education is a right of a woman over her husband. If the man does not avail education to his wife, then she has a choice of acquiring it from whichever source (Ibrahim, 1987:33; Doi, 1996:39). For example, according to Maliki scholars:

If a woman demands her right to religious education⁸ from her husband, and brings the issue before a judge she is justified in demanding this right because it is her right that either her husband should teach her or allow her to go elsewhere to acquire education. The judge must compel the husband to fulfil her demand in the same way that he would in the matter of her worldly rights since her right in matters of religion are most essential and important (Doi, 1996:139).

The tradition of learning and scholarship established by the Prophet continued during his life time, that of his companions (*sahaba*) and of the companions of the companions (*tabi'um*). Accordingly, during the early period of Islam, women exercised their rights to education. They contributed enormously in teaching and dissemination of the knowledge of the Qur'an and *Summa*. The exemplification of these women was the wives of the Prophet, so called the Mothers of Believers, and women *sahabiyat*. In this regard, Ayesha was the most notable of the wives of the Prophet. She survived the Prophet, living for fifty years after him. She was well known for her strong will, versatility, penetrating intellect and sharp memory. Ayesha was quite articulate and her aptitude enabled her to discuss any topic with the Prophet. She was an expert in various branches of learning that included Qur'anic Exegesis (*Tafsir*), *Hadith* and *Fiqh*, Poetry, Medicine, Theology and Mathematics. She was ranked fourth as an authority in *Fiqh* after Umar, Ali and Ibn Masoud (Chaudhry, 1991:125). She was one of the foremost sources and transmitters of *Hadith*. She is ranked the fourth narrator of *Hadith* after Abu Hurairah, Abdallah bin Umar and Anas (Chaudhry, 1991:125; Doi, 1996:140). She contributed 2,210 *ahadith* out of which 300 are included in **Sahih al-Bukhari** and **Sahih Muslim** (Ahmed, 1992:73;

⁸ In principle, education in Islam is not dichotomised into religious and secular. On the other hand, knowledge is categorized into revealed knowledge and acquired knowledge. Revealed knowledge is quintessence for Muslim guidance and salvation. It is obligatory (*faradh ayn*) to all Muslims, while acquired knowledge is a collective obligation (*faradh kifaya*). The bifurcation of Muslim education into secular and religious is a product of centuries of Western colonialism on Muslim societies that established separate institutions for both secular and religious education.

Mernissi, 1991:77; Mernissi, 1996:93; Doi, 1996:140). These two are the most authentic collections of *Hadith*.

Ayesha's role and importance in the codification of *Hadith* literature are evident. The *sahaba* and the *tabi'un* and other believers used to consult her on matters of belief. Those who sought her counsel expressed her knowledge of law:

I have seen groups of the most eminent companions of the Prophet ask her questions concerning *faraidh* - knowledge of distributing inheritance - rituals, daily duties of a Muslim etc. ... and Ayesha was among all the people, the one who had the knowledge of *fiqh* (jurisprudence). (Ibrahim, 1987:33; Mernissi, 1991:70; cf. El-Saadawi, 1980: 131).

Ayesha's testimonies over pertinent issues of the *Sunna* about prayer and method of reciting the Qur'an were paramount (Ahmed, 1992:73). Her contribution to the intellectual and historical development of Islam was immense. Famous scholars among the *sahaba* and *tabi'un* benefited from her wealth of knowledge and wisdom. Among them was Amr bin al Aas, Qasim bin Muhammad, Abdullah bin Zubair, Abu Musa al-Ashari, Said bin al-Musayyab and Alqamah bin Qays (Doi, 1996:141).

Other wives of Prophet whose influence in education was notably felt were Umm Salama and Safiyyah. Umm Salama was regarded as "a woman of very sound judgment and rapid power of reasoning and unparalleled ability to formulate correct opinions" (Mernissi, 1991:115). She was the one who asked the Prophet the-all-important question: "why is it that you men should be mentioned in the Qur'an while women are ignored?" (*Tafsir al-Tabari*, vol.xxii p.10, cited, Mernissi, 1996:81; Ahmed, 1992:72). The response to her question came in form of revelation of Chapter 33:35. This way Umm Salama shaped the nature of the revelations of the Qur'an. Equally, she had committed the entire Qur'an into memory and was an authoritative source of *Hadith*. (Chaudhry, 1991:124). About thirty-two eminent scholars learnt *ahadith* from her, and recounted them on her authority (Doi, 1996:142). She was also an expert in *Fiqh*. Many scholars consulted her on legal issues (Chaudhry, 1991:124; Doi, 1996:142). Safiyya was an expert in *Fiqh* from whom many women sought and acquired the knowledge of family relations and menstruation (Doi, 1996:141).

Besides the wives of the Prophet, there were many women *sahabiyat* who made a mark in the realm of education during the early period of Islam. Among them were: Umm Atiyyah, Ayesha *binti* Saad *ibn* Abi Waqqas, Sayyida Nafisa, Umrah *binti* Abdur Rahman, Fatima *binti* Qays, Umm Ad-Darda, Umm Hani al-Huriniyyah, Nashwan *binti* Abdullah al-Kinani, Hajar *binti* Muhammad al-Qudsi, Umm Salim, and al-Khansa among many others (Ibrahim, 1987:33; Doi, 1996:142-144). These women excelled in various branches of learning and scholarship such as Qur'an, *Hadith*, Literature, Rhetoric, Poetry, *Fiqh* and Theology. Other women were famous *sufis* (Muslim mystics). For example, Sheikha Shuhda an 11th century AD (5th century AH) scholar was styled "the pride of women" for expertise in Literature, Rhetoric, Poetry, *Hadith* and History. Many *ulama'a* flocked to her public lectures (Ibrahim, 1987:33).

Our discussion above has shown the examples of women who excelled in various branches of learning in the early period of Islam. This demonstrates that early Muslims, men and women, put into practice the teachings of the Qur'an and *Hadith* concerning pursuance of knowledge and education. In retrospect, it could rightly be argued that women in Islamic tradition exercised their rights to education. That this has not always been the case has nothing to do with the spirit of Islam.

As earlier mentioned, the importance of female education in Islam has prompted various law schools to make it a right of a woman over her spouse. It is therefore obvious that education rights of a woman over her husband are similar to the rights of maintenance and protection that are enjoined by Islam. Like all other aspects of life in Islam, education *per se* is not dichotomised into religious and secular. It should be noted that neither the Qur'an (for example, 20:114; 58:11) nor the *Hadith*, define the kind of education or knowledge that Muslims: men and women, should acquire or seek. As a way of life, Islam is supposed to offer guidance in all spheres. In that case, education is inseparable from religion. According to the Qur'an and *Hadith*, a woman should acquire all types of knowledge and education. Nevertheless some scholars opine that a woman's education should be geared to her roles of homemaking and care taking:

Education is important for a woman in order for her to learn about her rights, and particularly the education that is fundamental to her basic area of home management,

training and bringing up of children. Education should prepare her to become good wife, good mother and good housekeeper (Chaudhry, 1991:123).

Once a woman has acquired the education expedient to her domestic roles, she could pursue other branches of education to broaden her outlook to life (Mawdudi, 1995:199). This conservative posture hinges on interpretations of Islam on the role of women in society. It is shown in the next section of this chapter that the definition of roles in a Muslim community influences girls' access to education. This is because, in some conservative quarters, education is tied to the future roles of boys and girls. Education of boys is considered imperative in promoting their future roles as breadwinners for the family, and leaders of society. Conversely, girls' education is important for their future role as mothers. This conservative voice seems to relegate girls' education to the periphery. Some respondents observed that boys and girls should be educated, but if it is only possible to educate one, then a "girl should be educated because educating one girl is like educating a whole nation" (Hussein, OI, 26/2/99). The need to educate girls seems to border on empty rhetoric and sloganeering. This is because tying the education of girls to the role of motherhood limits their educational horizons (*vide infra*, 3.3.3).

The general opinion of Muslims in the area of study is that, since boys and girls have the same potentials, they should equally be provided with education. It is only through education that a girl will stake the claim to her rightful status in society:

Education gives a woman status. Denying girls education would be tantamount to discriminating against them. Males and females are equal before Allah; they only differ physically since their intellectual capacity is the same. No one is born intellectually inferior. There is a need for a balanced *ummah* (community), that means educating boys and girls (Mwenda, OI, 6/3/99).

3.2.1.3 Marriage

Marriage is a religious duty in Islam. Various schools of Sunni law are agreed that it is incumbent upon men to marry unless they are encumbered with physical and economic difficulties (Siddiqi, 1992a). Evidently, there are conditions for marriage depending on various schools of law, Sunni or Shia, and their interpretations. A man should marry if he cannot control his sexual desires, and if he has the means or wherewithal to maintain a family (Doi, 1996:35). Poverty however should not necessarily be a deterrent to marriage since God is capable of providing for every creature. Similarly, marriage is compulsory

for a woman who does not have means of maintaining herself and whose sexual needs may cause her to fornicate. An oral respondent observed that: "when a Muslim woman does not have any important thing to do and cannot earn a living, she could be married to curb prostitution" (Shec, OI, 29/2/99).

The Qur'an gives guidelines on marriage. For example, men should marry chaste wives (24; 5:5). A man should not contract marriage with a woman who is already married (4:24). In addition, the Qur'an stipulates the degrees or categories of prohibited marriage partners (4:22-24). In other words, marriage is forbidden with *maharim* (sing. *mahrām*). These are the non-inmarriageable persons par excellence. They are one's female ascendants and descendants, sister and the female descendants of one's sister and brother, one's paternal and maternal aunts and sisters and aunts of the ascendants, one's mother-in-law, and the other female ascendants of one's wife (if the marriage with the wife has been consummated). It is permitted to marry one's first cousin (4:22-24; Schacht, 1964:162).

While a man can contract a marriage with a believing woman from the People of the Book, that is a Christian and Jew, a Muslim woman is prohibited from marrying a Jewish and (or) a Christian man. The basis of this regulation is the Qur'an 5:5 and 2:221 (cf., 60:10):

This day are (all) things good and pure made lawful unto you. The food of the People of the Book is lawful unto you and yours is lawful unto them. (Lawful unto you in marriage) are (not only) chaste women who are believers, but chaste women among the people of the Book, revealed before your time - when ye give them their due dowers, and desire chastity, not lewdness... (5:5).

Do not marry unbelieving women until they believe: A slave woman who believes is better than an unbelieving woman. Even though she allure you. Nor marry (your girls) to unbelievers until they believe. A man slave who believes is better than an unbeliever even though he allure you... (2:221, cf., 60:10).

A Muslim man's dispensation to marry a non-Muslim (Jewish or Christian) woman and lack of reciprocity for Muslim woman could be interpreted as a contradiction of the assumed equality of sexes, sexual exploitation and subordination of women in Islam (Abdalati, 1977:141). According to Abdalati (1977:139-145), a man is offered this privilege because of some of the following reasons. Firstly, men are designated as the *Qawwamun*, that is, protectors and maintainers of women and managers of their affairs. A man therefore is the one responsible for the spiritual upbringing of his children. Secondly,

by marrying a non-Muslim woman, the man may extend his goodwill and that of Islam towards non-Muslims who may understand Islam better and thus discard the misconceptions that they may have hitherto about Islam. Thirdly, a non-Muslim woman who marries a Muslim man who honours, cherishes and respects her rights might reciprocate this good will and convert to Islam. This would be an indirect way of enlarging the *ummah*. Similarly, if a Muslim woman marries a non-Muslim man, she may convert to the religion of her husband. That would be a loss to the *ummah*.

A Muslim man's right to marry a non-Muslim woman without the same applying to the Muslim woman should not be viewed as denial of rights for the latter. This is because the reasons given above are meant to safeguard society for the common good for all her people. This is in view of the fact that if a Muslim woman married a non-Muslim man, her status, as a Muslim would change, since ordinarily, the wife takes the nationality of the man. In addition, a Muslim woman who marries a non-Muslim may be unable to exercise her Islamic rights within the marriage bond.

According to the *Hadith* literature, marriage is a religious duty. Men and women are enjoined to enter into marriage. In a *hadith* transmitted by Baihaqi and reported by Anas, the Prophet said: "when a man has married, he has indeed made his religion half perfect. Then let him fear Allah for the remaining half" (Hakim, vol.2, No.175, cited, Abdalati, 1977:52; Siddiqi, 1984:28; Ahmed, 1990:58; Doi, 1996:32).

Muslims enter into matrimonial relationships because by doing so "they complete half of their faith". This is the oft-quoted *hadith* to explain why marriage is important to Muslims. Marriage is *sunna* of the Prophet. By practicing it, Muslims simply follow the example of the Prophet. In a *hadith* recorded in **Sahih al-Bukhari** the Prophet declared marriage to be one of the most sacred practices and said: "whoever dislikes my way of life is not of me", or "marriage is my *sunna*, whoever keeps away from it is not from me" (**Sahih al-Bukhari**, vol.2, p.703). It is for this reason that the Prophet denounced asceticism and discouraged celibacy (**Sahih Muslim**, vol.2, p.104).⁹ Accordingly, some

⁹ Sufism is the mystical dimension of Islam. It advocates asceticism. Sufis strictly renounce worldly possessions and pleasures and everything that stand between them and their devotion to God, such as

scholars argue that asceticism is alien to the *sunna* of the Prophet. The Prophet is said to have disapproved the ascetic tendencies of the three companions who attempted to exhibit such traits. One wanted to fast daily without breaking the fast. The other one wanted to stand the whole night in prayer without sleeping while the third wanted to remain a bachelor and not to approach women so that he could be nearer to God. In a *hadith* recorded in **Sahih al-Bukhari** and narrated by Anas bin Malik, the Prophet disapproved such behaviour by saying:

Are you the same people who said so-and-so? By Allah, I am more submissive to Allah and more afraid of him than you; yet I fast and break my fast, I do sleep and also marry women. So he who does not follow my tradition, is not from me [not one of my followers] (**Sahih al-Bukhari**, vol.7, pp.1-2).

As a religious duty, marriage is above all an act of piety. Like all religious duties, marriage has to be fulfilled by all those capable of meeting its responsibilities (Abdalati, 1977:52). The Qur'an describes marriage as a solemn covenant between Allah and the human parties on one hand, and between man and woman on the other hand (4:21). As an important socio-religious institution, the purpose of marriage is to provide companionship (30:21; 7:189), sexual and emotional gratification (2:223) and procreation (4:1). It is a moral safeguard against sexual promiscuity and immorality. A *hadith* reported by Abdullah and recorded in **Sahih al-Bukhari** (vol. 7, p.4) notes:

We were with the Prophet (p.b.u.h) while we were young and had no wealth whatever. So Allah's Apostle (p.b.u.h) said: O young people! Whoever among you can marry, should marry, because it helps him lower his gaze and guard his modesty (i.e. his private parts from committing illegal sexual intercourse etc) and whoever is not able to marry should fast, as fasting diminishes his sexual power.

The Prophet recognized the significance of marriage for society's survival and personality development. He urged young people who can marry to do so, and the ones who cannot to practice voluntary fasting. He is reported to have said:

O young men, those among you who can support a wife should marry, for it restrains eyes from casting (evil glances), and preserves one from immorality; but those who cannot should devote themselves to fasting for it is a means of controlling sexual desire (**Sahih Muslim**, vol.2, p. 703; cf., **Sahih al-Bukhari**, vol.7, p.3)

marriage. A Sufi's spiritual progress along the path (*tariqa*) requires one to detach himself (herself) completely from the carnal desires that are the cause of sensual temptations that derail a Sufi from attaining the ultimate goal. i.e. the Truth (*al-Haqq*). A Sufi trains himself (herself) through self-mortification in his (her) quest after mystical union with God. In spite of the Prophet's denunciation of asceticism, the early sufis considered him as the first *Sufi-sheikh*, in all but name, and their model and spiritual guide on the ascetic path (for details see Attar, 1966:1-3; Schimmel, 1975:17-28; Lings, 1975:101; Bhatnagar, 1984:3-25).

Under the circumstances, apparently single life where a person is averse to marriage and sex without any reason is discouraged in Islam. Those who forgo marriage should practice self-discipline and temporary abstinence to guard their moral integrity. Marriage controls profligate sexual habits by legitimising sexual intercourse. It helps men and women to lead chaste lives, protecting them from promiscuity and sexual indulgence. Marriage reduces the occurrences of social evils such as fornication, adultery and premarital pregnancies whose results are illegitimate children and single motherhood. Information gathered from the field indicates that marriage is important to a Muslim woman as she gets protection and security from her husband. A respondent succinctly put it that: "Marriage is important to a Muslim woman because a woman is like a flower who needs to be cherished, she needs the security a husband can provide" (Mambo, OI, 29/9/98).

This contention puts to rest any doubts about the possibility of single motherhood among Muslims. Mernissi candidly shows that single motherhood is foreign to the Muslim conception of a family: "The concept of an adolescent woman, menstruating and unmarried is so alien to the entire Muslim family system that it is either unimaginable or necessarily linked to *fitna* [social disorder]" (1996:166).

The importance of marriage to Muslims is tied to its purpose. Marriage promotes emotional well being and peace of mind. The Qur'an says:

And among His signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are signs for those who reflect (30:21).

Information adduced from the Qur'an and *hadith* literature reveals that marriage is a command from Allah. It is the foundation of the family, the basic unit of society. Within the institution of marriage, procreation leads to the propagation and perpetuation of the *ummah* and the human race. Marriage unites two disparate families and promotes friendship and cooperation as alluded to in the Qur'an: "it is He who has created man from water: then has He established relationships of lineage and marriage: for thy Lord has power [over all things]" (25:54).

Within the institution of marriage, a woman is in principle an equal partner in the development of, and promotion of emotional well-being, spiritual harmony and procreation (Badawi, 1983; Siddiqi, 1984; Mawdudi, 1995). Upon marriage, a woman does not lose her individuality. That is, she retains her maiden name and has rights to her money and real estate; rights to buy, sell, mortgage and lease her properties. In all these matters, the Islamic law recognizes a woman's rights to act on her behalf without the intervention of husband or father (Abdalati, 1977:163; Badawi, 1983:21; Pickthall, 1990:150).

One of the conditions of marriage in Islam is the giving of a dower (*mahr*) by the man to his bride. The dower is a marriage gift that symbolizes love and affection. It safeguards a woman's economic position after marriage. Dower is enjoined by the teachings of Islam. Its amount largely depends on the agreement between the parties concerned and is estimated according to customary standards (4:4, 19-21, 25; cf., 2:229, 236-37; Abdalati, 1977; Siddiqi, 1992a). Dower is requisite for marriage to be legitimate. The *Hadith* highlights the importance of dower. Ibn Umar reported the Prophet saying:

Allah's Messenger (PBUH) prohibited *Shighar* which means that a man gives his daughter in marriage on the condition that the other gives his daughter to him in marriage without any dower being paid by either (Sahih Muslim, vol.II, p.713).

Since marriage is a contract between man and woman, a woman should not be forced to marry without her consent. Though parents have a say in the choice of the marriage partner, the concerned parties should freely, without any duress grant their assent for a marriage to be binding. Indeed, there should be a direct proposal followed by a corresponding acceptance in the presence of two witnesses. Forced marriages are contrary to the spirit of Islam. As recorded in **Sunan Abu Dawud**, a girl protested to the Prophet when her father forced her to marry without her consent. The Prophet gave her a choice of either accepting the marriage or nullifying it. The girl responded: "actually, I accept this marriage but I wanted to let the women know that parents have no right to force a husband on them" (Badawi, 1983:17). In another *hadith* recorded by Bukhari and narrated by Abu Huraira, the Prophet said that the father or the guardian cannot give a virgin or a divorced woman in marriage without their consent: "a matron should not be given in

marriage except after consulting her; and a virgin should not be given in marriage except after her permission” (Sahih al-Bukhari, vol.7, pp.51-52).

A marriage requires good treatment and companionship for the partners. The relationship should be an epitome of love, mercy and interdependence between man and woman. The Qur’an expresses this: “they are your garments and ye are their garments” (2:187). The *Hadith* further preponderates on this relationship by calling on good treatment of wives. The Prophet used his example to demonstrate how men should treat their wives. In a *hadith* recorded by at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah, Ayesha reported the Prophet as saying:

Among my followers the best of men are they who are best to their wives, and the best of women are they who are best to their husbands... to each of such women is set down the reward equivalent to the reward of a thousand martyrs (Siddiqi, 1984:97).

Islam accentuates the need to respect parents and to treat them well (17:23). One of the oft-quoted *hadith* transmitted by An-Nasai stresses the joys of sweet motherhood: “paradise lies at the feet of the mothers” (cited, Siddiqi, 1984:18; Pickthall, 1990:150; *Islamic Future*, vol.xiii, no.73, p.8). Another *hadith* shows that respect for mother should come first and that she is the one who is entitled to be treated with the best companionship. Abu Huraira narrates:

A man came to Allah’s Apostle and said: “O Allah’s Apostle! who is more entitled to be treated with the best companionship by me?” The Prophet said, “your mother”. The man said, “who is next?” The Prophet said, “your mother”. The man further said, “who is next?” The Prophet said, “your mother”. The man asked for the fourth time, “who is next?” The Prophet said, “your father” (Sahih al-Bukhari, vol.8, p.2).

3.2.1.4 Patriarchal Ideology and Gender Roles

Patriarchy is defined as the rule (power) of the fathers. It is an ideology of domination by the male over the female. In this case, men exercise their authority (power) over women. Patriarchy has been advanced as a theoretical explanation for the subordination of women (Coward, 1983:272). Patriarchal ideology is practically reproduced in most societies. Within a patriarchal society, woman’s status and access to means of economic production, education, politics and privileges, are determined by the male authority. In addition, there are two distinctive domains: the male and the female. The male’s is the one of power, while the female’s is subservient. Women are conditioned to their status through sex role stereotyping. They are supposed to operate within the rules of patriarchy

by subscribing to their roles. Failure to that, they are labelled aberrant, undesirable or pathological (*ibid*, p. 7). Patriarchal values are transmitted in the home, places of work, school, church, mosque, and in the print and electronic media.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of a Muslim society is its patriarchal nature (Al-Faruqi, 1991:43). The Qur'an calls for a society that assigns ultimate leadership (authority) and decision-making in the family to men (*ibid*, p.43). In a Muslim community, the basis of patriarchy, are the socio-cultural norms on male domination. As a result some Muslims misinterpret some verses of the Qur'an such as 2:228 and 4:34 to justify male domination that is the essence of patriarchal ideology.

The teachings of the Qur'an give clear guidelines regarding the definition of roles for both men and women in a Muslim family. Chapter 4:34 is precise on the definition of roles:

Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard in (the husband's) absence what Allah would have them guard (cf., 65:7).

The above verse is fundamental in regulating the division of roles in a Muslim family (Mernissi, 1996:68). It thus spells out clearly that a man is the breadwinner and head of the family as much as the wife is its neck. Therefore, it also follows, if the man is king, the wife is queen and none can exist without the other. As a breadwinner, he shoulders all the responsibilities regarding the provision of the basic necessities: food, clothing, residence, and all other provisions according to his financial ability. He should also offer security and protection to his household. However, the responsibility of providing and maintaining the family should be taken as a burden not a favour.¹⁰ The *Hadith* reinforces the notion that, man is the provider. The Prophet is reported to have said: "sufficient for the sin of a man is not to fulfil his duties of maintenance for which he is responsible". The Prophet warned of the consequences of dereliction toward the duty of maintenance:

The freeing of a man from his family is like that of a slave from his master. His prayer and fast are not accepted till he returns. He who neglects to do his

¹⁰ If a woman happens to be better endowed financially than the man, especially, if he does not have a source of income, the woman would automatically become the breadwinner. If a man is unable to provide for the family, then he contravenes the teachings of Islam. This is because, it is not recommended for such a person to marry before he is in a position to maintain and keep a family. The *ahadith* on the significance of marriage cited in this section attests to this fact.

duty of maintenance is like freeing man even though he remains present (cited, Fazlul-Karim, 1996:26).

Due to the role bestowed to man in maintaining his family, he has been designated the guardian. The *hadith* says: “the man is the ruler over his wife and children and is answerable to Allah for the conduct of their affairs” (cited, Mawdudi, 1995:190). The man should therefore devote himself to the service of his wife and children, and all the other people who depend on him.

Essentially, provision does not imply superiority of man over woman since the wife is the ruler of her husband’s house in his absence. The “degree of responsibility” (2:228) that was previously mentioned and later discussed in this chapter does not relate to any increased or exalted status of a man vis-à-vis woman. This degree is based on the responsibility that men have of protecting, maintaining and providing for the family (Iqbal, 1989:17).

A husband does not have rights to the earnings, savings or the property of his wife. The right of a wife over her husband in regard to economic maintenance is further established by the *Hadith* literature. In a *hadith* recorded by Abu Dawud, Ahmad and Ibn Majah, Hakim bin Muawiyah reported from his father:

I asked: O’ Messenger of Allah! What right has the wife of one among us got over him? He said: “it is that you shall give her food when you have taken your food, that you shall clothe her when you have clothed yourself, that you shall not slap her on the face, nor revile (her), nor leave (her) alone except within the house (Siddiqi, 1984:110; Chaudhry, 1991:65).

Notably, the passages of the Qur’an and *hadith* that define the man as breadwinner and the head of the family do not mean the subjugation of women and despotism over them. Al-Faruqi (1991:44) contends that: “such an interpretation shows a blatant disregard of the Qur’an’s repeated calls for equality of sexes and for its command to show respect and kindness to women”. She further argues that the essence of male guardianship in a Muslim society is to remove the possibility of disagreements and divisions in the family.

In the wider social context, a man’s role and authority in the family is transferred to society. He is the leader and guardian of society’s norms and values. Granted that man is the breadwinner, the woman is the homemaker and caretaker. She should devote herself to the service of her husband and raising children. She is best placed as a mother to bring

happiness to the husband and to promote physical, educational and spiritual development of her children and family (Lemu & Heeren, 1978; Siddiqi, 1992; Doi, 1996).

According to Mawdudi (1995), the real place of a woman is the home where she is the indisputable queen. She has been exempted from out-door activities, so that she may lead “a dignified and peaceful life” at home and execute her domestic responsibilities. In principle, Islam allows a woman to venture out to earn a living in case of necessity. This is the case where she seeks employment in response to pressing economic difficulties occasioned by absence of a man or the income of the man is not enough to take care of her economic and material needs. However, she should return after the day’s work to shoulder the domestic responsibilities. In the minds of most conservative people, these responsibilities are as important as breadwinning (El-Saadawi, 1980). Otherwise, a woman’s activities outside the house are seen as compromising her role as homemaker and caretaker if there is no necessity for her to work outside (Siddiqi, 1992a; Mawdudi, 1995). Oral information attests to ideological division of gender roles in domestic economy: “the place of a woman is the home to take care of children; she should not go out to look for food, if she has no need to, as that means playing the role of the husband who is the breadwinner and head of the household” (Ghalib, OI, 5/10/98).

Thus the noble role of a woman in Islam is that of a mother and wife. That is the first, holy and most important mission of a woman (Haddad & Smith, 1996:145). By all means, this task is considered as having the same weight with breadwinning or even more. In a *hadith* transmitted by Bukhari and narrated by Ibn Umar, the Prophet said:

All of you are guardians and are responsible for your wards. The ruler is a guardian and the man is a guardian of his family; the lady is a guardian and is responsible for the husband’s house and his offspring; and so all of you are guardians and are responsible for your wards” (Sahih al-Bukhari, vol.7, p.98).

That being the case, some ideologues argue that as a provider and head of the family, a man is *ipso facto* the decision maker. He is responsible for the family conduct. The wife and children are supposed to obey him so long as he is within the limits of religion (cf., 4:34). This means that the wife should disobey the husband who exercises authority outside the context of the teachings of Islam. Yet owing to cultural ethos of male domination, some people could interpret obedience to imply subservience of the woman

to the husband. Although the wife may be party to decision making within the household, by giving her opinions, the best role she can play is to:

Recognize her husband as the person responsible for running of the affairs of the family, and thus to obey him ... in a particular matter provided he does not go beyond the limits of Islam (Lemu & Heeren, 1978:18).

The *ahadith* express the qualities and virtues of a good wife. She is the one who is obedient to her husband. In a *hadith* transmitted by Abu Nasai (**Kitab al-nikah**), the best woman is:

One who makes her husband happy when he sees her, who obeys her husband when he asks her for anything and who does not do anything against his will as regards either herself or his wealth (cited, Khan, 1995:89).

A virtuous (pious) wife is depicted as the most precious thing that befits a man: In a *hadith* transmitted by Muslim and Ibn Majah, the Prophet is reported to have said: "the whole world is a provision, and the best object of benefit of the world is the pious woman" (**Sahih Muslim**, vol.2, p.752; cf., Mawdudi, 1995:202).

Obedience to the husband is one of the qualities that can earn a woman's reward of paradise. In a *hadith* recorded by at-Tirmidhi, Umm Salama reported the Prophet saying: "any lady who dies when her husband is pleased with her, will enter paradise."

A man has the authority to discipline his recalcitrant wife (cf., 4:15). The recourse that a man should take against his rebellious wife is stipulated in the Qur'an. This is admonishing, followed by suspension of conjugal relations, and finally, a light beating (4:34). *Nashiz* is a wife who rebels, and confronts her husband by word or action. The rebellion of a wife against a husband's authority is called *nushuz* (Mernissi, 1987a:95; Mernissi, 1996:109). Muslim commentators observe that *nushuz* is a rebellion by women, a refusal to obey their husbands in the matter of sex act. Asad (1980:109) a commentator of the Qur'an, defines *nushuz* as rebellion that comprises every kind of deliberate bad behaviour of a wife towards her husband or of a husband towards his wife. In case of the wife, it implies a deliberate, persistent breach of her marital obligations. Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari (d.923 AD), a leading Qur'an exegete says in this regard:

Al-nushuz means that the wife treats her husband with arrogance, refuses to join him in the marital bed. It is an expression of disobedience and an obvious unwillingness to any longer carry out what obedience to the husband requires. It is a way of showing hatred and opposition to the husband (Mernissi, 1991:156)

The concept of *nushuz* has generated various opinions and interpretations among scholars and commentators. Some Muslims take 4:34 literally to justify male supremacy and violence against women (Mernissi, 1991:156-157). Such people forget that according to Asad's definition, a man is also *nashiz*. In this case, if a man becomes so, the wife has a right to divorce him. Hence male supremacy is contested. Doi (1996) argues that wife beating is discouraged but if a wife's behaviour contravenes the injunctions of religion, chastising or light beating becomes inevitable. Mernissi (1996:153-160) provides an exposition of what constitutes *nashiz* and *nushuz* and a man's authority to chastise his recalcitrant wife. She has done this excellently by looking at the interpretations of verse 4:34 by al-Tabari who notes:

The verse saying that "men are the protectors and maintainers of women" means that they can discipline them, put them in their place when it comes to their duties toward God and toward their husband. This is because Allah has given authority to some of you over others (*ibid*, p.158).

One school of thought argues that, since a woman is subservient to her husband, she should obey him without question, even in matters of sex. It continues to argue that a man's authority is derived from the dower that he pays to the wife and his provisions to her in marriage. On the basis of that, the husband's words hold sway in case of a disagreement. Therefore, he can beat his wife for recalcitrance (Mernissi, 1991; Haddad & Smith, 1996).

It should however be noted that the Prophet detested violence toward women and forbid it on several occasions. This is evident from the *ahadith*. In a *hadith* recorded by Bukhari and Muslim, the Prophet is reported to have said concerning wife beating: "could any of you beat his wife as he would beat a slave and then lie with her in the evening?" (Asad, 1980). In another *hadith* recorded by Abu Dawud, Ahmad *bin* Hanbal, Nasai and Ibn Majah, and reported on the authority of Iyas ibn Abdallah, the Prophet generally forbid the beating of women in these words: "never beat God's hand maidens" (*ibid*, p.110). The Prophet set a good example in all these. He never at any time beat any of his wives, slave or any person. When he experienced a domestic revolt from his wives, he did not beat them. Instead he decided to leave his home and for almost a month he lived in a room near the mosque (Mernissi, 1991:157). This gesture demonstrates that the Prophet did not

approve of wife beating, a recourse, he could have taken himself. Ibn Sa'ad another Qur'anic exegete re-emphasizes the Prophet's opposition to wife beating by noting that:

The Prophet had always persisted in his opposition to the beating of women. And men came to the Prophet to complain about women. Then he gave them permission while saying: "I cannot bear seeing a quick-tempered man beat his wife in a fit of anger (Ibn Sa'd's *Tabaqat*, vol. 8, p.204, cited Memissi, 1991:157).

This quotation should not be taken as evidence of the Prophet's approval of violence towards women. On the contrary, it should be seen in the light of patriarchal Arabia and the pressure that was put to bear on the Prophet by men who were always complaining about their wives. They renounced the Prophet's opposition to wife beating as many women were now rebelling against their husbands (*ibid*, p.156). These people could not understand the Prophet's leniency towards women. When verse 34 of chapter 4 was revealed authorizing the beating of an obstinate wife, the Prophet reportedly said: "I wanted one thing but God, has willed another thing - and what God has willed is the best" (Asad, 1980:110). He therefore advised his followers: "very well, beat them, but only the worst ones among you will have recourse to such methods" (Ibn Sa'd's *Tabaqat*, vol. 204, cited Memissi, 1991:157). This *hadith* is found in Muslim, Tirmidhi, Abu Dawud, Nasai and Ibn Majah (Asad, 1980:110)

In his sermon during the farewell pilgrimage, the Prophet touched on the issue of wife beating and said that it is a last resort and only if the wife "has become guilty in an obvious manner, of immoral conduct" and should be done in such a way as not to cause pain or leave a mark on her body" (Farid, 1969:201; Asad, 1980:110). Siddiqi (1984:113-114) underlines the Prophet's recommendations on this issue with following words:

And be careful of your duty to Allah in the matter of women, for you have taken them as the trust of Allah... and they owe to you this obligation that they will not allow any one to come into your house whom you do not like. If they do, then give them slight corporal punishment that may not leave any effect on their bodies.

From the various *ahadith*, leading commentators and authorities on Islamic law underscore the Prophet's stance on the problem of wife beating. They emphasize that if it has to take place at all, it should be symbolic. According to al-Tabari, the beating should be done with a toothbrush. Other authorities mention a folded handkerchief or such like thing. Imam Shafi'i the founder of the Shafi'i school of Sunni law says that wife beating is "just barely permissible, and should preferably be avoided" (Asad, 1980:110).

We could revisit the roles of men and women by pointing out that Islam ascribes roles within the household and society according to gender. It also delimits the social space and sphere of activity for men and women. As a breadwinner, the sphere of activity of a man is the public. The domain of a woman is private. Despite that, Islamic discourse does not hold it obligatory for a woman to perform household duties. It is recommended that a woman does the routine work for the welfare and stability of the family (Abdalati, 1977; Badawi, 1983; Siddiqi, 1992a). This is a paradox in view of the division of roles between men and women as earlier discussed. The paradox is further compounded by reality in which childbearing has been considered the primary function of a woman. The question is, how does a woman separate mothering from its concomitant duties of house keeping? Should a man perform household duties, yet his role is to provide? There is no term in the Qur'an that indicates that a woman's function is only to be a mother or that her role should be restricted to childbearing. Nevertheless, the Islamic definition of roles on the basis of sex has led to a restrictive notion of women's roles:

Because a woman's primary distinction is on the basis of her childbearing ability, it is seen as her primary function. This has had negative connotations in that it has been held to imply that women can only be mothers. Hence a woman's entire upbringing must be to cultivate devoted wives and ideal mothers in preparation for child bearing (Wadud-Muhsin, 1991:64).

The Islamic conception of the role of women has shaped the overall attitude towards women and this has affected their status. Information gathered from the field clearly shows that the roles of men and women are determined: "something like taking care of the house and anything to do with the kitchen should be done by women only! Why should a man cook, when there is a woman in the house? (Nassir, OI, 9/10/98).

The role of a woman is restricted to the house so much that, if she is married by a working spouse, she should not go out to look for food. If a woman does to the contrary, she will be playing the role of a man. This school of thought presupposes that a woman should not work to complement the husband's income in maintaining the family. This would save the woman from the trauma of working to feed the family. Only poor women should go out and work to feed themselves. A respectable man should provide for his family. A woman does need to work to feed the family. In any case, it has been pointed

out that from an Islamic viewpoint, it is not recommended to marry until one is well disposed to feed and maintain the family.

Critics of women's role in the public domain advocate for a total ban on women through seclusion, which is against the teachings of Islam (*vide infra*, Chapter Four). These critics base their arguments on what Amawi (1996) calls "ideology of domesticity". The ideology centres on the family as the essential unit of society. It stipulates that within the family and society, the roles of males and females are circumscribed. Men are the breadwinners and manage the affairs of state, while women are homemakers. The ideology of domesticity is linked to that of gender differences. Thus the physical, psychological and biological differences between sexes are wrongly understood as differences in intellectual and social potentials (Amawi, 1996:153). The two ideologies premise that, a woman's ability to reason is limited compared to that of a man. Those who subscribe to the two ideologies argue that during menstruation and pregnancy, a woman is easily irritated, gets furious and could behave wildly. Under such circumstances, a woman cannot perform work of physical and mental exertions and her power to concentrate and mental abilities suffer a set back (Siddiqi, 1992:12-15; Mawdudi, 1995:149-152). Her emotional state makes her susceptible to influences, views and propaganda (Amawi, 1996:153). Consequent to the foregoing, certain ideologues regard the female sex as dangerous because of the susceptibility of men to female lures. The danger inherent therein makes female domesticity imperative.

It is evident that through the definition of roles for men and women, Islam attaches equal importance to both private and public domains of activity. There is nothing to suggest that Islamic teachings attach more significance to the roles that men perform in the public domain at the expense of women's roles in the private domain.

3.2.1.5 Inheritance

Islam grants woman rights of inheritance that were non-existent in pre-Islamic Arabia. A female's share is largely half that of male. That is, the male's share is generally equal to the portion of two females. This is stipulated in the Qur'an:

Allah (thus) directs you as regards your children's (inheritance): to the male, a portion equal to that of two females: if only daughters, two or more, their

share is two-thirds of the inheritance; if only one, her share is half. For parents, a sixth share of the inheritance to each, if the deceased left children; if no children, and the parents are the (only) heirs, the mother has a third; if the deceased left brothers (or sisters) the mother has a sixth. (The distribution in all cases is) after the payment of legacies and debts. Ye know not whether your parents or your children are nearest to you in benefit. These are settled portions ordained by Allah; and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise (4:11).

Other Qur'anic verses that deal with the issue of inheritance for women, are 4:7-8, 12, 176, etc. The female share is dependent on the number of heirs and the degree of relationship to the deceased. For example a mother receives a sixth if her deceased son left children or brothers and sisters. She gets a third, if he had only one brother, or if she jointly inherits with her husband, (the father to the son), and the wife. A widow inherits a quarter of her husband's estate, if there are no children, or an eighth if there are children. In case of more than one widow, they receive a collective share of a quarter. If the deceased (husband) had no children from the present or other previous wife (wives) or one eighth if the husband had a child. If a man is survived by two daughters, they inherit two-thirds between them. In case of only one daughter, she takes half (4:11-12, 176; Abdalati, 1977:256-60; Doi, 1996:164-167).

Some Muslims justify the bigger share for male considering the economic opportunities of woman vis-à-vis man. Her share is not because she is inferior to man! The female share is apparently equitable viewed from the backdrop of patriarchal Arabia where women did not inherit, but were instead inherited as property. Considering that in pre-Islamic culture women did not provide for themselves, it could be argued that the portion that Islam came to apportion to women by far improved their lots (Ammah, 1992:77). A man is bound by the *sharia* to maintain members of the family. This means that he shoulders a heavier economic burden than a woman who is not legally answerable to anybody, not even to herself for economic support and sustenance (Lemu & Heeren, 1978; Al-Faruqi, 1991; Doi, 1996). Besides being provided for by the man, a woman retains rights of ownership of any property she may have acquired before and after marriage (Doi, 1996:163). This economic autonomy that the woman enjoys offsets any assumed disadvantage over the half share that she inherits.

It is a fact that Islam has granted rights of inheritance to female relatives whether ascendants or descendants. However, critics of Islam point out at the female share to

show that the rights of men are more than those of women (Callaway, 1991). Such critics fail to appreciate that in many societies women do not inherit from their relatives. Although there are differences among the various schools of law, in principle, Islam has granted woman rights of inheritance. In practice, whether these rights are granted or not is a different issue altogether. In reality, these rights are not implemented in some parts of the Muslim world, where cultural values regarding property ownership come into play to deny women their rightful share of inheritance (Levy, 1969:245; Wamahiu, 1988:302).¹¹

3.2.1.6 Polygyny

Polygyny is used here to refer to the plurality of wives as opposed to polyandry, that is, plurality of husbands. Both polygyny and polyandry are classified as polygamy. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) did not institute polygyny. Other prophets such as Abraham, David and Solomon practiced it. The coming of Islam regulated polygyny by limiting the number of women a man may contract a marriage with, to a maximum of four at a time. It should be noted that pre-Islamic practices allowed unlimited number of wives.

Although, polygyny is permitted by the Qur'an, the *sunna* and the consensus of Muslim jurists, it is neither an offence, nor an article of faith, nor an injunction (Abdalati, 1977; Siddiqi, 1992; Doi, 1996). In other words, polygyny is not an institution of Islam, since the Qur'an does not enjoin it, but only recommends it in certain circumstances (Pickthall, 1990:156). Polygyny was advocated in the Qur'an to limit the widespread custom, where a man married more than four wives (Abdel-Kader, 1984:142). The basis of polygyny in Islam is described in Chapter 4:3. Initially, the essence of polygyny was to prevent injustices committed to women especially female orphans and to promote abstemiousness:

If ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with orphans, marry women of your choice, two, or three, or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one, or (a captive) that your right hands

¹¹ For example, among the predominant Muslim Yoruba of Nigeria, a Muslim's property is not distributed according to the Islamic law of inheritance but according to the customary law. In this case, a wife is not allotted any share, it is only her children (if she has any) that are given the collective shares on the basis of the number of wives of the deceased. It is considered a taboo for a mother to inherit her child, whether male or female (see, Oloso, 1994:41). In Jordan, once a male relative e.g. a father dies, a woman may be disinherited through various devices such as establishment of a family fund (endowment or trust), or a woman's share is given as gifts to male members of the family. It is a custom in some rural Jordanian areas for fathers to distribute their land to their male heirs before their deaths to avoid dividing it and giving shares to female heirs (Amawi, 1996:157).

possess. That will be more suitable to prevent you from doing injustice (4:3).

A man cannot marry more than one wife if he cannot provide for them adequately and treat them equitably. Besides not exceeding the limit of four wives, those who practice polygyny should express justice to their wives through equitability in companionship, provisions and considerateness (Abdalati, 1977:118; Doi, 1996:53). The Qur'an is quite emphatic on that:

Ye are never able to be fair and just as between women, even if it is your ardent desire: But turn not away (from a woman) altogether, so as to leave her (as it were) hanging (in the air). If ye come to a friendly understanding, and practice self restraint, Allah is oft-forgiving, most merciful (4:129).

The conditions governing polygyny in Islam make its practice an exception, and monogamy the norm, or the ideal marriage (Lemu & Heeren, 1978:28; Pickthall, 1990:155; Al-Faruqi, 1991:15). Abdalati be-labours this point and remarks:

The status of polygyny in Islam is no more and no less than that of a permissible act. And, like any other act lawful in principle, it becomes forbidden if it involves unlawful things or leads to unlawful consequences such as injustice (1977:119).

There is no doubt that polygyny has been abused in many parts of the Muslim world. Doi (1996:63) observes that: "more often than not, it has been practiced merely to satisfy the appetites or in accordance with a tradition of marrying more than one woman". Indeed polygyny among Muslims in Africa, for example is more of a sociological rather than a religious (Islamic issue). That is, it is more of a product of conformity with African socio-cultural patterns than the teachings of Islam (*ibid*, p.64; cf., Ammah, 1992:79).

The conditional permission for a man to marry more than one wife may be interpreted to imply that men have more rights than women in marriage. This interpretation is misplaced in view of the fact that Islam sanctions limited polygyny as a solution to the social evils that are engendered by unbridled sexual appetites and promiscuity. As stated before, the conditions governing polygyny makes its application only possible within a defined legal framework of Islamic law. Islam prohibits polyandry. Logically, if polyandry is permitted, it would fragment the family structure. This is because there would be a problem of determining the paternity of children arising from that type of marriage (see, Ammah, 1992:76-78).

3.2.1.7 Divorce

Islam takes cognisance of the reality of divorce and recognizes it in principle. Thus, divorce is permitted when all channels of reconciliation are exhausted between the marriage partners (2:228-235; 4: 35,130; 33:49; 65:1-6). It is designated as the very last and most detestable recourse (Abdalati, 1977:229). The Prophet described divorce as the most repugnant of all things that God has permitted. In a *hadith* transmitted by Abu Dawud, Ibn Umar reported the Prophet saying: “with Allah, the most detestable of all things permitted is divorce” (Ali, 1977: 284; Ahmed, 1990:68; Khan, 1995:104). Another *hadith* says that: “of all things, it is an act that shakes the throne of God as it were” (Abdalati, 1977:19f).

For a divorce to be pronounced, there are conditions to be fulfilled. These are stipulated in the Qur’an (2:228-235; 65:1-6) and the *Sunna*. Divorce can be classified variously along several dimensions. These classifications create *sunna* divorce and *contra-sunna* divorce, with each having its variants.¹² *Sunna* divorce has three pronouncements (2:228-32; Abdalati, 1977: 232-236). *Contra-Sunna* divorce is any divorce pronouncement that is not done according to the *Sunna* procedures. Such a divorce is considered as unprecedented and deviation from the *Sunna*. Depending on interpretations from various schools of law and jurists, such a *contra-sunna* divorce is considered religiously forbidden and legally void by some sources. Others may consider it religiously forbidden but formally valid (Abdalati, 1977:236-42). Notably, the various deviations in the practice of divorce in Islam contradict the spirit of Islam and defeat the purpose of divorce. These mal-practices have drawn the attention of non-Muslim critics who take them as typical Muslim practices that characterize the Muslim family system (*ibid*, p.241f).

Islam’s position on divorce has been criticized especially from non-Muslim circles. Abdalati (1977:220) cites one such criticism: “the Qur’an grants men complete liberty of

¹² According to Abdalati (1977:232-236), there are three variants of *Sunna* divorce. These are: simple revocable *sunna* divorce, double revocable *sunna* divorce and triple irrevocable *sunna* divorce. In each of the three, divorces pronouncement is followed by probationary *iddah* of three months (2:228). Meanwhile, the man is obliged to give provisions and to house the woman. For the first two, divorce does not terminate the marriage completely. The man has an option of revoking the divorce pronouncement. But the triple irrevocable divorce brings marriage to an end, in which case, after the probationary *iddah*, the woman is free to marry someone else.

divorce and demands of him no justification for divorcing his wife. Thus he can divorce her at his own caprice, but no such facility exists for her”.

This criticism brings us to the issue of the rights of Muslim women in divorce. There are different opinions regarding the issue. Some scholars argue that, “divorce is a right available mainly to the husband and not the wife” (Doi, 1996:90). The four schools of Sunni law give the husband absolute rights to divorce his wife. Other scholars argue that a woman too has rights to divorce. All Sunni authorities agree that chapter 2:229 gives the wife unconditional right to divorce her husband. Such a dissolution of marriage, is called *al-khul’u*. Literally, *al-khul’u* means “the putting off or taking off a thing” (*Sahih Muslim*, vol.2, p.754). Regarding divorce, the term means, the parting of a wife from her husband by giving him certain compensation or forgoing the *mahr* (Quraishy, 1987:199; Al-Faruqi, 1991:73). The wife brings about *Khul’u* if she is dissatisfied in her marriage, without fault or guilt on the husband. She returns the dowry as compensation for material and moral losses incurred by the man. Otherwise, the man may relinquish his right of compensation and divorce the wife to comply with her request (Abdalati, 1977:239).

The basis of *al-khul’u* is the Qur’an which stipulates that: “... If ye (judge) do indeed fear that they would be unable to keep the limits ordained by Allah, there is not blame on either of them if she gives something for her freedom... (2:229).

This verse is exemplified by a *hadith* recorded by al-Bukhari that says:

Narrated Ibn Abbas: The wife of Thabit bin Qais came to the Prophet (PBUH) and said, “O Allah’s Apostle (PBUH)! I do not blame Thabit for defects in his character or his religion, but I, being a Muslim, dislike to behave in un-Islamic manner (if I remain with him)”. On that Allah’s Apostle (PBUH) said (to her), will you give back the garden which your husband has given (as *mahr*)?” She said, “yes”. The Prophet (PBUH) said to Thabit, “O Thabit! Accept your garden, and divorce her at once (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol.7, p.150).

There are variants of the above *hadith* recorded by Bayhaqi, Nasai, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah and reported on authority of Ibn Abbas. A similar *hadith* reported on the authority of Ayesha is recorded in the *Muwatta* of Imam Malik, *Musnad* of Imam Ahmad and the *Sunan* of Nasai and Abu Dawud (Asad, 1980:50). Relating to that *hadith*, Asad (1980:50) comments that, according to the *sharia* whenever a marriage is dissolved at the wife’s insistence without offence to the husband’s marital obligations, the wife is the

contract breaking party. On her part, the wife returns the dower she had received from him at the time of concluding the marriage contract.

There is another instance where the woman has rights of divorce. This falls under what is regarded as remedy (*faskh*) to divorce under certain circumstances. In this case, a woman could seek a courts' redress. If the *qadhi* (judge) is satisfied that she has been deprived by the marriage, he could free her from the matrimonial bond (Doi, 1996: 90-92). There are circumstances under which a woman could sue for *faskh* divorce. These are: long absence of, or desertion by the husband from their matrimonial home; maltreatment; impotence and serious chronic disease or mental illness, financial disability which deprives a woman maintenance, apostasy, and proved debauchery, etc. (Abdalati, 1977:267; Strobel, 1979:57; Al-Faruqi, 1991:73). A wife could also be granted divorce upon reaching maturity if she rejects a marriage that was contracted by a guardian on her behalf when she was still a minor (Al-Faruqi, 1981:73). Otherwise, a woman's recourse to divorce falls under "delegated divorce" and "conditional divorce". Delegated divorce applies in a case in which at the time of signing a marriage contract, the man agrees for his wife's right of divorce if and when she desires. Conditional divorce applies where a man had agreed in a marriage contract that the wife has a right of divorce, if he does certain things that displease her (Abdalati, 1977:243; Al-Faruqi, 1991:73).

3.2.2 Political Dimension of the Status of Woman in Islam

Islam does not dichotomise the secular and the sacred, the affairs of the "church" and those of state. The lawful affairs of this world are considered as affairs of religion. All duties whether concerning politics, economics or social well being, are religious duties that are not different from the obligatory prayers, fast, almsgiving and pilgrimage. Thus the Qur'an, *Hadith* and various codified interpretations of Muslim scholars provide a textual basis for understanding the political status of women in Islam.

Since men and women are created equal, then they should be regarded as equal in politics, economic and social aspects of life. In that connection women should have a say in the affairs of the country. A woman has equal rights and obligations with a man. She has the right to vote and to be voted for and to be elected for a public office. She has a

right of representation; right to elect public representatives of her choice such as head of state or government, members of parliament, etc. A woman can also participate in socio-political activities of the state such as general elections. The idea of mutual consultation (42:38) and oath of allegiance - *bai'at* (60:12) rests on the sovereignty of God on earth that applies to all Muslims, male or female. In the early days of Islam, the idea of mutual consultation led to the establishment of *shura* or consultative body. In Qur'an 60:12, God instructed the Prophet to take oath of allegiance from the Muslim women. The oath of allegiance in Islam is a solemn promise on every Muslim, man and woman, to uphold Islamic values. It is a declaration to remain loyal to the Muslim community and state (Chaudhry, 1991:149; Doi, 1996:136).

As God's vicegerents, all Muslims are equal participants in the welfare of the state regardless of gender, class, colour or race. In this state, God is the Sovereign and people should run the affairs of state. All people should have the right to participate in the appointment of office-bearers. Nobody should be denied the right to nominate or to be nominated for a public office (Maina, 1999:139). Political freedom and freedom of choice are Islamic values which have been expressed in the *Hadith*. In a *hadith* recorded by at-Tirmidhi, Huzafah reported the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) saying:

Let not one of you be a character-less, saying: I do what the people do - if they do good, I do good, and if they do bad I do bad, but console yourselves that if the people do good, you will do good; and if they do evils, you will not oppress (cited, Ahmed, 1994:258).

Airing one's opinions is a duty of every person. This is important to help one to "enjoin the right and forbid the evil" in society. The Qur'an says in this regard: "Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong: they are the ones to attain felicity (3:104; cf. 3:110).

It could rightfully be argued that Islam grants political rights to women. These rights were exercised during the time of Muhammad (PBUH) and that of the orthodox caliphs. Women played an enormous contribution in the growth and development of Islam. This is evidenced by the part they played in the revelation of the Qur'an, education, and systematization and codification of the *Hadith*. This is an expression of the role of women in the realm of politics and their relationship with the wielders of power.

During the time of the Prophet, women appealed for their rights from the Prophet and God. The Mothers of Believers and other women *sahabiyat* provide classic examples. The cases of Ayesha and Umm Salama and the way they shaped the revelations are already mentioned (*vide supra*). The other case is that of Khawlah *binti* Thalabah. When she was overwhelmed by problems in her marriage occasioned by the amorous behaviour of her husband, she appealed to the Prophet who advised her to wait for a revelation. The revelation in Qur'an 58:1-4 granted her rights over her iniquitous husband (Maina, 2000:48).

During the period of the Orthodox (Four Rightly-Guided) caliphs (632-661 AD), women bravely and firmly defended their rights. They were highly conscious of their social, political and economic rights. They could not tolerate suppression of those rights. For instance, when Caliph Umar (634-644 AD) wanted to fix the maximum amount of dower, he dropped the idea on the advice of a woman who pointed out the Qur'an 4:20. Umar acknowledged the woman's point of view and retreated from his earlier stance by declaring that: "a woman is right and Umar is wrong" (Badawi, 1980; Chaudhry, 1991; Al-Alkim, 1993).

It has already been mentioned that the wives of the Prophet and other women *sahabiyat* were consulted on matters of law. For example, when Caliph Uthman (644-656 AD) was accused of nepotism in hiring of governors, he pledged not to appoint anyone except: "him on whom the wives of the Prophet and those of the counsel among you have agreed". When that failed, he called upon Ayesha to help.

Women were equally involved in other areas of politics. Women were involved in various battles and expeditions during the time of the Prophet and the Orthodox caliphs. During the Battle of Uhud (625 AD), women took part in actual physical combat. This was besides carrying water to the fighters in the battlefield, nursing the injured, removing the dead and the wounded from the field, and exciting men through song, poems and verses. The story of Nussaiba *binti* Ka'ab who fought with a sword alongside the Prophet is told. She fought gallantry until she was wounded thirteen times. This earned her great esteem

from the Prophet who remarked of her: “the position due to her is higher than that of men” (El-Saadawi, 1980:125). Examples of other women fighters are Umm Suleim *binti* Malhan. She tied a dagger around her waist and above her pregnant belly as she fought in the ranks of the Prophet during the Battle of Uhud (*ibid*,p.125). Umm Umara fought alongside her husband and sons in many battles of the Prophet. Her courage and efficiency with weapons led Muhammad (PBUH) to remark that she had vindicated herself better than many men. In the Battle of Uhud, Umm Umara accompanied her husband to the battlefield. When the Muslims were in the verge of loosing, she tried to keep the assailants at bay and this way she sustained several injuries on her arms and hands (Nadwi, 1967:13).

During the Battle of Marj al Saffar, women corps participated. The most outstanding of these women was Umm Hakim who single handedly killed seven Byzantine soldiers. In an expedition against a Persian sea port by Muslim forces, women led by Azdah *binti* al-Harith turned their veils into flags that were confused for new additional troops. This enhanced greatly the victory of Muslims (Ahmed, 1992). Women also fought in the battles of Qadissiyya (636 AD) and Yarmuk (637 AD). Umm Haram a maternal aunt of the Prophet and her husband accompanied the army that invaded the island of Cyprus in 649 AD (Waddy, 1980). Following the death of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in 632 AD, a series of rebellions broke out against the Muslim state. The “false prophets” sparked off the revolts, with some being masterminded by women such as Salma *binti* Malik and Sajah *binti* Aws (Ahmed, 1992). The participation of Muslim women in battles continued during the Umayyad Dynasty (661-750 AD) and later dynasties. The heroic deeds of women in these battles are well documented by Nadwi (1967).

The highlight of women who took part in physical combat in Muslim battles is important. This is because the popular opinion bandied by conservatives to the effect that the roles of women in these battles was the stereotypical and subservient ones of administering first aid and nursing the wounded. That opinion belies the actual role of women in the battles. Clearly, in Muslim tradition, women actively performed their rightful role in the military, which is considered a domain of men.

Ayesha's role in politics has no parallel in early Islam and especially the period of the four rightly guided caliphs. She challenged the rule of Ali (656-661 AD) who succeeded Uthman, by teaming with two companions of the Prophet, Talha and Zubair. Consequently, the Battle of the Camel was fought in 656 AD. This battle was so called after the camel on which Ayesha rode as she rallied the opposition forces (Callaway, 1991; Mernissi, 1991). Although Ayesha and her forces were defeated, the aftermath of the battle was a weakened and a disunited *ummah*. This battle led to the fall of Ali and the Orthodox Caliphate in 661 AD. It brought the rise to power of the dynastic Umayyad Dynasty. Ayesha's role in this battle demonstrates a woman's role in politics, the ability of a woman to lead, and the capability of women's leadership.

Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet, the wife of Ali and the mother of the Prophet's grandsons, Hassan and Hussein offers the other exemplification of a woman's role in Islam. Fatima died at the age of eighteen and her short life symbolizes the ideal daughter, wife and mother. As an ideal woman, she was self-sacrificing and devoted herself to raising her children. She went to the Battle of Uhud when she heard of her father's injury. Together with her two sons and husband, Fatima accompanied the Prophet in the expedition against the Banu Najran, in the field of Mubahila. She also addressed a large gathering while pleading her case in the court of Abu Bakr, the first orthodox caliph [632-634 AD] (Ahmed, 1988:58-59; Mernissi, 1996:93).

The other model for Muslim women is Zainab, the daughter of Fatima and Ali, and the sister of Hassan and Hussein. During the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979, the image of Zainab was presented as the role model to inspire political action. The warrior sister in Zainab was seen in her supporting role at the Battle of Kerbala - fought in 680 AD - in which an insignificant force of Hussein was annihilated by those of Yazid, the Umayyad caliph (680-683 AD).

Bilqis, the Queen of Sheba provides the only reference in the Qur'an (27:23-44) for a woman ruler. She exercised her political power and governed well. She did not experience any opposition to her leadership in spite of being a woman. Other than the wives, daughter and granddaughter of the Prophet, Bilqis provides an exemplary and

honourable precedent for women leaders (Waddy, 1980). In a candid Qur'anic account of her leadership, Bilqis is not essentially portrayed as a woman. On the contrary, she is depicted as an independent minded leader. In her leadership, she made judicious political decisions and judgments (Wadud-Muhsin, 1992). The account of Bilqis shows that a woman could rule a Muslim state without any hindrances whatsoever.

Following the precedent of Bilqis, Muslim women have been queens and founders of dynasties in Yemen and India. In Yemen, queens Asma and Arwa held the power of the Yemen dynasty (1087-1137 AD) for more than half of the period it (the dynasty) was in power. In India, Sultana Razia became Queen of Delhi in the 13th century after succeeding her father in 1236 AD. She competently ruled for three and a half years (see, Waddy, 1980; Ahmed, 1992; Maina, 2000). Contemporary Muslim period has registered women as heads of state and government. The classic examples here are those of Benazir Bhutto's two-term premiership of Pakistan and Begum Khalida Zia the current prime minister of Bangladesh (Maina, 1999; Maina, 2000). Indeed, Begum Khalida Zia, leader of Bangladesh National Party, and Sheikhha Hasina, former premier and Awami Party leader, have dominated Bangladesh's electoral politics for more than a decade (**Daily Nation**, 4/10/2001, p.13). In Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim country, Megawati Soekarnoputri, became the president in July 23, 2001. Megawati who heads the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle had formerly served as her country's 8th vice-president. She had been elected to that post on 21st October 1999 (**Mahjubah**, Vol. 20, No.10, October, 2001).

In some countries, Muslim women do not perform the role of an imam. In others like Egypt, they could act as imams for women (Abouegl, personal communication, November 2000). This is perhaps through borrowing a leaf from Islamic tradition which offers examples of women who acted as imams during the time of the Prophet. The Prophet appointed Umm Waraka to act as an imam. Later, Ayesha and Umm Salama served as imams. It was during the reign of Caliph Umar that, a legislation was instituted that led to the appointment of different imams for each sex, with male imams being appointed for women (Ahmed, 1992:61).

The foregoing discussion shows that in principle, a woman should take her rightful role in politics. In practice, there are differing opinions over the role women should play in politics. These opinions are largely based on the interpretations of Islam. It is in this respect that there are opponents and advocates of the leadership of women.

Opponents of the leadership of women quote some Qur'anic verses. These include Chapter 2:30 which shows that it was Adam the man and not the woman who was put as a viceroy (vicegerent) of God on earth. This raises the question: how woman can rule over man? Similarly, it was Adam the man that the angels prostrated to and not the woman (2:34). Opponents of leadership of women argue that although man and woman are created from a single soul, a man is superior to woman because, Eve was created from the rib of Adam. Therefore, a woman is a derivative and secondary in ontology. A woman was created not only from man, but also for man. This argument is alluded to in our previous discussion.

Other verses that are cited by the opponents of the leadership of women have already been referred to previously. These are: 2:228, 282; 4:34; 21:7; 33:59 and 43:18. Chapter 21:7 shows that only men have been sent as prophets. Since a woman has not been sent as a prophet, then it follows that she should not rule over men (Chaudhry, 1991; Ghalib, OI, 5/10/98). It should be noted that women also received inspirations (revelations) from the creator. Examples of women in the Qur'an who received inspiration from God were Mother of Moses (28:7) and Mary the Mother of Jesus (3:42-47; 19:16-26).

Opponents of leadership of women argue that the account of Bilqis cannot serve as a model for women rulers. This is because: "She reigned ages before Prophet Muhammad. She can never serve as a role model for women in Islamic tradition" (Iqbal, 1989:130).

Chapter 33:59 is an injunction of veiling for women when they venture out of their houses. The argument is, if a woman cannot come out of the house before strangers without a veil, how will she be expected to hold a political office that requires frequent meetings with men? It is however mentioned several times in this study that the veil

should not prevent women from participating in socio-economic and political activities. In deed, the veil is meant to enhance a woman's movement in the public space.

Opponents of female leadership also cite *ahadith* to show that a woman should not ascend to a political office. The most popular is the one reported by Abu Bakra and recorded in *Sahih al-Bukhari*. When the Prophet heard that the Persians had enthroned a daughter of Chosroe (Kisra) as queen he remarked: "never shall a people prosper who appoints a woman to conduct their affairs" (Mernissi, 1991:49; Chaudhry, 1991:165; Doi, 1996:136). This *hadith* is a strong political weapon that could be used by those who want to keep women out of politics. It was evoked after the crushing defeat of Ayesha at the Battle of the Camel. It is the oft-quoted *hadith*, to show why a woman should not involve herself in politics. A critique of the *hadith* is offered below. The other *hadith* is the one that depicts women as being deficient in knowledge and religion (*vide supra*). This *hadith* may be unacceptable because it contradicts the teachings of the Qur'an and the *Hadith* on women (Chaudhry, 1991:172).

A critique of the views of opponents of women's role in leadership is offered in our discussion on the advocates of leadership of women. Nevertheless, we could make a few observations at this juncture. As a Mother of the Believers, Ayesha's life is a model par excellence for all Muslim women. Her enormous brilliance prompted the Prophet to advice Muslims to draw half their religion from her. This possibly assuages the effects of her defeat at the Battle of the Camel. In any case, it was not Ayesha as an individual who was defeated, but the entire coalition forces that she led.

Oral evidence shows that roles that society and religion assign women influence a Muslim woman's role in politics. Politics is considered the domain of males. This is because the femininity of a woman renders her incapable of leadership. Further, oral response shows that women's leadership roles should be restricted to leading fellow women in various projects for women. The implication is that a woman should not be appointed to any of the following positions of political leadership: chief, DC, PC, ambassador (High Commissioner), minister, president and prime minister (Ghalib, OI, 5/10/98; Ayub, OI, 26/2/99). Equally, she should not serve in the police force, army and

law courts as a judge or magistrate. This stance posits that all these positions are quite demanding and could compromise a woman's role as a mother and wife. In addition, the traditional roles between genders will mix and this could create disorder [*al-fitna*] (Ayub, OI, 26/2/99; Abdi, OI, 13/2/99). In the same vein, a woman should not perform the role of an imam. This is because, during her monthly periods, a woman should not pray, hold the Qur'an, fast and perform the *tawaf* (circumambulation of the *ka'ba*). *Haidh* (menses) pollutes a woman, hence she cannot lead Muslims in prayer (Maryam, OI, 6/3/99). As a result, in Kenya today, the post of an imam that is an important religio-political institution among Muslims is today a preserve for men.

There are some weaknesses in the views of oral respondents regarding the role of women in leadership. In opposing the leadership, oral response seems to dwell on the biological and physiological composition of a woman and not the qualities of leadership of a woman vis-à-vis a man. We could argue that oral response on this issue is a product of interpretations of Islam. Hence, it is imperative to examine the interpretations of some leading Muslim jurists regarding the role of women in leadership.

Al-Tabari gave a *fatwa* (religious decree) that a Muslim is eligible for all offices in an Islamic state. These include those of a judicial officer and adjudicator of all types of cases (Doi, 1996:137). Imam Malik *bin* Anas (710-795 AD), the founder of the Maliki School of Sunni law is reported to have opined that a woman could head a state in all its affairs (Chaudhry, 1991). Imam Abu Hanifa, the founder of the Hanafi School of law, on the other hand, argues that a woman could be appointed to a judicial position where she could adjudicate in civil and commercial cases (Doi, 1996:137). However, he points out that it is not proper for a woman to be appointed to a position that requires her to adjudicate in cases requiring punishment and those entailing marriage.

Other jurists contend that a woman should not be appointed to the position of a *khalifa* (caliph). Although the caliphate is no longer there in Islam, by the same token, these jurists argue that a woman should not serve as a minister, a judge, leader of a *jihad* (holy war), police, army commander and head of state. The argument propounded by these jurists is that as a head of state, a woman would be required to handle complicated

religious and political issues which cannot be possible owing to the strict code of modesty and conduct required by her biological make up and religion. Other jurists argue that a woman could be appointed to all posts (Doi, 1996).

Mawdudi (1903-1979) is the one of the foremost Muslim thinkers of the 20th century. In 1964 Pakistan presidential elections, he favoured the candidature of a woman as opposed to a man. This was despite the fact that in the 1952 presidential elections, Mawdudi had firmly stated that the head of Muslim state should be a male. To support his argument, Mawdudi had then quoted from the Qur'an and *Hadith*. In the 1964 elections, Fatima Jinna was pitted against Ayub Khan who won with the help of a *fatwa* from the ulama'a who ruled that a woman could not head an Islamic state. Mawdudi differed with the ulama'a and aligned himself to Jinna. His argument was that Fatima Jinna could be a more Islamic and less tyrannical president than Ayub Khan (Mortimer, 1982:213). While endorsing Jinna, Mawdudi argued:

If one is confronted with a dilemma to choose between two evils, one must choose the lesser one; if on one side, there is a woman possessing all the merits except that she is a woman, and on the other side, there is a man having all the demerits except that he is a man, you should support the woman in such a situation (Chaudhry, 1991;174).

The change of heart by Mawdudi in rescinding his earlier stance on women leadership and his support for Jinna shows clearly that interpretations of the teachings of Islam determine women's role in leadership. Further evidence of how interpretations could be used to bar women from leadership could be found still in Pakistan. When Benazir Bhutto won elections in 1988, the media hailed her as the first woman to head a modern Muslim state. However male politicians who were opposed to the leadership of a woman attempted to bar her from taking over the reigns. They termed her victory as blasphemous to Islam, arguing that a woman could not head a Muslim state: "O horror, never has a Muslim state been led by women, they cried when faced by an unnatural event in Islamic tradition" (cited, Maina, 1999:142). These arguments are misrepresentations of facts, if the leadership roles of women in the early period of Islam, is taken into consideration. Nevertheless, it is evident that religious traditions are misinterpreted in particular circumstances to serve male expediency thereby restraining women from assuming leadership positions.

Islam can be interpreted to promote the leadership of women in the same it is interpreted to hinder their leadership roles. The advocates of leadership of women argue that the Qur'an does not forbid the rule of a woman, it has not prohibited it or condemned it; it has not disapproved or disfavoured it. Though not an advocate of leadership of women, Iqbal (1989:95) observes that there is no specific command in the Qur'an permitting or prohibiting the leadership of a woman. Wadud-Muhsin (1992:89) an ardent advocate for the leadership of women contends that despite the differences in opportunities between men and women, there is nothing implied or stated in the Qur'an to support the opinion that men are natural leaders. Chaudhry (1991:170), on the other hand argues that if the rule of a woman were unlawful, as the conservatives want us to believe, then, a verse would have certainly been revealed declaring so. He continues to argue that, the silence of the Qur'an on this crucial issue means that the Muslim community has been left to decide according to circumstances and best interest.

Advocates of the leadership of women cite the following verses of the Qur'an: 2:124; 2:228; 4:1, 32; 22:41; 27:23-44. Chapter 2, verse 124 refers to the promise of God to Abraham where he appoints him a leader of humankind and equally promised him leaders among his offspring. Chapter 22:41 refer to the functions of an Islamic state and the responsibilities of discharging these functions fall on both men and women. The rest of the verses have already been discussed above (*vide supra*).

Advocates of the leadership of women do not accept the *hadith* pertaining to the daughter of Chosroe. This is because, its narrator, Abu Bakra, was found guilty of false evidence and was punished by Caliph Umar. He was convicted of and flogged for giving a false testimony in a case involving fornication. The false evidence and the consequent flogging, cast aspersions on the moral integrity of Abu Bakra (Mernissi, 1991:60-61). His credibility as a source of *hadith* is doubted. Moral integrity was a prerequisite for transmitters of *ahadith*. As a result, this *hadith* is not considered reliable and is rejected by some leading Muslim jurists such as Imam Malik bin Anas (710-795 AD), the founder of the Maliki School of Sunni law. Al-Tabari, does not consider this *hadith* sufficient ground to exclude women from politics (Mernissi, 1991:60-61). Imams Malik, Abu

Hanifa and al-Tabari opine that a woman could lead in “abnormal exceptional circumstances” (Iqbal, 1989:104).

Yet according to others such as Al-Bukhari, Ahmad, An-Nasai and Tirmidhi, this *hadith* is *sahih* (Yusuf al-Qaradawi, *Fatawa Muasira*, vol. 1, p.73). They argue that the *hadith* means that women cannot take a supreme or overall leadership like that of a caliph for the Muslim empire but some other types of leadership are accepted for them. The argument is that Abu Bakra was flogged not because of giving false testimony, but that he believed he was giving true evidence. Abu Bakra and three other witnesses, Nafi, Shibil and Ziyad were in the room of the house of Abi Abdillahi and a man was in a room below. Then suddenly a door opened and they saw a man between the thighs of a woman. So all the four agreed to bear witness against the man. What happened later was that the first three did, but Ziyad was hesitant to testify, as he was not sure whether the man actually did the intercourse with the woman or not. Hence, he did not give witness and the three other witnesses were caned, for this kind of case required four witnesses to prove that adultery took place. Caliph Umar asked the three to repent for accusing the man. The two repented in order that their testimony in future could be accepted but Abu Bakra refused since he was convinced and sure that the man did the act (Ibn Hazm, vol. 12 Mas’ala 2223). Those who accept this *hadith* as authentic do not cast any doubt on the moral probity of Abu Bakra - something that is questioned by those who reject it. They argue that Abu Bakra was a man of his own principles, something that he was respected for. According to Hasan al-Basri, a theologian from Basra: “in Basra, there has never been better residents of the city than Abi Bakra and Imran bin Hasen (see *Siyar A’lam An-Nubala*, vol.4, p.1).

The foregoing discussion shows clearly the differing opinions regarding that particular *hadith*. What is clear is that, there are arguments either for or against the leadership of women depending on the scholar’s arguments and interpretations surrounding an event of the narrator’s life.

Within the Kenyan context, Muslim women have positively responded to the wave of liberal democracy ushered by the repeal of the Section 2A of the constitution in December 1991. This is evidenced in elective parliamentary politics. In the 1997 general

elections, Mwarere-Wa-Mwachai became the first Muslim woman MP, (member of parliament). Her victory was unprecedented in the history of parliamentary electoral politics in Kenya. She was elected on a KANU (Kenya African National Union) ticket to represent the Muslim predominant constituency of Msambweni in Kwale District. She is an Assistant Minister in the Ministry of Home Affairs, National Heritage, Sports and Culture. The other voice of Muslim women in Parliament is Maryam Matano, a nominee of the NDP (National Development Party).

The foregoing shows that [mis]interpretations of Islam shape individual's perceptions on the role of Muslim women. These perceptions ascribe roles that women should play in society. Leadership is therefore considered a demanding role that does not befit a woman. This view notwithstanding, it is evident the role women played in politics in Muslim tradition. Granted, the status of Muslim women in politics in Kenya today, largely depends on interpretations of Islam. This is because the Qur'an and *Hadith* contain references that could be interpreted to support, or to compromise the role of women in politics. Where her role is interpreted as strictly confined to the domestic sphere, her political rights will equally be restricted. Let us now examine the impact of the perceived status of Muslim women on girls' access to secondary school education.

3.3 The Influence of the Status of Women on Muslim Girls' Access to Secondary School Education in Mombasa and Kwale Districts

It is observed in the previous section of this chapter that interpretations of some Islamic teachings determine the status of woman in society. It is also noted that perception of the status of Muslim women is a product of socio-political and cultural conditions within particular historical epochs (Nelson, 1984). This section examines how due to misinterpretations of some Islamic teachings, the perceived status of woman impacts on girls' access to secondary education. Various parameters on the status of women have been discussed. These are sexual inequality, gender role ideology and marriage. In spite of the Islamic teachings on equality of sexes and the definition of roles of men and women, cultural values give rise to the notion of sexual inequality. In the same vein, the roles women perform are perceived to be less important than the roles of men. These notions have a bearing on girls' education.

3.3.1 The Notion of Sexual Inequality and its Influence on Muslim Girls' Access to Secondary School Education

Although Islam is quite categorical on equality between sexes, gender inequality influences girls' access to secondary education. The teachings of Islam are misinterpreted to show that women are sometimes less intelligent and deficient in knowledge. [Mis]interpretations of Islam give religious legitimacy to gender inequality. Oral information alludes to the sexual inequality by showing that woman is not clever; she is inferior to a man in intelligence (Ghalib, OI, 5/10/98). This subjective interpretation on equality of sexes contradicts Islamic teachings and is reinforced by social lore that depicts women as subordinates. Indeed, due cultural values, men are perceived as better endowed with intelligence and judgment, therefore they should make decisions that women should obey. Oral literature depicts women as weak, prone to mundane desires, gullible and sexual tempters that men should be wary of (Strobel, 1979:56). Information gathered from the field shows that boys are considered to be superior to girls in intelligence, as they cannot think deeply. This mentality could influence parents' attitude toward secondary school education of their daughters, especially if there is a presumption that girls cannot contend with the rigors of secondary schooling. Thus, boys should be educated because they are future providers for women and children. On the other hand, girls' education should be tied to their domestic status as consumers (Muhammed, OI, 9/10/98).

Though the superiority of men over women is not the grain of Islamic message, this belief is reinforced by social lore that considers men providers and women as consumers. Hence, despite Islam's position on the equality of sexes, the rights and privileges of women in some Muslim societies are far removed from the ideal (Ahmed, 1988:185). Social norms on male domination reinforce the interpretations of Islam on male superiority over females. These norms are disseminated through the process of socialization in the family, society, educational institutions and the work place. Where the belief in superiority of men over women is strong, it has an effect in limiting girls' education to the basic minimum. That way, secondary education for girls suffers as emphasis is put on educating boys.

3.3.2 Gender Role Ideology and its Influence on Muslim Girls' Access to Secondary School Education

Culture determines the ways men and women are defined and their roles in society. Although Islam defines the roles of men and women, it is clear from this study that the roles of the former are not superior to those of the latter. But the cultural lens of androcentrism influences the interpretation of Islam on women's role. This is because it is the men who interpret and pass laws that govern women (Hijab, 1996:44). In this case, by designating men as guardians of women, Islam is interpreted to sanction patriarchal power. This is despite the fact that guardianship is a burden placed on the male gender by God.

Patriarchal attitudes and values on gender identity are found in society's norms, institutional sanctions, belief systems, and legitimised by religion (Kabira, 1997:44). They are internalised and reproduced through the process of socialization. The attitudes and values influence roles men and women play in society. From an early age, girls grow up with the mentality that they should limit themselves to activities at home and the garden (Smock, 1977:4; Davison & Kanyuka, 1992:455). They internalise the belief that they are low achievers hence they should perform light tasks like cooking, sweeping the house, and washing utensils (Athmani, OI, 26/9/98). In addition, lower aspirations and expectations are prescribed and expected of girls. This affects girls' education because girls and boys learn different skills and are assigned duties according to gender specific division of roles. At school, the subjects that girls take are dovetailed with their roles as domestic producers and reproducers (Davison & Kanyuka, 1992:455). As a result, girls may be excluded from subjects that could lead to lucrative and more productive careers. They do not get opportunities for higher goal oriented achievements in life (GoK & UNICEF, 1992:119). The negative impact of sex role socialization on girls' education, life expectations, achievements and career choice is underlined by the UNESCO report:

A young girl electing to take technical courses may be able to compete in the educational setting, gain a feeling of competence and look forward to a successful career as a technician or an engineer, but she may be receiving direct and indirect messages from home, school and church that her place is at home, taking care of children and being of service to the others (cited, Riria-Ouko, 1986:50).

Once the sex role messages are internalised girls have to wrestle with the notion that they can perform any other task besides marriage and homemaking. Oral response shows that

the role of girls and women relates to their perceived body weaknesses. On the other hand, the role boys play is fitted to their strong physique. A respondent said: "men should perform hard tasks because they are strong, brave and hardworking. Women should take light tasks like sweeping and cooking because they are weak" (Muhasu, OI, 28/9/98; Ali, OI, 26/2/99).

Nevertheless, some respondents argued that men and women are both created equal. They are endowed with the same body organs and abilities. This implies that what a man does, a woman should equally do (Darani, OI, 26/2/99). There should not be specific roles for males and females. "If a girl can go under a car to repair it, then I do not see why a boy cannot take a broom and sweep" (OI, 24/2/99). These contentions notwithstanding, popular opinion among respondents was that male and female roles are clearly defined. Household chores like cooking, cleaning, fetching water and firewood, and nursing children are female roles. In addition, the role of men is to provide economic maintenance and to offer security to the household as the head of the family. Oral information from a cross section of respondents, both male and female, shows how the delineation of gender roles is internalised:

It looks weird to find a man cooking or washing clothes, utensils, if he has sisters or a wife at home. It is impossible to tell a man to cook. The work of cooking, washing the baby, fetching water and firewood is meant for women (Jeffa, OI, 30/9/98; Ahmed, OI, 25/2/99).

The delimitation of roles within the family and society influences the perception towards women's work. Largely, the role of women is considered subservient and stereotyped. Oral response shows that "housework is supposed to be done by women because, even traditionally, it is not good for men" (Mambo, OI, 29/9/98). Respondents observed that: "housewifery duties are meant for women because that is the way it is; some tasks like washing utensils and cooking are meant for women" (Hassan, OI, 28/9/98; Juma, OI, 6/10/98). These arguments run counter to the teachings of Islam, which as already mentioned do not prescribe house duties for women. The *sunna* shows that the Prophet used to help his family in housework. He used to sweep his house, mend his clothes and perform other chores (cf., Bullock, 1999:24). That Islam does not restrictly prescribe housework to women was alluded to through oral response. A respondent noted: according to the Qur'an, women should not be beasts of burden. Although there are some

duties for women, men should help, since by so doing they bring blessings to the family (Gakuria, OI,25/9/98).

It is significant to note that Islam assigns the same place of honour to housework as it does other types of work. This is evident from the traditions of the Prophet. A certain woman once went to the Prophet and said:

O Messenger of God, men have excelled in meriting the rewards of the Hereafter. They join the Friday prayer, attend congregations and perform *jihad*. Then, what is left for us women to do? The Prophet replied, "O Nasibah, if your manner of living with your husband is proper and obedient, such conduct in itself is equal to all actions performed by men, which you have just mentioned" (cited, Khan, 1995:42).

In view of this *hadith*, some Muslims will definitely consider the work of woman within the household as equivalent in importance to the income generating activity that men perform. This further confirms the earlier contention that the noble role of a woman is that of a wife and mother.

Socialization has made females to take pride in the defined roles: "housework is meant for women as they have more knowledge than men" (Hamza, OI, 29/9/98). Similarly, "looking after babies is meant for women because they understand the problems of babies better than men" (Kassim, OI, 28/9/98). This stereotypical depiction of women's role affects girls' access to education in situations where some parents think that child rearing does not require high education. Yet, understanding child psychology and how to bring up children in a healthy manner, in reality requires a certain level of education. Within the context of a Muslim family, a mother's education is significant in upbringing of children.

Within the ambit of differentiated gender roles, girls' education becomes imperative for the healthy upbringing of children. As the first educator of her children, a woman can ably perform this role if only she acquires education herself. A respondent supported this argument by observing:

A man should provide economic maintenance and protection for the family husband by providing him with comfort and happiness. As the first educator while women should perform the parenting roles at home, take care of the of children, a woman should mould their behaviour through inculcating discipline. Above all, she should respect and obey her husband, and make herself available to him (Husseini, OI, 9/10/98; Mgeni, OI, 22/2/99).

Misinterpretations of Islam have influenced the perception of roles of men and women in society. This is apparent from oral data. It was argued that, in Islam, women should stay at home. As such, they should take care of the home and to do house chores" (Talib, OI, 7/10/98). This is a blatant misrepresentation of facts, as Islamic teachings do not categorically state that women should stay at home. Even if they were, they should be educated. It should be noted that the definitions of roles between males and females as per the teachings of Islam have entrenched gender role socialization.

The delineation of roles within a Muslim household implies that female roles are in the domestic and private sphere while the male roles are in the public domain. Spatial confinement of female roles implies that all activities outside the private domain are unnecessary for women. Similarly, since a woman is not answerable to any body for economic sustenance, she may not feel obliged to engage in any activity that would put bread on the table or even joining the labour force. This implies that education, as a tool for socio-economic and political empowerment will be subservient. It has been noted that, in principle Islam accords women economic rights. However, if a woman is viewed as economically and materially dependent on a man, some ignorant parents may not see any necessity for her to venture out for an economic activity or for a girl to seek higher education.

The perception of the roles of females has an influence on girls' access to secondary education. Whenever these roles are interpreted to be restricted to the private domain, the education of girls will equally be restricted (Wamahiu, 1990; Slyomovics, 1996). A gender-specific education policy may even be put in place to restrict and limit the type of education offered to girls. In schools, girls' energies may be wrongly channelled to those subjects that could eventually enable her to fit in the occupations that suit her nature such as nursing, secretarial studies, teaching and institutional management. These are occupations that are seen as extensions of housekeeping and stereotypical roles of caring, nurturing and serving others (El-Sanabary, 1996:74). In that case, the aim of girls' education may be conceived in a way that fulfils her role in life as a successful homemaker, an ideal wife and a good mother (El-Sanabary, 1994:144).

Hence, Islamic injunctions on the various rights of women may be misinterpreted in a way that represses the need for women to seek education, engage in employment and politics. Alternatively, women's roles will be perceived as not requiring advanced or secondary education (Afshar, 1992). Misinterpretations of Islamic teachings and the internalisation of cultural values on the role of women in society negatively affect secondary schooling for girls. There is no debate about the high value attached to the education of boys by some parents. Boys' education will be prioritised since they are seen as the ultimate family heads and future breadwinners who will provide financial support to the family and the parents in old age. Hence educating boys is seen as better investment than educating girls. All these arguments are contrary to the teachings of Islam which underline the need to educate girls.

Among the very conservative families, sex roles and demand for girls' time impact negatively on girls' access to secondary school education. The roles that society has traditionally ascribed to women and girls impact negatively on girls' access to secondary school education (Smock, 1977; Smock, 1981; Tilak, 1993; Callaway & Crevey, 1994). Educating girls beyond primary school may be considered unimportant for it may instil the wrong work ethic as girls may become disinterested in the roles that pertain to the domestic sphere. Some families may consider just a limited education for their daughters while stressing on training them for future household responsibilities like cooking, cleaning and childcare (Smock, 1981). A respondent argued that secondary school education devoid of proper Islamic training could instil bad habits, such as inappropriate gender relations (Kutsetsera, OI, 25/9/98). Secondary education without a strong Islamic foundation is considered alienating to Muslim girls. This is because secondary schooling could make a Muslim girl learn western values and introduce her to non-conformist behaviour that could ultimately spoil her. Such behaviour includes putting on mini-skirts, trousers, socializing with the opposite sex and indulging in sexual practices, and lack of respect for elders (Wamahiu & Njau, 1995; Olela, 1996). All these are against the teachings of Islam. For this reason, Muslim parents are at ease in taking their daughters to Muslim schools where Islamic values are imparted. This aspect is discussed later in Chapter Five.

The other aspect that impacts negatively on girls' access to secondary school education is household responsibilities. On the whole, girls shoulder a heavier load of household chores than boys. The role of girls within the household economy dictates that they are mostly occupied with household chores at the expense of schoolwork. Domestic duties take the bulk of the girls' time. In addition, pressure of these roles on girls' time has the domino effect on their access to secondary school. This is due to late enrolment, irregular school attendance, lateness to school, absenteeism and poor concentration in school. This leads to lack of motivation and confidence in a girl's ability that causes poor academic performance and even dropping out of school. In both Mombasa and Kwale district, oral information reveals that, girls more than boys, are expected to perform certain household duties, hence little time is devoted to schoolwork. These duties include taking care of the younger siblings, cooking, cleaning, fetching water and firewood and working in the *shamba* (farm, garden). Sometimes, these roles are performed early in the morning before attending school, in the evening after school and during the weekends and school holidays.

Although the roles that girls play within the household are the same in Kwale and Mombasa, in the former, they perform more strenuous work. This is owing to the socio-economic situation of Kwale District. Unlike Mombasa which is an urban centre, in Kwale District, most families rely on subsistence farming. Girls in this area have to walk for long distances to fetch water and firewood besides working on the *shamba*. It could be noted that household chores affect girls in low-income families more than those in the middle and higher income groups. The latter has house-helpers, cooks and gardeners who perform much of the work that is otherwise done by girls in the lower income groups. Girls in the middle and higher income bracket have more time to concentrate on their schoolwork in the evenings, weekends, and school holidays. This economic aspect is discussed later in this section and in Chapter Five.

The roles girls play at home have a debilitating effect on their attitude to secondary school education. Some girls tend to think that secondary education holds very little prospects for them since they are preoccupied with the household roles. They will not concentrate

no importance seems to be attached to education. Consequently, they develop negative attitude towards secondary schooling. They grow up with a mentality that their place is in the kitchen with marriage being the ultimate destiny. Yet, some parents feel that the time spent in school by their daughters could be utilized optimally to perform various roles that society ascribe to girls.

3.3.3 The Influence of Marriage on Muslim Girls' Access to Secondary School Education

There is a strong marriage ethic among Muslims. There is no exception to this rule among Muslims in Mombasa and Kwale districts. Marriage is closely associated with the roles women play in society. This is because these roles are geared to the well being and success of the institution of marriage. The value of marriage is inculcated into the minds of girls and boys as they grow. Marriage therefore has far reaching consequences on the education of Muslim girls.

The strong marriage ethic implies that marriage and bringing up a family is considered the greatest ambition in the life of girls and boys. It is their ultimate destiny. The importance of marriage for a girl is seen in statements such as: "your future lies in marriage, and you must learn how to cook. Your future is marriage, marriage" (El-Saadawi, 1980:46)! Although men are equally supposed to marry and raise a family, off-the-cuff remarks to the effect that "women are meant to be married and bear children" were a common refrain during the field study. Marriage is the epitome of manhood and womanhood, but the latter was more emphasized: "I believe that a girl can only be a woman when she is married". For a girl to remain unmarried, she is seen as a burden to the parents (Hasham, OI, 7/10/98; Talib, OI, 7/10/98). This attitude is a product of ignorance, social norms and values in patrilineal societies where girls are expected to marry and leave their parents' homes.

The roles that girls perform in society are basically geared toward marriage life. Some respondents felt that due to this belief some girls do not take education seriously. This is mainly because a girl will eventually be married and get a man to take care of her material

and economic needs. Coupled to gender roles is the idea that educating a girl tantamount to lost investment. This is because a girl would ultimately get married and be incorporated into the family of her spouse

Popular social beliefs, stemming from the values attached to marriage, consider a girl's stay with her family as a stopgap measure. She is seen as being on transit to the family of her spouse where she belongs: "a girl is a visitor, she belongs to another family, she is on transit" (Kutsetsera, OI, 25/9/98). Preference is accorded to the education of boys as opposed to girls. Educating a girl is seen as educating a member of another family since she will eventually get married: "educating boys is considered a priority as he will take care of the family, unlike girls who will be married" (Adan, OI, 30/12/98). These attitudes have a long lasting negative effect on Muslim girls' education as they influence the importance attached to secondary school education for girls. Primary education, whose completion coincides with the biological maturity for girls in readiness for marriage, is considered sufficient for them. In the midst of limited resources and socio-economic difficulties, some families prefer educating boys and leaving out girls. Girls are perceived as help mates in the home and marriageable once they reach maturity and attain a modicum of education. In some instances, they are married off to raise dowry to educate boys (Juma, OI, 24/9/98; Adan, 30/12/98; Chirunga, OI, 25/2/99).

Field research conducted for this study reveals that marriage affects girls' access to secondary school. A girl who is interested in schooling might be caught in a dilemma of continuing with education or becoming married after puberty, thus discontinuing with her education. Research shows that women who are relatively well educated do not easily get marriage partners. This is because education beyond acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy skills is perceived as contrary to the social need for women to be wives and mothers. Due to ignorance, there is an apparent male phobia - real or imagined - of marrying an educated woman. This is despite the fact that the number of educated men is higher than that of women. Within the area of the study, this fear is on the decline, as discussed later in this section, as more educated men opt for educated spouses.

The fear of marrying educated wife is rooted in culture. This is because of the belief that education especially at a higher level, enables a woman to know her rights and acquires financial independence. Once economically empowered, she will question the social norms and values that subordinate her. Nevertheless, a woman of an average Muslim family is in principle economically empowered owing to the economic rights that have already been mentioned. That notwithstanding, from a socio-religious perspective, once a woman acquires access to the means and sources of economic production, male guardianship will be superfluous. An educated, income-earning woman may not totally devote herself to domestic roles and homemaking. Presumably, such a woman could not make a "good wife", as she is likely to perform domestic duties insufficiently. This situation could be perceived as creating disharmony in society. It is for this reason that conservatives perceive female education as creating a conflict of roles between men and women (Mernissi, 1987).

Cultural values demand that girls are married upon reaching puberty. At that point some parents stop their girls from schooling, at a point where it is possible to be married. This is because of the fear that they may not be educated with honour if they attend mixed schools where casual mixing of sexes is probable. At the same time, continued schooling is seen as reducing a girl's marriage opportunities.

Early marriages are a constraint to girls' access to secondary school education. After Standard Eight, some parents feel that their daughters have acquired enough education, and they are married-off. This hinders girls from joining secondary schools. Early marriages also deny girls an opportunity of continuing with secondary education. Research shows that some girls are already engaged by the time they reach Form IV. This means that their minds are already preoccupied with idea of virtues of beauty in readiness for marriage. As such, they will not concentrate on their studies. With lack of ambition even to further her studies to university, a girl's school life will be characterized by slothfulness, lateness to school and absenteeism. Education is sidelined because she is sure to be married to her affianced sooner rather than later (Issa, 1995; Mwenda, OI, 25/9/98). A teacher aptly summarized the effect of early marriages on girls' secondary schooling: "since many girls are married off at an early age, they are not motivated to

study to join university” (Deo, OI, 23.2.99). The socio-cultural value attached to marriage has curtailed Muslim girls’ ambition for higher education. This was confirmed by oral response. For example, in the 1997 Form IV class of Coast Girls’ High School, only twenty-five girls applied for admission to the university. Out of that number very few were Muslims. This could be interpreted as lack of ambition for higher education by girls, due to apathy engendered by the values attached to marriage.

Early marriages are tied to the belief that education especially at the secondary level could instil immoral habits to the girls such as sexual immorality that could lead to premarital pregnancies (Momanyi, [nd]; Kutsetsera, OI, 25/9/98). This is because most schools in the area of study are co-educational (see Chapter Five). Research reveals that early marriages are prevalent among the pastoral communities in the arid and semi arid areas of Kenya (**Daily Nation**, 23/4/94, p.15; 13/7/96, p.18; **Sunday Nation**, 21/7/96, p.2). In these regions, early marriages are cultural practices that militate against the education of girls. School-going girls are married off for dowry to boost the family income (**Daily Nation**, 18/5/94, p.16; 18/3/98, pp.I-II). Early marriages are also common in Mombasa and Kwale districts. Un-quantified field data is supported by official Government data on this score (RoK, 1994-96a; RoK, 1994-96b; **Daily Nation**, 25/4/2001, p.19).

In spite of the prevalence of early marriages in the area of study, oral evidence suggests that the practice is increasingly becoming unpopular with some parents and secondary school girls. This is an indication that early marriages are on the decline. Echoing disapproval for this practice a respondent agreed that: “it is not good for Muslim girls to be married early. One should grow enough to be married. It is good for a Muslim girl to learn up to the end because it is also written in the Qur’an that every child has a right to be educated (Salhadin, OI, 29/9/98).

Early marriages are unpopular among girls due to their uncertainty. They are largely forced, thus, unstable, and they do not last long. That is why most girls who were interviewed felt that a girl should not drop from school to be married. The uncertainty inherent in early marriages could only be expressed by the sentiments of a Form Three girl who said: “I do not know what the future holds for me. So, if I am married, my

husband may die or divorce me and I would not have anyone to support me, but if I finish my studies and such a thing happens, then I can go out and earn my living” (Maryam, OI, 7/10/98).

Among the parents who were interviewed, ten out of forty were categorical in their opposition to the institution of early marriages. They felt that a girl should not forgo secondary school to be married. This is because, on completion of her education, she may secure good employment to assist her immediate family members. Marrying one’s daughter even to a rich person is not a guarantee for the success of the marriage. Education is a life long process that a girl can depend on if the marriage breaks (Mwenda, OI, 25/9/98).

The changing socio-economic needs in the country, and among the Muslim community seem to create a growing need and awareness for secondary education for girls. More and more girls who seek secondary school education join the labour force either in the public sector or the informal sector. In a way such girls become partners in economic production either at the domestic or the national levels of the economy. More and more parents are appreciating that secondary education is an avenue through which their daughters could subsist in the family income. This is perhaps due to the dwindling economic fortunes and financial pressure in families where the man is the sole provider, coupled with the pride that goes with education. A respondent starkly expressed this reality by observing:

Secondary education is important for me as it determines the kind of home I will keep after school. I do not want my spouse to look down on me because I did not complete my secondary education. I do not want to rely on him on everything and everyday needs that I could get if I completed my secondary education (Mgeni, OI, 22/2/99).

The many incidences of broken marriages have led to an increased demand for girls’ secondary school education. The benefits of secondary education as an alternative to [early] marriages were highly rated by female respondents. A respondent remarked: “nowadays, so many marriages do not last. Girls prefer to continue schooling instead of being married, just to be divorced later without a source of income” (Baisha, OI, 26/2/99).

Divorce is a major contribution to broken marriages. Divorce rates are seemingly high not only in the area of study but also in the entire Coast Province (**Daily Nation**, 14/8/96, p.4; OI, 1/3/99; **The People**, 15/9/2000, pp.iv-v). According to the National Director of Children's Services, Coast Province leads in divorce among Muslims, with Mombasa and Lamu districts being some of the districts where the problem is rampant (**Daily Nation**, 14/8/96, p.4). There are some reasons behind the rampant divorces among Muslims in Coast Province. One reason is said to be lack of proper and appropriate upbringing in Islamic principles about a wife's duties and rights in marriage (**The People**, 15/9/2000, p.iv). The second reason is that most people who marry early are ill prepared for marital life and this leads to divorce thereafter (**Daily Nation**, 14/8/96, p.4). This is because some of the young men who marry early may not have a source of income to sustain their wives (**The People**, 15/9/96, p.iv). The third reason is that, some parents especially the well-to-do Arabs prefer marrying off their daughters to close family members like cousins, nephews, etc. Since such marriages take place not out of love but expediency, they do not last and in most cases, divorce follows (*ibid*, p.v). Paradoxically, education is one of the reasons for increased divorce in Coast Province. Educated women are considered too demanding to an extent that husbands cannot meet their demands, especially if the men are not employed or possess a regular source of income: "our young so called educated women are too demanding that even our working men find it most difficult to afford meeting their ever persistent unnecessary requirements" (**The People**, 15/9/2000, p.iv).

Generally, the rampant cases of divorce could probably be due to the absolute rights that Islam grants a man in divorce (*vide supra*). According to the Shafi'i School of law, that is predominant in East Africa, though women could not divorce their husbands without providing a just cause, as could husbands, they have recourse to divorce. The woman's grounds for divorce include the following: inability of the man to consummate the marriage; the repudiation of the wife at puberty of a marriage contracted for her while she was a minor; failure on the husband to support the wife; impotence and serious chronic disease like leprosy. A woman could be granted *faskh* divorce by the *qadhi* if she is able to prove one of these reasons. Alternatively, she could divorce her husband through *khul'u* (Strobel, 1979:190; Qadri, 1997:98).

Divorce creates family instability that affects girls' education. This is due to the psychological trauma that the mother and children may experience thereafter. They may also experience financial problems, if the man was the sole breadwinner, and residential instability that could impact negatively on the children's education performance. The effect of divorce on girls is more than for boys because the former are likely to step in the mother's shoes, to perform the tasks that she hitherto performed, if she has to seek a source of income for the family. Paradoxically, the prevalence of divorce has triggered an increased demand for girls' education. It is felt that, if a woman is divorced [or widowed], she could use her education to secure a job to support herself, children - if the man reneges on his role to provide for them - and relatives.

Within and outside marriage, it is generally accepted that secondary school education opens new horizons to women regarding employment and exposure. It makes a woman self reliant, and it is the gate way to university education. There is a growing trend in which educated men prefer educated spouses. Ultimately, the more men are educated, the greater the demand for educated wives. Secondary education is the channel through which girls are married to educated spouses. An educated woman also gains respect from her spouse and society at large. A respondent remarked accordingly: "these days without education you are useless, with education men will not ignore you" (Rashid, OI, 26/2/99). Ironically, secondary education is considered good in promoting good motherhood. An educated mother will raise her children according to modern hygienic standards (Ihah, OI, 30/9/98).

We could argue that the portrait of boys as future (potential) breadwinners who should be provided with education is contested. Some parents feel that this is no longer the trend. Today, women whether married or not, equally play the role of breadwinners. Therefore, they need to be educated as well:

These days, girls are more reliable than boys. Even if they are married, they make an effort to help the family. Some men even forget their parents when they become independent. Once a girl is educated, she can fend for herself, her children, parents and relatives (Mwenda, OI, 25/9/98).

The belief that boys are future providers is borne of ignorance. Ignorant parents will not appreciate the importance of girls' education. This ignorance is a product of illiteracy.

Illiterate parents cannot comprehend the importance of education, if they are not beneficiaries of the same. It could therefore be argued that financial constraints coloured in cultural norms and values disadvantage girls in education provision. This makes some parents to educate sons at the expense of daughters

3.4 Summary and Conclusion.

This chapter has discussed the status of Muslim women and its influence on girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts. It was premised that some misinterpretations of the teachings of Islam on the place and role of women constrain girls' access to secondary school education.

Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.l) improved the status of women. His efforts in ameliorating the status of women are remarkable in view of the pre-Islamic socio-cultural terrain in which he operated. Under Islam, women have been granted social, economic and political rights. Thus the theory of intrinsic inferiority of women is not essentially supported by ideology or biological differences between the genders. Nonetheless, the rights achieved by women through the prophetic promulgation either through the Qur'an or *Sunna* were not, and are not always implemented. This implies that the rights that Islam grants to women are rarely or not always exercised. It could be argued that, generations after the Prophet, interpreted Islamic injunctions regarding the rights of women in a way that did not always favour women (Keddie & Beck, 1978:26; Carroll, 1983:203). Sexual inequality is a product of social and political institutions and traditions, falsifications and, or [mis]interpretations of Islamic discourses (Mernissi, 1975; Schildkrout, 1982; Joseph, 1988). All these factors combine to determine the weakened status of women in some Muslim communities. Within the area of study, the actual status of woman falls far short of achieving the Islamic ideal

The status of woman depends to a greater extent on how the teachings of Islam are [mis]interpreted. Interpretations of Islam on rights of women relate to cultural values on male domination and gender role differentiation. Due to socio-cultural norms on male domination, Islamic teachings on the roles of men and women are misinterpreted to sanction patriarchal power.

Patriarchal ideology shapes society's attitudes toward the roles and status of women. Islam is misinterpreted to perpetuate patriarchal ideology. This is owing to the fact that Islamic teachings designate men as protectors and maintainers of women. Through cultural inclinations the twin roles of protection and maintenance are interpreted to imply that men have more power than women. In other words, Islam is interpreted to legitimise the domination of men over women, which is not really the case. Further, Islam is misinterpreted to reinforce customs and traditional beliefs that subordinate women. Consequently, some Islamic teachings on the rights of women are either, largely ignored, undermined or used against women. Wherever her rights are fully recognized and acknowledged, a woman's socio-economic and political status is promoted. Yet, where the roles of a woman are interpreted as restricted to the private domain, her status is depressed. Following this argument, the impact of interpretations of Islam on girls' access to education should be linked to the analyses of the practices and institutions of Muslims within a given socio-cultural milieu.

A girl's access to secondary school education depends on how culture and teachings of Islam define her role in society. In spite of the emphasis Islam lays on education for both males and females, it is shown that education of boys and girls is tied to their prescribed roles. In some families, educating boys is preferred to that of girls, because they are future providers for the family. In like manner, girls' education is linked to their role as wives and mothers. With a strong marriage ethic existing among Muslims, some girls drop out of school or forgo secondary schooling to be married. This affects girls' secondary school education regarding access, retention therein, performance in examinations and future aspirations. Nevertheless, some parents attach equal importance to secondary school education for girls as for boys.

In view of the foregoing, we could conclude that, the roles that society ascribes to girls, influence their access to secondary school education. Therefore, we could confirm our hypothesis that some misunderstandings of the teachings of Islam on the place and role of women constrain girls' access to secondary school education.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE INFLUENCE OF SECLUSION, VEILING AND GENDER SEGREGATION ON GIRLS' ACCESS TO SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION IN MOMBASA AND KWALE DISTRICTS

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter Three, we examined how the status of Muslim women influences the importance attached to education of girls. It was shown that the interpretations of Islam, cultural norms and values influence the status of women thereby influencing girls' access to secondary school education. This chapter discusses the effect of seclusion, veiling and gender segregation on girls' access to secondary school education in the two districts. It is shown that although seclusion of women is associated with Muslim communities, it does not have its *raison d'être* from the teachings of Islam. The development of this practice over the years has been highlighted. A distinction has been drawn between veiling and seclusion. The debate of scholars on seclusion and veiling has been examined. Seclusion and veiling of women, are linked to the concept of gender segregation which underlines the need for separate spheres of activity for males and females. This influences Muslim girls' access to secondary school education.

4.2 Seclusion and Veiling of Women: Some Definitions

According to the **Popular Dictionary of Islam**, *purdah* is a Persian and Urdu word derived from the word *pardah* meaning "veil" or "curtain" (Netton, 1992:199). "To keep *purdah*" or "to live behind *purdah*" refers to the concealment of women and the separation of the spheres of activity of men and women (Jeffery, 1979:2-3). Therefore, *purdah* is a concept that embraces the entire idea of the general seclusion of women (Netton, 1992:199). Within that context, *purdah* is an institution that divides and defines spaces: the public and private, the exterior and interior, the male and female spheres of activity. Private (interior) spaces define the sphere of activity for women, while the exterior or public domain is the sphere of activity for men (Shaheed, 1989:18). The application of *purdah* as a generic term referring to veiling and seclusion of women and

the definition of space largely depends on the context and the author, as later demonstrated (ff. below).

The difference of the terms *purdah* and veiling is further shown, in that a woman may be in strict seclusion by not leaving her house or compound, though she may not necessarily be veiled (*ibid*, p.18). *Purdah* refers to the veiling of Muslim women, which is different from seclusion. However, veiling and seclusion may be two sides of the same coin. This means seclusion and veiling have been used interchangeably depending on the context and the usage. In this study, where the context demands, a distinction between the terms veiling and seclusion has been maintained

The other term that is linked to the term *purdah*, as its definition implies, is *hijab*. According to the **Encyclopedia of Islam**, (vol.3, p.359). *Hijab* (pl. *hujub*) is derived from the Arabic verb "*hajaba*" which means "to hide from view" or "to conceal". *Hijab* therefore, means "curtain, (*sitr* pl. *astar*)" or veil that is placed in front of a person or an object to isolate it, or to prevent transparency (**Encyclopedia of Islam**, vol.3: 359; Mernissi, 1991:94; Netton, 1992:102). It is any partition that separates two things (**First Encyclopaedia of Islam**, vol.3:300). Mernissi (1991:96) observes that the *hijab* is a symbolic boundary that splits society into two: private and public.

The **Encyclopedia of Islam** (vol.3:359-360) details the various applications of the term *hijab* in the Qur'an, where it has been used seven times to mean separation, a veil or a curtain. For example, it is used in Chapter 19:17 concerning the veil or curtain behind which Mary, the mother of Jesus, isolated herself from her people. On the day of the judgment, the saved will be separated from the damned by a *hijab* (7:46). A veil will protect the elect from the brilliance of the divine countenance: "It is not fitting for a man that Allah should speak to him except by inspiration, or from behind a veil..." (42:51).

Elsewhere in the Qur'an, *hijab* is a veil that conceals the sun when it vanishes behind the veil of the night (38:32). It is used regarding the unbelievers who do not heed to the tidings: "They say: 'our hearts are under veils, (concealed) from that to which thou dost invite us'"(41:5). Thus, a veil exists between the Prophet and the unbelievers: "When

thou dost recite the Qur'an, We put between thee and those who believe not in the hereafter, a veil invisible" (17:45).

In the *Hadith*, *hijab* is used as a synonym for the veil of death. In a *hadith* reported by Abu Dharr, the Prophet said:

Allah will pardon his servant so long as the veil has not fallen. - "O Messenger of God, what does the *hijab* consists of?" - "it is", he said, "when the soul dies while it is *mushrik* (one who associates 'other gods with God'" (cited, *Encyclopedia of Islam*, vol.3:359).

The term *hijab* has also been used to signify the curtain behind which the caliphs and rulers concealed themselves from the sight of the people. This was a Persian (Sassanid) custom that was probably introduced by the Umayyads and developed as an institution during the reign of Muawiyya (661-680 AD) and his successors. Majority of the Umayyad rulers were separated from their household by a curtain. This was in such a way that no member of the house could see the actions of the caliph (*ibid*, p.360). Under the Fatimid caliphs, the *hijab* was an elaborate ceremonial garb used to conceal the caliph during receptions and solemnities such as *Ramadhan*.

Finally, the term *hijab* has been used by *sufis* to represent everything that veils the true end, all that makes people insensitive to the divine reality. *Hijab* is a mystical separation, a supernatural isolation, a supra-terrestrial protection, an amulet that renders its wearer invulnerable and ensures success for his enterprises. The one who is "veiled" is the one whose heart is closed to the divine light (*ibid*, p.361; cf., *First Encyclopedia of Islam*, vol.3:300).

It is evident from the foregoing that the term *hijab* has been variously applied. Apparently, the term has three dimensions in its usage. The first is the visual dimension, that is, hiding from view. The second is spatial dimension that marks a boundary or a threshold between two distinct areas. The third dimension is ethical since it relates to the issue of prohibition of mixing of sexes (Mernissi, 1991:93; Mernissi, 1996:51-52).

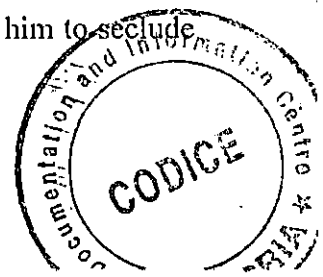
From the definitions, apparently, the terms *purdah* and *hijab* are interrelated and mutually reinforcing (Abder-Kader, 1984:146). They could be used interchangeably depending on

the context. *Hijab* is a head and face cover that conceals the hair and lower part of the face. In conventional language, the term *hijab* is synonymous with the veil that should cover the face. It is a frock, a cloak, gown or outer garment called a *jilbab* (pl. *jalabeeb*), *niqab*, *burqa'a* or *buibui*. The size of the veil varies from one Muslim country to another. It is also determined by local customs. Depending on customs, the *hijab* may be a plain piece of cloth or highly coloured and decorated apparel (Netton, 1992:102).

Among the Indo-Pakistan Muslims, *niqab* is a garment for public places. Women used it to conceal themselves from strangers (Jeffery, 1979:150-151). Among Kenyan Muslims, especially from the Coast, *buibui* is an outer garment for women. It is a light, thin non-transparent material, mainly black in colour, made of either cotton or satin and worn over the normal dress. *Buibui* is not meant for seclusion of women. On the contrary, it is a mark of identity that enhances the movement of Muslim women when they are outdoors in the public domain. Research reveals that in Kwale District, the *buibui* does not necessarily conceal the anonymity of women (cf., Wamahiu, 1988:297). Among our respondents, the *buibui* hardly covered the face and hands, only the hair and the rest of the body down to the ankles. During interviews, female respondents were not unduly conscious or sensitive about interacting with a male. The picture was quite different in Mombasa. The *buibui* completely covered the head, the face and hands and the rest of the body up to the ankles. The parts that were exposed varied from individual to individual. Whilst in Mombasa, the *buibui* provided some degree of anonymity to women, this was not the case for women in Kwale.

4.2.1 The Descent of the *Hijab* - Veil

In the history of Islam, a number of events took place that had a bearing on the reasons for the revelation of the "verse of the *hijab*". First, the Prophet used to receive many visitors in the mosque courtyard where he conducted his daily activities. Second, hooligans and other crooks used to molest women to have sexual intercourse with them in the pretext that they were slaves or prostitutes (Al-Darsh, 1995:14). This did not spare the believing women. The Prophet was therefore faced with a challenge of protecting his wives and other Muslim women against the behaviour and overtures of the hooligans. As a result, Umar, a leading companion and confidante of the Prophet, urged him to seclude



his spouses. He advised: "O Messenger of Allah, different people call at your house. Some of them are decent and righteous, but others are insolent. Could you not ask your wives to be secluded?" (*ibid*, p.11). In this context, "seclusion" refers to keeping them out of the public eye and not keeping them indoors. There is no evidence in Islamic tradition to imply that the Prophet's wives were secluded to the extent of being kept indoors.

By advising the Prophet to seclude his spouses, Umar was simply following the practice that was already in existence among the Persians and Byzantines, for whom *purdah* was a sign of social status. The Prophet's spouses were not ordinary persons. In Umar's view, they deserved a sign of recognition, like the women of status among the Byzantine and the Persians

The feast at the Prophet's wedding to Zaynab binti Jahsh in 627 AD (5 AH) was the occasion when the "verse of the *hijab*" (33:53) was revealed. This verse says:

O ye who believe! Enter not the Prophet's houses - until leave is given you - for a meal, (and then) not (so early as) to wait for its preparation: but when ye are invited, enter; and when ye have taken your meal, disperse, without seeking familiar talk. Such (behavior) annoys the Prophet: he is ashamed to dismiss you, but Allah is not ashamed (to tell you) the truth. And when ye ask (his ladies) for anything ye want, ask them from before a screen: (that makes for greater purity for your hearts and for theirs.

According to Anas *bin* Malik, a companion of the Prophet, some of the wedding guests stayed on unnecessarily in Zaynab's room chatting. This behaviour annoyed the Prophet who was not able to get rid of this small group of tactless guests who were lost in their conversation (*Sahih Muslim*, vol.II, pp.723-727; Mernissi, 1991:86). As a result, this verse was revealed. Anas *bin* Malik reports about the reasons for the revelation (*asbab al-nuzul*) of this verse as discussed in *Tafsir al-Tabari* (vol.22, p.26):

The Prophet had wed Zaynab *binti* Jahsh. I was charged with inviting people to the wedding supper. I carried out this charge. Many people came. They arrived in groups, one after the other. They ate and then they departed. I said to the Prophet: "Messenger of God, I invited so many people that I cannot find anyone else to invite". At a certain moment, the Prophet said: "End the meal". Zaynab was seated in a corner of the room. She was a woman of great beauty. All the guests departed except for three who seemed oblivious of their surroundings. They were still there in the room, chatting away. Annoyed, the Prophet left the room. He went to Ayesha's apartment....He thus made the rounds of apartments of his wives.... Finally, he retraced his steps and came again to Zaynab's room. They were still there continuing to chat. The Prophet... quickly left the room again and returned to Ayesha's apartment... he came back to the nuptial chamber. He put one foot in the room and kept the other outside. It was in this position that he let fall a *sitr* (curtain) between himself and me, and the verse of the *hijab* descended at that moment (cited, Mernissi, 1991:86-87).

This verse regulates the social behaviour of members of the community regarding their relationship not only with the Prophet but also his wives. It is instructive that despite his busy schedules, the Prophet required some privacy with his wives. To guarantee this privacy, the believers were required to follow some laid-down social etiquettes that are found in the verse. The veil was the solution for those ill-mannered people whose lack of decorum offended the Prophet.

It is necessary to point out that chapter 33:53 was the first in a series that led to the veiling of women: It brought the splitting of the Muslim space into private and public and the segregation of sexes (Mernissi, 1991: 92,101). Later, there were other revelations meant to stem the tide of social anarchy that targeted women, which has been discussed at the beginning of this section. Among these revelations are Chapter 33:59:

O Prophet! Tell thy wives and daughters and the believing women, that they should cast their outer garments over their persons (when abroad): That is most convenient, that they should be known (as such) and not molested. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

This verse instructed the spouses of the Prophet and believing women to pull a *jilbab* over themselves. *Jilbab* was a very large piece of cloth worn by women to cover their heads and bosoms. It was meant to distinguish the wives of the Prophet, his daughters and other Muslim women from female slaves. This was important so that thugs could not find a pretext of teasing and molesting them (Ahmed, 1992:54; Al-Darsh, 1995:14; Mernissi, 1991:180-181). The Prophet veiled his spouses to preserve their dignity and other Muslim women emulated them. With the spread of Islam, the practice of veiling spread rapidly in Arabia and elsewhere in the Muslim world. It was adopted by Muslim women in towns especially those of the middle and upper classes. However the Bedouin, peasant and working women, did not adopt the veil completely (*Encyclopedia of Islam*, vol. 3:359).

Let us digress a bit by mentioning something regarding female slaves. That the wives of the Prophet and other Muslim women were veiled to differentiate them from slave women does not mean that Islam denigrated female slaves. Under Islam, the ancient Semitic practice of slavery continued. Slavery originated either through birth or captivity. This did not at all justify the institutionalisation of slavery and slave trade under Islam. In

Islam, all types of slavery were (are) unlawful except that of the prisoners of war. And even then, only when no reasonable methods were available in emancipating them. Under Islam, slaves enjoyed rights that were hitherto unknown. For example, a slave became free by law if he (she) was the property of a person who was his *mahram*. Equally, a female slave who bore a child with the master, which he had recognized, became free by law. Upon the death of the master, the child (children) gained rights of inheritance like children of free women (Schacht, 1964:127; Al-Faruqi, 1991:8). Otherwise, Islam is against a Muslim enslaving a fellow Muslim or the selling of free persons for debt relief. The Prophet was quite categorical on that issue: “he who would sell a freeman by laying hold on him, I would myself be a claimant against him on the Day of Judgment” (**Sahih al-Bukhari**, vol.3, p. 419). On the other hand, the Qur’an encourages Muslims to free slaves (captives of war) as a meritorious act or for purposes of ransom:

Therefore, when ye meet the unbelievers (in fight), smite at their necks; at length, when ye have thoroughly subdued them, bind a bond firmly (on them): thereafter (is the time for) either generosity or ransom.... (47:4)

In spite of the apparent differences between free (Muslim) women and female slaves regarding veiling during the time of the Prophet, Islam recognized the rights of female slaves. A female slave (*jariya*) could marry a free man who was not her owner. A Muslim man could also emancipate a female slave and then marry her. This was exemplified by the Prophet himself who manumitted a female slave and then married her (**Sahih Muslim**, vol.2:719; cf., Maina, 1993:85). Marriage to believing men was therefore one of the ways in which female slaves acquired their freedom. Indeed, the Qur’an shows that Muslim men could marry virtuous female slaves: “If any of you have not the means wherewith to wed free believing women, they may wed believing girls from among those whom your right hands possess” (4:25; 2:221; cf., 4:3).

It is worthwhile re-visiting the debate on the *hijab* to show that even after its descent, the Prophet’s wives were veiled but they were not secluded as such. It is reported by Ayesha that one night, her and another wife of the Prophet, Sawda, went outside for sanitation and Umar recognized her from a distance. He called out to Sawda and said that he had recognized her (Ahmed, 1992:154). Sawda remonstrated with him and later she complained to the Prophet. In his reply, as reported in **Sahih al-Bukhari**, the Prophet

said: "O women! You have been allowed by Allah to go out for your needs" (vol.7, p.120; cf., Mahdi, 1989:62; Mawdudi, 1995:261).

The spouses of the Prophet were the first to be veiled. Thus, the phrase "she took the veil" is used in the *Hadith* to mean that a woman became a wife of the Prophet. By veiling his spouses, the Prophet was creating a distinction between them and the multitude of people always seeking after him. He was creating a form of segregation that was already apparent among the Persians and the Byzantines (Ahmed, 1992:53-55). After the death of the Prophet, the practice of veiling seems to have continued. During the reign of Caliph Umar, legislations and institutions were put into place that limited the social space of Muslim women by confining them. Umar for example, sought to seclude women from attending prayers in the mosque. This move raised opposition and therefore, he instituted segregated prayers and appointed separate imams for each sex. Umar's measures could perhaps be understood in the context of changes that were taking place then. When Ayesha's opinion was sought by those who were opposed to these measures she responded that: "if the Prophet knew what Umar knows, he would not have granted you permission to go out to the mosque" (Doi, 1996:29). The prohibition for the Mothers of Believers from attending *hajj* imposed by Umar' was later rescinded by Caliph Uthman who revoked the plan for separate imams for men and women (Ahmed, 1992:60-61).

4.3 The Development of the Practices of *Purdah* and Seclusion

Although the practices of veiling and seclusion of women are associated with Muslims, they are not intrinsic to Islam. Many ancient peoples such as Assyrians, Jews, Greeks, Persians and Indians practised *purdah* in one way or another. *Purdah* was not essentially an Arab practice. The Arabs adopted it after the advent of Islam (Waddy, 1980:123; Ashrafi, 1992:185; Ahmed, 1992:55). In the same way, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) did not introduce veiling into Arabia. It was common in many cities of the East before the rise of Islam (Pickthall, 1990:139). During the early years of Islam, and probably later, women mingled freely (Ahmed, 1992:68). Veiling was a symbol of social status and existed among some classes of people in Syria, Persia, Mesopotamia and Palestine. It was a prevalent and popular custom that protected the honour of women, since those who were unveiled were associated with loose character (Pickthall, 1990:139). As Islam

spread outside Arabia into areas where veiling and seclusion were common, these practices were adopted as part of the Muslim culture. Since veiling was a sign of social status, the influence of wealth and the consequent elevated standing of the Arabs led to the adoption of veiling and seclusion as symbols of "civilization" (Pickthall, 1990; Sule & Starratt, 1991; Ahmed, 1992).

It is instructive to note that the system of seclusion of women appeared during the Umayyad period (661-750 AD). During the reign of Al-Walid II (743-744 AD), seclusion existed among the ruling Arab elite and aristocrats. A number of reasons could have contributed to the adoption of seclusion and veiling by the ruling Arab families. These were increased affluence and extravagant living; the practices of polygamy and concubinage, and finally, the need by men to control and possess their wives and concubines. These reasons brought a need to conceal women from the public eyes, resulting to seclusion and veiling. Al-Walid II was the first Umayyad caliph to use the Byzantine practice of employing eunuchs and to adopt the harem system. Under this system, women were shut off from the rest of the household under the care of eunuchs (Waddy, 1980; Ahmed, 1992).

The Abbasid Dynasty (750-1258 AD) in the history of Islam witnessed an increased adoption of Persian customs and influences, such as veiling and seclusion of women. During this period, seclusion curtailed the movement of women more than under the Umayyads (Waddy, 1980:43). Caliph Al-Mutawakkil (847-861 AD) ordered the segregation of sexes at feasts and public ceremonies. Caliph Qadirb'illah (991-1030 AD) established seclusion as a Muslim institution (Ashrafi, 1992). Under the Abbasids, seclusion of women became a social institution and a preserve of the rich classes. Seclusion was a sign of social status for the women of Arab rulers, to distinguish them with other women. It was largely an urban affair that went concomitantly with the increase of concubines and the harem system. The middle classes and the rural people later adopted it (Waddy, 1980; Ahmed, 1992; Ashrafi, 1992).

The Abbasid society went further and emphasized on androcentric teachings over the teachings of Islam in matters relating to sex relations. Various customs and prejudices

that degraded women and which were part of the indigenous Byzantine and Persian cultures were endorsed and licensed as Islamic institutions. The concepts of honour and shame meant for protection of men and women within these cultures were adopted to give religious legitimacy to the seclusion of women. Islam was further interpreted to sanction practices such as female seclusion. Thus codified, the practice led to the subordination of women (Keddie & Beckie, 1978; Jeffery, 1979; Ahmed, 1992). With time, the practice of seclusion spread widely. About one and a half a century after the death of the Prophet, the practice had become fully established and universally accepted in the Muslim world (Jeffery, 1979:23).

The subordination of women through seclusion is evident during the Abbasid period and the Fatimid Caliphate (909-1171 AD). The 28th Abbasid caliph, Al-Muqtadi, exiled women singers and those of ill fame from Baghdad, after selling off their houses. He also prohibited sailors from transporting men and women together. The Fatimid caliph, Al-Hakim, saw the veiling of women as a solution to his political problems. For example, the fluctuation of the Nile waters caused crop failure and spiralling inflation that occasioned riots and political instability. In 975 AD, he prohibited women from leaving their houses and going out to the public baths. He also stopped the manufacture of women's shoes. Many women opposed these orders and were put to death (Mernissi, 1993:154).

Over the centuries, seclusion and veiling have been transformed. The Ottoman period in the history of Islam is considered to have brought the transformation of seclusion of women to its zenith. This is captured by Waddy (1980:124) who notes that:

Women were never veiled at the time of Mehmed (sic) the conqueror. They wore a scarf over their heads but their faces were uncovered. The early sultans did not segregate their wives, nor did they employ eunuchs to guard their women, and there were no elaborate pompous palace ceremonies. It was from the Byzantine these customs were passed on to the Turks. In modest homes, there were no separate quarters for men and women. The majority of the Turks were monogamous. But the influence of the upper classes spread to the rest of society, and with it, women were reduced to a secluded and confined lot.

It could be noted that over the years, the influence of social customs and traditions have resulted in acceptance of veiling and seclusion as social norms (Abdel-Kader, 1984:142). Due to the need to protect the respectability of Muslim women the practice of seclusion was rationalized. In East Africa, the *buibui* as a manifestation of seclusion came from Hadramaut. It was practised with varying degrees of strictness, depending on the social

status of the women involved (Strobel, 1979:73-74). The adoption of the veil increased as Muslim values were accepted such that, by the beginning of the twentieth century, seclusion and veiling had become popular practices. By 1919, *purdah* had become popular among the Swahili of Mombasa due to its respectability (*ibid*, pp.75-76).

4.4 Interpretations Regarding Seclusion and Veiling of Women: Traditionalists versus Modernists

In spite of its non-Islamic origin, in the eyes of Muslims and non-Muslims, seclusion is associated with Muslim communities. However, it is a common phenomenon among non-Muslims such as Hindus. Among Muslims, female seclusion has generated debate as to whether it is Islamic or has a Qur'anic basis. The debate on seclusion and veiling has brought the interpretations of Islam into perspective. Depending on interpretations, there are two main trends: the traditional trend and the moderate trend. The traditionalists advocate a total ban on women's appearance in public. They intertwine non-Islamic socio-cultural values with Islamic norms to justify their argument that female seclusion is inherently Islamic. They take some Islamic ideals of honour of women to give moral and religious justification to seclusion (Jeffery, 1979:33). For traditionalists, Muslim women should stay at home and never venture out of the house unless when it is necessary. Traditionalists cite Chapter 33:33 to justify close and complete seclusion of women. The injunction in Chapter 33:33 says: "And stay quietly in your houses, and make not a dazzling display, like that of the former times of ignorance..." Oral information reveals that this is one of the verses that is cited by some people to argue that seclusion is prescribed by the teachings of Islam. The verse is also used as a general regulation to restrict women from wanton display of their ornaments and going out of their houses altogether (Wadud-Muhsin, 1992:98).

The traditionalists are strongly opposed by the moderates who posit that Islam does not explicitly stipulate that women should be secluded. According to moderates, the words: "And stay quietly in your houses", do not imply that women should not at all venture out of the house. On the contrary, women should go out of the houses to fulfil their socio-economic and political needs (Ashrafi, 1992; Siddiqi, 1992; Mawdudi, 1995). To confine

women to the four walls of a house is wrong interpretation of the teachings of Islam (Siddiqi, 1992a)! Oral information supports this contention. A respondent argued that:

Seclusion is not prescribed by the teachings of Islam. It is as result of misunderstanding of the people. It is oppressing to women. A woman should not be secluded. She should be free to move out of the house, so long as she does not exceed the limits of religion (Athmani, OI, 26/9/98).

Evidently, some Muslims misunderstand the Islamic teachings on non-intermingling of sexes and veiling to imply seclusion of women. Those who support seclusion misinterpret Islam. They argue that seclusion is prescribed by Islam to avoid sexual attraction since men and women are not supposed to mix in social places such as schools and mosques. This is supported by oral information. An informant observed that: "Muslim women should be secluded because Islam is against free mixing of men and women. If seclusion means veiling or *purdah*, it is prescribed in the Qur'an" (Kassim, OI, 27/2/99).

There also seems to be some misunderstanding about the terms veiling and seclusion. Veiling is misinterpreted to mean seclusion as one respondent noted: "it is unlawful to mix sexes after puberty, in that, according to the *hadith*, boys and girls are supposed to be secluded from the age of ten" (Siwazuri, OI, 30/9/98). The misunderstanding could be seen from the response of another respondent who said: "women should be secluded because they have been ordered to stay at home, and men to work to feed them. However, they have the right of movement as long as they are all in veils" (Abdi, OI, 30/10/98).

Confining women to their homes is not a normal way of guarding their modesty. On the contrary, confinement is prescribed as a punishment for lack of chastity (cf., 4:15; Hassan, 1996:382). The argument by the moderates is that, if women were not allowed to leave their houses, then the injunction for them to cast down their looks and the prescription of the veil for women (24:30-31; 33:59), could be superfluous (Siddiqi, 1992:146; Siddiqi, 1992a:91).

According to the moderates, seclusion of women as practised by some Muslims has nothing to do with Islam. It is not part of the Islamic law and is derived "from the source of weakness to Islam, not from the source of strength" (Pickthall, 1990:145). Female seclusion is purely a non-religious socio-custom that is not legislated by the teachings of Islam (Abdel-Kader, 1984; Siddiqi, 1992a). Ali aptly discerns this picture by saying:

Muhammad recommended to the women folk the observances of privacy. But to suppose that he ever intended his recommendations should assume its present inelastic form, or that he ever allowed or enjoined the seclusion of women, is wholly opposed to the spirit of his reforms. The Qur'an itself affords no warrant for holding that the seclusion of women is a part of the new gospel (1974:279).

It could be argued that even if Chapter 33:33 implies physical seclusion of women, as some traditionalists argue, this institution did not deter the wives of the Prophet and other early Muslim women from participating in socio-economic and political activities. As shown in Chapter Three, if women were secluded, they could not have achieved the sterling feats in education, politics and other spheres of activity in Muslim tradition. That the role of women in public realm continued even after the revelation of Chapter 33:33 is evident in early period of Islam. It is in this regard that Mahdi (1989:62) argues that it is immoral to use religion to parade the necessity of female seclusion when Islam does not sanction it and only insists on women's modest dressing. The concept of ideal dressing for a woman hinges on the veil which is discussed below.

Hence, the various postures regarding female seclusion and veiling of women depend to a greater extent on the interpretations of the Qur'an. Apart from the verses mentioned above, others that are considered to deal with veiling are 24:58-60 and 33:55. Most importantly, we need to discern and decipher the message contained in some of these verses. Chapter 24:30-31 say:

Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make for greater purity for them: and Allah is well acquainted with all what they do. And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or the slaves whom their right hands possess, or male servants free of physical needs, or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex; and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments....

Chapter 24:58-60 say:

O ye who believe! Let those whom your right hands possess, and the (children) among you who have not come of age ask your permission (before they come to your presence), on three occasions: before morning prayer; the while ye doff your clothes for the noon day heat; and after the late-night prayer: these are three times of your undress: outside these times it is not wrong for you or for them to move about attending to each other: Thus does Allah make clear the signs to you: for Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom. But when the children among you come of age, let them (also) ask for permission, as do those senior to them (in age): Thus does Allah make clear His signs to you: for Allah is

full of knowledge and wisdom. Such elderly women as are past the prospect of marriage—there is no blame on them if they lay aside their (outer) garments, provided they make not a wanton display of their beauty: but it is best for them to be modest: and Allah is the one who sees and knows all things.

Chapter 33:32-33 say:

O consorts of the Prophet! Ye are not like any of the (other) women: If ye do fear (Allah), be not too complaisant of speech, lest one in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire: but speak ye a speech (that is) just. And stay quietly in your houses, and make not a dazzling display, like that of the former times of ignorance....

Chapter 33:55 says:

There is no blame (on those ladies if they appear) before their fathers or their sons, their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or the (slaves) whom their right hands possess. And, (ladies), fear Allah; for Allah is witness to all things.

Some scholars argue that the verses of the Qur'an that refer to veiling of women relate to the wives of the Prophet and not to women in general (Jeffery, 1979; Mahdi, 1989; Chaudhry, 1991). These verses are 33:32-33, 33:59 [in spite of the very clear message in 33:59 that addresses the wives of the Prophet and other Muslim women]. It is in this regard that Ahmed (1992:55) and Mawdudi, (1995:252) argue that veiling is nowhere explicitly prescribed in the Qur'an or *Hadith*. They further observe that the only verses that deal with women's clothing instruct women to guard their private parts and to throw their scarves over their bosoms (24:30-31). In what appears as a contradiction, Mawdudi (1995) further notes that the veil is Qur'anic in spirit. This is because women at the time of the Prophet used the veil or *niqab* as part of their regular dress outside the home. Mernissi notes that the Qur'an puts no restriction on how a woman should dress but suggests "modesty for both men and women". She further argues that the *hijab* has nothing to do with the women's wearing veils or *chadors* (Bardach, 1993, INTERNET). A *chador* is the Iranian version of the *hijab*. It is a semi-circular piece of either flowered, multi-coloured or black fabric. It is worn with its exact centre on top of the head, covering the hairline in order for the sides to be even (Mahjubah, vol.4, No.3, 1985, p.21).

Some scholars consider 24:30-31 the final statement concerning the covering of women in public. It is thought that 24:30-31 was revealed after 33:33 and 33:59, therefore, it is regarded as the final, unabrogated universally applicable requirement concerning veiling

of women (Al-Darsh, 1995:17). According to this argument, the verses of the Qur'an regarding veiling always apply to all women (Jeffery, 1979; Siddiqi, 1992).

All the verses stated above show that men as well as women have to lower their gaze and not to throw evil glances when relating to members of the opposite sex. The verses also explain the dressing code for women when they are amidst non-*mahram* men. These are male strangers with whom a woman could contract a marriage. Women should avoid ostentatious display of their ornaments and speaking alluringly to attract the opposite sex. These verses are further reinforced by the *ahadith*. A few examples could suffice for illustration. In a *hadith* transmitted by Abu Dawud and reported by Ayesha:

Asma'a daughter of Abu Bakr came to the Messenger of Allah while there were thin clothes on her. He approached her and said: O Asma'a! When a girl reaches the menstrual time, it is not proper that anything on her should remain exposed except this and this. He pointed on his face and palms (Siddiqi, 1984:142; Chaudhry, 1991:99; Siddiqi, 1992:84; Siddiqi, 1992a:86; Mawdudi, 1995:228; Doi, 1996:14).

In another *hadith* transmitted by Muslim, Jaber reported:

My maternal aunt was divorced thrice. She then intended to get fruits of palm trees. A man threatened her for coming out. She came to the Prophet who said: Yes, take fruits of your palm trees. It is perhaps you will make gift or do some good act (Chaudhry, 1991:99).

This *hadith* clearly shows that women should not be secluded, and that they should go out to fulfil their socio-economic needs. In another *hadith* transmitted by Tirmidhi and reported by Ibn Masoud, the Prophet said: "a woman is like a private part. When she goes out (not properly dressed), the devil casts a glance to her" (*ibid*, p.101). In another related *hadith*, transmitted by Muslim, Umm Atiyya reported:

The Messenger of Allah commanded us to bring out on *idd ul-fitrah* and *idd ul-adha* young women, menstruating women and *purdah* observing ladies, menstruating women kept back from prayer, but participated in goodness and supplication of Muslims. I said: Messenger of Allah, one of us does not have an outer garment. He said: Let her sister cover her with outer garment (*ibid*, p.100).

In a *hadith* transmitted by Abu Dawud and reported by Ayesha:

The riders were passing by us while we were with the Apostle of Allah in *ihram*. When they came by us, one of us let down her veil over her face from the head. When they passed on, we removed it (*ibid*, p.102).

The verses of the Qur'an and the *ahadith* cited prescribe the dressing code for women. They further show that women should be dressed decently to guard themselves and men from falling into sexual temptations. A Muslim woman could wear whatever she pleases

in the presence of her husband, family members and women friends. Nevertheless when she goes out or when men other than her husband or close family members are present, she is expected to wear a dress that covers all parts of her body. The dress should not reveal her figure! However, during *hajj* and prayers, a woman could uncover her face and hands, but the rest of the body remains covered (Siddiqi, 1992:86-87).

Rules of modesty in dressing apply to men as well. They should also guard their chastity. They should not wear silk as a show of luxurious living (Siddiqi, 1984; Siddiqi, 1992). Men are supposed to be cautious by not entering the house at night, early morning and during mid-day without notice. Among other reasons, this precaution is supposed to guard the privacy of female members of the household, who might be found in a state of undress. Men are not supposed to enter houses unless leave is granted them by those inside: "O ye who believe! Enter not houses other than your own, until ye have asked for permission and saluted those in them: that is best for you, in order that ye may heed [what is seemly]" (24:27). Similarly, male strangers should also ask for something from behind a curtain (33:53).

The essence of the *hijab* is to cover certain parts of a woman's body that are not supposed to be exposed. These parts are called *awrah* and they also apply to men. For a man, *awrah* is from the knees to the navel (Siddiqi, 1992a:86). A *hadith* says the following about a man's *awrah*: "what is above the knees and what is below the navel should be covered" (cited, Siddiqi, 1992a:86; Mawdudi, 1995:227). In another *hadith*, Ali reported the Prophet as saying: "Do not uncover your thigh before another person, nor look at the thigh of a living or a dead person" (cited, Siddiqi, 1992a:86; Mawdudi, 1995: 227). Ibn Majah and Ibn Jarir have also transmitted this *hadith* with its variant wording

For a woman, the entire body is *awrah*, except the hands and face. In a *hadith* transmitted by Abu Dawud, the Prophet said: "when a woman reaches the age of puberty, no parts of her body should be kept exposed except the face and the hands up to the wrist joint" (Siddiqi, 1984:142; Siddiqi, 1992:83; Siddiqi, 1992a:86; Mawdudi, 1995:228; Doi, 1996:14).

Awrah should not be exposed to any person except to the wife or husband, or in case of medical or other pressing necessities. Three of the founders of the four schools of Sunni law have virtually the same opinions about *awrah*. Imam Malik argues that that the whole body of a woman except the hands and the face are *awrah*. Ahmad bin Hanbal holds that the entire body of a woman should be covered except the face and hands. Abu Hanifa's position is that a stranger should not see the body of a woman save for the face and hands (Siddiqi, 1992a:105).

Connected to *awrah* is a woman's mode of dressing. A woman's dress should be loose. It should not reveal her beauty, the shape of her body and the colour of her skin (Siddiqi, 1992:86). A *hadith* cited above reported by Ayesha about Asma'a shows the Prophetic teaching on this issue. The *hadith* thus lays emphasis on decent dressing. In a *hadith* transmitted by Muslim the Prophet said: "women who remain naked even after putting on their dress and draw others into temptation, or walk and move in an alluring manner shall not enter paradise, not even get its scent" (cited, Siddiqi, 1984:136; Siddiqi, 1992a:87; Mawdudi, 1995:228).

In another *hadith* recorded in the **Muwatta** of Imam Malik, Hafsa, daughter of Abdur Rahman came before Ayesha and was wearing a thin wrapper over her head and shoulder. Ayesha tore it into pieces and put a thick wrapper over her (Siddiqi, 1984:143; Siddiqi, 1992:81; Mawdudi, 1995:228; Doi, 1996:14). Similarly, in a *hadith* transmitted by Al-Mabsut, Caliph Umar instructed that: "do not clothe your women in such clothes as are tight fitting and reveal all the outlines of the body" (Siddiqi, 1984:143; Siddiqi, 1992:85; Mawdudi, 1995:229; Doi, 1996:14). That a woman should be dressed in a long garment and not a dress that reveals her body features brings in the purpose that *niqab*, *jilbab* or *buibui* fulfils.

The issue of how a woman should be dressed especially when she ventures out of the house brings in the debate on the words: "what (must ordinarily) appear thereof" which are found in Chapter 24:31. The interpretations of these words have brought into existence two diverse opinions concerning the veil. One opinion holds that the veil should cover the face and other parts of the body such as the hands and feet. The other opinion holds that a woman's veil or outer garment should cover the head, neck, bosom but not

face, hands and feet (cf., Chaudhry, 1991:106). These rules do not apply to women who do not have sexual desires or whose age does not allow sexual attraction (cf., 24:59-60). These opinions are based on the interpretations of various jurists on the phrase “what (must ordinarily) appear thereof”. Hanafi jurists take the position held by Abdullah *ibn* Abbas. This position holds the view that these words refer to all those parts of the body that remain exposed like hands and face that do need to be covered. These also include eye paint (kohl), signets and hand paint. Ibn Masoud, on the other hand, argues that the words refer to clothes that a woman must be wearing (Chaudhry, 1991:105; Al-Darsh, 1995:19). According to al-Tabari, in his *tafsir*, **Jamil al-Bayan**, the phrase refers to the face and the two hands that include the kohl, the ring, the bracelet and colour of dyed hands (Al-Darsh, 1995:20). Another leading companion of the Prophet, Ibn Umar says the words:

Mean face, hands and signets because women are forced to uncover those parts. If they do not uncover their hands, they cannot buy or sell; if they do not expose their faces, they cannot act as witnesses, nor seek the hand of any man in marriage; if they do not uncover their feet, they can hardly go about for their necessities (Siddiqi, 1992a:105).

Majority of the jurists and exegetes cite the *hadith* reported by Ayesha about Asma'a to explain the phrase. Hence, the generally accepted view is that a woman could go out for her genuine needs with face and hands uncovered. This means that, veiling that absolutely covers the face is not necessary. It is, therefore, obvious that the positions of jurists regarding these words generate different interpretations about the veil. In this respect, Lamya al-Faruqi (1991:8) observes that those words signify conforming with the prevailing customs of a region or period and says nothing about the necessity for the veil or *purdah*.

4.5 The Economic Implications of Seclusion of Women

As socio-cultural practices, seclusion of women has economic implications and significance that could explain their *raison d'être*. Female seclusion has been a Muslim practice for many years. Whether it is given religious justification or is a cultural practice, the practice varies from one Muslim community to another. Concealment of women is the essence of seclusion. Studies that deal with seclusion of women apparently indicate that the degree of concealment, to a larger extent, is dependent on the socio-economic status

of a family and varies from one class to another (cf., Jeffery, 1979; Boesen, 1983; Mernissi, 1987; Shaheed, 1989).

Seclusion of women takes a heavy toll on the family resources because women have to be provided with all the necessary services (Mernissi, 1987:142). When and if the basic necessities of women are not catered for, it would be foolhardy to seclude them. In poor families, socio-economic conditions force women to look for work to supplement family income. Hence such women cannot be secluded. We could infer that, to a larger extent, the wealthier a family is, the stricter are the restrictions of female seclusion and the poorer a family is the less strict are the strictures of seclusion. This however should not be generalized as it may largely depend on individual Muslim communities and from one locality or country to another. Jeffery (1979:3) in her study of Indian women notes that among some families, it is only a curtain that marks the threshold of women's and men's domain. In other families, solid structures are used to separate the two spheres.

Female seclusion presupposes that men are the providers for women. This assumption accords religious legitimacy to the dependent status of women and children. Thus, it enhances the political and social status attached to the economic roles of men vis-à-vis women (Schildkrout, 1982:55). While women are relegated to a state of economic dependency, there are situations where secluded women play economic roles and generate income behind the walls of *purdah*. Such women could be economically independent but to the outsider, they are dependent on men, since they are secluded (*ibid*, p.74).

As a product of females' dependence on males for sustenance, seclusion expresses a man's economic success. Therefore, in some Muslim countries, it is common among the upper and middle classes, than among the peasants and the poor (Schildkrout, 1982:55). Siddiqi underscores this aspect by saying that:

Purdah as popularly understood is only possible among the upper and middle classes and not among the poor and the labouring classes who have to toil hard for their daily bread. Such people of necessity could not practice *purdah* (1992:144).

Boesen (1983:114) in her study of the Afghan Paktun women further underlines the socio-economic dimension of female seclusion. She notes that in the families of small land owners, and tenants, women are not secluded. Economic survival therefore dictates whether women are to be secluded or not. This is because they have to perform certain

tasks outside the home, e.g. fetching water, firewood and vegetables, and helping men in the fields in weeding, and shopping. Pickthall (1990:139) shares the same contention and observes that seclusion:

Has never been a universal custom for Muslim women, a great majority of who have never used it, for majority of the women in the world are peasants who work with their husbands and brothers in the fields. For them face-veil (*pardah*) [sic] would be an absurd encumbrance.

Female seclusion was thus a symbol of socio-economic status. It was adopted in towns for safety and distinction of women. Whereas the rich in the towns could afford spacious homes and private gardens for secluding women, the same was not practical in the rural areas, where the poor people lived in tiny rooms. In such situations, to confine women could be utter cruelty (*ibid*, p.140). This means the social norms governing seclusion, are bound to be flouted by lower class women due to economic pressures. On the other hand, upper class women who are amply provided for all their needs may comply with the norms of seclusion (Stiehm, 1976:230).

4.6 The Social Significance of Seclusion and Veiling of Women

Seclusion could be restrictive as far as the social mobility of women is concerned. It may also be considered as oppressive to women, but for those who practise it, it may have some premium. In Pakistan, it is associated with upper classes of the rural people. Therefore, it confers prestige and value to women and it is a sign of upward mobility (Shaheed, 1989:19). In rural Morocco, many conservative women perceive seclusion as a source of pride, prestige, privilege and a preserve for the wives of the rich men (Mernissi, 1987:142). Among the Hausa of northern Nigeria, female seclusion is a sign of high status (Schildkrout, 1982:74). Oral information attests that, some people perceive seclusion as a method of enhancing morality. It is seen as a check against rape and other social evils, since women are removed from society. According to some respondents, honour, chastity and dignity of a woman lie in her seclusion.

Like seclusion, the veil confers prestige to women. In Morocco, the *hijab* as a distinct headdress is a symbol for the educated, urban, upper and middle class women (Mernissi, 1997:126). In Egypt, since the late sixties, there has been a widespread acceptance and appreciation of the veil. It has become a common recurrence in colleges and schools

(Nelson, 1984:222). In Mombasa, in the mid 19th century to around 1914, the lower class adopted *buibui* by imitating, the high class women. Its adoption was a sign of enhanced respectability and increased social status (Strobel, 1979:74-75). In both Mombasa and Kwale districts, the *buibui* is a sign of social status. It is a demonstration of Muslim women's piety and identity. It guards the reputation of women in their work places, whether in schools, offices, or in public gatherings.

The social significance of the veil depends on who is looking at it and in what context. For example, during the Iranian Revolution, the *chador* served both religious and political roles. From a religious perspective, women chose to adorn it as a mark of new identity. It represented decency and honour as those who refused to veil themselves were labelled supporters of westernisation and Western values. Politically, the *chador* symbolized political support for the Islamic Republic. It was a symbol of resistance to, and liberation from the Pahlavi regime that had attempted to proscribe it. The *chador* allowed woman's anonymity as they could conceal their identities from the Shah's secret police (SAVAK) during demonstrations (Mahjubah, vol.4, No.3, July 1985, p.22; "Islam's Appeal to Women": INTERNET).

To the non-Muslims, the veil may represent backwardness and subjugation of women. For the majority of the Muslim women, wearing a veil is a means of prestige, piety, pride and status in society. Mainly, a veil is a mark of identity for a Muslim woman (see, Porter, 1992:107). In this regard, its usage cuts across all ages and generations and is:

Worn by many Muslim women out of modesty, the veil is also a striking symbol of pride in being a Muslim which many younger Muslims and older generation are pleased to wear contrary to popular belief (Netton, 1992:102).

These contentions prove that, the veil is not perceived to be restrictive to women. On the contrary, it enables her to assume her roles and responsibilities in society without hindrance. In other words, it provides anonymity to women whenever they venture out in the public domain. Indeed, majority of women find the veil comforting, protective, and the object of deep personal pride whenever they interact with members of the opposite sex in professional and social circumstances (Porter, 1992:108; Haddad & Smith, 1996:142; **The Guide**, 1998: 40). Thus, the *hijab* has become more of an attitude than a fashion:

When one wears the *hijab*, she has to behave in a certain way. Flirting is out. Running for the bus and boisterous behaviour in public are not to be encouraged either. The idea is that one should conduct oneself with dignity always, and be a worthy ambassador for Islam. Wearing *hijab* identifies you as a Muslim and people will judge Islam by you (Al-Islam, 15/3/91, p.38).

Generally, the veil has become the accepted dress code for Muslim women. Wearing a veil is an affirmation that one is a good and modest woman who comports herself and comprehends the importance of the relations between sexes (see, Haddad & Smith, 1996:141). A *hijab* should be loose fitting. That is, it should not be thin or transparent to such an extent that it attracts men and becomes potential source of mischief (Khan, 1995:145). According to oral information, the *buihui* conceals a woman's body from exposure to the members of the opposite sex. It is a religious prescription to guard against immorality, that is, sexual harassment and promiscuity. In view of this, a woman who exposes herself without a *hijab* is considered as displaying immorality. A woman's body should not be exposed for public consumption as this perverts morality.

Besides being a Qur'anic prescription, the veil is considered the ideal dress for a Muslim woman. Muslims see the western mode of dress for woman especially the mini-skirt as anathematic. In some countries that have enforced the legislation of the *hijab*, such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, non-veiled women are considered to be evil tempters out to corrupt sexual morality. In that case it behoves non-Muslim women in those countries to copy the dressing code of Muslim women and wear the *hijab*. Indeed, it is also mandatory for women foreigners in Iran to wear the veil in public (Mather, 1999, INTERNET).

The practices of seclusion and veiling of women discussed above are linked to the concept of honour. This has implications on the education of girls.

4.7 The Concept of Honour and its Influence on Girls' Education

In Muslim communities, the concept of honour is based on religious and socio-cultural values. Honour regulates and controls the behaviour of family members. The words of Joseph (1996:199) curtly describe the significant role of family honour among Arabs:

Family honour implies that one's sense of dignity, identity, status and self, as well as public esteem are linked to the regard with which one's family is held by the community at large. The cultural assumption has been that a person's actions reflect on her or his family as a whole, and the reputation of the family as a whole is borne by each of its members. Children are taught that the good of the family comes before personal

good. Sacrifice by individual family members to benefit the family as a whole is expected. Family members are supposed to be responsible to and for each other.

Although Joseph was writing about the Arab family, his notions on honour could apply to virtually all Muslim communities. This is apparent in our discussion later in this section. From a religious and social perspective, honour in Muslim communities is a tool of controlling women's sexual behaviour. In this respect, the practice of *purdah* is based on family honour in which women are the focus. Once this honour has been lost, it is difficult to regain. A woman who fails to bring honour is a disgrace to the husband, family and society (see, Jeffery, 1979; El-Sanabary, 1993; al-Hasan, 1995). The significant role that women play in preserving honour in Islamic cultures is underscored by the following observations:

Honour is linked to female purity. This requires virginity for the unmarried, fidelity for the married, and continence for the divorced or widowed. This conception of honour means the behaviour of an individual woman affects not only her own reputation but also that of her husband, father and indeed that of her male kin (Stiehm, 1976:229).

The need to guard honour among some families necessitates veiling, seclusion and segregation of sexes. For honour to be guaranteed, in some cases, men may assume all public roles and women take domestic roles (*ibid*, p.229). In some parts of the Muslim world, some family members go to the extremes, to guard this honour, something that is anti-Islam. For instance, should a husband, father or brother believe that his wife, daughter or sister has dishonoured the family, it could lead to "honour killing" (Bardach, 1993: INTERNET). **The Jordan Times** (see, **Daily Nation**, 13/2/2001, p.9) reported about a twenty-five year old man who was arrested by the police for allegedly killing his married sister to cleanse the family's honour. The woman reportedly had sexual relations that resulted into pregnancy with the man who married her later. Such incidents are considered as "crimes of honour" and they contribute to the deaths of an average of twenty Jordanian women every year (*ibid*, p.9).

Segregation of sexes is based on the religio-cultural premise that honour and respect for the family is protected and preserved through women (Nelson, 1984:214). Seclusion thus serves as a mechanism for controlling women to protect family honour (Boesen, 1983:113). On the other hand, veiling affirms a woman's modesty and comportment and regulates her social behaviour. It could be offensive for a woman to appear in public

when she is inappropriately attired, without a veil, or walking with the face uncovered . The veil is a moral safeguard against impropriety and sexual perversion. A woman should not move around displaying her beauty, mixing and flirting with male strangers or non-*mahram* men. This could damage her honour and that of the family (Jeffery, 1979; Mernissi, 1993; Al-Hasan, 1995; Haddad & Smith, 1996; Mernissi, 1997). In this case, careers or occupations where a girl's honour and that of the family are compromised are considered inappropriate to women. It is for this reason that the 1997 Ugandan Face of Africa model winner, Hadjah Bushirah had to abandon a career in modelling. Her family was opposed to it, arguing that modelling leads to immoralities and other vices (**Sunday Nation**, 26/10/97, p.7). An respondent, Athmani (OI, 26/9/98), cited Bushirah's case to argue that although a Muslim woman has freedom to participate in public activities, she should not exceed the limits of religion in regard to dressing. She should not wear mini-skirts and display her body by performing in catwalks. On the same vein, Niger's Islamist leaders opposed the International Festival of African Fashions (FIMA) held on 16th November 1998. They were disgusted by the attire worn by what they described as the "scantily clad models" that revealed their breasts and legs. They invoked the Qur'anic injunction on veiling (cf., 24:30-31) to express their displeasure (**Daily Nation**, 17/11/98, p.11).

Obviously, the concept of honour is highly valued among Muslim communities that were the focus of this study. This has an impact on girls' access to secondary school education. Generally, honour entails a woman's proper conduct at all times. It behoves her to conduct herself with modesty, chastity and decorum. The values of chastity imply that a girl is expected to retain her virginity until marriage. Girls must be guarded against premarital sex and possible pregnancy. Some parents fear that continued schooling could damage the family honour if a girl becomes pregnant. Hence, there is strict surveillance on girls upon reaching puberty. This is the stage that girls start adorning the *hijab* or observe *pardah*. In this connection, a mother makes sure that she protects her daughter against loosing her virginity before marriage. Among the Swahili, there has to be proof of a girls' virginity before marriage. The bloodstained bed sheets of the wedding night provide the evidence (Olela, 1996:38). Fear of loss of a girl's virginity and pregnancy, may force some parents to withdraw their daughters from school. Some parents feel that

they cannot have sufficient control of their daughters if they are in school. The situation becomes more complicated if the girls have to attend a mixed school. Besides, from puberty, it is considered unsafe for a girl to move outside the home unaccompanied especially where there is no school in the neighbourhood, which means long distance to school. All these affect girls' access to secondary school education, their retention within the school and their educational aspirations.

4.8 Gender Segregation.

The concept of *purdah* and the practice of seclusion of women discussed in the previous section are closely tied to that of sexual relations governing segregation of sexes. Gender segregation in mosques, work and social places, and schools is meant to protect men and women from sexuality.

Islam discourages unrestricted freedom between sexes. It forbids casual intermingling of sexes with the intent of guarding society from sexual immorality. Mixing of sexes breed mischief between boys and girls. It leads to sexual acts such as dating, kissing, necking and petting which are likely to cause illicit sexual relations and its accompanying evils such as fornication and adultery. The consequences of these evils are unwanted pregnancies, abortion and children born out of wedlock. By discouraging casual mixing of sexes, it is argued, that Islam acts as a moral safeguard against these social evils. Above all, some respondents observed that mixing of sexes in schools makes a girl lose her honour (*heshima*). It creates *fitna* as some boys start competing to win girls' attention (Bachani, OI, 7/10/98).

Conservative Muslims argue that the result of mixing of sexes is *fitna* because of female sexuality being more potent, powerful and dangerous than the male. They further argue that if not carefully controlled, female sexuality causes chaos that threatens the social order. In that connection, men are considered as more susceptible to female lures than females are to men's (Rassam, 1984:129; Graham-Brown, 1996:7). In this regard, there is need to guard society from the evils that emanate from the mixing of sexes. The views regarding the inherent nature of female sexuality vis-à-vis male's are not really true to the spirit and the teachings of Islam. These views are products of societal beliefs, traditions

and customs regarding gender identity (Rassam, 1984:131) where female and female behaviour is considered problematic, religiously immoral and biologically anomalous. Nonetheless, if female sexuality is negatively conceived, such an attitude could advocate spatial confinement and exclusion of women from various spheres of socio-economic and political activities.

Segregation of sexes through observing the veil minimizes moral degeneration. It entails two aspects:

The first one relates to restraining of the eyes by both men and women by casting down their looks to guard their private parts and avoiding the “adultery of the eyes”. For a man to enjoy the beauty and decoration of a woman, and for a woman to be the object of a man’s eyes is likely to cause amorous results (Siddiqi, 1984:124). Islam prohibits a person from casting amorous glances towards members of the opposite sex. The first look is involuntary and absolved but not the second one, which is considered to be sexually motivated. The *ahadith* warns of this look. In a *hadith* transmitted by Abu Dawud, Ahmad and Tirmidhi and reported by Buraidah, the Prophet said to Ali: “O Ali, do not cast a second look after the first one. The first look is pardonable, but not the second”. Another *hadith* says: “Son of Adam, your first (unintentional) look is pardonable. But beware that you do not cast a second look” (cited, Siddiqi, 1984:126; Siddiqi, 1992:60; Mawdudi, 1995:215; Doi, 1996:16). The gravity of this suggestive look is explained in a *hadith*: “on the day of judgment a molten lead will be poured into the eyes of the man who looks at the charms of a woman lustfully” (Siddiqi, 1992:60; Mawdudi, 1995:237).

It should be noted that, what is forbidden is not looking at the opposite sex *per se* but the stares or glances that are sexually suggestive. A mere look that is not tinged with sexual emotions may therefore not be harmful. Otherwise, certain circumstances require that a person looks closely at a person of the opposite sex. This could apply when a male doctor treats a woman or when she appears before a judge as a witness. It also applies when a woman’s life is on the verge of danger like drowning or a burning house. In all these circumstances, the life of a woman is ultimately necessary. Therefore, the prohibited parts of a woman may be seen or touched if it means saving her life (Mawdudi, 1995:237; Doi, 1996:16). A man can also look at a woman for purposes of marriage. In a *hadith*

transmitted by Tirmidhi, Mughira *bin* Shu'aib reports: "I sent a message to a woman asking for her hand in marriage. The Holy Prophet said to me: 'have a look at her, for that will enhance your love and mutual regard between you'" (Siddiqi, 1992:61; Mawdudi, 1995:238; Doi, 1996:17).

In another similar *hadith* transmitted by Muslim, Abu Hurairah reports that:

He was sitting with the Prophet, when a man came and said that he intended to marry a woman from among the Ansar. The Prophet asked him if he had seen her. He replied in the negative. The Prophet told him to go and look at her, because the Ansar had generally some defect in their eyes (Siddiqi, 1992:62; Mawdudi, 1995:238; Doi, 1996:17).

The second aspect of gender segregation pertains to having privacy with the opposite sex. Contact with women of productive age has sexual overtones. Hence, a man or a woman is not permitted to remain alone with a person of the opposite sex, except his or her partner or the *mahram* (24:30-31; 33:55). The *Hadith* supports this. In a tradition transmitted by al-Bukhari, Muslim and Tirmidhi, the Prophet said: "do not go near a woman in the absence of her husband because Satan is circulating as blood in your veins" (Siddiqi, 1992:148; Siddiqi, 1992a:87; Doi, 1996:18). In yet another similar *hadith*, transmitted by al-Bukhari, Muslim and Tirmidhi, and narrated by Aqaba bin Amir, the Prophet said: "do not go near women when they are alone. One of the Ansar asked: 'what about the husband's elder and younger brothers?' The Prophet said: 'intimacy with them is to be avoided as death' (Sahih Muslim, vol.3, No. 286.).

Oral response cited this *hadith* to show why males and females should not mix (Gakuia, OI, 25/9/98; Ghalib, OI, 5/10/98; Harunani, OI, 7/10/98). The regulation of having privacy with the women does not apply to old women of non-productive age who have passed the age of childbearing (24:58-60). According to the *Hadith*, Abu Bakr, who became the first caliph, used to visit the clan where he was brought up and shook hands with old women. Abdullah *bin* Zubair, a companion of the Prophet, used to have his head and feet pressed gently for relief by an old woman (Doi, 1996:19).

The foregoing teachings of the Qur'an and *Hadith* show that men and women should not intermingle casually in places of work, social places, such as mosques and educational institutions. For example, during *haj*, men and women should not mix freely when

performing the *tawaf* (Siddiqi, 1992:47; Mawdudi, 1995:266). In mosques, the Prophet ordered that men should not stand shoulder to shoulder with women, not even their husbands or fathers. Equally, women should not stand in front rows but should have their separate rows behind the rows of men (Siddiqi, 1992:45; Mawdudi, 1995:266). A tradition transmitted by Muslim in this regard and reported by Abu Hurairah says: “the best place for men is the front rows and the worst at the rear, whereas the best place for women is at the rear and the worst in the front rows” (Siddiqi, 1992:45; Doi, 1996:30). The position of women vis-à-vis men does not imply that women are subordinates to men. On the contrary, it is an expression of propriety and right sexual conduct that behoves males and females. This is important, since at the time of prayer, nothing should distract a worshipper’s attention and concentration, since that would nullify prayer. Equally, propriety and good conduct apply when men stay at their positions of prayer for a short while in order to allow women standing behind them to retire first at the end of prayer (Quraishy, 1987:91).

The Prophet did not prevent women from attending mosque. In a *hadith* transmitted by al-Bukhari and Muslim, he is on record as advising the companions: “do not prevent the female servants of Allah from going to the mosque” (Siddiqi, 1992:42; Doi, 1996:28). In another *hadith* transmitted by Abu Dawud and reported by Ibn Umar, the Prophet advised husbands: “when the wife of one of you asks for permission to go to the mosque, he must not prevent her, though their houses are better for them” (Siddiqi, 1992:42; Mawdudi, 1995:263; Doi, 1996:28). However, for those women who seek to attend mosque, regulations on dress and modesty have to be observed. They should wear a *jilbab*; simple and dignified clothes; should not use perfume and avoid ostentatious display of ornaments. The *Hadith* supports this contention. In a *hadith* transmitted by Ibn Majah, Muslim and Imam Malik in his **Muwatta**, the Prophet instructed: “O people prohibit your women from coming to the mosque with decoration and coquetry”. And: do not use any perfume or scent in the night when you want to join the prayers in the mosque. Come in simple dress. The women who use perfume will not have her prayer rewarded by Allah (Siddiqi, 1992:45; Mawdudi, 1995:265).

Despite this concession, the *Hadith* also depicts the Prophet favouring women to perform their prayers in the house as opposed to the mosque. This was probably meant to discourage mixing of men and women in mosque congregation. Thus, a prayer of a woman in the house is considered as more virtuous than the one offered in a mosque congregation. While for men, prayer offered in a congregation in a mosque is more virtuous than one offered in the house (Siddiqi, 1992:39; Mawdudi, 1995:262; Doi, 1996:29). An incident is reported in which Umm Humaid Sa'idiyyah pleaded with the Prophet to allow her to be praying at his mosque in Medina. In a *hadith* transmitted by Ahmad and Tabarani, she said:

O Prophet of Allah, I desire to offer prayers under your leadership. The Prophet said: 'I know that'. But your offering the prayer in a corner is better than offering it in your closet. Your offering the prayer in your closet is better than your offering it in the courtyard of your house. Your offering the prayer in the courtyard is better than offering it in the neighbouring mosque. Your offering it in the neighbouring mosque is better than offering it in the biggest mosque of the town (cited, Mawdudi, 1995:262; Doi, 1996:29).

Nevertheless, the *Hadith* also shows that women should attend mosque for prayers that are conducted at night. These are early morning prayer or *fajr* and night prayer or *isha*. A *hadith* transmitted by al-Bukhari and Tirmidhi says: "if the wife of any one of you asks permission to go to the mosque, he should not forbid her" (*Sahih a-Bukhari*, vol.7, p.120; cf., Siddiqi, 1992:44-45; Mawdudi, 1995:264).

During the time of the Prophet, women used to have their prayers with a separate imam. Umm Waraqa was appointed by the Prophet to lead other women in prayer. Ayesha also led women in prayers while standing in the same line with them in the middle (Siddiqi, 1992:41). After the death of the Prophet, women continued to frequent the mosque for prayers. During the caliphate of Umar, mosque visitations by women especially at night posed a danger to their dignity and honour, as men teased them. Under such conditions, Umar issued a promulgation that required women to pray in their houses. Some women opposed this move, as we mentioned in our previous discussion.

The rules governing dress codes for women and separation of sexes should not hinder women from pursuing education, that is, attending school and college; participating in recreation and other socio-economic activities (Siddiqi, 1984; Siddiqi, 1992). Nevertheless, gender segregation applies in such varied social places as public baths and

swimming pools, dance halls and gymnasiums, theatres, hotels and ballrooms, schools and colleges. Mixed gymnasiums where women remove their clothes and adorn skin tights are not allowed. Equally, a woman should not use mixed public baths and swimming pools, lest she exposes herself to evil influences. In a tradition transmitted by Tirmidhi and Abu Dawud, Ayesha reports of how some women from Sham went to her. She asked them: "do you enter the public baths? I heard the Messenger of Allah saying that a woman who un-dresses anywhere else other than in her own house tears off the *satr* which lies between her and her Lord" (cited, Doi, 1996:27).

We could paraphrase Siddiqi (1992:52) to demonstrate the Islamic attitude towards mixing of sexes in social institutions:

There is no room for mixed gatherings in Muslim society. Women must meet and sit apart from men. The mixing of boys and girls for education, is spoiling the youth. Separate institutions alone give girls the chance of free thinking and advancement in society. It is against the spirit of Islam to encourage free mixing of sexes in social and state function.

In spite of Islamic teachings that forbid casual mixing of sexes, some respondents among students felt that interaction between boys and girls in schools has got some advantages. The following were some of the observations. Boys and girls could mix so long as they behave according to the teachings of Islam. This means the girls should be dressed in *hijab* (Omar, OI, 30/9/98). Mixing promotes a spirit of competition between boys and girls, since they are able to socialize, co-exist, exchange ideas; relate and appreciate each other by minimizing the various complexes toward each other. These sentiments that were aired by students in mixed schools reflect the kind of orientation that they go through in the schooling system. The so-called advantages of mixing of sexes, are from an Islamic perspective, the means to sexual promiscuity. This is because something like the spirit of competition could still be enhanced effectively in single-sex schools. In educational institutions, the rules of gender segregation do not permit co-education. This aspect is discussed in Chapter Five. Let us now discuss the effect of seclusion of women, veiling and gender segregation on girl's access to secondary school education.

4.9 The Influence of Seclusion, Veiling and Gender Segregation on Girls' Access to Secondary School Education

Among communities where seclusion of women is practised, it circumscribes the spheres of activity for males and females. Female seclusion entails gender segregation and

governs the interaction of sexes in all spheres of activity (Shaheed, 1989:98). It acts to control the participation of women in public domain. This enhances the domination of males over females, by limiting women's sphere of activity and social space. As indicated previously in this chapter, the institution of female seclusion is supported by social customs and reinforced by misinterpretations of Islam. In such circumstances, the supporters of seclusion and strict confinement of women quote a *hadith* that is said to be attributed to the Prophet. He is reported to have said: "the woman goes out of the house twice, once to the house of her husband and the other to the grave" (cited, Haddad & Smith, 1996:145). This *hadith* is not authentic because first, it does not have an *isnad*. Second, it contradicts the fundamental teachings of Islam that grant women social, political and economic rights. The *hadith* may be attributed to social lore that depicts women negatively. We could cite an example of the Afghan Pakhtun proverb that portrays women in the same light as the *hadith* quoted above: "a woman is best either in the house or in the grave" (Boesen, 1983:104). When such proverbs are given a religious facade by attributing them to the *ahadith*, they carry more weight in suppression of Muslim women's rights. Thus portrayed, the image of a woman is that of a controlled being and an object under the mercy of a man (*ibid*, p. 104). In that case, a woman should devote her entire life completely and exclusively in the service of her family, attending to the needs and desires of her husband and raising of children (Haddad & Smith, 1996:145).

Female seclusion has far reaching implications on the social, economic and political roles that women play in society. This is because a secluded and confined woman cannot play her rightful role in society. Seclusion is dependent on the premise that men are the providers of the family. This curtails the economic contributions of women in employment and income-generating activities. The role of women would largely, be confined to the domestic sphere. In some instances, among some communities, seclusion and veiling go hand in hand. Nevertheless, advocates of confinement of women see seclusion and veiling as epitomes of femininity. That is:

An obedient woman who is physically modest. She veils herself and keeps her body available for the husband only. Veiling goes together with modesty and is the expression of spatial confinement that excludes women from the public sphere, the sphere of knowledge and power (Mernissi, 1996:113).

Seclusion restricts women's social space and upward mobility. This could be said of laws on veiling of women that have been enacted in some Muslim countries that limit the participation of women in socio-economic and political spheres of life. For example, in July 1980, Imam Ayatollah Khomein (d.1989) enacted the "Hijab Law" that required Iranian women working in the state sector to veil themselves (Mernissi, 1993:165; Mernissi, 1996:xi). Khomein, the leader and architect of the Islamic Revolution, followed the traditional interpretation of the Qur'an. According to him, women should veil themselves, and the return of the *chador* was one of Khomein's main achievements. ("Islam's Appeal to Women": INTERNET). These contentions however do not take into consideration, the religious and political roles that the *chador* played during the revolution as mentioned earlier. That majority of the women during the revolution, adorned the veil on their volition, without duress, is equally ignored. The *chador* reinforces women's role in society, since she needs to cover herself for protection and virtue. Indeed, women participate in all activities, and the *chador* is not an encumbrance.

In Pakistan, under Zia ul-Haq, series of decrees were issued for all women in government employment to veil themselves or lose their jobs. In Saudi Arabia, there is a department of moral police (*mutawain - mutawa*) whose roles include enforcing the veil and ensuring that people observe the daily prayers (Ahmed, 1992:231; Chand, 1992:9; Mernissi, 1996:xi).

In Iran, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, the law or decree on veiling for women creates an atmosphere of male aggression and harassment on women who are considered immodestly dressed. This happens in the streets and places of work (Ahmed, 1988:187; Ahmed, 1992:231ff; Chand, 1992:9; Mernissi, 1993:165). In Iran, the observance of the *hijab* dress code has reinforced negative attitudes toward women. Women who do not observe the *hijab* or show a fringe under their head scarves are regularly arrested, flogged and made to sign a statement saying: "they will not behave as prostitutes any longer" (Mather, 1999:INTERNET). There is special morality police that questions members of the opposite sex who behave in a manner likely to pervert sexual morality (**Daily Nation**, 8/3/96, p.2). In Saudi Arabia, the *mutawa* jab women with sticks if they show naked arms and legs that must be covered in public (Chand, 1992:9). Afghanistan under the Taliban

had religious (moral) police whose role was to promote virtue and prevent vice. It was blamed for the harassment of women, especially those who did not adorn the *burqa'a* (**Daily Nation**, 27/9/97, p.6). Harassment of whatever nature is not condoned. The responsibility of an Islamic state is to remind people of their religious obligations in a polite way but not harassment. However at times it may enforce certain rules to be obeyed especially for those who fail to abide by the Islamic rules of the state.

Within the area of study, seclusion of women is not a common practice. However, the few who seclude their women and daughters keep them ignorant (Kutsetsera, OI, 25/9/98; Siwazuri, OI, 30/9/98). Therefore, seclusion has an impact on girls' education. Proponents of female seclusion argue that girls should be educated in privacy or within sexually segregated facilities where the identity of women may not be revealed (Wamahiu, 1990:16).

It is noteworthy that keeping girls at home on the onset of puberty is not Islamic. It is not justified by any religious discourse. However, this practice hinders girls' access to education and upward mobility, since seclusion leads to girls' dropping out of school. The negative influence of seclusion on girls' education is apparent. Research by Muhammad (1989:32-33) and Juma (1994:254) shows that supporters of the seclusion of women paradoxically argue that it does not hinder girls from education because their roles in society are circumscribed. Oral information however points that seclusion denies women their basic rights. It limits their social space, socio-economic opportunities and access to schools, colleges and universities. It was not a wonder therefore that, majority of the respondents did not favour seclusion of women. The popular opinion was that a woman should engage in all socio-economic and political activities. This is possible provided she is properly veiled and comports herself with dignity and decorum, without attracting the opposite sex (Athmani, OI, 26/9/98; Siwazuri, OI, 30/9/98; Kibirige, OI, 8/10/98).

Veiling entails gender segregation. Segregation of sexes has an impact on the education of girls. The negative effect of gender segregation on girls' schooling is seen in cases where mixing of sexes is considered as leading to moral depravity in schools, colleges and universities. The positive effects of segregation are evident in Muslim countries that

have a tradition of veiling of women. For example, in Saudi Arabia, segregation of sexes is obligatory in work places, schools, colleges and universities (El-Sanabary, 1996). The religio-cultural values that are the basis of segregation of sexes demand that women join occupations that are "suitable" to them and those which offer services to other women. These are medicine, nursing and teaching. The needs for female cadres in these professions assist to attain gender segregation in work places. In turn, this creates a demand for higher education of girls who could be trained to take up jobs in those professions (Boserup, 1970; Jeffery, 1979; Kelly, 1984; El-Sanabary, 1996). In most Arab and Muslim countries, it is anathema for female patients to be treated by male doctors. This situation has created a demand for professional cadre of female doctors and subsequently increased the enrolment of female students studying Medicine at the universities. Medicine is the most popular and prestigious profession for Muslim women in Muslim countries (El-Sanabary, 1996:71f.). Statistics show that in 1987, 50 per cent of all medical students in Tunisia were women, 37 per cent in Syria and 30 per cent in Algeria and 42 per cent in Saudi Arabia (Mernissi, 1993:159; El-Sanabary, 1994:147). This move has ensured that there is good representation of female doctors in countries such as, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey (El-Sanabary, 1993:146; Sha'aban, 1996:56).

Gender segregation has improved girls' access in schools. This is because religion and culture demand that girls should be educated in segregated or girls' schools and taught by female teachers. This is the case with Bangladesh and Pakistan (Herz *et al*, 1991:30). The existence of gender segregated schools in Kuwait and Malaysia in the seventies and eighties, improved girls' access to primary and secondary schools (Meleis *et al*, 1979; Kelly, 1984). Elsewhere in some Muslim countries, the demand for female teachers has also led to an increase in the number of female lecturers at the university. Statistics attest to this. In 1986, Saudi Arabia had 32 per cent of female professors while the percentage for Egypt was 28 in the same year (Mernissi, 1993:162). The percentages for these two Muslim countries were higher than that of USA and Germany, which had 25 per cent each in 1980 (Mernissi, 1996:168). France and Japan had 23 per cent and 10 per cent respectively in 1987 (Mernissi, 1993:160).

Gender segregation has had positive effects on girls' education in Muslim countries. What is the relevance of this on girls' education in Mombasa and Kwale districts? Obviously, the success story of Muslim countries proves that if gender segregated schools with an amiable Islamic environment were established in the area of study, girls' access to secondary school education could be promoted tremendously. This is evident from the high enrolments of Muslim girls in Muslim schools in Mombasa (*vide supra*, Chapter Two).

Gender segregation influences girls' access to secondary school education. As noted above, segregation requires a heavy capital investment in both physical and human infrastructures. Segregation therefore disadvantages girls regarding the availability of segregated schools and the quality of facilities (Smock, 1981:105). For effective segregation, there is a need for separate lavatories, tuition blocks, libraries, dining halls, dormitories, and female teachers and support staff for girls (cf., Herz *et al*, 1991:29). These facilities are not available in many schools especially in Kwale District. Field research revealed that segregation of sexes is more noticeable in secondary schools in Mombasa District than in Kwale District. For the former, these are schools that are sponsored or funded by Muslim organizations, groups or communities. These are largely private schools such as Sheikh Khalifa, Jaffery and Memon. Although these schools are mixed, boys and girls are segregated with each sex having their classes (streams) separate from the other. The case is different in Kwale District where most of the schools are mixed and there is no segregation of boys and girls in classes. The only semblance of an Islamic characteristic in secondary schools in Kwale, is a veil which in this case, is a simple white covering for the head.

Gender segregation could explain why the Muslim run private schools in Mombasa are popular with Muslim girls. These schools have high enrolment of girls (*vide supra*, tables 18 & 23) because they have facilities that are required for the segregation of sexes. This is something that many schools in Kwale can ill afford owing to the economic constraints of the communities. Gender segregation affects girls' access to secondary education. The effect is such that where there are no girls' or single sex schools for girls, many girls may be denied the opportunity of joining a secondary school. Where there are secondary

schools for girls, parents send their daughters. Lack of, or shortage of girls' schools is a constraint to girls' access to secondary school education. Some parents view a girl who attends a mixed school as being prone to illicit sexual relations that could lead to pregnancy hence dropping out of school. To protect the family's and the girl's honour, such parents opt to have the girl stay at home instead of attending a mixed school after Standard 8.

Coupled with gender segregation is the issue of *hijab* as a part of the school uniform. In most schools in Mombasa, especially the private ones run by Muslims, the *hijab* is a part of the school uniform for Muslim girls. The same applies to public schools such as Coast Girls and Star of the Sea. In the early nineties, the issue of the *hijab* came to the fore. Muslim girls in non-Muslim sponsored schools were barred from attending school in *hijab* as a part of the school uniform (**The Guide**, 1990; **Daily Nation**, 19/1/91, p.18). The issue of the *hijab* as a factor in Muslim girls' education hinges on school's sponsorship whose details have been discussed in Chapter Five. However, it should be pointed out that some parents prefer to send their daughters to secondary schools where they could practice their religion, including wearing the *hijab* as a part of the school uniform. With a shortage of Muslim sponsored schools, some parents are reluctant to send their daughters to non-Muslim schools. A respondent confided that, if he had an alternative, he would not send his daughter to Matuga Girls' school, because the veil is not a part of the school uniform (Mwalupa, OI, 29/10/98).

Underlying segregation of sexes is the issue of interaction between school girls and male teaching staff. Some parents worry about the possibilities of their daughters getting impregnated in schools that are predominated by male teachers (see, Wamahi & Njau, 1995:13). Though this factor was not investigated, oral information shows that in Coast Girls' some Muslim parents were wary of the male teaching staff in the school (ff.5.2) However, it should be noted that the Islamic teachings governing the interaction of women with non-*mahram* males could explain that concern. This concern could affect girls' access to secondary school education.

4.10 Summary and Conclusion

This chapter aimed at assessing the influence of seclusion, veiling and gender segregation on girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts. Various issues that relate to seclusion and veiling of women have been examined. These include: the development of the practices of seclusion and veiling; the Islamic basis for veiling; the values attached to seclusion, veiling and gender segregation and their effect on girls' access to secondary education.

It is shown that seclusion of women is not essentially a religious practice but a socio-cultural practice that Qur'anic verses on veiling legitimise through interpretations. It is demonstrated that the application of the terms veiling and seclusion are taken to be two sides of the same coin. Evidently, though not quantified, some people misinterpret the teachings of Islam to favour seclusion of women. Clearly, Islamic teachings do not support seclusion of women. Therefore, those who support this practice are ignorant of the teachings of Islam. Such people confuse seclusion with veiling. Seclusion has an impact on women's mobility, social space and their roles in socio-economic and political activities. In this respect, seclusion affects girls' access to secondary school education.

Veiling is an Islamic practice since Qur'an and the *Hadith* legitimises it. The essence of the veil is to facilitate the movement of a Muslim woman in public. It should not act as an impediment to a woman's participation in education and other social, economic and political activities. That the veil is interpreted as an instrument of seclusion of women is not the kernel of the teachings of Islam.

Seclusion and veiling entail gender segregation that governs the relations between sexes. Gender segregation is underscored by the teachings of Islam. This has implications on girls' access to secondary school education. Owing to Islamic teachings forbidding casual intermingling of sexes, single-sex schools are popular with Muslim girls. This also applies to mixed schools with segregated or separate facilities that cater for Muslim girls. This is apparent in the high enrolments of Muslim girls in the private schools run by Muslim groups or organizations.

Our discussion in this chapter therefore validates the premise that the practices of female seclusion, veiling and gender segregation that hinge on interpretations of Islam influence girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts.

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE INFLUENCE OF CO-EDUCATION AND OTHER SCHOOL RELATED FACTORS ON MUSLIM GIRLS' ACCESS TO SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION IN MOMBASA AND KWALE DISTRICTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates the influence of some school related factors on Muslim girls' access to secondary school education. Various factors to that effect are identified. These are co-education, distance to school, school sponsor(s), religious (*madrasa*) education and poverty that affects a school's performance in national examinations. A school may be single sex or co-educational (mixed). It may be a Muslim school or non-Muslim one, depending on the sponsor. Whatever the case, the type of school and the sponsoring agency, the distance to school and poverty impinge on Muslim girls' access to secondary school education.

5.2 The Influence of Co-education.

From an Islamic perspective, the system of co-education has a lot to do with the relations between genders and segregation of sexes. As indicated in Chapter Four, casual intermingling of sexes is only permitted under certain circumstances. In other words, mixing of sexes is only allowed for the old people or those who have lost sexual attraction. Granted, co-education is contrary to the spirit and the teachings of Islam. Co-education leads to inappropriate gender relations in society:

Frequent and unrestricted intermingling of mature boys and girls which co-education schools allow may bring a possibility of immoral relationships being developed among students. The cumulative effect may be unwanted pregnancy occasioning illegal abortion or emergency wedding. Since Islam wants decent relationship among boys and girls, it does not give room for whatever may cause indecent acts of sexual aberrations (Nasiru, 1997:71).

Although Nasiru's observations are about Muslim girls' education in Nigeria, they apply to the Kenyan situation as well. *Sheikh* Hamisi Mambo, an Imam of Kwale Jamia Mosque, captures this situation in his remarks:

Muslim girls should not attend secondary schools that are not gender segregated because casual mixing of sexes is not allowed. The *sharia* and Islamic teachings are clear on the segregation of sexes from the age of seven years (OI, 25/9/98).

Proponents of co-education consider it a cost effective measure in view of limited financial resources. A dual system of education with separate administrative and physical facilities from the primary school to university is an expensive enterprise. Even then, it all depends on the development priorities of individual countries, and whether a dual system of education for promotion of morality is considered a priority. Amidst limited resources, a country could still prioritise the development of a dual system of education. In some Muslim countries, studies reveal that opposition to co-education especially at secondary school level necessitates the establishment of dual systems of education for males and females. A few examples could illustrate this picture. In Saudi Arabia, co-education beyond kindergarten is prohibited (El-Sanabary, 1993; El-Sanabary, 1994; Harfoush-Strickland, 1996). In Pakistan, co-education is only found in a few universities (Smock, 1981). In Kuwait, all public schools beyond kindergarten are gender segregated (Meleis, *et al.*, 1979:115). In Tunisia and Turkey, co-education exists at all levels. In some countries, there is co-education at primary and tertiary levels, but single sex schools at secondary level (El-Sanabary, 1993:159; Harfoush-Strickland, 1996:68).

It could be argued that some of these countries have put in place dual systems of education due to the dictates of Islam against free mixing of sexes. On this point, the Kenyan Government may not feel morally obliged to establish a dual system of education for Muslims because Kenyan laws are secular and are not determined by the Islamic legal code. So it should be up to the Muslim community to establish schools that cater for the moral needs of its people. Nevertheless, events in the country in the recent past that targeted girls in mixed schools, (*ff. vide infra*), shows there is an urgent need to establish single-sex schools especially at the secondary school level.

Research in Muslim some countries shows that most parents are reluctant to send their daughters to mixed schools because of free mixing of sexes which is religiously, morally and socially unacceptable to Muslims. This generally affects girls' access to education (Smock, 1981:104; Don, 1984:116). At puberty, some parents prefer to send their daughters to single sex schools or Islamic (Muslim sponsored) schools, where boys are segregated from girls. Having to attend co-educational schools may force some parents to

have their daughters discontinue with secondary schooling (Don, 1984:117; Hill & King, 1993:26; Tilak, 1993:269).

Field survey conducted for this study shows that the non-availability of single sex schools affects Muslim girls' access to secondary school education. Within Mombasa and Kwale districts, the non-availability of single sex schools or co-educational schools with separate facilities for boys and girls force some parents not to send their daughters to school (Issa, 1995:319; Hassan, OI, 7/10/98). This is because Islamic teachings on proper gender relations militate against co-education. Most parents prefer their daughters to join single sex schools or co-educational schools with segregated facilities. Where schools do not provide for separate facilities that cater for girls such as toilets, some parents are unlikely to retain their daughters in such schools (Wamahiu & Njau, 1995:13). Islamic teachings against free mixing of sexes in work places, schools and social gatherings were cited as the reasons why boys and girls should not be co-educated. As a result, upon reaching puberty, some girls who attend co-educational schools with no separate facilities for boys and girls, are likely to be withdrawn from school. Otherwise, they may also have their schooling interrupted through early marriages (UNICEF Kenya, 1991:91; Olela, 1996:121).

Among some parents, there is no compromise regarding Islamic teachings on intermingling of sexes. Casual mixing of boys and girls in mixed schools, colleges and universities contravenes the teachings of Islam. This posture has affected the educational careers of some bright girls who have passed and qualified for admission to local universities, but are denied the opportunity, because of the co-educational nature of these universities. Research reveals that such parents try to secure university places for their daughters in Islamic countries where males and females are segregated. In the long run, failure to secure places in Islamic universities force some girls to be married off early in life. Girls do not have a choice of early marriage, hence are forced into it by parents and circumstances such as lack of places. This ends their educational aspirations and what could have possibly be a bright career after university education.

There is parental fear that girls who attend mixed schools could develop sexual liaisons with boys. This could lead to pre-marital pregnancies. Besides the girl dropping out of school, such incidents may spoil the family honour. Cases of Muslim girls dropping out of school due to pregnancies though not quantified were reported during the field survey (cf., Momanyi, n.d; **Daily Nation**, 10/2/96, p.19). Despite that, oral information reveals that Islamic teachings that underscore chastity have stemmed widespread cases of pregnancies among Muslim girls. This confirms Porter's (1992:189) observations in her study among the Swahili that, cases of pre-marital pregnancies among girls are low. Nevertheless, this is an aspect that is a matter of conjecture and may need further investigation.

Generally, in Kenya, pregnancy is a major factor in girls' attrition from the schooling system (see Wamahiu & Njau, 1995). Statistics show that by 1996, about 30 girls dropped out of school daily due to unwanted pregnancies. When translated annually, this means that about 10 per cent or approximately 10,000 girls drop out of primary and secondary schools. This number is equivalent to an annual closure of 19 schools, with three streams each and an enrolment of 640 pupils per school (**Daily Nation**, 3/2/96, p.15; cf., **Daily Nation**, 23/4/94, p.15; 24/11/95, p.20). The problem of pregnancies among school girls has raised much national concern. Consequently, the government has devised a policy of re-entry of girls into schools after giving birth. This was adopted in 1995 (**Daily Nation**, 13/11/2000, p.15).

Muslim parents feel that girls who attend a single sex school retain their respect and honour, as cases of sexual relationships through interaction with boys are limited in such a school. Most girls have reached puberty by the time they complete Standard 8, before their entry into secondary school. This period coincides with the ages 13-15. At this point, girls will start wearing *buibui* and separate themselves from non-*mahram* men. As a result of this transformation, Muslims prefer their daughters to be educated in single sex secondary schools or co-educational schools with separate facilities, such as classrooms and lavatories for boys and girls. Single sex schools are preferable because:

Girls are shy when they are placed in the classroom with boys. It is difficult to instil discipline if you are teaching about sex to a mixed class. Better if

the girls are taught by a teacher who is like a mother to them and the boys taught by a man (Porter, 1992:189).

Co-educating boys and girls is considered deterring to optimum educational attainment for the latter. This is because some learning experiences conflict with a Muslim girl's religious beliefs. For example, to expect a Muslim girl to participate in a swimming class with boys and in the presence of male teachers would be expecting too much from her (cf., Porter, 1992:190). This contravenes Islamic teachings that explain the parts of the body that a woman should not expose (*vide supra*, Chapter Four). Revealing a part of her *awrah* is immoral behaviour. Since Muslim girls are aware of the teachings that forbid casual mixing of sexes, co-education has a negative impact on their education. In a mixed class, some girls tend to shy off for fear of being derided or laughed at by boys. This would make girls to have a negative self-image about themselves. Under such circumstances, girls may not reap the maximum benefits from a lesson for failure to actively participate in class discussions and this will affect their academic performance (Hassan, OI, 7/10/98; Bhanji, OI, 23/2/99; Chinyama, OI, 23/2/99). Equally, outside the school or classroom, girls may not be free to mix with boys for academic discussions. Similarly, Muslim girls may shy off from participating in games (Physical Education) because of having to wear sports gear that reveals part of their *awrah* (Kutsetsera, OI, 25/9/98).

In some mixed schools, it was observed that, due to Islamic teachings governing the relations between sexes, boys and girls do not mix casually. Boys or girls, who break this rule, are ridiculed. As a result, in a classroom situation, the opposite sexes are not paired in the sitting arrangement. Efforts to separate boys and girls may be futile in schools without separate and segregated facilities like classrooms and dinning halls. However, even under those circumstances, some parents feel that a girl's *heshima* could still be retained, if the *hijab* is maintained as a part of the school uniform. In Kwale schools, there has been an effort towards making the veil a part of the school uniform. However, what passes for a veil is a white headdress covering for the hair. This is a mark of identity of Muslim girls. In Mombasa, a full *hijab* is a component part of the school uniform in schools such as Star of the Sea, Coast Girls', Sheikh Khalifa, Burhaniyya, Memon and Jaffery (ff. 5.4)

As mentioned earlier, to put up segregated facilities for boys and girls in co-educational schools is an expensive exercise that few schools can afford. This demand creates financial pressure on parents in various schools, public or private, who have to shoulder this responsibility. This could be explained by the fact that the government has left funding for secondary schools to local communities. The government has largely been left with the responsibility of providing teachers and paying their salaries. This problem is surmountable by utilizing the existing educational facilities within a given area. A policy could be put in place where some schools could be reserved for boys and others for girls depending on the demand for schools for each sex. Such a policy definitely requires political good will, understanding and co-operation from the local community. Following the St. Kizito tragedy in Meru, (*vide infra*), the policy of separate schools for boys and girls was effected in Tana River District (Fatuma, OI, 6/3/99).

In spite of the financial implications, the sponsoring or managing agents of some private mixed schools in Mombasa have managed to provide separate facilities for males and females. These facilities range from different streams or classrooms, school canteens, as in Jaffery, and separate staff-room for males and females, as in Sheikh Khalifa. Though these schools have a policy of gender segregation, it is impractical to separate boys and girls in all areas of school's pursuits. For example, in Jaffery, it was observed that, in forms V and VI, boys and girls are co-taught in certain subjects for cost effectiveness. In Burhaniyya, boys and girls have separate classes, but there is a mixed class for the "bright" students. The two cases cannot in any way water down the efforts some of these schools have put in place to ensure co-education under separate facilities. Indeed, co-education, in separate facilities for either sex, is a success story in Muslim sponsored schools like Memnon, Sheikh Khalifa and Jaffery, among others.

The impact of the school curriculum on girls' education is discussed later in this chapter. However, it is worth making a few observations regarding the curriculum and single sex schools. The proponents of single sex schools for girls posit that girls in such schools develop self-confidence to learn all subjects. In girls' schools, there is no fear of boys, while girls in mixed schools have to contend with boys who in most cases supersede them

in class performance (cf., Dale, 1969:46-49). It is shown later in this chapter that in mixed schools, teachers tend to concentrate more on boys than girls. This is a product of culture and socialization where males are considered as performers, active and achievers while girls are perceived as non-performers, passive and under-achievers. It is also shown that some teachers discourage girls in tackling some subjects especially mathematics and sciences. All these contribute to girls' poor performance in education. Our contention is that these issues affect girls in mixed schools more than those in girls' (single-sex) schools.

Generally, co-education goes against the grain of Islam. Nonetheless, oral response shows that some teachers favour co-education and mixing of sexes in schools for effective learning to take place. In this regard, a respondent pointed out that co-education is quite healthy, especially between the ages of 12 to 16 years. It enables each sex to know and learn from the other thus contributing to mutual understanding between the sexes. This argument seems to suggest that schoolboys and girls should be allowed to interact without segregating them. This, however, is contrary to the teachings of Islam.

From an Islamic perspective, co-education is subject to certain conditions being fulfilled. These include segregation of sexes and separate facilities and female teachers for girls, among others. As girls mature faster, boys face the challenge of being "equal" to their counterparts. This helps them to think and act maturely, which to some extent leads to competition and good performance (Khan, OI, 8/10/98). This argument posits that mixing of sexes enhances learning especially in group-discussions as each sex learns from the other. Moreover, according to the opinions of the advocates of co-education, performance is enhanced as boys and girls tend to work harder, since each wants to be recognized by the opposite sex. It is pointed out later in this section that the spirit of competition can be disastrous. A situation may arise where the opposite sexes may start pairing and competing for sexual favours.

Through co-education, girls learn that they have equal abilities with boys. Similarly, boys and girls get the opportunity to understand the characters of the opposite sex and to cope with each other socially. Hence, boys and girls mature into well adjusted individuals

(Makila, 1986). In this regard, Muslim girls learn to develop good interpersonal relationships. Where there are separate facilities, girls learn the Islamic rules and values practically by dressing in an Islamic way. In the long run, this could encourage them to join secondary schools (Bakari, OI, 29/9/98; Mazrui, OI, 9/10/98).

The above opinions attributed to both Muslim and non-Muslim respondents are seemingly insensitive to the teachings of Islam on separation of sexes. Evidently, from social, moral psychological and religious perspectives, the disadvantages of co-education outweigh the advantages. From a social and moral perspective, it should be noted that, societal attitudes that discriminate against females are felt more in mixed schools than in single sex schools (**Daily Nation**, 3/9/94, p.14). Sexual harassment of girls is one of the manifestations of these attitudes. The height of this harassment was the St.Kizito Mixed Secondary School tragic incident in which nineteen girls were killed and seventy-two raped in an orgy of violence carried out by their male counterparts. There is no gainsaying the physical and psychological effects of rape on the victims. The St.Kizito infamy took place on 4 July 1991 in the then larger Meru District. It is a constant reminder of the kind of sexual violence that can be visited on girls in a mixed school. The tragedy revealed to a stunned nation, the vulnerability of girls in the hands of boys in a mixed school. The incident may have been outrageous, because of the number of deaths. Nevertheless, it is by no means the only incident involving rape and violence against girls. There are more such cases, though not of similar magnitude, which do not capture the media headlines and public condemnation.

Since the tragedy of St. Kizito, there has been some incidents where boys' in some schools raid neighbouring girls' schools. These incidents peaked in the last quarter of the year 2000 when there was a wave of raids by boys on girls' secondary schools or on mixed secondary schools targeting girls. The raids that took place in different parts of the country led to injury and rape of girls and the burning down of their dormitories. In Bahari Secondary School in Kilifi District, boys from Kilifi Township Secondary School, injured thirty girls in a morning attack. In Nyahururu, thirty-four boys of Nyahururu High School raided Ndururumo Girls' High School with the ill motive of raping girls (**Daily Nation**, 27/11/2000, p.21). Similar incidents took place in Uasin Gishu (Rift Valley)

where boys of Kapng'etuny Secondary School raided Kipsaos Mixed Secondary School, burnt two dormitories and raped the girls. Reportedly, the reasons behind the spates of raids and violent attacks were rivalry between schools in examinations and co-curricular activities such as sports, among others (*ibid*, p.21). These incidents may be dismissed as isolated cases of indiscipline among schoolboys. However, they point out to a larger socio-cultural attitude of male dominance that is expressed in rape and other forms of sexual harassment that targets girls and women. For instance, in case of a riot in a mixed school, girls would serve as easy prey to the culture of sexual harassment as it happened at St. Kizito Secondary School.

Closely tied to the issue of co-education is lack of female teachers in a school. This also affects Muslim girls' education (Harfoush-Strickland, 1996:69). The presence of male teachers in a girls' school may determine whether some parents send their daughters to school or not (Herz, *et al.*, 1991; Hill & King, 1993; El-Sanabary, 1993). Research findings indicate that even in girls' schools some Muslim parents are concerned about the existence of male teachers in the staff (see Wamahiu & Njau, 1995:13). For example in Coast Girls', the Deputy Principal noted that some Muslim parents complain about the male teachers, preferring instead to have female teachers. The Principal of Tawhid Islamic Center, Sheikh Abdullah Ghalib, shared this contention (OI, 5/10/98). He argued that, male teachers should teach boys while female teachers should teach girls. In a situation where there is a shortage of female teachers, then male teachers could teach. But then it depends on whether they are Muslims or not and their age. There is no harm for example if the teacher is an old man who has lost sexual appeal (*cf.*, 24:58-60). The moral probity of the male teachers should be taken into consideration. Following these requirements then, some respondents noted that male teachers could teach in a girls' school if they observe Islamic principles that govern gender relations and mixing of sexes (Gakuria, OI, 25/9/98). This argument is based on the premise that "according to Islam all acts are in principle permitted if they are not prohibited" (Mwalupa, OI, 30/9/98).

Granted, it is not possible for many schools to retain an exclusive female teaching staff owing to the paucity of the female teachers in various schools. Table 24 illustrates the

distribution of the number of teachers, by gender and academic achievement in selected schools in Mombasa and Kwale districts.

Table 24: Number of Teachers by Sex and Academic Achievement in Selected Schools in Mombasa & Kwale Districts

School	Graduate		Dip./SI		Certificate		Others		Total		Grand Total	Per cent%	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		M	F
Coast Girls	13	34	7	7	2	-	-	-	22	33	55	40	60
M. Ngina	3	10	3	8	-	-	-	-	6	18	24	25	75
Star	7	16	5	12	1	-	-	1	13	29	42	31	69
Burhaniyya	10	4	1	1	2	1	-	-	12	6	18	67	33
Memon	10	3	5	2	-	-	-	-	15	4	19	79	21
S.Khalifa	12	7	10	2	-	-	-	-	22	9	31	71	29

Diani	9	4	4	1	1	1	-	-	14	6	20	70	30
Kaya Tiwi	5	-	4	2	3	1	-	-	9	3	12	75	25
Matuga	9	9	6	3	1	-	-	1	16	13	29	55	45
Ng'ombeni	8	7	4	-	-	-	-	-	12	7	19	63	37
Waa	13	7	10	2	-	-	-	-	23	10	34	70	30

Key: Dip - Diploma; M-Male; F - Female

Source: Field Survey, Mombasa and Kwale Districts' Secondary Schools, September 1998 - March 1999.

The table shows a preponderance of male teachers in most schools. It is only in three schools where there are more female teachers than male teachers. The three schools are Mama Ngina which had 18 female teachers out of a total of 24, Star of the Sea with 29 females out of 42 and Coast Girls with 33 females against 22 males. As the table shows, the sheer numbers of female teachers do not spare Muslim schools. In Sheikh Khalifa, there were only 9 female teachers in a staff of 31 while in Memon, there were only 4 females out of 19 teachers.

It is noteworthy that, in spite of the strong sentiments against male teachers in the staff of a girls' school, many Muslim parents have to contend with this situation for a long time to come. The paucity of female teachers in most schools is a reflection of gender disparity in the teaching profession. Nationally, by 1994, females constituted about 40 per cent in the teaching profession at the Tertiary, Secondary and Primary levels (**Daily Nation**, 7/5/94, p.12), while in 1995, they accounted for 34.2 per cent of secondary school

teachers (RoK, 1995:181). The 2000 *Economic Survey* shows that female teachers constituted 42.7 per cent of all teachers in primary schools and 35.3 per cent of the secondary school teachers (RoK, 2000:37; cf., RoK, 2001:35). These figures demonstrate the predominance of male teachers in secondary schools in the country. This is proof of the under representation of females in the teaching profession. The same situation is replicated in other spheres of economic development in Kenya. The percentage of women in modern sector employment for example, was 12.2 per cent in 1964; 14.8 per cent in 1972; 16.2 per cent in 1976; 18 per cent in 1981 and over 21 per cent in 1987 (RoK, 1989-1993:9). This picture could equally be discerned in the nineties. For example by 1990, females occupied 3.1 per cent of managerial positions (*Daily Nation*, 25/7/96, p.vii). In 1994, females held 21 per cent of all the jobs in the formal sector (*Daily Nation*, 23/4/94, p.15) but a meagre 7 per cent of the work force in the manufacturing sector (*Daily Nation*, 7/5/94, p.12). In 1995 and 1996, females in the modern sector employment constituted 26.2 per cent and 28.6 per cent respectively (RoK, 1997:66). Generally, women are equally under-represented in national structures of political decision-making (Nzomo, 1993:5-15; Maina, 2000:36-43). It is only in the agricultural sector where women predominate by constituting about 80 per cent of the work force (*Daily Nation*, 23/4/94, p.15).

Related to the issue of male teachers, is that of non-Muslim teachers in a Muslim school. Although data was not quantified on both Muslim and non-Muslim teachers in various schools surveyed, it was apparent that there were more non-Muslim teachers than Muslim ones. Even Muslim schools like Jaffery and Memon were not an exception. There is also a heavy preponderance of up-country teachers in these schools. In some public schools such as Mama Ngina, all teachers, save the IRE teacher are Christians. The presence of non-Muslim teachers in Muslim schools is not an issue of concern as long as they respect the religious traditions and values that guide the philosophies of these schools. These values include modes of dressing, separation of sexes and observance of obligatory prayers, among others (Admani, OI, 7/10/98; Mazrui, OI, 9/10/98).

Nevertheless, some Muslims feel that Muslim teachers should staff schools in Coast Province (*Daily Nation*, 17/1/98, p.16). This view is untenable owing to the shortage of

Muslim teachers in the schools. The view is in line with the thinking of most coastal people, who accuse the upcountry people for having dominated them in various sectors of socio-economic development for a long time. For example, it is argued that in spite of the coast being the hub of the lucrative tourism industry, gains from the sector do not benefit the local people, majority of who are Muslims. This opinion is based on the argument that the best and choice beach hotels are owned if not by foreigners, by the up-country people who instead of employing locals, go for their clan members, relatives and tribe members even for menial jobs that do not require any skills. The local people not see themselves as beneficiaries of the lucrative industry within their doorsteps. Hence, unemployment at the Coast, that is otherwise a countrywide problem, is partly blamed on the “invasion” by the up-country people:

The large number of Coast youth who have left school and are looking for jobs is alarmingly growing, aggravated by a large number of up-country youth, sent to be given jobs in Mombasa...giving them semi-skilled, clerical or lower management jobs ... take jobs meant for indigenous youth and for the ones who have been permanently living at the Coast for some generations (cited, O'Brien, 1995:205).

It is instructive that sentiments on domination of the Coastal people by the up-country people partly provided the powder keg for the 1997 politically instigated clashes in Likoni, Mombasa that spread to some parts of Kwale like Ng'ombeni, Waa and Ukunda. The clashes led to deaths, displacement of people and destruction of property, and primarily targeted up-country people though the effects on the locals were quite enormous. The aftermath of the atmosphere of insecurity engendered by the clashes was the near total collapse of the tourism sector, an exodus of up-country teachers from the affected areas and closure of some schools in the clash areas.

The shortage of Muslim teachers is not a new phenomenon in Kenya's education system. This shortage has historical reasons and could be traced right from the colonial period. The **Hussey Report** (1924) reacting to the shortage of Muslim teachers who could teach Arabic and Qur'an recommended importing teachers from the Middle East. The **Report of Muslim Religious & Welfare Convention** (1956) similarly decried the shortage of Muslim teachers who could teach Islamic subjects. The **Ominde Report** (1964) looked at the same issue. It recommended the establishment of a college to train Muslim teachers for Islamic subjects. To say that there is an acute shortage of Muslim teachers in primary and secondary schools in Kenya, is not an overstatement. This shortage is even reflected

in the provision of teachers for Islamic religious subjects in schools (*Al-Islam*, vol.2, No.2 1987; *Ar-Risala*, 1990, no.30; Maina, 1993:266). The shortage of IRE (Islamic Religious Education) teachers is discussed later in this chapter.

As discussed earlier (*vide supra*, Chapter Two), nationally, the distribution of secondary school facilities has for a long time favoured boys against girls. In the seventies, through to the nineties, the distribution of aided and maintained secondary schools discriminated against girls. This implies that many girls had to join mixed secondary schools since there were fewer single sex schools for them (cf., Shiundu & Karugu, 1991:8). The situation is not different today. Evidently, in Mombasa and Kwale, most of the schools are mixed (ff. Appendix; Chapter Two). Out of thirty-nine secondary schools in Mombasa, by March 1999, four were for girls, six for boys and the rest thirty were mixed. In Kwale out of 28 secondary schools in March 1999, three were for girls, three for boys and the rest twenty-three were mixed. Therefore, in the two districts, secondary school facilities for girls are dismally few. This leaves girls with fewer opportunities in single sex secondary schools. Opposition to mixed schools disadvantages Muslim girls' access to secondary school education. This is mainly because with a shortage of single sex schools for girls, a mixed secondary school is considered only as an alternative that some parents may not even give a second thought.

5.3 Distance to School

Research conducted in Muslim countries reveals that distance from home to school influences girls' access to education (Don, 1984; Robertson, 1986; Herz *et al.*, 1991; El-Sanabary, 1993). In Kenya, a report by the Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development shows that in areas such as Garissa, Kwale, parts of Baringo and Kisumu districts, pupils have to walk long distances to school. As a result, some parents prefer to keep their children at home for the sake of their security (*Daily Nation*, 22/2/99, p.23; see, Wamahu & Njau, 1995). The location of a school makes it accessible or closed to Muslim girls. This is because a Muslim woman (girl) is not supposed to travel for a long distance unless accompanied by a *mahram*. This regulation is based Qur'an 24:30-31 and *Hadith*. A *hadith* transmitted by Tirmidhi and Abu Dawud says: "a woman should not travel for a day or night unless she is accompanied by a male *mahram* (cited, Mawdudi,

1995:191-192). In that respect, therefore, where there are no schools within the locality and vicinity, or schools are not within easy reach by girls, some parents may be reluctant to send their daughters to distant secondary schools. A long distance to school is likely to expose her to moral and physical danger (cf., King & Hill, 1993:33; El-Sanabary, 1993:151). Even in schools that are accessible by vehicle, girls are susceptible to molestation by drunks, lay-about, loafers and *matatu* touts.

From a moral perspective, some Muslim parents feel that a girl who attends a distant school, may be susceptible to developing sexual relationships with boys. This could bring disrepute that could damage her honour and that of the family, especially if she gets pregnant. Therefore, moral and safety concerns make parents to feel obliged to send their daughters to schools that are located near home. If the school is closer to the home, parents are less anxious about their daughters' safety and reputation (Adan, OI, 30/12/98). That the distance to school is a factor in girls' access to secondary education is evident. Oral information attests to this. A girl from Kwale District who had been admitted to a national secondary school upcountry, had to forgo her chance because the parents were concerned about her safety. As a result, she had to join another secondary school that is located in the neighbourhood (Mwalupa, OI, 29/10/98).

The location of a school determines the means of transport a girl uses to school. Where there are transport problems regarding cost or availability of vehicles, or where populations are dispersed, distance to school poses much concern to parents (Herz, *et al.*, 1991:29). Covering vast distances by girls is detrimental to their schooling. This is the case in Kwale District where girls have either to commute to school daily on foot or use public transport. There are implications for either choice. The use of public transport on a daily basis is expensive, depending on the distance covered. That is something that many parents cannot afford. Daily commuting - depending on the distance covered - are energy sapping and time consuming. It leads to lateness and fatigue that makes it difficult for the girl to concentrate on schoolwork. At home, some girls have to assist in the kitchen, fetch water and firewood, among other household chores. This means that girls sacrifice their evenings when they are supposed to do their schoolwork. Lateness and fatigue from daily commuting to and from school were cited by many respondents in Kwale District, as

some of the constraints to girls' pursuit of secondary school education. Boarding facilities could be a panacea to the daily commuting of students to school. However, as already pointed out, most schools in Mombasa and Kwale are day or combine day and boarding. In Kwale District, even where boarding facilities exist in schools, some parents may not afford the boarding fees. Hence, they prefer their daughters to commute daily to schools as this reduces the financial burden.

In Kwale District, most schools are far apart and some especially those located in the interior are not easily accessible due to poor roads. However, schools along the coastal strip are accessible from the Likoni - Lunga-Lunga road and Likoni - Kwale road. These schools are Ng'ombeni, Waa, Matuga, Kaya Tiwi, Diani, Msambweni, Ramisi and Lunga-Lunga, among others. In some of these schools, girls have to commute daily to and from school. For some of these schools that do not have boarding facilities, distance to school force girls to look for alternative accommodation near the school by renting hostels. For those who put up in hostels apparent freedom makes them to indulge in bad company and influences that are a source of concern for parents (Mwenda, OI, 24/9/98).

In Mombasa, most secondary schools are concentrated within the island and they are also located within walking distances. This means they are easily accessible by public transport. Respondents in Mombasa cited traffic jams as a constraint to schooling due to lateness to and from school. It should be noted that in Mombasa, distance to school did not feature as a factor that influences girls' schooling. Perhaps this is because schools are easily accessible.

Hence the distance to school and hostile environment affects girls' access to secondary education. Distance to school affects girls more than boys since the former are more prone to security and moral dangers than the latter. It is for this reason that, whenever a school start boarding facilities, preference is given to girls. This is the case at Ramisi Secondary School where boys are day scholars but a hostel has been established for girls.

5.4 The Influence of School Sponsor on Muslim Girls' Access to Secondary School Education.

Within the Kenyan education system, there are sponsoring bodies, agents or organizations for various schools both public and private. The school sponsors perform variety of roles. Among others, they provide books, land, physical infrastructure, buildings and furniture. They also employ teaching and non-teaching staff and pay their salaries. In some schools, a sponsor sets the general objectives and policies, and fees' structure. In some private schools, the sponsor appoints the head teacher and members of the Boards of Governors (BoG) besides managing the school. A sponsor could be a religious group, whether Muslim, Christian or Hindu, etc. or individual philanthropist, groups and organizations. The Government also sponsors many public schools.

Depending on a school, the objectives and policies of a sponsor may influence Muslim girls' access to secondary school education. In Mombasa District, groups or organizations sponsor most private schools. In this regard, religious groups sponsor the Muslim schools that were the focus of this study (see Table 25). Notably, all these schools are private. In Kwale District, apart from St. Mary's Seminary that is a private school run by the Catholic Church, the rest of the schools in the study sample are public and sponsored by the Government (see Table 25).

It has already been documented (ff. Chapter Two) how education in the colonial period was used to promote racial, religious and sectarian ideologies and beliefs. Since the school was used as a channel of proselytisation, Muslims were suspicious about missionary education. Schools were opened to all people regardless of religious, tribal and racial affiliation by the nationalization programme in 1963. This means Muslims could attend Christian sponsored schools and Christians were free to attend Muslim sponsored schools. The **Ominde Report** (1964:36) underlined the need for the education system to promote social cohesion, equality and national unity. In addition, it stressed the importance of safeguarding and respecting the religious convictions of all people. Public schools were not to be used as instruments of proselytisation and propaganda, or to champion the cause of one religion at the expense of other(s). In other words, no religion

was to enjoy a privileged status. To this end, the school sponsors were to make a provision for religious instruction of its pupils while respecting the religious beliefs of others. Contrary to this, the report stated:

In case of children whose parents do not wish their children to receive religious instruction, schools must make alternative provision to enable them to receive a proper education during periods in which the other children were undergoing instruction (*ibid*, p.35).

The recommendations of the Ominde Report notwithstanding, the colonial legacy has continued to shape Muslim attitude towards Christian sponsored schools. This attitude is not far fetched. It is based on various conflicts and controversies arising in non-Muslim, mainly Church sponsored schools where the religious rights of Muslims have seemingly been undermined. In the past, problems arising from Muslims attending non-Muslim schools affected girls more than boys. We contend that, problems stemming from school sponsorship influence Muslim girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts.

Apparently, Muslims do not have problems in practicing their faith in Government sponsored schools. Virtually, the problematic cases referred to in this study point at Christian sponsored schools. This is a proof that practicing Muslim girls sometimes experience problems in schools managed or sponsored by non-Muslims. A glimpse of these problems is offered by the following sentiments:

We are disturbed by cases of our youth who get problems at school because of following Islamic practices or refusing to do things which in their eyes or in the eyes of their parents cannot be done in public e.g. swimming by girls in public in the presence of males (UNICEF Kenya, 1991:91).

Two issues arising from the problems that Muslim girls experience in non-Muslim sponsored schools stole the national limelight a decade ago. The first one concerned wearing of the *hijab* by Muslim girls in schools. The second one related to suspension of seven Muslim girls from a Christian sponsored school. Some details could possibly provide information about the two issues.

The wearing of *hijab* became a controversial issue when Muslim girls in non-Muslim schools insisted on using it as a part of the school uniform. As a result, they were expelled from school. Incidents related to this issue took place at the Star of the Sea and Changamwe secondary schools in Mombasa, and Khalsa Primary School in Nairobi

South "C". The Catholic Church sponsors the two schools in Mombasa while the Sikh community sponsors the one in Nairobi. The school administrators were reluctant to allow Muslim girls to use the *hijab* in school. Consequently, they had to seek redress from the courts of law (*The Guide*, 1990:12-13; Maina, 1995:126; Maina, 1995b:6). Muslim leaders cited this issue as an example of harassment of Muslim girls in non-Muslim schools. It took the presidential intervention to end this controversy, by directing schools to respect the religious rights of Muslim girls concerning dress (Maina, 1995:126; Maina, 1995b:6).

Table 25. Sponsoring Organization in Selected Secondary Schools in Mombasa and Kwale Districts.

1 Mombasa District Secondary Schools	
(a) Private Schools	Sponsor
Aga Khan Kenya Secondary	Aga Khan Educational Services
Burhaniyya	Bohra Educational Society
Jaffery Academy	Khoja Shia Ithn'Asheris Educational Board
Sheikh Khalifa	Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed al-Nahayan (Board of Trustees)
Memon	Memon Community
Dar ul Ulum	Jamiat Taalimul Qur'an
St. Theresa's Girls'	Catholic Church
(b) Public Schools	
Aga Khan High	Aga Khan Educational Services
Coast Girls	Government
Mama Ngina	"
Star of the Sea	Catholic Church
2 Kwale District Secondary Schools	
Public Schools	
Diani	Government
Kaya Tiwi	"
Kichaka Simba	"
Matuga	"
Ng'ombeni	"
Ramisi	"
Waa	"

Source: Field Survey, Mombasa and Kwale District Secondary Schools, 1998/1999.

The suspension of Muslim girls from school took place in the Catholic Church sponsored Consolata Secondary School in the then Meru District of Eastern Province. This incident was reported in early 1993 (Maina, 1995b:7). The girls were suspended after failing to turn up for evening studies. They had delayed in a mosque in town where they had attended mosque during the fast of Ramadhan (Maina, 1995:128; Maina, 1995b:7). Fasting had been banned in the school for both Muslims and Christians. Local Muslim leaders took up this issue and demanded the girls' unconditional re-admission to the school, and to be allowed to continue fasting. When the school administrators refused to budge the parents of the affected girls sought court redress. Consequently, the girls were re-admitted to the school without prejudice to their faith (Maina, 1995:128; Maina, 1995b:8).

It should be pointed out that, according to the Education Act, a school sponsor may promote its religious beliefs in the school. However, that should not be prejudicial to the religious beliefs and practices of other students who do not subscribe to the faith and traditions of the sponsoring body. From the two examples, some Muslim parents may fear to send their daughters to non-Muslim schools. Whether this fear is real or imagined is another case altogether. Nevertheless, parents are cautious of educational institutions where their daughters could be hindered from practicing their faith. Oral information cited an example from Coast Girls where a Muslim girl performed so well in KCSE that she qualified for admission to university. However, her parent inquired whether there is a mosque at the university.

Clearly Muslim parents prefer to take their daughters to Muslim schools where they could practice their faith without interference. An atmosphere provided in a Muslim school is commensurate with Islamic faith. Apart from seeking knowledge, both students and staff observe Islamic practices such as the obligatory *salat* and *saum*. In these schools, the uniform is *hijab* for girls and *kanzu* and *kofia* for boys. Non-Muslims who join Muslim schools are required to abide by some of the Muslim codes of conduct. The extent to which these Islamic practices are followed varies from one Muslim school to another. Our observations reveal that, in the two Aga Khan schools, the rules of the Muslim dress

are less rigid. This is because most girls wore the regular school uniform without the *hijab*. In like manner, there are no separate streams (classes) for boys and girls, like in other Muslim schools such as Jaffery, Memon and Sheikh Khalifa. The difference between the Aga Khan schools and Muslim schools regarding the dress codes for girls reflects the philosophy of Ismaili leaders that is discussed in Chapter Two.

To demonstrate that seeking for knowledge is interwoven with religious practices in Muslim schools such as Sheikh Khalifa, the motto is "*al-ilm wal iman*" that is "knowledge and faith". Indeed, even the classroom atmosphere is reminiscent of this Islamic ambiance. At Jaffery, we found excerpts of Islamic teachings about respect for parents posted on the notice boards. There are also pastoral sessions on educational and religious subjects delivered by experts. In the two Aga Khan schools, the guiding motto is the first verses of the revelation of the Qur'an (96:1-5). The mission statements of the two schools underscore the religious aspirations and philosophy of the sponsors, that is the Aga Khan Educational Services: "the Aga Khan Educational Service will enable many generations of students to acquire both knowledge and essential spiritual wisdom needed to balance that knowledge to enable their lives to attain the highest fulfilment".

The sectarian or religious affiliation of the sponsoring organization in Muslim schools is quite evident. At Burhaniyya Secondary School, the portraits of the Bohra spiritual leader hang in the classrooms' walls and at the entrance to the administration block.

To ensure that students and teachers carry out their religious obligations, some Muslim schools such as Sheikh Khalifa have erected modern mosques within the compound. The construction of places of worship, such as chapels and mosques fall within the requirements of the Education Act. However, this is not explicitly stated in the Act. Chapter 211, Section 26 (2) of the Act says:

Where the parent of a pupil at a public school wishes the pupil to attend religious worship or religious instruction of a kind which is not provided in the school, the school shall provide such facilities as may be practicable for the pupil to receive religious instruction and attend religious worship of the kind desired by the parent (RoK, 1980 [1970]:16).

The Act shows that a sponsor may put up a chapel, mosque or temple in a school for students who ascribe to its religious beliefs and aspirations. In so doing, the religious

beliefs of the sponsor(s) are promoted while the spiritual needs of other students may be disregarded. This means the worship facilities provided by the sponsor may not be extended to students of other faiths. Provision of worship facilities to Muslims in a Christian sponsored school or vice-versa may cause a conflict of interests. In most cases, such an endeavour is likely to cause some suspicion. A chapel in a Muslim sponsored school or a mosque in a Christian sponsored school may be construed as an avenue of proselytising others. For example, the construction of a mosque in Isiolo Girls' Secondary School in Eastern Province was interpreted as a religious affront on Christianity by Muslims, that tantamount to declaration of a *jihad* on Christians. The school is sponsored by various Christian denominations: Anglican, Methodist, Catholic, Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) and Kenya Pentecostal (Maina, 1995:127-128; Maina, 1995b:7). Data on Muslim girls in the school is not quantified. However, we could deduce that, there were many Muslim students because Isiolo town has a predominant Muslim population from the Borana and Somali communities.

For religious rights of their daughters to be respected, many Muslim parents prefer to send them to a Muslim school. There is a limitation to this inclination due to the few Muslims' sponsored schools in Kwale and Mombasa districts. In Kwale, the Government even sponsors the schools with predominant Muslim student populations. Fortunately, as noted before, Muslim students do not have problems of practicing their faith in Government sponsored schools. Problems arise mainly in Church sponsored schools. With the shortage of Muslim sponsored schools, Muslims girls are in a dilemma whether to attend a non-Muslim sponsored school or not. A cross section of student respondents noted that they could attend a non-Muslim school for the sake of acquiring education. They could do so if their religious rights are respected. These include the rights to offer obligatory prayers, observing the fast of Ramadhan and wearing the *hijab* (Matano, OI, 28/9/98; Tenguri, OI, 28/9/98; Nassir, OI, 9/10/98; Hassan, OI, 22/2/99; Khaki, OI, 23/2/99; Virjee, OI, 23/2/99). Other respondents contended that they could attend a non-Muslim school if there is no danger of conversion to another religion (Bindo, OI, 30/9/98; Inayat, OI, 7/10/98). In like manner, attending a non-Muslim school is an alternative where there is no Muslim school, provided Muslims are not discriminated against and Islamic values are not violated.

Some respondents regarded non-Muslim schools especially the ones managed by Christian groups as discriminative and insensitive to the needs of Muslims. A case in point is where a Catholic sponsored school head teacher reportedly refused to admit Muslim girls into the school, despite the girls' qualifications (Maina, 1995:129; Maina, 1995b:8). In the area of study, discriminative tendencies are seen in the way Muslim girls are not allowed to wear *hijab* in Church sponsored schools. Yet, Catholic nuns are allowed to adorn the veil (cf., **Daily Nation**, 19/1/91, p.18). It is therefore not surprising that discriminative sentiments resulting from such incidents create apathy in the minds of some Muslim girls. With a shortage of Muslim schools, some parents are reluctant to send their daughters to non-Muslim schools.

It is worth noting that the number of non-Muslims, especially Christians, attending Muslim sponsored schools is quite insignificant indeed. It is mentioned in Chapter Two (*vide supra*), that Muslim sponsored schools admit non-Muslims. In spite of that provision, evidently, tables 18 and 19 show that the student population of private Muslim sponsored schools such as Jaffery and Sheikh Khalifa are virtually 100 per cent Muslim. That there are non-Muslim students in Muslim sponsored schools such as Memon and Burhaniyya, presupposes that those students are allowed to practice their faith. This is according to the requirements of the Education Act, which is stipulated elsewhere in this section. The insignificant number of non-Muslims especially Christians in Muslim sponsored schools could be explained by the fact that there are many Church sponsored schools at their disposal to choose from. This does not in any way dismiss Christians' apathy toward attending a Muslim school for fear of getting converted to Islam.

A respondent curtly pointed the ambivalence of Muslim girls who are faced with the prospect of attending a non-Muslim school:

Given a choice of attending a non-Muslim school, I would be eager and at the same time scared. Eager, since I will get a chance of learning and understanding others' religions; scared because of what I may be forced to do which is contrary to my religion (Maryam, OI, 7/10/98).

According to some respondents, there is danger of conversion to other religions for Muslims who attend non-Muslim schools. This is because, in such schools, Muslims may

not be allowed to practice their faith (Kijuvi, OI, 29/9/98; Omar, OI, 29/9/98; Ahmed, OI, 26/2/99). Those who oppose attending non-Muslim schools argue that these schools do not provide facilities such as mosques and girls may not be allowed to wear the *hijab* (Muhasu, OI, 28/9/98; Ahmed, OI, 26/2/99). Fear abounds that, in such schools, Muslims may be forced to attend Christian services. Other than that, during *Ramadhan* when Muslims eat a special diet the schools may not allow Muslim students to receive donations of foodstuffs or money (Abdillah, OI, 1/3/99; cf., **Daily Nation**, 11/5/96, p.17). Besides, most non-Muslim schools do not offer IRE in their curriculum. This means denying Muslim students an opportunity to learn their religion. Some circumstances may also force a Muslim to eat forbidden foods (Kassim, OI, 26/9/98; Ahmed, OI, 26/2/99).

We need to make a few observations about IRE. The introduction of IRE as an academic subject in the school curriculum owes its origin to the **Ominde Report** (see Maina, 1993:300-303). Since its inception in 1970, IRE has been plagued by lack of qualified trained teachers to teach the subject effectively. As a result, some schools with Muslim students do not offer IRE in their curriculum (Quraishy, 1977:5-6; **Al-Islam**, 1983, vol.7, No.2; **Ar-Risala**, 1990, no.30; UNICEF Kenya, 1991:101; Maina, 1993:302-303; **Daily Nation**, 2/12/95, p.17; 11/5/96, p.17).

The acute shortage of IRE teachers could be illustrated by statistics. Statistics derived from National Union of Kenya Muslims (NUKEM) indicated that due to shortage of teachers, only 52 out of 200 primary schools in Nairobi by 1995, could offer IRE. It was further noted that there was a shortfall of 300 IRE teachers in Nairobi (**Daily Nation**, 2/12/95, p.17). Another source gives the number of IRE teachers in Nairobi primary schools in 1996 to have been 50 (**Daily Nation**, 11/5/96, p.17). The shortage of IRE teachers is repeated elsewhere. In Mombasa, by December 1994, there were 161 teachers who catered for more than 25,000 Muslim students. This is a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:155 (**Daily Nation**, 2/12/95, p. 17). This shortage notwithstanding, teaching of IRE in some public schools by trained non-Muslim teachers has generated tensions between teacher and Muslim students. At times this has caused hostility pitting the teacher against the Muslim community. For example, at Matuga Girls' High School, a university graduate IRE teacher was forced to stop teaching IRE due to hostility from the local Muslim

community (Mwalupa, OI, 30/9/98). This example shows that suspicions abound among Muslims in situations where non-Muslims teach IRE in education institutions. The general opinion among some Muslims is that a Christian could only teach IRE with an insidious motive of denigrating Islam (Maina, 1995:130; Maina, 1995b:10). The argument is, a non-Muslim teacher may have the knowledge of the subject. However, lack of religious refinement required of a Muslim, may make such a person be critical of Islamic doctrines (**Daily Nation**, 11/5/96, p.17). The opinion that a non-Muslim could only teach IRE to defame Islam is clearly a product of the colonial legacy. In the colonial period, Islam was seen as the nemesis of Christianity (see, Maina, 1993:81-114; Maina, 1995:122-125; Maina, 1995b:2-5).

Conceivably, as an academic subject IRE could be taught by a Muslim or non-Muslim who possess the knowledge of the subject and the right qualifications and training. In like manner, Christian Religious Education (CRE) could be taught by a Christian or non-Christian. Nevertheless, some Muslim and Christian circles prefer that a Muslim teacher and a Christian teacher teach IRE and CRE respectively. This is because any religion has two main components. These are the informative (knowledge) element that is acquired by reading, and the faith element that is acquired by practicing. The two components must be present because:

The teacher may well be one of the primary resources for helping children to understand the importance of commitment to beliefs and values. But the teacher must tread a careful middle way between the dangers of trying to force his own views on children and pitfalls of attempting to be so detached that children conclude that the whole exercise is academic and irrelevant (cited, Mraja, 2000:28).

According to the above argument, if the teacher of religion lacks one of the two components, then he (she) could be considered not fully qualified to give the students the full content of the subject. In this regard, some Muslims who are opposed to teaching of IRE by non-Muslims cite various reasons. Firstly, they argue that one should not teach what he (she) does not believe in or practice. The rationale for this argument could be based on Chapter 2:44 which says: "Do ye enjoin right conduct on the people, and forget (to practice it) yourselves. And yet you study the scripture? Will ye not understand?"

Secondly, they argue that knowledge of Arabic, the Qur'an and the *Hadith* are imperative for an IRE teacher. Hence, a teacher who is not conversant with those subjects may not present Islam objectively (Mraja, 2000:28). Taking into consideration the two reasons, a non-Muslim could only teach IRE under the rule of necessity. This is based on a precedent where the Prophet allowed non-Muslim war captives to be emancipated subject to teaching Muslims how to read and write. The rule of necessity should apply where there is a shortage of Muslim teachers, provided the non-Muslim teacher is well versed in the subject and is objective in his (her) presentation (*ibid*, p.28).

Lack of the practical element of religion has engendered controversies and conflicts between Muslim students and administrators in Christian sponsored schools. These controversies largely dwell on the issue of *hijab*, teaching of IRE by non-Muslim teachers and other Muslim practices that have been discussed in this chapter.

Over the years the shortage of IRE teachers in schools has prompted Muslims to agitate for the construction of colleges by the Government where IRE teachers could be trained. Consequently, the Islamic colleges at Mikindani, Mombasa and Maragwa were established. The Muslim teachers' college in Mombasa was the first Islamic institute of higher learning in independent Kenya. Initial funding was by the Islamic Development Bank and African Muslim Agency of Kuwait. The college aimed at training Muslims for a two-year P1 certificate course based on 8-4-4 curriculum, and Arabic and Islamic studies (*Ar-Risala*, 1990, no.30). The government's foot-dragging in the registration of the two colleges did not augur well for its relations with the Muslim community (*Daily Nation*, 6/11/95, p.5; 2/12/95, p.17-18; Mraja, 2000:27). Initially the government denied registration to the Mombasa College with the pretext that the teaching profession was saturated with primary school teachers. This is a paradox in view of the dire shortage of IRE teachers - which the government was well aware of - that the college sought to ameliorate. The college was later registered on 31 January 1996, through the intervention of the President, after a meeting with Muslim scholars, imams and MPs. However, it was not lost to the unregistered Islamic Party of Kenya (IPK) that the government's stance on the college's registration was motivated by hatred and enmity for Islam by the political

establishment. It was seen as government's effort to kill Muslim initiatives in the field of education (**Daily Nation**, 10/1/96, pp.1-2; Mraja, 2000:27).

The inception of 8-4-4 system of education in 1985 introduced religious education as a compulsory subject in the primary school curriculum. This was done without due consideration for the personnel available to handle the religious subjects. While there were enough teachers to handle CRE effectively, the same could not be possible for IRE. The shortage of teachers has forced many Muslims in some non-Muslim schools where IRE is not offered, to learn CRE or Social Education & Ethics. This situation is worse at the primary school where Muslims have to fulfil the requirements of KCPE (**Ar-Risala**, 1990, no. 30; **Daily Nation**, 2/12/95, p.18). Unsubstantiated sources indicate that in 1995, for example, about 30,000 Muslim students, out of a total of 125,000 candidates sat for CRE in KCPE, whereas, only 2,500 sat for IRE in the same exam (**Sunday Nation**, 4/8/96, p.5). Regardless of the reliability of these statistics, evidently there is a dire shortage of IRE teachers at the primary school level that force Muslims pupils to opt for alternative subjects to IRE.

Indeed, the offering of CRE to Muslim students as an alternative subject to IRE is a very contentious issue. It is understood as a ploy to convert Muslims to Christianity (**Ar-Risala**, 1990, no. 30; Maina, 1993:305). CRE like IRE is an academic subject in the school curriculum that can be studied by all students regardless of their religious beliefs. Yet, forcing Muslim students to learn CRE contravenes their rights that are guaranteed by the constitution. The Education Act Section, 26 (1) says in this regard:

If the parent of a pupil at a public school requests that the pupil be wholly or partly excused from attending religious worship, or religious worship and religious instruction, in the school, the pupil shall be excused such attendance until the request is withdrawn (RoK, 1980[1970]:16).

Some respondents agreed that they could not mind a Christian sponsored school provided they were not forced to do CRE (Noorani, OI, 7/10/98; Sumaya, OI, 26/2/99). It should be noted, like many subjects in the secondary school syllabus, CRE is not a compulsory subject. Therefore a Muslim student in a non-Muslim school is not obligated to learn CRE. There is no documented evidence to illustrate any attempt to introduce CRE as a compulsory subject in Kenya's education system. The only time such an issue got into the

public limelight was in 1993. Then, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, Honourable Kalonzo Musyoka reportedly said that he could press the government to make CRE a compulsory subject in schools. The statement inadvertently, attributed to the Minister, while addressing the annual conference of National Association of Religious Education Teachers (NARET), was vehemently opposed by the Muslim community. The statement was linked to media distortion and turned out to have been mere political rhetoric (Maina, 1995:129; Maina, 1995b:9).

In spite of the factors against attending a non-Muslim school, opinion differs from individual to individual. In this regard, many Muslim girls attend non-Muslim schools and complete their education with their religion and conduct unscathed. However, fear of conversion to other religions especially Christianity and exposure to un-Islamic practices force some parents not to allow their children especially girls from attending non-Muslim schools. Although incidents of girls experiencing problems in non-Muslim schools may not be commonplace today, research revealed that some apathy towards these schools does exist. Amidst limited facilities for single sex schools for girls and few Muslims' sponsored schools in Mombasa and Kwale districts, the apathy towards non-Muslim schools affects girls' access to secondary school education.

In view of the Education Act, many schools may strive to champion the religious beliefs of their sponsors at the expense of others. With many schools in the country being sponsored by church groups, we could find a situation where some head teachers strive to promote Christianity while suppressing other faiths such as Islam. Controversies over the veil, observances of *Ramadhan*, construction of mosques among others, are examples of how Church sponsored schools could be repressing the practise of Islam within the school. On the whole such moves make Muslims circumspect in attending non-Muslim schools.

5.5. The Influence of the *Madrasa* (Religious) Education on Muslim Girls' Access to Secondary School Education.

By definition a *madrasa* is an institute of Islamic religious education. The term *madrasa* is used interchangeably with Qur'an school. In the context of this study, a Qur'an school

is an elementary institution of Islamic (religious) education while a *madrasa* is a more advanced institute of Islamic education. In a *chuo*, basic notions in *Fiqh*, *Hadith*, Qur'an recitation and memorization and Arabic language are taught. A wide range of Islamic subjects is offered in a *madrasa*. These include Arabic, *Hadith*, *Tawhid*, *Seera*, *Fiqh*, *Nahw* (Grammar), *Tasawwuf* (Mysticism), *Mantiq* (Logic), *Insha* (Composition) and *Tafsir*, among others (Maina, 1993; Maina, 1995a).

Muslim children attend both the secular school and *madrasa* (or *chuo*) by oscillating between the two institutions. There is no gainsaying the importance of both institutions to the education of Muslims. Nevertheless, much of the time of a child is spent in school and attendance of *madrasa*. Attendance of *madrasa* is mainly in the afternoons of weekdays and the whole of Saturdays and Sundays. The days and times of operation vary from one *madrasa* to another (see Maina, 1993:180-184). Muslim parents recognize the importance of a *madrasa* for the religious and moral training of their children. The role of the *madrasa* in this respect surpasses that of IRE that is offered in some schools. As an academic subject, IRE is limited in scope regarding time allocation in school timetable, and therefore cannot substitute the whole gamut of religious and moral teachings offered in a *madrasa*.

The role of the *madrasa* system in Muslim education is well documented by some researchers (Maina, 1993; Maina, 1995a). However, we need to point out that a few issues that relate to the present study. The study data revealed that *madrasa* education has an influence on girls' access to secondary school education. Respondents argued that some Muslim parents prefer to take their daughters to *madrasa* instead of schools. Some teachers complained that *madrasa* takes much time that girls could use for schoolwork. Conversely, some parents complained that girls are given much schoolwork that denies them time to recite the Qur'an or to attend *madrasa* for religious instruction. Whatever the case, the *madrasa* and the school compete for a learner's time. In this connection, some schools such as Jaffery reserves the afternoon sessions of the school week for religious instruction.

There is no doubt that the 8-4-4 curriculum, puts much pressure on the learner's time. This is despite the latest attempts to reduce the number of examinable subjects. Sometimes the learners are required to attend school over the weekend and during the holidays for tuition. To minimize the competition for the learner's time between the school and the *madrasa*, some *madaris* have adopted Islamic Integrated Education Program [IIEP] (see Maina, 1993:281-293; Sperling, 1993:198-209; Bwajuma, 2000:11). This is a school curriculum that incorporates religious (Islamic) education and secular education. This programme, initiated by Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) with the help of other organizations was introduced in Mombasa, Kwale and Kilifi between 1986 and 1987 (Bwajuma, 2000:11; cf., **Daily Nation**, 31/5/99, p.23), but later spread to other parts of the country. Starting with about fifteen *madaris*, presently, over fifty *madaris* in Mombasa have adopted the Madrasa Integrated Pre-School Program (Bwajuma, 2000:60). Examples of such a *madrasa*, is Qubaa Muslim School that integrates Islamic and secular education at the primary level (Maina, 1993:288). Other *madaris* in Mombasa with an integrated religious and secular curriculum are those managed by **Jamiat Taalimul Qur'an**. They have adopted a secondary school curriculum, in which secular school subjects such as Mathematics, Geography and History are integrated into the religious curriculum. (**Al-Islam**, 1987; Wamahiu, 1988:340; Maina, 1993:287). The Muslim Welfare Association of Mombasa started Abu Huraira Primary School in 1995 as a model for the integration of religious and secular curriculum. The objective was to award students who complete eight years of primary schooling with both Islamic and KCPE certificates (**Daily Nation**, 19/8/95, p.18). In Kwale, Muhaka Islamic Education Centre has integrated pre-school curriculum with Qur'anic teaching (Maina, 1993:291).

The most successful effort towards integration of secular and religious curriculum is the Aga Khan Foundation's (AKF) Programme of Integrated Early Childhood Education. The AKF's grant facilitated the implementation of the first integrated *madrasa* pre-school at the Liwaton Mosque in Mombasa in 1986 (Bwajuma, 2000:17). The AKF established the Madrasa Resource Centre (MRC) in 1986 (*ibid.*, p.17). In collaboration with National Centre for Early Childhood Education (NACECE), the AKF funded MRC trains teachers for the pre-schools that offer the integrated curriculum (Maina, 1993:288-289; Bwajuma, 2000:17).

The AKF, which is a part of the Aga Khan Development Network has funded the *madrasa* pre-school programme to the tune of more than Kenya Shillings 100 million (**Daily Nation**, 31/5/99, p.23). It supports material and policy development at NACECE and projects in education that have led to training programs on integrated curriculum in almost 200 primary schools. Equally, the Foundation has contributed to the establishment of District Centres for Early Childhood Education (DICECE) in Garissa, Kericho, Kilifi, Mombasa and Nyeri and Wajir (**Daily Nation**, 17/6/96, p.17).

The development of an integrated pre-school curriculum for *madrasa* teachers is along term plan and objective of NACECE that is under the auspices of the KIE. NACECE was founded in early 70's partly to develop training curricula and systems for pre-schools (Bwajuma, 2000:17). It promotes culturally based pre-school integrated curriculum and establishment of day care centres through out the country. This way, it responds to the Muslims' educational needs and religious aspirations, and promotes the Muslims' cultural identity in Kenya (**Daily Nation**, 31/5/99, p.23). In addition, NACECE develops models for the provision of early childhood education. Its efforts at the district level have led to the establishment of DICECE, where the training of teachers through in-service courses, for the various day-care centres, public or private, takes place (**Daily Nation**, 17/6/96, pp.16-17; Bwajuma, 2000:8).

Field research demonstrates that attendance of *madrasa* influences girls' access to secondary school education. This takes place in two ways: First, some girls join the primary school rather belatedly since some parents insist on their children completing Qur'anic instruction first before joining secular school. This implies that, such girls are big by the time they join secondary schools. With the parental fear of their daughters becoming pregnant, the chances of such girls completing their secondary school cycle are drastically reduced, as they may be withdrawn from school to be married off. Second, oral information shows that attendance of *madrasa* makes some girls ambivalent towards western education. This is because they have to combine religious education and secondary education concurrently. The effect is lack of interest and hence poor performance in education.

5.6 Poverty and its Effect on Performance in KCSE Examinations

Generally, the performance of Coast secondary schools in national examinations is deplorable. This is indicated by the perennial poor performance. The province has the dubious distinction of trailing other provinces in national exams, save North-Eastern Province. For instance, the 1994 KCSE examination results show that, girls' schools in Coast Province performed poorly (**East African Standard**, 2/3/95, p.7). It is within this context, that we should discuss the performance of secondary schools in Mombasa and Kwale districts in national examinations. This performance is exemplified by the KCSE examination results of 1995, 1996, 1997 and 1998.

In 1995 KCSE examination results, Memon High School the best school in Coast Province was ranked position 79 nationally. The second school was Kenyatta High School Taita, which was ranked position 87 nationally (KNEC, 1995; cf., **Daily Nation**, 23/2/96, p.1; 24/2/96, p. 36). In the same year, Star of the Sea was position 5 in the province (KNEC, 1995; cf., **Kenya Times**, 27/2/96, p.4). In 1996 KCSE results, only two schools from the province appeared among the top 100 schools. These were Mama Ngina at position 90 and Allidina Visram at position 94. Both schools are in Mombasa District and they had a performance index of 6.9721 and 6.8608, respectively (KNEC, 1996; cf., **Daily Nation**, 8/3/97, p.15). Results for the same year reveal that in Kwale District, Matuga led other schools with a performance index of 5.4636, followed by Kwale High School with a performance index of 5.1110 (KNEC, 1996; cf., **Daily Nation**, 1/3/97, p.1). These results illustrate the poor performance of schools in Mombasa and Kwale districts in national examinations. This dismal performance is apparent if the 1996 results are compared with those of the best two schools nationally, the same year. The best school, Precious Blood Riruta had a performance index of 10.4267 and the second placed, Kianda, 9.9641 (KNEC, 1996; **Daily Nation**, 1/3/97, p.1).

The poor performance was again repeated in 1997 KCSE examination results. There was no school in the province appearing among the top fifty. Only two schools appeared in the list of the top 100 schools. These were Mama Ngina Girls' at position 63 and Allidina Visram at position 69. In Kwale, Matuga Girls' and Kwale High School repeated the feat

again. The two had a performance index of 5.5324 and 4.9382 respectively (KNEC, 1997;cf., **Daily Nation**, 25/2/98, p.5; 26/2/98, p.22; 28/2/98, p.17). Table 26a shows that these two schools have dominated top berths in Kwale District for three years, 1995-1997.

The 1998 KCSE witnessed an improved performance as the examination results indicated that three schools in the province appeared in the list of the best 100 schools nationally. Sheikh Khalifa was placed at position 19 nationally, thus emerging the best school in Coast Province, followed by Allidina Visram at position 38 and Mama Ngina at position 47. In Kwale, 'Matuga Girls' lost top honours for the district to Kwale High School that emerged the best, followed by St. Mary's Seminary (KNEC, 1998; cf., **Daily Nation**, 25/2/99, p.1).

It is evident from the data alluded to above that in KCSE examinations, Mombasa District secondary schools perform better than other schools in Coast Province. Kwale District is no exemption to this. When one compares the national examination results of the two districts, Mombasa and Kwale, it is evident from the mean score that secondary schools in Mombasa perform better than those in Kwale. This is illustrated in tables, 26a and 26b that show the results from the best schools in both districts in 1995, 1996 and 1997. The poor performance of schools in Kwale district compared to those of Mombasa District could be explained by the fact that the latter is a more economically endowed region than the former. This situation is further explained below.

Table 26a: The Best Three Secondary Schools in KCSE in Kwale District: 1995, 1996 & 1997.

Year	Performance and School	No. of Candidates	Mean Score
1997	1. Matuga Girls'	107	5.532
	2. Kwale High	148	4.871
	3. St. Mary's Seminary	73	4.753
1996	1. Matuga Girls'	110	5.46
	2. Kwale High	74	5.02
	3. St. Mary's Seminary	79	4.61
1995	1. St. Mary's Seminary	60	5.84
	2. Kwale High	142	5.85
	3. Matuga Girls'	110	4.80

Source: CP/GA/14/18, Vol. III, Education Brief: Provincial Education Office, Mombasa.

Table 26b: The Best Two Schools in KCSE in Mombasa District: 1995, 1996 & 1997

Year	Performance and School	Mean Score
1997	1. Mama Ngina	7.54
	2. Allidina Visram	7.48
1996	1. Mama Ngina	6.97
	2. Allidina Visram	6.86
1995	1. Memon High School	6.67
	2. Allidina Visram	6.33

Source: Education Brief, Second Quarter, July 1998, CP/GA/14/18 Vol. III, Provincial Education Office, Mombasa.

Performance of some schools in Mombasa and Kwale districts shows that few students manage to attain a minimum of grade B and above which is necessary for admission into a public university. The 1997 KCSE examination results shows that some schools in the two districts are concentrated within the grades C and D (see Table 27). The table further shows that Mama Ngina and Memon performed exceptionally well compared to other schools in the district. The two schools are some of the best performers in national examinations (see Table 26b). Where do Muslim girls fall in this scenario? We could answer this question by taking two secondary schools in Mombasa District, that is Coast Girls' and Star of the Sea. An analysis of the KCSE examination results of Coast Girls' High School between 1989 and 1998 reveals that most of the candidates fall within the range of grades C and D. It is not easy to tell whether the majority in this category were Muslims or non-Muslims. However, according to Deputy Principal (OI, 1/3/99), the best student in 1997 and 1998 KCSE examinations was a Muslim. In the 1996/1997 academic year, 14 girls from the Star of the Sea were admitted to public universities. Seven of them, including the best girl who was admitted for a degree in Medicine, were Muslims (Amuka, OI, 12/2/99).

There are no statistics to demonstrate clearly the performance of Muslim girls in national examinations vis-à-vis non-Muslim girls. It could be argued, that in schools where the majority of the students are Muslims, the best students are likely to be Muslims. The same could apply in schools where non-Muslims are the majority. This is a generalized

statement in that no such variable was empirically tested. The argument is based on the fact that in a Muslim majority school, there could be a tendency to admit the best Muslim students in KCPE. It was revealed that though Coast Girls' is not a Muslim sponsored school, it admits some of the best Muslim girls in KCPE. At the same time, the school admits some non-Muslim girls with low KCPE examination marks. Under those circumstances, the best girls in KCSE examinations happen to be Muslims (Deputy Principal, OI, 1/3/99).

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Table 27 Summary of Mean Grades of 1997 KCSE Results in Selected Secondary Schools in Mombasa and Kwale Districts

School	Entry	M e a n						G r a d e s					
		A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
Coast Girls	194	-	-	2	3	2	9	28	51	61	31	7	-
M.Ngina	70	-	2	7	10	18	18	6	4	5	-	-	-
Star of Sea	143	-	1	1	4	11	29	29	41	18	8	1	-
Burhaniyya	85	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	4	5	21	42	4
Memon	73	1	3	6	7	12	11	10	12	5	4	0	0
Sh.Khalifa	69	-	1	2	3	7	24	16	15	1	-	-	-
Kaya Tiwi	39	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	6	13	14	2
K.Simba	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	3	4	-
Matuga	107	-	-	-	-	5	17	31	37	11	6	-	-
Ng'ombeni	63	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	3	11	26	16	2

Source: Field Survey, Mombasa and Kwale Districts Secondary Schools, September 1998 to March 1999.

It could further be observed that the performance of Muslim girls in KCSE reflects the national trend where girls generally perform poorly than boys. This is in spite of the false impression that girls' schools collectively perform better than boys' schools. At least this is the impression created by the KCSE examination results for the last couple of years. For example in the 1997 results, out of the top ten schools, girls' schools took six positions, and eleven out of the top twenty positions. Boys' schools took six of the top positions, while the rest were taken by mixed schools. The district ranking also indicated that girls' schools perform well by taking top positions (**Daily Nation**, 28/2/98, p.17).

Despite, the impressions of good performance of girls, a keen observation reveals that, boys attain better grades, (B- and above) than girls. Statistics of KCSE examination results for 1996, 1997 and 1998 as presented in Table 28 indicate the existence of gender disparities in examination performance. The 2000 KCSE examination results indicate that boys performed better than girls. Only 5 girls' schools appeared among the top twenty schools. In the list of the best 800 candidates there were only 186 girls representing a mere 23.25 per cent. On the other hand, there were 614 boys or 76.75 per cent of the 800 top candidates. In the ranking of the best 100 candidates, there were only 35 girls representing 34.3 per cent (**Daily Nation**, 12/3/2001, p.19). These figures clearly demonstrate that girls are out-performed by boys in KCSE examinations.

The dismal performance of girls critically determines their under representation at the universities and placement for training in tertiary institutions and the job market. Girls seem to perform better than boys in the stereotypical "feminine" subjects. These are Home Science, Typing and Office Practice. The feminine tag concerning these subjects is not far fetched. For example, in the 1999 KCSE examinations, only 63 boys sat for Typing and Office Practice, compared to 1,181 girls. In Home Science, 650 boys sat for the exam compared to 10,934 girls (**Daily Nation**, 28/2/2000, p.23).

Table 28: KCSE Performance by Sex in Various Grades for 1996, 1997 and 1998.

YEAR	SEX	Number of Candidates	Grade A and Above & %	Grade B- and Above & %	Grade D+ and Above & %
1996	Male	83,786	598 0.71	10,482 12.51	60,509 72.22
	Female	68,611	310 0.45	5,176 7.54	42,852 62.46
1997	Male	88,878	856 0.96	11,339 13	62,357 74
	Female	69,229	387 0.56	5,948 8.6	45,893 66
1998	Male	90,541	693 0.77	10,748 11.8	- 68.19*
	Female	76,012	286 0.38	5,656 7.44	- 82.55*

* represents those who attained grades D and E

Source: Extracts from KNEC, 1997, 1998, 1999 cf., *Daily Nation*, 1/3/97, p.2; 8/3/97, p.15; 28/2/98, p.17; 1/3/99, p.2; 11/10/99, p.17

Apart from gender disparities, there are also glaring regional disparities in performance of national examinations. Marginal areas like Coast and North-Eastern provinces perform poorly, while the economically high potential areas such as Nairobi and Central provinces register good results in KCSE examinations. This has been the trend over the years. For example, in 1998 KCSE examination results, Nairobi Province had eight schools while Central Province had five schools among the top twenty. Nyanza, Coast and Western provinces had one school each, Rift Valley had two schools while North-Eastern had none (KNEC, 1998 Exam Results; *Daily Nation*, 1/3/99, p.23). Thus the economic potential has implications on girls' access to education and their performance in examinations. Schools in the high potential areas have the required facilities, and most parents could afford school fees to send and maintain their daughters in secondary schools. Mombasa District is a high potential area and that explains why schools in the district perform better than others in the province.

The national KCSE examinations' results also show the predominance of Church sponsored schools, especially Catholic ones, in the top honours. These schools generally perform better than others. The 1996 results indicate that seven of the top ten schools and about half of the top 100, were Catholic sponsored (*Daily Nation*, 8/3/97, p.15). The 1997 and 1998 KCSE exam results, again reveal the same scenario. Seven of top ten schools, and five of top ten schools in 1997 and 1998 respectively, were Catholic sponsored (KNEC, 1998; cf., *Daily Nation*, 28/2/98, p. 17; 1/3/99, p.23). The predominance of the Catholic sponsored schools is clear pointer to the significant role that the Church and Christian groups have played in the development of education in Kenya.

Generally, marginal areas such as Coast and North-Eastern provinces, perennially perform poorly in national examinations. This is attributed to lack of facilities, high drop out rates, insecurity and poverty. In Coast Province, poor performance is partly attributed to poverty and lack of qualified teachers. Poverty is a leading and contributory factor towards poor performance in national examinations. In that case, it deters various efforts of improving education in the province. Poverty has direct negative impact on educational performance. This is because of lack of textbooks, physical facilities like classrooms suitable libraries, workshops, laboratories and equipment for “practicals” in science subjects. Poor infrastructure including roads, water and electricity also impact negatively on performance in education. Oral information from head teachers and educational officers reveals that poverty impinges on performance in exams. Evidently, most secondary schools in Kwale District have none or ill-equipped laboratories, workshops, libraries and boarding facilities. Other schools lack good classrooms, desks, textbooks and stationery. Some parts of Kwale District are too remote and inaccessible due to poor roads. This affects the overall performance in national examinations.

Poverty has implications on girls’ access to secondary school education. In Kwale District, poverty is a determining factor in girls’ access to secondary schools and retention therein, (cf., RoK, 1987:110). Firstly, when poverty reigns, families tend to invest their meagre resources on the education of boys. When the socio-economic advantages of educating boys weigh over that of girls’, some parents prefer to invest in educating sons than daughters. This is because, as indicated in Chapter Three, sons are perceived as the future breadwinners and economic mainstays of the families. The high cost of living has put many parents in a difficult financial situation and creates a dilemma on whether to educate boys or girls. When harsh economic realities combine with cultural values, some families consider girls’ education lost investment since a girl is ultimately married. If there are limited economic resources, girls’ education is sacrificed. This leads to low participation of girls at the primary school that cumulatively affect their access to secondary schools, tertiary institutions and universities.

Secondly, in a low-income family or single household family, girls may be forced to leave school. This is done so that she could work to supplement family income or to assist working mother who

may be the breadwinner. Although this variable was not tested in this study, it was evident that the family's socio-economic status has an impact on Muslim girls' access to secondary school education. Research conducted elsewhere shows that girls from middle income and upper income families are more likely than those from the lower income families to enter school and progress all the way to the university (El-Sanabary, 1993:153). Poor families cannot afford to take their daughters to Boarding schools or Private schools that are expensive, but offer quality education. In most cases, poor parents are complacent with Day schools, where they have to pay less, and their daughters have to commute daily to school. This situation is more common in Kwale than in Mombasa.

The significance of Boarding schools in girls' education cannot be under estimated. There is ample evidence to suggest that when boarding facilities are provided in schools, enrolment improves (cf., **Daily Nation**, 18/5/94, p.16). This is because Boarding schools are more popular and competitive than Day schools owing to the high levels of discipline that is necessary for better academic performance. In the same vein, Boarding schools improve girls' performance immensely. Indeed, the putting up of boarding facilities at Pangani Girls', St. George's and State House Girls' schools, all in Nairobi, improved the schools' performance in national examinations (**Daily Nation**, 23/4/94, p.15). It was pointed out in Chapter Two that Boarding schools are more expensive than Day schools, hence poor parents cannot afford. Therefore the impact of Boarding schools on girls' access to secondary school education is double edged. This means that as much as Boarding schools promote girls' access to education, for poor parents these schools impinge on girls' access to education. For the average parent who can afford the fees, the advantages of Boarding schools outweigh those of Day schools regarding girls' education. This is because a girl who attends a boarding school is spared the day-to-day distractions at home such as household chores, tending to siblings, which take much of her time. A girl who attends a Day school contends with these chores almost on a daily basis.

Lack of basic facilities such as tap water and electricity in some rural areas of Kwale District implies that the responsibility of fetching water and firewood in families fall on girls more than boys. This deprives the girl child the time for doing her schoolwork. Besides, routine performance of these chores by the girl may make her to think that they are more important in life than education. In single parent households, or where a woman is the sole breadwinner, girls might be withdrawn from school

to assist in performing household chores and to take care of the younger siblings. In many cases, girls more than boys, are likely to be withdrawn from school to assist mothers who are engaged in income generating activities.

The prevalence of poorly maintained public schools in Kwale District, most of which are former *Harambee* schools, is a hindrance to girls' education. The quality of education in these schools is relatively poor compared to that of most schools in Mombasa. This is evidenced from Kwale District rating in national examinations where it performs poorly than Mombasa District. Ironically, the general trend in most of these former *Harambee* schools has been to charge high fees to finance various school projects. The high fees in some of the schools could contribute to girls' dropping out due to financial constraints (GoK & UNICEF, 1992:20). Moreover, poverty causes low enrolment in schools. This is because some poor parents cannot afford school fees. Certainly, this leads to absenteeism and eventual dropping out of school, especially by girls.

The political violence that rocked Likoni in Mombasa, and Ng'ombeni and Waa areas of Kwale on the eve of 1997 general elections, also contributed to poor performance of some schools in the districts in 1997 national examinations. The violence that mainly targeted upcountry communities, led to the death of more than forty-seven people and a displacement of another estimated at 100,000 (cf., *Daily Nation*, 6/9/97, p.19). The violence disrupted school programs and brought fear and despondency on pupils and teachers. In the period following the violence most schools in the affected areas recorded, poor turn out of pupils and teachers.

5.7 School Curriculum and its Effects on Muslim Girls' Access to Secondary School Education.

Curriculum is a powerful weapon in the reproduction of gender divisions in schools. The influence of the curriculum on schooling is seen in the various fields of study open to both boys and girls, and stereotypes in textbooks that emphasize gender roles (El-Sanabary, 1994:145). The "hidden curriculum" constrains girls' access to secondary school education. The "hidden curriculum" is contained in the ways that formal subject (curriculum) material is presented in the classroom (Porter, 1992). The presentation is done through the teacher's interaction with the students and the various portrayals of men and women in the textbooks. Through the "hidden curriculum", schools expect

students to conform to certain masculine and feminine norms and attributes (Eshiwani, 1985). As boys grow, they are socialized and expected to be out-spoken, authoritative, dynamic, combative, domineering and impartial. On the other hand, girls are socialized to be docile, reticent, quiescent, nurturing and serene. Girls are also expected to be subjective, more interested in peoples and ideas, and receptive to violence meted on them by males (Eshiwani, 1985:50; Davison & Kanyuka, 1992:455). Some of these attributes are closely linked to certain subjects. For example, Mathematics is associated with aggression that is connected with an increase in the level of testosterone in males with the onset of adolescence. Since boys are considered as aggressive, they are expected to perform better than girls in Mathematics (see, **Daily Nation**, 10/2/96, p.19; 6/4/96, p.20). Thus Mathematics is analogous with toughness, an attribute that is not supposed to be inherent in girls. Oral information reveals that since girls are not aggressive, some teachers and parents therefore do not expect them to perform well in Mathematics.

The process of socialization reinforces the mode of interaction between the teacher and the students in classroom. Values and norms that boys and girls have learnt through socialization are transferred to the classroom. In a mixed school, girls are likely to be quiet and shy. They are less likely to ask questions, while boys would predominate in class discussions, since they are expected to be assertive and domineering (Davison & Kanyuka, 1992:457). During our various participatory observation sessions in mixed schools, it was noted that boys always had an upper hand in class discussions. Girls on the other hand tended to shy off from answering questions.

Within a classroom situation, socialization produces gender role stereotyping. This, together with gender biased classroom interaction affects girls' performance. This interaction is shaped by the perception that girls are less intelligent than boys. Girls are also considered poor achievers, and less able and achievement oriented than boys. This is a product of cultural values and social beliefs that regard women as inferior to men. Girls are therefore discouraged from actively participating and continuing with education (Juma, 1994:274; **Daily Nation**, 23/4/94, p.15; 22/2/99, p.23). As a result, some girls may not assert themselves and exploit their potentials and intellectual abilities. In addition, some male teachers especially in mixed schools are hostile and rude to girls and ridicule

them about their abilities and educational performance (Porter, 1992:190; cf., **Daily Nation**, 22/2/99, p.23).

Negative perceptions and attitudes transmitted through classroom interaction impact on girls' achievements and academic progress. Once these perceptions and attitudes are internalised, a girl may develop a low self esteem and lack of confidence in her abilities. Social pressure and gender role stereotyping ascribe particular subjects to girls as opposed to others. Some teachers, who discourage girls from learning or concentrating on certain subjects such as Mathematics, Science and technical subjects, reinforce this. For example, a teacher's attitude toward science and his (her) method of teaching affects students' (girls') attitude toward Science. (Akoth, 1992:14). However, it should be noted that stemming from the misconceived belief that these subjects are meant for boys, some girls lack the self-drive to face these challenging subjects. This is because some girls shun and regard the subjects as more difficult. Consequently, many girls perform poorly in these subjects (Pala & Krystall, 1975:4; Eshiwani, 1985:56,60; Hill & King, 1993:33).

Evidently, negative reinforcing stereotypes discourage girls from taking the subjects that promise better rewarding and lucrative careers and access to higher education. The **UNESCO World Science Report** (1998) notes that fewer girls than boys enrol for and excel in Science and Mathematics at the tertiary level, where girls account for less than 30 per cent of the student population (**Daily Nation**, 14/9/98, p.18). The few numbers of females in Mathematics and Science related courses at the university stems from apathy in those subjects at the secondary level that leads to poor performance.

In some cases, girls are encouraged to focus on the stereotypical and less intellectually rigorous subjects. These include home science and other art subjects that lead to humble professions such as teaching, secretarial and nursing which are "traditionally" accepted for women (Riria-Ouko, 1989:27; **Daily Nation**, 2/12/95, p.18). On the contrary, careers and professions such as engineering, architecture, law, economics and accounting are considered a strictly male preserve. A study by the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) entitled **Female Education in Mathematics Project** (FEMSA), shows that many girls subscribe to the notion that they cannot succeed in the

male dominated professions (**Daily Nation**, 14/9/98, p.17). This belief limits and curtails girls' aspirations and educational horizons.

Oral information attests to the way teachers discourage girls in learning science. A student concisely put it his way: "we had a chemistry teacher who used to discourage us every now and then. He used to say that it is not necessary for those who are not interested to learn chemistry, to force themselves (Nasrah, OI, 12/2/99).

This attitude from the Chemistry teacher is quite unfortunate because he was supposed to nurture the girls' interest in the subject. It further shows that Chemistry is not important for girls probably because it a difficult subject meant for those who are intelligent and interested. Ultimately, some girls may not put efforts and this may lead to poor performance in the subject.

Research conducted by Obura (1991:17) shows that Mathematics is considered a male subject. This is because money and Mathematics are apparently related. Generally, men seem to have more money than women for obvious reasons. Men possess means of economic production due to their rights and access to land and property ownership, etc. Men are also better represented than women in the wage sector. Through socialization, girls learn that the roles that society ascribe to them such as childbearing, parenting, house keeping and toiling in the *shamba*, do not have any direct relationship with Mathematics. As girls progress through the education system, they lose interest in mathematics and perform poorly in the subject.

Lack of gender sensitive language and the way the material is presented in class by the teacher could covertly be discouraging girls from pursuing challenging science subjects (**Daily Nation**, 2/12/95, p.18). This was revealed through participant observation sessions. In a Form Four chemistry lesson at Memon High School, the male teacher unaware about the message he was covertly imparting into the minds of girls kept asking about: "the significance of hydrogen gas to mankind". The lesson was based on an experiment on hydrogen gas. In spite of the enthusiasm that the girls showed in the lesson the reference to "mankind" could have an impact on girls' educational aspirations. The questions that are bound to be imprinted, in the minds of girls are: is science relevant to women and if not, does it mean the girls are learning the wrong subject or a subject that does not have any utility

to them? Lack of gender sensitive language slowly and surely covertly imparts the wrong message to girls that science subjects are meant for men only. The message has implications on girls' performance in science subjects.

The courses that are offered and the message about sex role conveyed by the educational materials and teachers, influence how parents and students make decisions about educational priorities (Hyde, 1993:119). Thus educational materials are biased and portray girls negatively (**Daily Nation**, 25/5/96, p.18). Notably, values such as honour for women and sex roles are transmitted through the curriculum. In a participant observation session at Sheikh Khalifa, the Form Two Literature lesson revolved around one of the set books: **Things Fall Apart** by Chinua Achebe. The female teacher drew examples from the main character of the novel, that is, Okonkwo to convey the message that men are tough. Toughness is evidenced by the wealth and polygamist status of Okonkwo. Within this context, the teacher also inadvertently stressed the virtues and importance of marriage to girls, maintaining that beautiful girls could be married to wealthy men. She remarked: "in a home, a beautiful girl attracts many men and the girl feels very good and proud" (PO, Sheikh Khalifa, 9/10/98). The teacher's inferences were glorifying the institution of marriage. Within an environment with a strong marriage ethic, the glorification of marriage could send the wrong signals. This may have a negative connotation on girls' performance and schooling, since marriage seems to offer an alternative to a beautiful girl. In some situations, the way the message about marriage is communicated to girls is absurd. A student remarked: "some teachers tell girls that there is no need to spend so much time on studies as they will end up being married and being homemakers" (Suleiman, OI, 26/2/99). In a mixed class, this kind of message casts aspersions on girls' abilities and career prospects. When thus portrayed, some girls could develop a negative self-image and may not do much to improve their educational performance.

Certain concepts on socio-cultural behaviour expected of each sex are transmitted to the learners through sex-role stereotyping. In the classroom interaction, the content of the subject and the examples that a teacher draws have an impact on girls' educational performance (Davison & Kanyuka, 1992:455). In that context, the idea of honour for a Muslim girl is transmitted and reinforced through the medium of instruction. In a Form Two class at Kaya Tiwi Secondary School,

the Kiswahili lesson was based on *msamiati* (the sum of words used in a language). Using the example of *heshima*, the female teacher stressed good behaviour as the virtue that earns a woman honour. The concept of honour has implications on the education of Muslim girls (*vide supra*, Chapter Four).

The perception and attitude of the role of men and women in society are fortified by the way men and women are portrayed in text books and other reading materials. Hence gender role stereotyping in textbooks impact on girls' access to education by confining them to stereotyped roles and identities. Textbooks promote gender bias. This is because, while men may be portrayed performing some important activities, girls may be portrayed performing insignificant tasks such as menial work (Gichuri, 1998:18; cf., **Daily Nation**, 25/5/96, p.18). This implies that textbooks contribute to gender imbalances in education by limiting females to domesticity (Gichuri, 1998:24). According to Obura (1991:83), gender stereotyping in text books inculcates into the minds of the learners gender determined division of play, work, conduct and character idiosyncrasies. These characteristics are gendered. Thus adventure, independence, forcefulness, ingenuity and charm are depicted in textbooks as masculine attributes. Some feminine attributes include cooperation, domesticity, dullness, pretty, verbal sparring, striving for attention and admiration (*ibid*, p.83).

The way women are portrayed in the textbooks impact negatively on girls' academic aspirations and achievements. Due to stereotypes, girls may be de-motivated to excel in their educational careers since their aspirations are limited to the inferior, subservient and dependent roles that are portrayed by textbooks (Gichuri, 1998:18). In addition, textbooks are gender insensitive and reinforce sexist images. Most of the primary school and secondary school textbooks are written from a male viewpoint. Thus, there are, more reference to male images than females' in those books (Obura, 1991; cf., **Daily Nation**, 2/12/95, p.18; 10/2/96, p.19; 14/9/98, p.18).

Generally, textbooks portray men and boys as clever, strong, outgoing hardworking, risk takers, successful, independent, owners of property and decision makers. These qualities fit men into various roles in the public as politicians, managers, engineers, electricians, doctors, judges, mechanics, farmers, manual labourers and machine operators. Girls and women are portrayed as

lazy, being beaten, failures, passive, crying, submissive and wasteful, loving, sacrificing, gullible and susceptible to cheating (**Daily Nation**, 14/9/98, p.17). These qualities are considered appropriate for women's role in the domestic and private environment. Hence, women are portrayed as mothers, wives, home makers and care takers, or in those occupations that take care of others such as secretarial, teaching, nursing and as receptionists (Harfoush-Strickland, 1996:69; **Daily Nation**, 14/9/98, p.17). Obviously, the occupations that are associated with men depict them interacting actively with the wider community while women's occupations depict them serving others, as subordinates. In a way, the roles that men seem to perform are more important than those of women that seem to be peripheral to national development (Obura, 1991:45). This shows that many textbooks use examples that abate the status of girls thereby killing their confidence and determination to pursue challenging careers in life.

In the science textbooks, women are portrayed as domestic workers who keep the house clean while men are associated with physical activities. It is this kind of portrayal that discourages girls from doing physical sciences. As a result, schools emphasize home economics, needlework, cookery for girls but industrial arts and crafts and science for boys (Obura, 1991:45; Harfoush-Strickland, 1996:69). It is evident therefore that careers that are considered as appropriate to girls are extension of their domestic roles. These are nursing and teaching (Harfoush-Strickland, 1996:69). While men are excluded in home science textbooks, women are portrayed therein as mothers, child-bearers, homemakers and house workers (Obura, 1991:57). It is therefore not surprising that Home Science is a pet subject for girls in both primary and secondary schools in Mombasa and Kwale districts and elsewhere in the country.

The roles that textbooks assign to women are highly stereotypical and typical of the roles that society ascribes to women. For example, in Mathematics' text books women are portrayed as mothers at home, in the market buying goods for domestic consumption. Men on other hand are portrayed actively being involved in work, business, buying land and houses, etc. (*ibid*, p. 37). Women are under represented in Mathematics textbooks. This denies the girl students the female adult role models with whom they could be identified. However boys have many adult male role models to identify with in the textbooks. The under representation of female characters in Mathematics

Textbooks convey the wrong message to girls that women are under achievers or non-players in mathematics (*ibid*, pp.29-31).

There are few women in lucrative professions and top decision-making organs in Kenya. This means that schoolgirls lack role models who could inspire them to scale greater heights in education. Within the schools, where most teachers are males especially in the Science, Mathematics and technical subjects, girls lack role models to copy. Oral information attests that lack of role models contribute to dismal performance of Muslim girls in education. This is because there are few Muslim women in positions of political and economic leadership in Kenya.

4.8 Summary and Conclusion

The main objective of this chapter was to evaluate the influence of co-education and other school related factors on Muslim girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale Districts. Accordingly, various factors, have been identified and discussed. These include: co-education, school sponsor(s), distance to school, *madrassa* (religious) education, poverty, and the "hidden" curriculum.

It is observed that most schools in Mombasa and Kwale districts are mixed or co-educational. This means there is a shortage of single sex girls' schools. It is therefore inevitable that many Muslim girls attend mixed schools. Many parents are reluctant to send their daughters to such schools as casual mixing of sexes could compromise their *heshima*. A shortage of Muslim sponsored schools has worsened the situation. There is some apathy towards non-Muslim schools especially the Christian (Church) sponsored ones. This apathy is a product of the colonial legacy in which Christian missionaries used the education system and schools as tools to undermine Islam and Muslims. It is in this connection that Muslim girls are circumspect about attending non-Muslim schools. Some Muslim girls who fail to secure admission in a Muslim school are reluctant to attend non-Muslim schools where they may be denied the opportunity of practicing their religion and wearing the *hijab*.

It is also noted that, the distance to school affects girls' access to secondary school education. This is due to the need for protecting girls from moral and physical danger. The farther the distance from

ome to school, the fewer are the chances of a girl attending school. The distance to school as a factor in girls' access to secondary education is felt more in Kwale than in Mombasa. This is because of the vastness of the district and the way schools are dispersed.

Madrasa education influences girls' access to education. There are cases where some parents insist on their daughters completing the Qur'anic instruction before joining school. This means some girls may be contented with religious education only. To undergo Qur'anic instruction first, means late admission in primary school. This ultimately reduces the chances of completing secondary education as a girl may become old within the school system. Parental fear of pregnancy while the girl is still in school could trigger an early marriage. Otherwise, combining religious instruction with secular education could make a girl loose interest in secondary education.

Directly, poverty influences girls' access to secondary school education. This is the case in low-income families where parents have to choose between educating a boy or a girl. Due to poverty many schools, especially in Kwale District lack basic facilities. This contributes to poor performance of those schools in national examinations. Elsewhere within the school, the hidden curriculum affects girls' educational performance and attainment. Gender role images are transmitted through classroom interaction between the teacher and the students. Hence girls tend to avoid or to put little effort in subjects such as Mathematics and Science. Gender role images are further enhanced through textbooks. This has a negative effect on girls' schooling since girls may channel their energies to the stereotypical subjects that are seen as extension of the gendered roles of parenting and housekeeping. This therefore limits girls' educational horizons and career choices.

The discussion in this chapter confirms our premise that, co-education, type of school; school sponsor(s) and facilities, distance to school and poverty could impinge on Muslim girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary and Conclusions

In a capsule, this study investigated the influence of interpretations of Islam on girls' access to secondary school education in Mombasa and Kwale districts. Various factors that determine these interpretations have been discussed. They include the social status of Muslim women, seclusion, veiling and gender segregation and school-related factors. All these factors influence Muslim girls' access to secondary school education.

To begin with, the study has examined the main trends in the development of Muslim girls' education in the two districts in the colonial and the post-colonial periods. It is shown that, Christian missionaries introduced Western education. Initial Muslim response to Western education was characterized by apathy. This was because of two main reasons.

First, Muslims had a tradition of learning through the Islamic education that was different from, and pre-dated the introduction of formal Western education. Islamic education was imparted through the *vyuo*. However, there were limited opportunities of girls' access to the education offered in the *vyuo*.

Second, Muslims equated Western education with missionary education. The latter was evangelical in nature and Muslims perceived it as a ploy to convert them to Christianity. They therefore shunned mission schools. Arguably, Muslims were not opposed to Western education *per se*. In reality, what they were opposed to, were the evangelising activities that accompanied missionary education. This explains why they were at ease with government schools. Besides, being outside the domain of missionary control, Muslim children could be offered Islamic religious instruction in government schools. It should be noted that in both Mombasa and Kwale districts, the introduction of Qur'anic instruction in the curriculum of government schools boosted attendance and enrolment.

The response of Muslims to missionary education had far reaching consequences for the general development of Muslim education and the education of Muslim girls' in Mombasa and Kwale districts.

Undoubtedly, the colonial racial educational policies favoured some Muslim groups as opposed to others. This is underlined by the way the government established schools for Asians, Arabs and Swahili as opposed to African Muslims. Even with Arabs and the Swahili, educational facilities provided by the government were hardly adequate to fulfil the demand. The government left the responsibility of providing education to Africans in the hands of missionaries. It was within that context that African Muslims had to contend with missionary schools, which they shunned because of their evangelical nature. As a result, the education of Africans lagged behind that of other races - Europeans and Asians. The domino effect of missionary education and limited government schools was the under-development of Muslim education. On the whole, the effect of limited educational opportunities and facilities were more debilitating on Muslim girls' access to education. The situation was different for Asian Muslims, especially the Ismailis who had the wherewithal to establish schools for boys and girls to complement the government's efforts.

At the formative period, the policies of colonial administrators and missionaries were not in favour of girls' education. This is because girls' education was largely dovetailed with their future roles as wives and mothers. Priority was given to education of boys as future providers for their families. Hence, the colonial educational policies did not promote the education of Muslim girls. There were limited facilities for girls' education. Where schools existed, they were largely mixed with no separate facilities for Muslim girls. Therefore, on reaching puberty, most girls were withdrawn from school. The colonial policies further reinforced some cultural beliefs, customs and practices that were unfavourable to the education of girls among some Muslim groups and individuals. Hence, there was some resistance to the education of girls. Instead, parenting and housekeeping roles were considered to be of ultimate significance for the future responsibilities in marriage than pursuing education. A combination of conservatism and

the effects of missionary education and colonial education policies led to under-development of Muslim girls' education in Mombasa and Kwale districts during the colonial period.

Since the dawn of Kenya's independence, Muslim attitude to girls' education has changed tremendously. More Muslim girls are attending secondary school than in the past. A respondent succinctly described this change of attitude regarding the past and the present situation of Muslim girls' education:

There is more enthusiasm by Muslims to take the advantage of the available educational opportunities that are offered to them now. These opportunities were not available in the past. Hence girls are encouraged to take up education as much as boys. It was only wrong approach in the past that led to the wide disparity between boys and girls in schools (Admani, OI, 7/10/98).

The change of attitude notwithstanding, the effect of the colonial legacy on Muslim girls' education is evident from the limited facilities and opportunities available to girls in Mombasa and Kwale districts. A review of the enrolment patterns in the two districts shows that there was rapid growth in the number of girls in secondary schools in the seventies. During this time, there was an increased growth in private schools than public schools especially in Mombasa. However, there were glaring gender disparities in secondary school education.

Despite the rapid growth in girls' education over the years, enrolment figures indicate that there are more boys than girls in secondary schools in the two districts. Due to the many years of under-development, the pace of growth of girls' education regarding facilities could not keep pace with that of boys'. Drop out rates for girls are also higher than boys'. In view of the increased social demand for secondary education, limited facilities and opportunities affect Muslim girls' access to secondary school education. The demand is a response to the changing socio-economic and political situation in the country that has created an enabling environment for girls' education.

In terms of enrolment, Muslim sponsored schools record high number of Muslim girls than non-Muslim schools. The latter record a relatively lower enrolment of Muslim girls. The high enrolment of girls in the largely private Muslim schools in Mombasa and in

some schools in Kwale is a pointer that where a congenial Islamic environment prevails, Muslims take advantage of the existing facilities and opportunities to provide their daughters with secondary education. This implies that a shortage of Muslim schools is a constraint to girls' access to secondary school education.

The lower enrolment of girls in non-Muslim schools reveals some apathy by Muslims towards these schools. It is therefore concluded that the colonial legacy still haunts the provision of girls' education among Muslims in the two districts, since parents are still wary of sending their daughters to non-Muslim schools. This attitude is a product of the colonial legacy where missionary education was seen as an instrument of evangelisation.

In Chapter Three, the status of Muslim women has been discussed. This has been done, by examining the teachings of Islam vis-à-vis the Muslim practice. In retrospect, there is no doubt that Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h) improved the status of women. This is evident in the way Islam accords woman various socio-economic and political rights. It is shown that Islam teaches about the inherent equality of the sexes. This equality however should not obviate the differences between the sexes. Unfortunately, men have generally taken away the various rights that Islam has given to women. This means women have become oppressed in some Muslim homes (Ali, 1998:11). Therefore, it could be argued that, the status of women in some contemporary Muslim communities does not reflect the spirit and the teachings of Islam. This is the situation of the status of woman in Mombasa and Kwale districts. It does not meet the Islamic ideals. When the "Islamic ideal" of the status of woman is taken into perspective and compared with the status of Muslim woman in the area of study, then we could rightly conclude that, "there is a difference between women in Islam and women in some Muslim communities" (Aboulmaali, 1996:7). The lowly status of Muslim women in Kwale and Mombasa districts should not be blamed on Islam. Rather, it should be attributed to the failure of individual Muslims to fulfil some of the Islamic teachings on the rights of women.

The depressed status of women in some Muslim communities is a product of a plethora of socio-cultural beliefs and practices and [mis]interpretations of some Islamic teachings. Consequently, male dominated values and beliefs are rooted in the socialisation patterns.

As boys and girls grow up they are socialized to accept certain behavioural patterns such as sex-role stereotyping. The crux of this socialization process is a set of patriarchal attitudes that presuppose the superiority and domination of males and inferiority and subservience of females. It is shown that a feeling of inferiority complex by girls is a hindrance to their access to school, performance and retention therein (*vide supra*, Chapter Five).

Islam defines the roles of men and women within the household and society. These roles are complementary and not competitive. They are different but not discriminatory, equal in importance but not identical in importance (Al-Faruqi, 1991:44). The roles of a woman are in the private domain, while those of a man are in the public domain. Despite the differentiated roles, the teachings of Islam do not prevent a woman from fulfilling her basic needs outside her domain. Within the context of a Muslim family, functional distribution of roles between males and females is significant for the stability and well being of the family and society. Yet, some people use this role differentiation to justify and legitimise practices such as seclusion and the culture of domesticity for women. It is in this regard that the Qur'an and *Hadith* and *sharia* are selectively interpreted to support the thesis of superiority of men over women. For example, the "degree" of responsibility referred to in Chapter 4:34, and which results from the guardianship of men over women, is interpreted as superiority of men over women. This leads to degradation and subordination of women.

Cultural beliefs and practices are seen through religious spectacles or even confused with religion. Owing to culture there is a "general misconception that everything that happens in a Muslim society is necessarily Islamic" (Ammah, 1992:81). This creates some confusion between culture and religion, and it borders on misinterpretations of Islam. This confusion causes much havoc on the negative image portrayed of woman in Islam. Women are depicted as weak, inferior and unsuitable in performing certain tasks such as education. This confusion was apparent in oral response:

Some Islamic practices affect the education of girls. Women are restricted in many areas. They are not supposed to dominate over men. This makes them to be inferior and not to aspire for public offices. They are de-motivated due to lack of freedom, but this trend is changing gradually (Chinyama, OI, 23/2/99).

Due to androcentrism, the parenting and domestic roles of women are considered subservient to the roles of men as providers. The domino effect of values of male domination and female subservience assumes *a priori*, boys' education is more important than girls'. Preference is therefore given to the education of boys as the future providers of the family. This has implications on girls' access to secondary school education. This is because there is a mentality that a modicum education could suffice for girls. In any case, for girls, marriage and childbearing are seen as the ultimate goals that do not require much education.

Prejudices and attitudes that are embedded in cultural values on male domination reinforce [mis]interpretations of Islam on male domination over female. Interpretations therefore have an important place in the status of women in Muslim communities. Ideally, androcentric interpretations favour male interests that restrict the status of women to role expectations (Anumah, 1992:81). Misinterpretations of Islam stem from patriarchal attitudes where men cherish exercising their power to discriminate against women. Patriarchal attitudes are supported by religious discourse and cultural values on male domination. Consequently, some verses of the Qur'an are interpreted to subordinate women. Hasan al-Turabi, a former ideologue of the Sudanese Government and Speaker of Parliament sums up how men use their power to oppress women through misinterpretations. He says:

Through out history, Muslims have experienced a significant deviation from the general ideals of life as taught by Islam...whenever weakness creeps into the faith of Muslim men they tend to treat women oppressively and seek to exploit them. This is a natural tendency, and is amply demonstrated by the fact that most of the rulings of the Qur'an regarding women were set down as restrictions on men, to prevent them transgressing against women.... This discriminatory attitude of interpretation is very widespread indeed (cited, McCloud, 1995: 143f).

[Mis]interpretations legalize particular customs and practices that consider the male gender the norm or standard for culture while the female gender is considered subservient. [Mis]interpretations lead to prejudices and stereotypes that support restrictions on women. Unfortunately [mis]interpretations that de-humanize women are attributed to the teachings of Islam rather than to the person(s) responsible for the interpretations (Wadud-Muhsin, 1991:35). Due to misinterpretations, practices such as seclusion of women are equated with and associated with Islam. Some of these practices

are those that some respondents regard as cultural (traditional) practices. Largely, these practices constrain Muslim girls' education (El-Sanabary, 1993:151). Irrespective of whether they are African or Arab, cultural practices such as early marriage and preference for the education of boys, should not be equated with Islamic practices.

Islam has a role to play in the education of girls. This is because, in principle, it accords equal educational rights to both male and female children. Seeking knowledge is a duty for all Muslims. Religion *per se* does not hinder Muslim girls from pursuing secondary education. However, the interpretation of the Islamic definition of the role of men and women influences girls' access to secondary school education. Within Mombasa and Kwale districts, cultural beliefs and practices reinforce the misinterpretations of Islam on the role of woman in society. These influence the importance that is attached to the education of girls. Oral response shows that:

While Islam encourages the growth of a person (woman) in the realm of knowledge, the various cultures and traditions of people break the role Islam would play in bringing out the importance of education of girls (Khan, OI, 8/10/98).

Even though female seclusion is associated with Muslims and Muslim communities, it is neither Islamic nor Arabic in origin. Many ancient societies such as Jews, Assyrians, Greeks and Persians used to practice seclusion (*vide supra*, Chapter Four). During the spread of Islam, Muslims adopted female seclusion as a cultural practice. For those who adopted and advocated it, they did not mean to do any harm to women. Seclusion of women is not sanctioned by the teachings of Islam. Indeed many Muslims do not practice seclusion. Evidently as the practice spread far and wide, female seclusion in the subordination of women reared its ugly face. Pickthall (1990:141) underlines this transformation:

So long as it involved no cruelty and did no harm to women, it may be regarded as unobjectionable from the stand point, as a custom of a period. But the moment it involved cruelty to women and did harm to them, it became manifestly objectionable from the point of view of the *sharia* which enjoins kindness and fair treatment towards women and aims at improving their status.

While the non-Islamic origin of seclusion is quite clear, it is shown in Chapter Four that some Muslims from the area of study and elsewhere consider female seclusion an Islamic practice. In other words, such people argue that female seclusion is sanctioned by the teachings of Islam. The conception of female seclusion as an Islamic practice, borders on

the misinterpretations of Islam. Like other cultural practices that could be legitimised by religion, the practice of secluding women has been sanctified and legitimised through [mis]interpretations of Islam. Misinterpretations can cause something that was cultural to assume a religious face and consequently be considered an Islamic practice (Bardach, 1993, INTERNET).

Female seclusion is an un-Islamic practice that leads to limiting of the public space of Muslim women. The essence of female seclusion is to confine women to the four walls of a house. Those who subscribe to it argue that if women are given the opportunity for any public role that could create *al-fitna* in society. The essence of secluding women is cruel and punitive. Seclusion is not justified by Islamic discourse because it was a punishment for those who had committed adultery.

As a practice that limits the social space of Muslim women, female seclusion affects girls' access to secondary school education. Those who support the seclusion of women misinterpret Islam to keep girls at home at the onset of puberty. They argue that since casual intermingling of sexes is contrary to Islam, girls' education in mixed schools contravenes the teachings of Islam. Hence, seclusion of girls after puberty is a drawback to their education pursuits. This is because some girls are forced to drop out of school. For others, chances of joining a secondary school after completing Standard VIII are curtailed. Generally, the effect of seclusion on the social mobility and education of a Muslim woman is best summarized by the following remarks:

She is confined to her home in a manner prescribed in Islam only as a penal sanction for an act of adultery. She is so isolated on the pretext that she should devote herself exclusively to the care of her children and the service of her husband. But how can she qualify for attending to domestic family affairs or for the rearing of children in a satisfactory manner without being herself versed through education or experience, in the moral and functional culture of the wider society (cited, McCloud, 1995:140).

Seclusion and segregation of sexes are sometimes used in the context of the veil. In this study, a distinction between seclusion and the veiling is maintained. The latter is known by different terms (see, Chapter Four). Unlike seclusion, veiling of women is justified by religion. The veil should not keep Muslim in bondage. It should not be a drawback to a woman to engage in socio-economic and political activities. Contrary to opinions from some non-Muslim circles, the veil is not a sign of backwardness, ignorance, oppression of

the Muslim women. The veil is a mark of identity for Muslim women, a symbol of great personal pride, inner strength and self-esteem. It is a constant reminder to the wearer that she has to conduct herself with etiquette and dignity befitting a Muslim woman. It enhances a woman's movement in the public domain, devoid of harassment from members of the opposite sex. This significant role of the veil is underlined by these words:

It facilitates her many jobs with increased inefficiency. In wearing a *hijab*, a woman builds her own security and protects herself from exploitation by ensuring a distance between herself and men of all types (Iqbal, 1989:54).

Veiling entails the segregation of sexes in schools, social places and places of work. Gender segregation has implications on Muslim girls' access to secondary school education. Majority of the Muslims prefer their daughters to be educated in single-sex girls' schools or mixed schools with separate facilities for boys and girls. Opposition to mixed schools is tied to the Islamic teachings against casual intermingling of sexes. There is enough evidence in the study to show that Muslim sponsored schools register high enrolment of girls. Although these schools are mixed, they have separate and segregated facilities for boys and girls. However, there is a dearth of Muslim sponsored schools in Mombasa and Kwale districts. Equally, the shortage of girls' schools in the two districts forces some Muslim girls to discontinue with their secondary school education. The differences between Muslim schools and non-Muslim schools in the enrolment patterns of Muslim girls prove that Muslims are not opposed to the education of their daughters, once an enabling environment is provided.

Distance to school is a factor in the education of Muslim girls. This hinges on the interaction of girls with strangers, especially members of the opposite sex. Harassment from members of the opposite sex bring about safety and moral concerns for girls. Muslim parents prefer that their daughters attend secondary schools located closer to home where they could have a closer eye on their safety. These concerns affect Muslim girls' access to secondary school education, especially where no schools are available in the neighbourhood, or within easy reach and access.

Coupled with the issue of mixed schools is the prevailing belief that Muslim girls could be well placed to observe and practice their religious rights in a Muslim sponsored

school. These rights include wearing the *hijab* as a part of the school uniform, and observing the fast of *Ramadhan*. The issue of school sponsor influences Muslim girls' access to secondary school education. Amidst the shortage of Muslim sponsored schools, attendance of Christian (non-Muslim) sponsored schools, create apathy in the minds of many Muslim girls. That Muslim girls who attend non-Muslim or Christian sponsored schools have experienced problems in observing these rights is evident in Chapter Five. The teaching of CRE to Muslim girls who attend Christian schools is a very contentious issue. Since non-Muslim schools do not offer IRE in the curriculum, Muslim girls oscillate between school and *madrassa*. Religious instruction of the *madrassa* competes for the girls' time. This affects their educational performance.

To find out why some people do not send their daughters to secondary school, heads of household were asked to rank in order of strength some of the reasons given. These were: "financial difficulties; early marriages; girls preferring marriage to secondary education; no schools available in the neighbourhood; parental fear of losing dowry; parental fear of daughters becoming spoilt; and lack of educational facilities that cater for Muslim girls (see Appendix 4). From the response, it was apparent that the single most important reason why some parents do not send their daughters to secondary schools is due to financial difficulties. This was followed by parental fear of girls becoming spoilt. Lack of educational facilities was ranked third, followed by early marriages. The non-availability of schools in the neighbourhood was ranked fifth, followed by parental fear of losing dowry and girls' preference for marriage came last. The results of these ratings are tabulated below.

Table 29: Ratings of Reasons that make some Parents not to send their Daughters to Secondary School in Mombasa and Kwale Districts

Rating	Reasons Why Girls Should not Attend Secondary Schools	No. of Respondents
1	Financial Difficulties	16
2	Parental fear of daughters becoming spoilt	12
3	Lack of educational facilities that cater for Muslim girls	6
4	Early (arranged) marriages	3
5	No schools available in the neighbourhood	2
6	Parental fear of losing dowry	1
7	Girls preferring marriage to secondary school education	-
	Total Respondents	40

Source: Field Survey, Mombasa and Kwale Districts, September 1998 - March 1999.

The reasons cited above are inter-related, and one reason could lead to another. For example, the parental fear of daughters becoming spoilt and non-availability of schools for Muslim girls could compound an already difficult situation where parents have a limited financial ability. Under these circumstances, some parents will take into consideration the opportunity cost of educating girls. Some parents will therefore opt to marry off their daughters to raise money for the dowry that could help to finance the education of boys who are seen as the future providers. Early marriages are linked to the parental fear of girls becoming spoilt. Early marriages are attached to the need to protect family honour. This means attending single-sex girls' schools or mixed schools that have separate facilities for girls. This is to avoid the sexual mischief concomitant with the casual mingling of sexes. Alternatively, girls should attend schools within the neighbourhood where surveillance on their behaviour is possible. Some parents prefer to marry off their daughters at the onset of puberty. This is because continued schooling is seen to compromise family honour, if the girl becomes sexually promiscuous and gets pregnant.

Early marriages are connected to the strong marriage ethic among Muslim communities in the area of study. This impinges on girls' access to secondary school education, and

also contributes to girls' dropping out of the secondary school system. Marriage is perceived as the future destiny for girls. In this case, schooling is a transitional stage pending marriage. On the other hand, for some, the school is a place for growing up. This creates apathy in the minds of such girls, and occasional absenteeism would characterize their school attendance.

From Table 29, it is apparent that access of Muslim girls to secondary school education is also influenced by socio-economic factors. Within the context of the family, poverty and socio-cultural beliefs prompt some families to educate boys and not girls. In poor families, priority after Standard 8 is given to the education of boys. Even within the secondary education system, some girls drop out before completing Form IV. Poverty also affects the performance of schools in national examinations. In Kwale District, for example, most secondary schools lack the essential physical infrastructural facilities for good educational performance (*vide supra*, Chapter Five). This is reflected in the poor performance of a majority of schools in national examinations.

Lack of awareness or ignorance by some parents is a drawback to the education of Muslim girls. Ignorant parents or those who have not had the benefits of education would equally not appreciate the importance of girls' education. Such parents cannot prioritise the education of girls or even encourage them in their studies. Equally, they will sacrifice girls' education at the altar of conservative cultural beliefs and misinterpretations of Islam that consider women's place to be the house.

Through the process of socialization, cultural beliefs on male domination are transferred to the classroom situation in the form of the hidden curriculum. The effect is that girls in mixed schools are marginalised in classroom learning situations. More attention is given to boys especially in some subjects such as mathematics and science. The cumulative effect is that the general performance of girls in national examinations is poorer than that of boys.

Lack of role models for Muslim girls impact negatively on their educational aspirations in two ways. First, with fewer Muslim women at the upper echelons of political and policy

decision-making positions, there are fewer models for the girls to copy. Second, if the Muslim girls who complete secondary school do not secure jobs that could influence their lives and those of their families, young Muslim girls in secondary schools may not feel motivated to scale greater heights in their educational careers. This is because of the tendency in this country to equate educational advancement with material gains and employment in the private and public sectors

6.2 Recommendations

The teachings of Islam are not necessarily the constraints to women's role in various socio-economic and political activities. Essentially, the main constraints to women's role in various spheres of life are the misinterpretations of Islam that are reinforced by the cultural practices and beliefs. The teachings of Islam predicate its progressive nature in ameliorating the status of women. If the proper teachings of Islam on the status of woman are practiced, the position of women - in the area of study - could improve tremendously. Hence one should not take only the conservative interpretations that cast the Muslim woman in subordinated roles.

When discussing the issues of women in Islam and Muslims, one should always bear in mind the differences between Qur'anic injunctions and cultural beliefs and practices. Islam grants women rights that societal traditions and customs take away. Therefore, problems and challenges that women experience due to socio-cultural impediments need to be overcome. For this to be achieved, there is need to return to the Islamic ideals and values on the status of women. If Islamic ideals were implemented, this would effectively improve the status of girls' education

Illiteracy or lack of knowledge of Islam makes women to be ignorant of the various rights that Islam grants them. It is lack of understanding of Islamic teachings that exacerbates some parents' lack of interest in educating girls. An ignorant parent on issues of Islam would automatically be susceptible to socio-cultural beliefs and practices that underlie the subordination of women. These include early marriages, seclusion of women and non-education of girls. One who is oblivious of the teachings of Islam on the status of women could easily take cultural norms for Islamic teachings. This is because the interaction of

Islam and cultural values of people make it difficult to separate the values of Islam with those of culture. Probably and possibly, a clear demarcation of cultural values with the values and teachings of Islam need to be defined. This is the only way that a clear picture of the status of woman in Islam could be discerned. In this regard, a better understanding of the teachings of Islam on the status of women is necessary to enable women to know their rights. That way, women would appreciate that education is a right that they should pursue in accordance with the teachings of Islam.

The Muslim communities should move with the changing times. Islam is a dynamic religion, therefore changes have to be accommodated and accepted. The Qur'an alludes to a change of attitude (13:11). This means that for the Qur'an to maintain its relevance for Muslims at all times, the context of the revelations of the verses regarding the status of women should be taken into perspective. This implies that the Qur'an should be continually re-interpreted in the context of the socio-economic and political changes taking place in the Muslim communities.

There is a need to discourage cultural practices such as early marriages that impede girls' education. This could be achieved through sensitising the community about the importance of girls' education. In that case, the role of government administrators, political and religious leaders and NGOs operating in Muslim areas is important to create awareness among communities about the negative effects of early marriages on girls' education. Coupled with this, the leaders should step up an intensive and vigorous campaign of the need to educate girls. This would help to narrow gender gaps in education regarding access and retention in schools.

The few Muslims who have not recognized the importance of girls' education should be conscientised on that aspect. This is important in order to bring about a change of attitude towards education of girls. Religious leaders especially imams need to underscore this aspect during the *Jumu'ah* (Friday) *khutba* (sermon) by emphasizing the Islamic teachings on education of girls. Further, they should underplay the cultural values that inhibit girls' education.

Since co-educating boys and girls, unless in separate facilities affects Muslim girls' education, there is a need for the government and the Muslim community to address this issue. This is a priority area that needs to be explored in order to improve the standards of education not only for Muslim girls in the area of study but also other girls in other parts of the country. Single-sex schools should be established or separate facilities for girls created in mixed schools. With proper planning and coordination with education officers, administrators and community leaders, the communities in the area of study could take an initiative by identifying their needs for separate schools for girls and boys. Due to the financial implications to such an enterprise, the existing facilities could be consolidated and some set-aside for girls and others for boys depending on the needs of each sex and available facilities. The presence of single-sex schools for girls would definitely improve girls' access to secondary school education, as the fear of casual mixing of sexes will abate.

It is shown in this study that some non-Muslim schools do not respect the religious rights of Muslim girls. This situation creates apathy among Muslim parents that could lead to girls dropping out of school. In this regard, schools should respect the religious beliefs and practises of Muslim girls. This rule should apply according to the Education Act, insofar as it does not infringe on school discipline or disrupt school programmes. The stipulations of the Act regarding religious rights should be followed in schools attended by Muslims. Owing to the centrality of the *hijab* for Muslim women, girls attending non-Muslim schools should be allowed to wear it as part of the school uniform. If this and other religious rights of Muslims are taken care of, it would possibly remove the apathy apparent in Muslim parents whose daughters are forced by circumstances to attend non-Muslim schools.

Though IRE has been dogged by a shortage of teachers since its inception in the curriculum, the government should wholly recognize its importance as a component of Muslim education. Once that is done, more IRE teachers should be trained to ameliorate the shortage. Then, IRE should be introduced in all schools with a Muslim student population. The benefit of IRE to girls' education is obvious. Muslim girls would not have to oscillate between secular school and *madrassa*, thus wasting the limited available

time. In addition, Muslim girls in non-Muslim schools would also feel that their religious heritage is taken into consideration in some of these schools. This may help in reducing the apathy that some Muslim parents have towards their daughters attending such schools.

Poverty bedevilling most people especially in Kwale District is an issue that requires urgent attention. Its eradication should not be left solely to the government, but should also be a concern of the local people and their leaders. As long as poverty engulfs the people, promotion of girls' access in secondary education will remain a mirage. This is because amidst pecuniary difficulties, it is the education of girls that is sacrificed at the altar of cultural values that consider educating boys to have more functional importance. Within this context, education officers should identify and target bright Muslim girls for bursaries. Alternatively, a bursary scheme for poor Muslim girls in the two districts in particular and the country in general should be established by liaising with philanthropic Muslim groups and individuals, local authority, politicians, and government officers such as the DC, DEO, chiefs and AEOs.

Muslim women who have scaled greater heights through education and excelled in their professions should act as the role models for Muslim girls. These are women in various cadres in both the private and public sectors. They include doctors, nurses, teachers and politicians. Muslim girls who have excelled in education should be given an opportunity to serve the community (public) in such capacities. This could motivate the girls in secondary schools to work hard in their studies in order to become achievers like the role models they emulate. Along this line, Muslim schools and other girls' schools should organize Open (Speech) Day forums where leading Muslim women achievers address Muslim girls. On such days, emphasis should be laid on the need for girls to work hard in school in order to produce more nurses, doctors, teachers, lawyers and other professions to serve the community in various capacities.

Textbooks have a negative impact on girls' education. The effects of gender role images in textbooks need to be addressed. The government and curriculum developers should

develop syllabus and textbooks that are gender sensitive in the portrayal and presentation of girls and women, and their roles.

6.3 Suggestions for Further Study

(a) This study was specifically restricted to the influence of interpretations of Islam on girls' access to secondary school education. Other studies could be undertaken to investigate the influence of either Christianity or African religion on girls' education. This is important if the impact of the whole gamut of religious traditions on girls' education is to be put into perspective.

(b) The effect of early marriages on Muslim girls' secondary school education is evident from this study. Nevertheless, there was no quantified data on this phenomenon. To actualise the efficacy of early marriages on Muslim girls' education, there is a need for a study that specifically deals with this issue. Such a study could be significant for policy makers in order to put in place measures that could curb this cultural practice that is ubiquitous in many parts of the country, and which contributes to girls dropping out of school.

(c) It was noted in this study that few Muslim girls drop out of secondary school due to pre-marital pregnancy. The number is attributed to the high values of chastity underscored by the teachings of Islam. We suggest that a study of the effect of pre-marital pregnancies on Muslim girls' access to, and retention in the schooling system be an area of further research.

(d) Apart from interpretations of Islam, there are other factors that influence girls' education within the schooling system. These include socio-economic factors and curriculum, among others. It is our contention that these factors should be explored further in independent studies.

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APPENDIX 1 (a) Secondary Schools in Mombasa District, 1999

Private Schools

Name of School	Type of School
1. Alibhai Panju Jaffery Academy	Mixed Day
3. Bamburi High School	Mixed Day
4. Burhaniyya Secondary	Mixed Day
5. Coast Academy	Mixed Day
6. Dar al Ulum Secondary School	Mixed Boarding/Day
7. H.H The Aga Khan Kenya Secondary	Mixed Day
8. Jomvu Secondary	Mixed Day
9. Kilindini Secondary School	Mixed Day
10. Lyale Academy	Mixed Day
11. Makupa Secondary School	Mixed Day
12. Memon High School	Mixed Day
13. Mombasa Academy	Mixed Day
14. Mombasa Baptist High School	Mixed Day
15. Mombasa High School	Mixed Day
16. Mombasa Secondary School	Mixed Day
17. New Era High School	Mixed Day
18. Oshwal Academy	Mixed Day
19. Sheikh Khalifa Sec. & Techn. School.	Mixed Day/Boarding
20. St. Anne's high School	Mixed Day
21. St. Charles Lwanga	Mixed Day
22. St. Theresa's Girls' Mombasa	Girls' Boarding
23. Sunrise High School	Mixed Day
24. Valentine High School	Mixed Day
25. Shree Swaminarayan Academy	Mixed Day

(b) Public Schools

1. Allidina Visram High School	Boys' Day
2. Bondeni Girls Secondary School	Girls' Day
3. Changanwe Secondary School	Mixed Day

4. Coast Girls High School	Girls Day
5. H.H. The Aga Khan High School	Mixed Day
6. Khamis Secondary School	Boys Day
7. Likoni Secondary School	Mixed Day
8. Mama Ngina Girls' Secondary School	Girls Boarding
9. Mombasa School for the Physically Handicapped	Boys Boarding/Day
10. Sacred Heart Secondary School	Mixed Day
11. Serani Secondary School	Boys Day
12. Shimo-la-Tewa High School	Boys Boarding
13. Star of the Sea High School	Girls Day
14. Technical High School	Mixed Day
15. Tudor Day Secondary School	Boys Day

Source: Provincial Education Office, Mombasa , 1999

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APPENDIX 1b. Secondary Schools in Kwale District, 1999

1	Kwale Boys High School	Boys Boarding
2	Matuga Girls high School	Girls Boarding
3	Shimba Hills Sec. School	Mixed Boarding & Day
4	Waa Secondary School	Mixed Boarding & Day
5	Taru Secondary School	Mixed, Girls Boarding
6	Kinango Secondary School	Mixed Day/Boarding
7	Msambweni Secondary School	Mixed Day
8	Mazeras Secondary School	Boys Boarding
9	Lukore Secondary School	Mixed Boarding
10	Ng'ombeni Secondary School	Mixed Day
11	Mazeras Memorial Girls' Sec. School	Girls Boarding
12	Lunga Lunga Secondary School	Mixed Day
13	Diani Secondary School	Mixed Day
14	Kaya Tiwi Secondary School	Mixed Day
15	Mwavumbo Secondary School	Mixed Day
16	Kikoneni Secondary School	Mixed Day
17	Kichaka Simba Girls Secondary School	Girls Day
18	Mkongani Secondary School	Mixed Day
19	Ndavaya Secondary School	Mixed, Girls' Boarding & Day
20	St. Mary's Seminary Kwale	Boys' Boarding (Private)
21	Ramisi Secondary School	Mixed Day, Girls' Boarding
22	Burani Secondary school	Mixed Day
23	Mivumoni Secondary School	Mixed Day
24	Samburu Secondary School	Mixed Day
25	Mnyenzi Secondary School	Mixed Day
26	Mwaluphamba Secondary School	Mixed Day
27	Golini Secondary School	Mixed Day
28	Mwananyamala Secondary School	Mixed Day

Source: District Education Office, Kwale, 2/3/99

APPENDIX 2: Questionnaire/Interview Guide

Preamble

The researcher is a student at Kenyatta University. He is conducting a research on **The Impact of Interpretations of the Teachings of Islam on Girls' Access to Secondary School Education in Mombasa and Kwale Districts**. Please assist him to fill in the following questions. This information will be used purposely for this research only and will be treated with confidence as required.

General information for all respondents

Name (optional) _____ Age (optional) _____ Sex: Male Female (Tick appropriately).

Religion: Christianity Islam African Religion Any other (specify)
(Tick one).

Class (where applicable): Form I Form II Form III Form IV

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(A) Questionnaire/Interview Guide for Head teachers and Class Teachers**(i) Head Teachers**

Highest education achievement:

Post-Graduate Graduate Diploma/S1 Certificate Any other (specify)
(Tick one).

1. (a) Name of the school _____
2. (b) (i) Is the school: boarding day ? (Tick one)
(ii) The school is girls' mixed ? (Tick one)
(iii) How many streams does the school have? (i) 1 (ii) 2 (iii) 3 (iv) 4 (Tick one)
2. (a) (i) What is the current student enrolment of the school?
(ii) (If the school is mixed) what is the approximate proportion of the boys' enrolment to that of the girls?
(iii) What is the approximate proportion of Muslim girls' enrolment to that of non-Muslim girls?
3. (a) Who are the sponsors of the school? The Government The Catholic Church The Anglican Church Muslim organization (specify) Any other (specify) (Tick one).
(b) In what ways are the sponsors involved in the management of the school?
4. (a) (i) What is the total number of teachers in the school ?
(ii) In your opinion what are the effects of a male teaching staff in the overall students' performance of a girls' school?
(iii) In your opinion what are the effects of non-Muslim teachers in the staff of a predominantly Muslim girls' school?
(b) Indicate the highest educational achievement of teachers in the school in the order of number and sex as shown below:

Level of Education	Males	Females	Total
i) Post-graduate			
ii) Graduate			
iii) Diploma/S1			
iv) Certificate (specify)			
v) Other (specify)			

5. (a) How could you rate the performance of the school in national exams?
Excellent Good Satisfactory Poor (Tick one). Give reasons.
- (b) If the school is mixed) Do boys in the school perform better than girls in national exams? Yes No (Tick one). Give reasons.

- (c) How could you rate the performance of Muslim girls in the school, in the national examinations, when compared to non-Muslim girls? Excellent Good Satisfactory Poor (Tick one). Give reasons.
- 6.(a) (i) Are there cases of repetition of classes by students in the school? Yes No (Tick one). If "yes", give reasons?
- (ii) (If the school is mixed) Does the rates of repetition affect girls more than boys or the vice-versa? Give reasons.
- (iii) Do the rates of repetition affect Muslim girls more than the non-Muslim ones? Yes No (Tick one). Give reasons.
- (b) (i) Does the school experience cases of drop-outs? Yes No (Tick one). If yes, what is the trend?
- (ii) (If the school is mixed) Does the drop-out rates affect girls more than boys or vice-versa? Give reasons.
- (iii) Do Muslim girls drop out of the school more than the non-Muslim ones? Yes No (Tick one). Give reasons.
- (iv) What are the reasons that force Muslim girls to drop out of secondary school?
- (c) (i) What are the advantages and disadvantages of co-education?
- (ii) In your opinion, what is the effect of co-education on Muslim girls' education?
- (iii) Are there some Islamic practices that you think affect the education of Muslim girls? Yes No (Tick one). Give reasons.
7. In your opinion, what are the factors (if any) within, the school that hinder Muslim girl from joining the school?
8. In your opinion, what are the solutions to the problems Muslim girls experience in their secondary education?

(ii) Class Teachers

- 1 (a) (i) How many students are enrolled in your class? Girls__ Boys _ (where applicable).
 (ii) (For a mixed class only) What is the proportion of boys enrolled in class to that of the girls?
 (iii) Are there more non-Muslim girls than Muslim ones in your class? Yes No
 (Tick one). Give reasons.
- (b) In your opinion, what are the causes of low enrolment, if so, of Muslim girls in secondary school?
- 2 (a) What are the reasons for girls absenteeism, if so, from class (school)?
 (b) In what way(s) does absenteeism affect the education of Muslim girls?
3. In your class, how could you describe the interest of Muslim girls to education?
 Positive Negative Ambivalent I don't know (Tick one). Give reasons.
4. What problems do Muslim girls encounter in their pursuit of secondary education?
4. What are the factors within the school or classroom situation that influence the education of Muslim girls?
6. Does Islam have any role to play in the secondary education of Muslim girls? Yes
 No (Tick one). Give reasons.
7. In your opinion what is the effect of co-education on Muslim girls' access to secondary education?

(B) Questionnaire/Interview Guide for Muslim Students

1. (a) Who is responsible for paying your school fees?
 Father Mother Both father and mother Guardian Brother Sister
 Other (specify) (Tick one).
- (b) Do you experience problems of payment of school fees? Yes No (Tick one).
 Explain.
2. (a) Give reasons why boys should go to school.
- (b) Give reasons why girls should go to school.
- (c) Between boys and girls who should be given preference in secondary education?
 Boys Girls Both (Tick one). Give reasons.
3. (a) Are there any problems that you encounter at home, which you feel, affect your studies? Yes No (Tick one). If "yes", identify them.
- (b) Are there any problems that you experience in school which are detrimental to your studies? Yes No (Tick one). If "yes", identify them.
4. (a) Do your teachers encourage you in your studies? Yes No (Tick one) If "yes" explain in what ways.
- (b)(i) Among your teachers who would you say encourage you more than the others in your studies? Females Males (Tick one). Give reasons.
- (ii) Do some teachers discourage you in your studies? Yes No (Tick one). If "yes", explain.
5. (a) (i) Is there any kind of work that you do when you are out of school? Yes No (Tick one). If "yes", what tasks? Identify as many as possible.
- (ii) Among those tasks are there some which you feel are only meant for men? Yes No (Tick one). Explain.
- iii) Are there some tasks that you feel are only meant for women? Yes No (Tick one). Explain.
- (b)(i) What roles do you think men should play within the household and society?
- (ii) What roles should women play at home and in society?
5. (a) How far is the school from your home?
 Less than 2 km less than 4 km more than 5 km (approximate ___) (Tick one).
- (b) What means of transport do you use to school? vehicle Foot other (specify) (Tick one).
- (c) (i) Does the distance to school affect your education in any way? Yes No (Tick one). If 'yes' Explain in what ways.
6. (a) (For Muslim girls) Given a choice between marriage and secondary education, what would you take? Marriage Secondary education (Tick one). Give reasons.

- (b) In your opinion is marriage important to a Muslim woman? Yes No (Tick one). Give reasons
7. (For Muslim girls) Given a choice of attending a non-Muslim school what would be your reaction? Explain.
8. (a) Should Muslim boys and girls mix freely in school? Yes No (Tick one). Give reasons (explain).
- (b) (i) What are the advantages of casual intermingling of boys and girls in school? Identify as many as possible.
- (ii) What are the disadvantages of casual intermingling of boys and girls in school? Identify as many as possible.



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(C) Questionnaire/Interview Guide for Heads of Households

- 1.(a) Identify reasons why girls should be sent to secondary school?
- (b) Are there reasons why girls should not be sent to secondary school? Yes No
(Tick one). If yes, identify those reasons.
2. Who do most people in your area favour in sending to school? Boys Girls (Tick one). Give reasons.
3. (a) (i) Are there any hindrances or problems you encounter in educating your child (children) in a secondary school? Yes No (Tick one). If yes, identify those problems.
(ii) Do those problems affect girls more than boys or vice versa? Yes No (Tick one).
(iii) Among those problems are there some that are peculiar to girls? Yes No
(Tick one). If yes, explain.
4. The following could be some of the reasons why some children especially girls do not go to secondary school. (Rank in order of strength):
- (a) Financial difficulties
- (b) Early or arranged marriages
- (c) Girls preferring marriage to secondary education
- (d) No schools available in the neighbourhood
- (e) Parental fear of loosing dowry
- (f) Parental fear of daughters becoming spoilt
- (g) lack of educational facilities which caters for Muslim girls
- (h) Other (specify).
5. (a) What kind of household chores should boys perform? Give reasons.
(b) (i) What kind of household chores should girls perform? Give reasons
(ii) In what ways do you think these chores hinder the secondary education of Muslim girls?
6. In what ways is secondary education relevant to a Muslim girl?
7. Are there any religious practices that hinder girls from pursuing secondary education? Yes No (Tick one). If 'yes' give reasons.
- 8 (a) According to Islam what roles should (a) men (b) women, play in the household and society?
(b) Are there specific roles that women should not perform? Yes No (Tick one) Explain.

9. Does the Qur'an or prophetic *hadith* delimit the place and role of man and woman in Islam? Yes No I don't know (Tick one). Explain.
10. (a) Should Muslim women be secluded? Yes No (Tick One). Give reasons.
(b) Is seclusion prescribed by the teachings of Islam? Yes No (Tick one). Explain.
(c) (i) In your opinion does seclusion hinder a woman from engaging in certain activities? Yes No (Tick one). Explain.
(ii) Identify those activities.
11. In your opinion what is the effect of seclusion on girls' access to secondary education?
12. (a) In what ways is marriage a religious duty in Islam?
(b) In your opinion should a girl forego secondary schooling in order to get married? Yes No (Tick one). Explain.

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