

THE ROLE OF MUSLIMS IN PUBLIC POLICY FORMULATION IN MALAWI
(2015-2023)

MASTER OF POLITICAL SCIENCE THESIS

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**THE ROLE OF MUSLIMS IN PUBLIC POLICY FORMULATION IN MALAWI
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DECLARATION

I declare that this study, “**The Role of Muslims in Public Policy Formulation in Malawi from 2015 to 2023**”, is my work and that it has not been presented for examination for any degree at any institution or university. All other people’s work used in this study has been indicated and acknowledged accordingly using references.

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The undersigned certify that this thesis represents the student's work and effort and was submitted with our approval.

Signature.....Date.....

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Second Supervisor

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother, Suzanna, whose unwavering love and limitless sacrifices have been my inspiration and source of strength. Her confidence in me has helped me get through difficult times, and her kind hand has always kept me grounded. This accomplishment is equally hers as it is mine, and I will always be appreciative of her tireless commitment to my success. *‘Thank you Mum for being my rock and guiding light. I dedicate this work to you full of love and gratitude’*...Tikhala

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores how Muslims were involved in Malawian public policy formulation from 2015 to 2023. In essence, the main objective of the study strives to investigate the influence of Muslims in the formulation of public policy in Malawi. The study was inspired by the worldwide influence of religion, particularly Christianity, on the formulation of public policy. Using a qualitative research paradigm, the study employs content analysis to find trends that would help explain how Muslims affected public policy formulation over the specified time. David Easton's Political Systems theory and the Pluralist theory were applied to understand how Muslims participated in the formulation of public policy and how formulated policies mirrored their goals. Based on data from key informants and an analysis of a few policy documents including the National Foreign Policy (2019) coupled with the Malawi Trade Policy (2017) as the National Education Policy (2016); this paper substantiates that Muslims participated in the formulation of public policies during the specified period through Muslim organizations that used cooperative strategies (lobbying and contact and dialogue). In all, this study's findings, nevertheless, manifest how little Muslim contributions regarding Islamic values, beliefs and practices were taken into consideration when creating public policy between 2015 and 2023.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BJI	Bangladesh Jammat-e-Islam
CSO	Civil Society Organization
AKP	Justice Development Party
FJP	Freedom and Justice Party
FBO	Faith-Based Organization
JUP	Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistani
JUI	Jamiat-I-Ulema-I-Islam
JIP	Jammat-e-Islam Pakistan
IAF	Jordan Islamic Action Front
IPPs	Islamic Political Parties
MAB	Muslim Association of Britain
MAM	Muslim Association of Malawi
MB	Muslim Brotherhood
MCB	Muslim Council of Britain
MUR	Movement of United Revolution
MMA	Muthahida Majlis-e-Amma Alliance
QMAM	Quadria Muslim Association of Malawi

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The study explores public policy-making in Malawi. It places special focus on the role of Muslims in formulating public policy from 2015 to 2023. This chapter encompasses the introduction, the problem statement, the general and specific objectives, research questions, justification, and key term definitions. Ultimately, it closes by providing a chapter outline of the thesis.

Religion and politics have interacted for millennia in the field of governance even though the two do not always get along at dinner parties (Nelsen, Guth, & Highsmith, 2011). According to Ganji and Ashtarian (2019), religion influences the government's policy realm by advancing religious values, beliefs and practices. Feldman (1997) emphasizes the link between religion and the state by pointing out that church imperialism, both formally and informally, resulted from the church's interactions with the state throughout the Roman Empire. Due to the Roman Empire's official acceptance of Christianity, concerns about the power dynamics between the emperor and the pope emerged, and the Church's acquisition of governmental authority,

made the church to become the source of institutional models like legal advancements (Feldman,1997; Grzymala-Busse, 2024).

The connection between the church and state has been emphasized by scholars like St. Augustine, Pope Gelasius, and St. Gregory (Gregory the Great). In their standpoint, the scholars promoted the hierocratic notion that implied the pope's superiority over temporal authority (Feldman, 1997). Pope Gerasius, for example, emphasized the two powers that govern the world: royal and religious authority. In his view, ecclesiastics had to follow the emperor's regulations on material and worldly matters, while the emperor was to follow the church's rulings on religious subjects (Feldman,1997). Yet, Gelasius contended that priestly authority was crucial since emperors were expected to obediently submit to those in charge of divine matters and to look up to them for ways to be saved (Feldman, 1997).

Emperor Justinian scantily agreed with Gelasius, departing from his hierocratic conclusion by highlighting the emperor's (Caesaropapism) primacy rather than the pope's (Feldman, 1997). As "divinity on earth," Justinian claims that the emperor condescends to ensure the clergy is appropriate since they pray to God on his behalf (Feldman, 1997).

Furtherance of Feldman's (1997) acknowledgement of the relevance of Christianity in the governance of the ancient Roman Empire, Tartaczyk (2018) highlights the Church's ongoing significance in influencing public life in the modern world.

Tartaczyk asserts that the church has been a key component of Western civilization, fostering Western Christian culture across the world (Tartaczyk, 2018). Consequently, religious influence has affected internal state activities, processes, and policies (such as weekly work schedules, Christian holidays, and educational curricula). (Nelsen & Guth, 2003; Grzymala-Busse, 2016; Tartaczyk, 2018).

Along with the church's contribution to public life (Feldman, 1997; Nelsen & Guth, 2003; Tartaczyk, 2018), Muslims' propagation of Islamic values has also influenced public life. According to Paas (2006), the establishment of the Ummah (a society in which the teachings of the prophet Muhammad governed all aspects of life) throughout the Arab Peninsula marked the beginning of Muslim influence on public life. Muhammad's successors later transformed the Ummah into an Islamic kingdom (the Caliphate) that covered half of the world, from India to Spain (Paas, 2006). Nevertheless, the empire suffered from conflicts under Uthman's rule, which led to both its and Islam's dissolution (Sunni majority breaking into multiple sects: Shia, Kharijites, and others) (Paas, 2006).

In both contemporary Islamic and some contemporary secular regimes, Muslims have influenced the public sphere despite the breakup of Islam (the emergence of numerous Islamic sects). Muslims use their values, beliefs, and traditions as standards to influence government decisions according to Ganji and Ashtarian (2019). For example, Turkey has imposed restrictions on the retail sale of alcohol and its advertising, while Pakistan has enacted laws prohibiting bank interest and designating Friday as a holiday (Haqqani,

2004; Kuru, 2009; Ganji & Ashtarian, 2019). This merely serves to highlight Muslims' position in the process of formulating public policy.

The public sphere has been influenced by religious players not only in countries in the Middle East, Asia, and Europe but also in Africa, particularly Malawi (Ross & Fiedler, 2020). The presence of missionaries in Malawi ensured that Christians would be involved in the health and education sectors, in addition to other notable areas (Mchombo, 2004). Consequently, Christians have influenced policy relating to education by making it possible for Christian lessons to be taught in Malawi's public schools. Through organizations like the Public Affairs Committee (PAC), the Evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM), the Episcopal Conference of Malawi (ECM), and others, Christians have also engaged with the government, lobbying, submitting petitions, giving advice, and taking part in actions to influence public policy (Vondoepp, 1999).

It is important to emphasize, however, that the introduction of Islam to Malawi was spurred by the desire of Arab settlers (Muslims) for trade, ignoring their contributions to the public sphere (the fields of health and education) (Bahari & Mdoka, 2019). Recently, Muslims have stepped up their efforts to support the government in areas of health and education (Mchombo, 2004).

Additionally, scholarship highlights the presence of Muslim organizations that support Muslim interests in the creation of public policy, such as the Muslim Association of Malawi (MAM), the Quadria Muslim Association of Malawi (QMAM), and other

Muslim faith-based groups (Chunga & Tostensen, 2020), but it neglects to highlight the role that Muslims play in the formulation (stage) of public policy.

This study sought to explore whether Muslims shaped public policy formulation in Malawi spanning 2015 to 2023. Consequently, it provides answers to queries such as: Did Muslims take part in the formulation of public policy in Malawi between 2015 and 2023? Were Muslim suggestions about Islamic values, beliefs and practices incorporated in the formulated public policies? And which Muslim participation channels were more successful in shaping public policy?

1.2 Statement of the problem

It is worth noting that some critical events continue to be shaped by the church worldwide (Tartaczyk, 2018). For nearly two millennia, the church has been a crucial part of Western civilization, shaping modern state development, international politics and nation-building protocols (Nelsen & Guth, 2003; Dunn & Englebert, 2013). It introduced the European Christian Culture to Europe and the world, influencing various activities like work schedules and holiday customs (Nelsen & Guth, 2003).

It is more significant to state that the influence of the Church in Malawi is irrefutable. This is evidenced by the Christians' active participation in the health and education sectors since the arrival of missionaries (Ross & Fiedler, 2020). Among myriad contributions, Christians have influenced education policies, allowing Christian curricula to be taught in public schools (Vondoepp, 1999; Mchombo, 2004). It is worth mentioning, however, that while the church and Christians have always had an impact on

politics and public policy in Malawi, the emergence of democratic governance altered the political landscape and the distribution of power (Patel & Svasand, 2007).

Thus, a window of opportunity to influence matters of the state like public policy development was granted to various parties including religious groups like Muslims.

Though literature on religion and public policymaking is extensive globally, there is limited research on how Muslims influence public policy formulation. Al-Anshori (2016) analyzed Islam's influence on Indonesia's post-Suharto foreign policy, revealing that it significantly shaped the country's foreign policy, considering Islamic values and Muslim community objectives. Ganji and Ashtarian (2019), emphasized the role of organized Islam in Turkey and Pakistan's public policymaking processes, highlighting the significant involvement of Muslims in the processes. Al-Anshori's (2016) work examined how Islam influenced Indonesia's foreign policy, while this study emphasizes Muslims as a religious grouping and their influence on the formulation (stage) of public policy. Still, as opposed to focusing on public policy formulation that this study explores, Ganji and Ashtarian (2019) examined public policymaking broadly.

Malawian literature faces a similar challenge as scholars have not extensively studied the influence of Muslims on public policy formulation. Chinsinga (2007) examined the functions of policy stakeholders in public policy making processes. Mchombo (2004) emphasizes religion's influence on public policy, highlighting Muslim and Christian participation in welfare and democratization initiatives, and strengthening ties between Malawi and Arab countries under President Muluzi's leadership.

Mchombo's study, nonetheless, is more concerned with religion (in general) than Muslims and how they shape public policy formulation.

Likewise, Chunga and Tostensen (2020) studied faith communities' involvement in policymaking and their influence through lobbying, petitions, and advice, but did not specifically focus on the Muslim role nor policy formulation. This study was thus conducted with this background in mind. *"Did Muslims influence public policy formulation in Malawi between 2015 and 2023?"* is the main query that was posed.

1.3 Study objectives

The study focuses on the following objectives:

1.3.1. Main Objective

This study is aimed at exploring the influence of Muslims in public policy formulation in Malawi from 2015 to 2023.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

To successfully achieve the main objective, the study paid attention to the following specific objectives:

- i. To examine the participation of Muslims in public policy formulation.
- ii. To assess the channels of participation of Muslims in public policy formulation

- iii. To explore the adoption of Muslim contributions concerning Islamic values, beliefs, and practices during policy formulation.

1.4 Main Question

Did Muslims influence public policy formulation in Malawi between 2015 and 2023?

1.4.1 Research Questions

- i. Did Muslims participate in the formulation of public policies in Malawi between 2015 and 2023?
- ii. What channels of participation did Muslims use in the formulation of public policy?
- iii. Were Muslim contributions concerning Islamic values, beliefs, and practices incorporated in public policies between 2015 and 2023?

1.5 Study Justification

Malawi's inclusive policymaking processes were given a chance when democratic politics were established in May 1994 (Chinsinga, 2007). This trajectory moved policy matters out of the president's and the bureaucracy's exclusive purview and placed them in the hands of a broad range of players operating at various societal levels (Chinsinga, 2007).

Additionally, it meant that religious groups or faiths that might have been dominated by Christians in questions of policy would interact with the government and champion policies and causes that were important to them.

Nonetheless, little scholarly attention has been paid to ascertaining whether these religious groups (Muslims) have influenced the formulation of government policies to date.

This study diverges from an enduring tendency in religion and policy studies to concentrate on policymaking in general and instead focus on policy formulation, adding to the body of existing scholarship in this area. Thus, policy formulation being a crucial stage in public policy-making processes requires particular attention because it is during this stage that policy actors examine and adopt specific policies, which then serve as benchmarks for different groups to assert their interests.

The study also sheds light on the challenges Muslims face in proposing and having their policy interests met. The study, which derives from pluralist theory and David Easton's Systems theory, also emphasizes on the interests of many policy stakeholders and demonstrates the extent to which Muslims influence Malawi's public policy-making.

1.6 Definition of concepts

This study employs several terminologies which have been defined as follows:

(i). *Public policy*:

The phrase public policy, in this study, means, '*a relatively stable, purposeful course of action taken by government or public actors in addressing a social problem*' (Chinsinga, 2007: 351).

The scholar elaborates that this course of action generates decisions that lead to the creation of public policy, which includes laws, presidential orders, judicial decisions, regulations and much more.

(ii) *Public policy-making*: This is a process where interrelated decisions are made to address public problems (Howlett et al.2009). The process, according to Howlett et al. (2009), encompasses a set of stages through which policy issues and deliberations flow in a more or less sequential fashion from problems to policies. The sequence of stages has been referred to as the policy cycle, according to Werner and Wegrich (2007).

(iii). *Policy Formulation*: This is a stage of the policy cycle that, according to Howlett et al. (2009), has multiple stages such as problem articulation to adoption and implementation of the anticipated solution. Formulation thus, involves transforming public policy problems, proposals, and demands into government policies. Hai Do (2010) notes that this task includes crafting of a set of policy alternatives to address socio-economic problems and the selection process by narrowing that set of solutions in preparation for the final policy solutions or adoption of a particular policy alternative.

iv). *Muslims*: These are followers of the Islamic faith based on the teachings of Muhamad (Paas, 2006). Muslims in this study are Sunni Muslims who form the greater Muslim community in Malawi (Bone, 2021).

(v). *Islam*: Refers to the way of life blending religion and politics (Werner,2001).

(vi). *Participation*: The term means a process in which all those with interest play an active role in decision-making and in the subsequent activities that affect them (El-Gack,2007).

1.7 Chapter Outline

The organization of this study comes into five chapters.

This allows a thorough examination of the influence of Muslims on public policy formulation in Malawi from 2015 to 2023. Hence, **Chapter One** comprises the study's introduction, problem statement, objectives, research questions, study justification, and concept definitions.

Chapter Two gives contextual summaries of the development of public policy in Malawi. It also provides the theoretical framework, which is rooted in Pluralist and David Easton's systems theory and is presented along with a review of the literature with a particular focus on the following specific objectives: examining Muslim participation in the formulation of public policy, assessing the channels through which Muslims participate in the process of policy formulation and exploring the incorporation of Muslim contributions concerning Islamic values, beliefs and practices in formulated public policies.

Chapter Three provides the research design and method, study population, sampling and sample size, data collection methods, data analysis, ethical considerations and limits are all examined.

Chapter Four carries the results and thorough explanations of the study findings.

Chapter Five contains the study's conclusion which also includes an overview of the study, a summary of findings, implications, and recommendations for further studies.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter has presented an introduction to the study by focussing on the influence of religion and religious actors on public policy formulation. Furthermore, the chapter has presented a statement of the problem that it sought to address. The chapter also justified the conduction of the study, presented the concepts utilized in the study, and closed by highlighting an outline of the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter offers contextual summaries of Malawi's public policy-making from Dr. Kamuzu Banda's authoritarian administration to the current democratic system. It also addresses theories of public policy-making, including the pluralist theory and David Easton's systems theory. Finally, it reviews the literature on public policy-making based on the following specific objectives. First, examining Muslim participation in public policy formulation; second, assessing Muslim participation channels in public policy formulation and finally; exploring Muslim contributions to the formulation of public policy concerning Islamic values, beliefs, and practices.

2.2 Contextual overviews

Since different government systems are going to employ different approaches to crafting public policies, some have been championed as the most capable of being sensitive to the demands and interests of citizens (Magolowondo, 2007).

Magolowondo proposes a democratic system of government that is based on popular participation in governance and the justification of government as the most effective means of advancing the development of public policy in the interest of the people.

2.2.1. Making Public Policy in Malawi: 1966-1993 (Authoritarian era)

There are distinct types of governments, claims Magolowondo (2007). He underlines democratic and non-democratic forms of government, unitary or federal governments, parliamentary and presidential systems, and republican and monarchical systems. According to him, the period 1966 to 1993 (in Malawi) is the non-democratic period, which he characterizes as a type of administration where one person has total political authority over state matters and where there is little to no public voice (Magolowondo, 2007).

According to Malamulo (2012), the declaration of Dr Banda as the nation's founder and life president, as well as Malawi's establishment as a one-party state in 1966, trumped democracy and democratic principles that had been in place upon political independence in 1964. As a consequence, public policy-making was turned into a top-down phenomenon, robbing the people of a voice in their demands and the ability to influence decisions made by the government (Kanyongolo, 2007).

Rather than becoming a one-party state, Venter (1995) contends, Malawi devolved into a one-man state, where the whole state apparatus answered to a single individual.

According to Banda (2020), the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government were unified under Dr. Banda's leadership, granting Dr Banda total power and authority. Among other facets, ministerial and legislative roles functioned as ceremonial platforms for executing policies that Dr. Banda himself recommended (Amundsen and Kayuni,2016). For instance, there was no haggling, compromise, or negotiation throughout the process of drafting the national budget, which suggests that parliament simply enacted a budget that had already been approved by the president (Venter,1995). Principal secretaries were also required to accompany the president to rallies and also had to listen intently to the president's speeches on the radio (if not at the rally) in case he announced new policies (Cammack,2007).

Mkandawire (2010), underscored the violence, corruption, and predatory conduct characteristic of Dr. Banda's administration. Consequently, people's participation in government activities was limited, among other things, as there were limited opportunities for democracy.

2.2.2. Making Public Policy in Malawi: 1994–2023 (Democratic Era).

The democratic era in Malawi started in 1994 (Magolowondo, 2007). Democracy, Magolowondo claims, implies a form of government in which the people are the ruling class. Stated differently, those in positions of authority act as representatives of the people, while the people themselves possess ultimate authority (Heywood, 2002).

Periodically scheduled elections are a part of the democratic process that allows the people to choose leaders or remove existing ones based on their preferences (Magolowondo, 2007). However, democracy cannot be confined to the conduct of elections and additional institutional requirements and rights, such as the freedom to engage in public life and governance, the right to information, free media, and the capacity to run for public office, must also be satisfied (Magolowondo, 2007).

According to Chinsinga (2007), Malawi's 1994 transition to democratic governance offered an opportunity for inclusive public policymaking. He mentions that democratization signified a shift in the process of formulating public policy from the purview of the president and the bureaucracy to a process that is influenced by various players operating at varying levels of society. Kanyongolo (2020), further asserted that democratization made it possible for a limited government in which the legislative, executive, and judicial arms of government shared authority (separation of powers) as well as for the emergence and growth of several institutions.

Although scholars in the likes of Chinsinga (2007), Magolowondo (2007), Kanyongolo (2020), and others highlight a milliard opportunity, that is, the fact that democracy has made it possible for a variety of actors at different social levels to participate in the creation of public policy, others suggest otherwise.

According to Luhanga (2001) and the Center for Human Rights and Rehabilitation (2020), the process of creating public policy has not been without difficulties, chief among them being the top-down approaches of government agencies, the lack of publicity surrounding policy and legislative processes, the capacity gaps in civil society, and low literacy rates that restrict the public's understanding of policy procedures and their implications.

Booth, et al. (2006), additionally highlighted the neo-patrimonial leadership style adopted by Dr Bakili Muluzi in which he circumvented formal and administrative procedures to formulate policies reflecting his interests and those of his cronies, and the single-handed formulation of policies such as "shoot to kill" by Bingu Wa Mutharika as striking examples of the difficulties that public policy making has encountered in the democratic dispensation

2.3 Theoretical Framework

In essence, studying public policy means studying how power is used to create policy (Cochran & Malone, 2014). Cochran and Malone posit power as a relationship between political players who might be people, groups, or other human aggregates. Further to this, they point out that these actors will have different preferences from one another (Cochran and Malone, 2014). As a consequence, several theories, including David Easton's political systems theory, elite theory, pluralist theory, incremental theory, and rational choice theory, explain how policies are made. This section explores the political systems theory of David Easton and pluralism as theoretical foundations for Malawi's policy-making from 2015 to 2023.

2.3.1. Pluralist Theory

The pluralist theory is part of the study's theoretical framework since it sheds light on the processes and entanglements of formulating public policy. Pluralism is an assault on the Elite theory (Zeb-un-Nisa et al. 2021), which maintains that the ruling elite that sets public policy is mostly reflected in it. Thus, the Elitist theory holds that policies do not originate from popular demands but rather trickle down from the elite to the masses.

Pluralism, according to Anyebe (2018), portrays public policy as the outcome of various social groupings' struggles. It underscores the influence of interest or pressure groups on the formulation of public policy (Zeb-un-Nisa, et al., 2021). Two essential elements of the pluralist worldview, according to Hill (2009), are that everyone has access to the political platform and that individuals who take the stage are representatives of wider social groups. It follows that various groups will have an opportunity to represent their constituents and influence public policy. Accordingly, diversity is a good and essential component of public life, and pluralism acknowledges and embraces it (Schwarz Mantel; 1994, in Hill, 2009).

Egonmwan (1991) notes that a group's ability to maintain its policy gains is reliant on its capacity to thwart the efforts of rival groups seeking to sway decisions in their favour. As a result, the group that is most successful in establishing its dominance over the rest determines where the center of power is located in society periodically.

Acknowledging the fluidity of the power structure in society, Latham argues that public policy is a transient equilibrium that is achieved through intergroup conflict (Latham, 1965; in Hill, 2009). As soon as the equilibrium point is shifted in favour of new groups, new policies will be formulated or existing ones will be amended (Anyebe, 2018). Zeb-un-Nisa, et al. (2021) claim that the state merely acts as an arbitrator in intergroup conflicts, approving the triumphs of victorious coalitions and enshrining in statutes the conditions of concessions, conquests, and compromises.

According to Iglupus (2015), a group's capacity to influence public policy will depend on a variety of factors, chief among them being wealth, organizational skill, leadership quality, bargaining skill, access to decision-makers or connections, and a modicum of luck. For instance, because political mobilization consumes resources, funds are necessary. Since politics costs financial resources across the globe, the wealthy can afford to influence policy-makers and the electorate to support their choices and policies (Anyebe, 2018). Anyebe goes on to emphasize that a group will be unproductive if its members lack organizational abilities despite having wealth. Therefore, the ability to generate ideas and persuade others to adopt them should exist for a group or an individual to influence policy decisions in their favour.

Several scholars have contributed to the pluralist thesis. However, Dahl (2005), perhaps the most significant pluralist theorist, provides the pluralist postulations upon which this study is built.

Dahl contends that power is extensively distributed across different groups in many Western industrialized civilizations, giving each group a voice in the formulation of public policy (Anyebe, 2018). He claims that if a group is sufficiently determined, it can make sure that its policy interests are realized. He makes it clear that he opposes an equitable division of power. Rather, he contends that power originates from uneven, broadly distributed sources across individuals and groups within society. Furthermore, he asserts that government agencies are merely one type of pressure group among many, meaning that the government not only grants demands from groups outside of it but also advances its interests (Hill, 2009). Dahl consequently breaks with much of the literature on pluralism, which focuses little on the state and emphasizes the idea that the state is neutral and just mediates conflicts between groups (Latham, 1965).

The theory has been criticized for focusing primarily on the function of groups while ignoring the role of people and society. Though Politics is undoubtedly a struggle between and among groups, no one can undervalue the importance of certain individuals (Anyebe, 2018). This has been witnessed, especially in third-world countries, where one-man dictatorships have demonstrated that one person can truly control the course of events after eradicating all rival parties(Anyebe,2018). This phenomenon is evident even in developed states, where presidents wield substantial influence over the policies that receive priority or careful consideration (Cochran and Malone, 2014).

Other critics of pluralism have argued that different groups have different resources and that this may lead to domination over public policy development (Cochran and Malone, 2014; Anyebe,2018). For instance, certain interest groups, such as those that represent wealthy industries or firms, are well-funded and structured, and this gives them an upper hand in matters of policy development compared to others that are less funded and structured, such as those representing underprivileged populations. Thus, in Nigeria, some groups have maintained their power over time and prevented lesser groups from influencing public policy (Anyebe,2018).

2.3.2. David Easton's Political Systems Theory

David Easton's political systems theory is also integrated into the theoretical framework for this study to address some of the shortcomings of the pluralist theory, which has been criticized for being elitist as group representatives occasionally end up promoting their interests over those of the group (Hill, 2009). It additionally addresses the pluralist postulation, which emphasizes groups above people and essentially ignores the role that society and individuals play in the creation of public policy (Anyebe, 2018).

Easton developed the political systems theory in 1953 as he attempted to explain politics as a system (Nisa Zeb-un et al., 2021). As per Zeb-un-Nisa et al. (2021), a political system can be defined as a framework of identifiable, interconnected institutions and social interactions (input-throughput-output-feedback interaction) that facilitates the allocation of authority and the implementation of decisions and policies that have implications for the community as a whole.

Easton argues that understanding political life requires examining the interconnected institutions and social interactions in a piecemeal manner as each part on the larger political canvas does not stand alone, but is related to each other part (Easton,1957). He thus, indicates that the policymaking process is a political structure that responds to environmental concerns (Easton,1957). As a crucial component of the system, the environment will influence the decision-making process through demands and support (Anyebe, 2018). Demands are calls for action that people and organizations make to accomplish their aspirations and ideals. Support is given when people and organizations pay taxes, respect the law, adhere to election results, and accept other decisions and acts made by the political system in response to demands (Anyebe, 2018). A political system's level of support reveals how much people believe it to be valid, authoritative, and obligatory for all its citizens.

When individuals or groups appeal to the political system to fulfil their aspirations and interests, the political system converts the inputs into outputs like laws, court decisions, executive orders, and the like, which together constitute public policy (Iglupas, 2015). Government work is regarded as an output (Zeb-un-Nisa et al., 2021), and the best way to assess the effectiveness of the outputs is through feedback on the policies. The notion of feedback implies that the political system, as well as the demands that arise from the environment, can change depending on the decisions made on public policy at a given time (Anyebe,2018). Thus, in the never-ending cycle of public policy, policy outcomes may give birth to new demands, which may then lead to the formulation of even more policies.

Research on developed nations like the United States served as the foundation for Easton's theory. In rich countries like the US, the input-throughput-output-feedback stages of policymaking are very feasible; but, in developing and underdeveloped nations, they are wildly inconsistent (Ascher,2017). In these nations, the public policy-making process does not necessarily follow Easton's (Ascher,2017) model of processes. Especially in underdeveloped countries, feedback channels are virtually never accessible when public policy is being made.

Another criticism levelled at David Easton's political systems theory is that it is very broad and abstract (Anyebe, 2018). It thus says very little about the procedures and processes by which decisions are made and policies are formulated inside the 'black box' or the political system.

Walt (1994) adduces that emerging nations differ greatly from American culture and other developed nations in terms of the kind of influence that demands, and support have on the creation of *public* policies. As a result, governments in underdeveloped nations commonly react to environmental demands less than those in developed countries. The role of societal support as a decision-making input is likewise less important in the setting of developing and underdeveloped nations. Walt (1994) notes that there are several instances of governments in emerging nations holding onto power without the consent of the people. Therefore, without first looking at the particular policy situation, it is impossible to maintain that society will influence the formulation of public policy as per Easton's thesis.

Although David Easton's political systems theory has faced criticism regarding its relevance in developing and underdeveloped nations due to policymakers' inability to always follow his identified chain of actions, among other things, developed nations also encounter this issue. Therefore, the theory still offers a framework for researching the policies of developing and underdeveloped nations since it shows how public policy and environmental factors are mutually causal (Anyebe, 2018). It is an effective approach for structuring research on the formulation of public policy as it points out some significant aspects of the political process, such as how environmental inputs influence the political system's functioning and the content of public policy, how public policy influences the environment and the ensuing calls for policy actions, and how well the political system can translate demands into public policy and maintain itself over time (Anderson, 1997).

2.4 Empirical Literature

This section examines the body of literature pertinent to the research, with a primary focus on empirical data that aligns with the following specific objectives: examining the participation of Muslims in public policy formulation, assessing Muslim participation channels in public policy making and exploring Muslim contributions to the formulation of public policy.

2.4.1. Participation of Muslims in the Formulation of Public Policy

Public policy is made in large part by the government although society still influences it according to Werner and Wegrich (2007).

The functions and influence of policy actors in the policy process are examined by Cahn (2012), who concludes that the policy process is remarkably subtle, as, though the constitution establishes the legislature to enact laws, the executive to carry them out, and the judiciary to interpret them, the policy process has expanded into a complicated labyrinth of state and government ministries, agencies, and committees which together make institutional policies and the network of organized citizen groups as well as the rise of electronic media, policy consultants and the like, whose functions in public policy processes shape policy outcomes. Cahn (2012) therefore indicates that public policy is a result of institutional processes influenced by noninstitutionalized actors.

Consistent with the claim made by Cahn, Anderson (1979) distinguishes participants in public policy-making into official and non-official actors. He cites government agencies and the three branches of government, which are authorized by the constitution to formulate public policy and which do not rely on other branches or agencies of government to carry out their formal policy-making functions as official actors. Official actors in policy-making are identified by Popoola (2016) as significant and influential in the sub-processes of policy initiation, formulation, implementation, and evaluation.

Non-official policy actors do not hold official or public office; they include civil society or interest organizations, political parties, private citizens, political consultants and the media among others (Anderson, 1979). As they are not part of government, official policy actors determine their significance and influence over policies (Popoola, 2016).

Consequently, they organize their demands and interests, harmonize them, and persuade formal policymakers to take them into account when formulating policies.

Muslims are an integral part of the processes that determine public policy as the literature at hand suggests. Consequently, Radcliffe (2004), Pedziwiatr (2007) and Peace (2015), pinpoint the participation of Muslims in processes of developing public policy in Europe, specifically in Britain. According to Radcliffe (2004), the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) is a prominent body that advances Muslim public policy agendas. He draws attention to the important role that MCB plays in shaping British foreign policy by engaging government ministers and bureaucrats.

Similarly, the MCB is described by Pedziwiatr (2007) as a Muslim Organization of the second wave of British Muslim Immigration. Pedziwiatr claims that by participating in public discussions, the MCB aims to promote the interests of British Muslims in the field of public policy. He thus, proposes to think of the public sphere as diverse, comprising members of different social groups to discuss issues and compete to get their issues on the government agenda. It is, however, worth noting that while Radcliffe (2004), Pedziwiatr (2007) and Peace (2015) pinpoint the participation of Muslims in processes of developing public policy in Europe, they are not critically looking at the participation of Muslims in the formulation (stage) of public policy, which this study emphasizes.

Similar to Radcliffe (2004), Pedziwiatr (2007), and Peace's (2015) focus, who pinpoint the place of Muslims in processes of developing public policy in Europe, Ibrahim (1982), Hamzawy and Ottaway (2009), and Lynch (2016) highlight the participation of Muslims in public policy-making processes in contemporary Arab states. Hamzawy and Ottaway (2009) and Lynch (2016) mention that Muslims have formed governments, served as oppositional forces to them, or had parliamentary representatives who have participated in legislative discussions in contemporary Arab states. Thus, the activities of Islamist parties and movements such as the Jordan Islamic Action Front(IAF), the Islamic Salvation Front(FIS) in Algeria, the PJD of Morocco, and Hamas in Palestine, among others have been cited (Hamzawy & Ottaway, 2009).

The role of Muslims in state activities in North Africa is highlighted by Medhat (2019) and Suri (2020). Addressing the question on whether political participation can moderate Islamist movements, Suri (2020) argues that whilst Islamist movements may be moderated, the moderation is not due to their inclusion. He mentions that the moderation is a reaction to the political opportunities and challenges that come with inclusiveness. According to Suri (2020), who examined the Islamic Salvation Front's (FIS) position in Algeria up until its dissolution in February 1992, the FIS maintained a moderate stance both during its inclusion and after it was excluded, in contrast to the majority of scholarly views. This has been ascribed to the internal organization and dynamism of the FIS, which made sure that no single faction was able to fully dominate it and that, during the course of its life, there was a readiness to reach compromises with opposing viewpoints both inside the organization and with other political players (Suri,2020).

Medhat (2019) examines the presence of Islamic political parties in Egyptian and Tunisian politics. He provides insight into the formation of the parties, their ideological stances, their relationship to mother social movements, and their performance while in power. Taking a close look at the political paths taken by the FJP in Egypt and Al-Nanda in Tunisia after gaining control of their respective nations, Medhat concludes that there are two distinct kinds of relationships between Islamist political parties and the social movements from which they sprang. Though both the FJP and Al-Nanda originated as movements and were formed in the same environment, they approached emerging difficulties and the changing institutional and political landscape from distinct points of view and this affected their decision making procedures, alliance building, institutional legitimacy and their political survival (Medhat, 2019). As such, even though both parties were founded in the same year, Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood rule only lasted for a single year while Tunisia's Al-Nahda party was able to adjust to the country's changing political landscape and preserve its standing as a significant player in the country (Medhat, 2019). Worth pointing out is the fact that Medhat (2019) and Suri's (2020) work focuses on Muslim political party involvement in state activities as opposed to the involvement of Muslims in public policy formulation. However, their work still depicts Muslims as significant actors in public policy making processes due to the involvement of FIS of Algeria and the FJP in Egypt and Al-Nanda in Tunisia in governance.

Emphasizing the engagement of Muslims in public life in west African countries, Abbink (2023) looks at legal contestation cases in Senegal, Nigeria, and Mali, where Muslim religious leaders and institutions have taken political action to increase their religious power by contesting laws, and proposing legislation. Abbink (2023) cites the objection of several provisions in the 2009 family code by the Tijan-iyya Brotherhood and the Islamic High Council of Mali, despite the secular nature of Mali's constitution. This resulted in the 2011 approval of a more conservative version.

Abbink (2023), also cites the informal interplay between religion and politics in Senegal, wherein the secular Senegalese constitution is not a barrier to interactions between the government and the Sufi Brotherhoods and marabouts. An example of a Muslim challenge to Senegalese law was the official implementation of the 1972 family code (Abbink, 2023). Muslims argued that the code was secular and alien, and demanded acknowledgement of the religious justification for the law (Wolof or Muslim religious culture) but were unsuccessful. In an alternate scenario, the 2001 proposed constitution for Senegal was shelved due to significant public outrage over the removal of a clause highlighting the state's secular character (Abbink, 2023). Consequently, the section referring to Senegal as a secular state was retained in the 2009 and 2016 revisions to the constitution.

In northern Nigeria, religious players have since 2000 influenced the implementation of sharia as state legislation (to be applied to criminal and public law matters in addition to family and personal law) (Abbink,2023). While most people were in favour of Sharia law's implementation, Abbink (2023) notes that this move violated section 10 of Nigeria's 1999 federal constitution, which prohibits a federal state from designating any religion as its official religion.

Examining how Muslim legislators in northern Nigeria used democratic and federalist institutions to extend Sharia into the penal code, Bolaji (2013) reveals that once democracy was restored in Nigeria, Muslim legislators used state legislatures to enforce majority rule. Even though democratic government often operates under the principle of majority rule, processes that require the active participation of all relevant parties should be followed. On the contrary, the adoption of Sharia in Northern Nigerian states violated this concept (Bolaji, 2013). For example, in Kaduna, legislators from religious minorities (Christian legislators) were excluded from the process to stifle their opinions (Bolaji, 2013).

According to Thurston (2015), the implementation of Sharia in Zamfara and other northern states of Nigeria (Kano, Katsina, Niger, Bauchi, Kaduna, Sokoto, Borno, Gombe, Kebbi, Jigawa, and Yobe) brought a variety of difficulties in Nigerian politics and public life.

He identified the challenges as political rivalry within the Muslim community in northern Nigeria, tensions between the Muslim and Christian populations, and disagreements between the federal and state governments. Emphasizing the conflicts within the Muslim community in Northern Nigeria, he notes that state bureaucracies set up to enforce Sharia became political hotspots where different Muslim factions sought to define public morality, fought for power, and attempted to influence the application of Sharia (Thurston, 2015).

In Cameroon, there has been nuanced distinctions between state independence and secularism in reference to the various religious organizations (Fombad, 2015). Thus, in spite of open confrontation, religious denominations have been active and have the potential to play a greater role in promoting change and the common good. The public recognition of Christian and Islamic holidays such as Good Friday, Ascension Day, Assumption Day, and Christmas Day for Christians, and Eid al-Adha as well as feast of the lamb for Muslims, is a result of the proactive role played by Catholics and Muslims in society (Fombad, 2015). State Television beams religious programs produced by Muslims and Christians on Sundays and Fridays, while state radio broadcasts Christian and Islamic religious services regularly (Fombad, 2015). Just as Abbink (2023) and Bolaji's (2013) work shows the involvement of Muslims in policy formulation and their influence on the same in Northern Nigerian states, Fombad (2015) reveals the role played by Muslims (along with Catholics) in shaping public policy in Cameroon, necessitating the conduction of the study at hand (in Malawi).

Offering a Kenyan perspective, Chome (2019) analyses the development of Islamist ideology in Kenyan public discourse, situating it within a lengthy tradition of Muslim political thought. Chome looks at discussions about ways to better the lot of Muslims in Kenya, including those between Muslims and the state, Muslims and the general Christian public, and the minority Muslim population itself and concludes that Islamist politics in Kenya and elsewhere, are more often than not a result of local histories as much as they are part of a global Muslim ‘victimization’ narrative (Chome, 2019). He draws attention to calls for the formation of the Islamic Party of Kenya (IPK) in the early 1990s in order to improve the representation of Muslims in government, deal with institutional discrimination against Muslims, and encourage government spending on infrastructure and education in areas that are primarily Muslim (Chome, 2019). In response to the IPK's denial of registration, Muslim organizations were established, offering a forum for the promotion of Muslim interests. These organizations included the Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya (CIPK), the Muslim Consultative Council (MCC), and Muslims for Human Rights (MUHURI) (Chome, 2019). The organizations contend that the best course of action for furthering Muslim interests in Kenya is to embrace an agenda that promotes Muslim involvement in official political processes (Chome,2019). By pinpointing the calls for the formation of the Islamic Party of Kenya(IPK) and the formation of Muslim organizations such as the CIPK, MCC, MUHURI and others, Chome’s work reveals the involvement of Muslims in Kenya’s public policy circles but falls short of emphasizing the engagement of Muslims in public policy formulation.

In contrast to Chome's (2019) inquiry, Meinema (2021) builds on his anthropological fieldwork to examine how Muslim led CSOs implement CVE (counter-violent extremism) activities in Malindi. Meinema looks at various Kenyan civil society organizations with a primary focus on two, that implement the 'Building Resilience in Civil Society against violent extremism' (BRICS) program. While Meinema (2021) typically tackles CVE policy implementation in Malindi, his work signifies the place of Muslims in public policy-making processes in Kenya. This is the case since the implementing Muslim organizations are recognized by the government and have contacts with lawmakers, government officials, other Muslim led organizations as well as Christian led organizations.

2.4.1.1 Factors affecting Muslim participation in Public Policy Formulation

Several factors, including the laws of certain nations and Islamophobia (particularly in states where Muslims constitute a minority) have affected Muslims' ability to participate in the formulation of public policies. According to Gole (1997), the law influences Muslims' participation in the formulation of public policy. Werner (2001), thus, makes a case, focusing primarily on Britain, that Islamic law is an unofficial status quo in most of Europe. He draws attention to the British legal system's secularism, which keeps religion and the law apart. Werner posits that Muslims in Britain can only have a religious effect because of Western legislation which grants them the freedom to practice their religion but not the ability to live as Muslims fully, that is, to live according to the teachings of Islam.

Collaborating with Werner's (2001) claim, Solomon (2019) draws attention to the annulment of Islamic law in Turkey, which resulted in institutional changes at the executive and legislative levels. These changes included the dissolution of the Sultanate and Caliphate (1924), the elimination of the Ministry of Pious Foundations and religious courts, the adoption of a secular civil code of law from Switzerland (1926), and the 1937 constitutional amendment that declared Turkey to be a secular state (Solomon,2019).

Gole (1997) additionally highlighted that the reallocation of jurisdiction over the education sector from Muslim religious leaders to the Ministry of Education signified the de-legitimization of religious education and the development of the secular mode of education as the dominant educational approach. Thus, the abolition of the Sultanate and Caliphate, the elimination of religious courts and the Ministry of Pious Foundations, the adoption of a secular civil code and the transfer of authority over education from Muslim religious leaders to the Ministry of Education, all of which were consequences of the annulment of Islamic law in Turkey, illustrate the diminished role of Muslims in Turkey's public policy-making processes.

Muslims' ability to participate in the formulation of public policy has also been affected by Islamophobia (Samari, et al, 2018). As defined by Rehman and Hanley (2023), Islamophobia is the prejudice or discrimination against Muslims that has been increasing in the Western world since the early 21st century.

It has been categorized by Inayat (2007) into four: prejudice that manifests itself in everyday conversations and media representations; exclusion from management and responsibility; discrimination in employment practices; discrimination in the provision of services like health and education; and violence that involves verbal abuse, property vandalism, and physical abuse. The racial and religious discrimination of Muslims hurts their lives around the world (Samari et al. (2018). It affects their social, psychological, and physical well-being as well as their ability to engage in state governance and policy-making. Racist immigration policies, banning religious practices, increased severance, and ethnic profiling of Muslims are some of the implicit forms of islamophobia (Rehman and Hanley, 2023).

2.4.2. Muslim Channels for Participation in the Formulation of Public Policy

Muslims have participated in public policy formulation through a variety of avenues, which has enabled them to influence policy in ways that align with their values, beliefs, and practices. Muslim political parties and civil society are some of the channels through which Muslims have participated in the formulation of public policy (Koni, 2018; Amin and Siddiq, 2021; Upal and Cusack, 2021). According to Dye (2013), there should be easy access to channels of communication and involvement with the government in an open plural society. This is necessary as it allows concerns to be forwarded to the appropriate authorities for consideration.

Due to their inherent status as actors in public policy, political parties influence how public policy is formulated (Linton and Burstein, 2002).

Islamic political parties belong to a variety of political party categories. They have been a significant aspect of Muslim states like Pakistan, which is home to approximately 25 IPPS, the majority of which are associated with particular sectarian groups (Amin and Siddiq, 2021). According to Husain and Husain (2021), religious political parties (Islamic) work to Islamize the political system of Pakistan by constitutional means.

Aziz (2022) explores the evolution of Jammat-e-Islam(JI), Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam(JUI), and Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan (JUP) from opposition entities to assuming governance roles (1990s-2008) in the Muthahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) alliance. His study, which uses a qualitative research paradigm, identifies the crucial role Islamic parties had in influencing Pakistan's political discourse during a transformative era. For instance, due to cordial collaboration, the MMA and the Musharraf government were able to reach an agreement on the Legal Framework Order (LFO), which demonstrated the practical character of politics and the ability to weigh political expediency against ideological conviction. Furthermore, following an election victory in 2002, MMA assumed power in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), popularly known as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK). The administration of the KPK was thus, motivated by the implementation of Islamic policies to harmonize governance with the principles of Islam (Aziz, 2022). This was demonstrated by the introduction of the Hasba and Sharia bills, which sought to control public morality (Khan, 2004).

While Aziz (2022) acknowledges the importance of Muslim political parties and the crucial role they (Jammat-e-Islam, Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan, and Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan) played in forming Pakistan's political discourse during its transformative era, Amin and Siddiq (2021) draw attention to Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan's (JUP) lack of party institutionalization (1947-2018). They highlight how party elites and outside parties monopolize decision-making on crucial matters to serve their interests and also how JUP is unable to establish any kind of consensus regarding the execution of the party constitution or the creation of organizational structures like party offices, a national party presence, staff, and material resources (Amin & Siddiq, 2021).

Islamic political parties have not only been salient in Pakistan, but also in other Muslim-majority countries such as Turkey (Justice Development Party), Bangladesh (Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islam), and Egypt (Freedom and Justice Party of the MB) (Koni,2018). These countries have witnessed a notable increase in Muslim participation in politics and public policy circles through Islamic political parties (Onis,2009; Kurzman & Naqvi,2009; Nyadera, et al,2020). Nyadera et al. (2020) examine Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islam (BJI) political culture and democratic engagement from a historical standpoint. Based on their ethnographic examination of BJI's involvement in the democratic movement, they conclude that BJI is an Islamic political party that has prioritized social welfare support to achieve its primary objective of establishing an Islamic governance structure at the state level.

Muslims have used civil society, which includes associations, movements (pressure groups) and non-governmental organizations, apart from Islamic political parties to participate in public policy making (Koni, 2018). Mwalubunju (2007), identifies civil society as an area of structured social activity that exists between the state and the individual. Thus, it is a social interaction space that is above the person but beneath the state. Upal and Cusack (2021) point out that Islamic civil society has leaned on specific Muslim sects such as Shia, Sunni, and Sufi, while others consider themselves Islamic but are rejected by Sunni and Shia Muslims. The Muslim Brotherhood, the Heyati movement, the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB), the extremist and fundamentalist Taliban, Hamas, Boko Haram, ISIS, and the Shia of Hezbollah are a few of the prominent Islamic organizations (Radcliffe, 2004; Koni, 2018; Upal & Cusack, 2021).

According to Radcliffe (2004), the MCB is a well-known organization that advocates Muslim policies in the British public sphere. Radcliffe underscores the role of MCB in the making of British foreign policy, though with minimal influence and attributes MCB's rise in the British policy terrain to the organization's reputation as one that values collaboration and works behind the scenes with the government (interacting with ministers and bureaucrats).

Likewise, Pedziwiatr (2007) emphasizes the MCB's involvement in public discourse as a means of representing British Muslims' interests and influencing governmental policies.

He argues that MCB's friendly contacts with the government do not mean that it turned into a government puppet because it also used outside tactics such as igniting discussions and spreading ideas through press releases. Peace (2015) claims that in certain situations, the MCB has opted to remain silent, which has led to the use of outsider strategies by many of its member organizations. For instance, while the MCB remained mute, the Stop the War coalition and MAB co-organized anti-war protests before the 2003 Iraq War.

2.4.2.1. The Muslim Brotherhood's Case: Egypt

The Muslim Brotherhood, alias Jammāt al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn, was founded by Hasan al-Banna in 1928, in Egypt (Lagervall, 2021). It is regarded as one of the most important Islamic movements and has gone strong for around a century (Lagervall, 2021). Its branches have existed both inside and outside of Egypt, and autonomous groups inspired by it have formed across North Africa, the Middle East, and Europe (Pehlivan, 2013; Meijer, 2014).

While the MB was established to win over Egyptians to its cause by advocating for an Islamic state and society, Ghobashy (2005) points out that the movement gradually transformed into a flexible political force in response to the demands of electoral politics. He marks the transformation of the MB from two angles: organizational and ideological. At first, there were divisions based on generation, as middle-aged professionals who came of age on college campuses in the 1960s and 1970s represented the MB in parliament and professional bodies, helping to shape policy.

There were additional debates regarding the necessity of a paradigm change from politics as a sacred mission to politics as a public struggle between competing interests (Ghobashy, 2005).

Likewise, Esra (2008) examined how the MB's interactions with the local, regional, and international environments resulted in the ideological transformation of the organization in Egypt. Based on a historical synopsis, Esra's analysis identified turning points in the transition at two levels: domestic and global. Consequently, he argued that the MB began to approach the political terrain with greater freedom in the 1980s, marking the first major turning point in the movement's doctrinal maturation. An instance of this was the shift in Ikhwan's ideological viewpoint, which veered away from Sayyid Qutb's views as they were articulated in "Maalim fi al-Tariq" (signposts), and cautiously reinterpreted the teachings of al-Banna (Ghobashy, 2005). Following the 1990s, regional and global variations had a greater influence on the Ikhwani's metamorphosis, and the movement's rhetoric on democracy grew. As a result, the MB adopted a more democratic stance toward women's rights, political pluralism, and parties. This is consistent with Brook and Leiken's (2007) argument that, although Western observers had condemned Islamism on the part of the MB, Muslim radicals in the Middle East had criticized the Ikhwani for rejecting jihad and supporting democracy.

Unlike Ghobashy (2005), Brook and Leiken (2007), and Esra (2008), who emphasized Ikhwani's moderation and transformation, Pehlivan (2013) looked at the context of Ikhwani's conception.

Rather than emphasizing the core principles of Islam, he saw political Islam as a contemporary phenomenon that developed in reaction to historical and contextual political and social-economic challenges that had been affecting the Muslim world (discontent with modernization, deterioration of values and practices, identity issues, failure of Egyptian economic policies). Islamists thus, use different tactics and methods from secular ideological movements to challenge the flaws in the current global order (Pehlivan, 2013). While secular organizations rationalize their resistance through ideas, Islamists utilize religious rhetoric as a means of protesting.

The ascent to power and eventual fall of the Muslim Brotherhood

Yousef and Mustafa (2013) studied the MB's political platform in the 2005 elections and its post-revolutionary platform, where the MB looked to subscribe more to democratic values in 2005 than in 2011 (as they saw glimmers of power). Mohamed and Momani (2014) and Khan (2019) observed that the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) had a modified religious and ideological stance in 2011, embracing more democratic values and making an effort to impact legislation and policy through democratic channels. However, after assuming power in 2012, the MB failed to maintain democratic values, as it invoked the slogan "Islam is the Solution."

Due to the MB's ascent to power, Islamists carried out extreme measures on a national and international level (Sarmanlou and Goudarzi, 2015).

They collaborated with the Muslim Brotherhood to institute Sharia, leading to the development of articles defining Christians and Jews as minorities, defining the Islamic character of the state and legislation, and defending women's rights to the extent that they did not conflict with Sharia (Ozdemir, 2013).

It is, however, worth underlining that the theological credentials championed by the MB and its allies were less important to Egyptians as they were affected by a multitude of social and economic challenges (Mohamed and Momani, 2014). The public perceived the MB as weak and inexperienced as it could not address the main problems they were facing. Consequently, the administration headed by president Morsi was ousted in less than a year (Momani & Mohamed, 2014).

In addition to the aforementioned factors that illustrate the MB government's premature downfall, the military's support of the opposing groups had a major role in the political transition's failure (Goudarzi & Sarmanlou, 2015). The Ikhwani were barred from politics and their assets were seized. The MB also lost the public's support and endorsement, making it difficult for them to enter politics again (Goudarzi & Sarmanlou, 2015).

2.4.3. Muslims' contributions to the Formulation of Public Policy

The involvement of Muslims in public policymaking has had diverse effects on public policy throughout history and in various global contexts.

In the Ottoman traditional state, Islamic policies were incorporated into the empire's legal and educational systems due to the role played by Turks (Sultans) and the participation of Muftis and experts of Sharia in state affairs (Shu & Liu, 2017). Islamic principles, beliefs, and practices supported by Muslims were the centre of public policy in the empire, though non-Muslims would have policies that reflected their cultures, religions and ethnic backgrounds in Millets (Barkey, 2014; Shu & Liu, 2017).

Whereas Barkey (2014) and Shu and Liu (2017) focus on the contributions made by Muslims in the Ottoman traditional state, Kuru (2009) addresses the role that Muslims have played in the formulation of public policy in contemporary Turkey. He asserts that Turkish society has undergone reforms since the 19th century (Ataturk secularization in 1923), and Islamists have contested the Western paradigm of change. Institutional changes at executive and legislative levels led to the demise of the Caliphate and Sultanate (1924), the elimination of religious courts and titles, dismantling of the ministry of pious foundations (1926), as well as the adoption of a secular civil code of law from Switzerland (1926) (Solomon, 2019). Turkey was declared a secular state by the 1937 constitutional amendment and to delegitimize religious education and establish the primacy of secular education, the Ministry of Education took control of the education sector, which had been governed by Muslim religious authorities (Gole, 1997). This reveals that while Muslims shaped Ottoman public policy, Kernalist elites shaped Turkey's Ataturk government policy.

According to Somer (2007), when the Islamic Justice Development Party (AKP) assumed power in Turkey, there was no push for an Islamic state, and as a result, Turkey was seen as a model of inclusive public policymaking by the West and the Arab world. However, President Erdogan's tyranny and the rise of extremism destroyed the Turkish model and rendered it obsolete (Solomon, 2019). In Turkish public spaces, the headscarf was reinstated and leaders frequently made public visits to mosques. Islamization of education accelerated as more Islamic content was added to primary and secondary textbooks (Solomon, 2019). In 2017, the government passed laws that forbade security officers from marrying adulterers, gambling, or consuming alcohol. Thus, Erdogan's rule was defined by an Islamist political ideology in addition to neopatrimonialism and electoral authoritarianism. This affected the inclusion-moderation hypothesis, which holds that if extreme Islamist groups are incorporated into formal democratic institutions, they would become less radical (Solomon, 2019).

As Muslim contributions to Turkish public policy appear to have taken some twists (Gore, 1997; Somer, 2007; Kuru, 2009; Solomon, 2019), Pakistan has a long history of being an Islamic ideological state (Haqqani, 2004). Muslims have dominated Pakistan politics and greatly influenced the formulation of public policy. Haqqani emphasizes that; *'religious parties which started as pressure groups, as well as radical Islamic groups, became established and have influence in different arms of government'* (Haqqani, 2004, p. 4).

Likewise, Ganji and Ashtarian (2019, p. 10) posit that;

‘The secession of East Pakistan and the birth of Bangladesh strengthened the cooperation of government officials and religious groups through efforts towards national cohesion and in the process, steps towards Islamisation such as the embedding of religious education into schools and the adoption of Islamic-oriented foreign policies as put forward by leaders such as Zulfikar Bhutto were taken’.

According to Haqqani (2004), Zia's military dictatorship (1977–1988) formed Pakistan's legal and educational systems based on Islamic law, collaborating with Islamic religious organizations to entrench Islamic ideology. While Musharraf attempted to reorient Pakistan's policy (improvements on women's rights, allowing cultural events involving songs and dance, as well as state media becoming culturally liberal) away from its Islamist and Jihadist past, his attempts failed as Muslim majority policy prevailed and Islamic laws on blasphemy and Hudood (Islamic restrictions) remained in effect (Haqqani,2004).

In African nations such as Nigeria, Cameroon, Senegal, Kenya, Tanzania and many others, Islamic concepts have also influenced legal systems and policies, thanks to the efforts of Muslims in the making of public policy (Ubah,1990; Fombad 2015; Chome,2019; Meinema,2021; Abbink, 2023).

Underlining the importance of Muslims in Nigerian politics and public affairs, Ubah (1990) explores the background of the Sharia controversy, citing the 1978 argument between Christians and Muslims in the Constituent Assembly and the 1988 split of the assembly over the reemergence of the Sharia case. Ubah (1990) argues that the Sharia issue is not a product of the events that transpired in the 1970s and 1980s, but rather has its roots in precolonial history when it was raised at various times and under different circumstances in precolonial Islamic cultural zones of Nigeria. He makes note of the fact that the question of Sharia was initially brought up when Islam was introduced to Nigeria, particularly when Humai Jilmi, the Sefawa dynasty's head, converted to Islam in the ancient Kingdom of Kanem (Ubah, 1990). On his conversion, according to Ubah (1990), he must have been persuaded to change the way his society was structured to fit the requirements of his new faith.

Further underscoring the issue of Sharia in Nigerian politics and public discourse, Abbink (2023) points out the influence of Muslims towards the implementation of Sharia in Northern Nigeria states. Sharia was to be applied to criminal and public law in addition to family and personal law (Abbink, 2023). Although the majority of people in northern Nigeria supported the adoption of Sharia, this conduct was against section 10 of the 1999 federal constitution of Nigeria, which forbids the designation of any faith as the official state religion (Abbink, 2023).

Besides highlighting how Muslims influenced the implementation of Sharia in the Northern Nigerian States, Abbink (2023) stresses the crucial role of Muslims in the public domains of Mali and Senegal. Abbink highlights the secular nature of Mali's constitution but also brings up the religious leaders' 2009 protests against certain of the new family code's provisions, which led to the 2011 ratification of a more conservative version. The Islamic High Council and the Tijan-iyya Brotherhood were among the main opponents of the so-called "secular code," which included rights and legal conceptions that were not religious in nature (Abbink, 2023).

Abbink (2023) also notes the informal interpenetration of religion and politics in Senegal as the country's constitution emphasizes the separation of religion and state. This is seen by the way Sufi Brotherhoods and marabouts interact with government officials to shape public policy (Abbink, 2023). For instance, Muslims wanted recognition of the theological justification for the law (Wolof or Muslim religious culture) when the 1972 family code was legally implemented (Abbink, 2023). They disputed the code, claiming its secular alien nature, but were unsuccessful in their efforts. Later, they influenced the elimination of a secular article in the draft Senegalese constitution of 2001, but a strong public backlash forced the reinstatement of the clause (Abbink, 2023). Thus, the provision that describes Senegal as a secular state has remained in the constitution notwithstanding modifications made in 2009 and 2016 (Abbink, 2023).

Whilst Abbink (2023) highlights the Sufi Brotherhood's inability to accomplish its policy objectives in Senegal, Mbow (2009) looks at how the state's relationship with religion

affects the country's educational system. As stated by Mbow (2009), the year 2002 saw the integration of religious education into the state school system and reforms were put into place that allowed pupils enrolled in daara (Senegalese Quranic Schools) to be considered as having obtained an education equivalent to that of public school students. These incidents, as Mbow (2009) asserts, called into question the state's commitment to secular education.

Considering Muslim contributions in Cameroon's public sphere, Amadou (2019) examines how Islam influenced the country's social and political environment. He underlines the precolonial contributions made by Muslims to the Bamoun Kingdom throughout its transformation into a Sultanate and additionally notes the role played by Fulani Muslims in the fight to establish a theocratic state in Mayo Daga, Ngaoundere, Banyo, and Tibati. Furthermore, Amadou (2019) pinpoints how Muslims contributed to the growth of Islamic learning and training centers, the inclusion of Arabic into public secondary school curricula and creation of an academic system that combined French and Arabic curriculum under Ajidho's presidency. Being a devout Muslim, Ajidho shaped Cameroon's political landscape from an Islamic perspective. Among other things, he established the "Association Culturelle Islamique du Cameroun" (ACIC) in 1963 with the dual goals of organizing the Islamic educational system across the republic and managing central mosques (Amadou, 2019). Cameroon's foreign policy also gave preference to Arab and Islamic nations, fostering favourable ties with Saudi Arabia and Egypt as a result (Amadou, 2019).

Additionally, accentuating the significance of Muslims in Cameroon's political landscape and public arena, Fombad (2015) acknowledges the involvement of religious groups in advancing change and the common good. Fombad indicates that public vocalization by Muslims and Catholics contributed to the recognition of Christian and Islamic holidays such as Good Friday, Ascension Day, Assumption Day, Christmas Day for Christians, and Eid al-Adha for Muslims (Fombad, 2015). Fombad (2015) further indicates that Sunday and Friday religious programs produced by Christians and Muslims are televised by state television, while Christian and Islamic religious services are transmitted by state radio (Fombad, 2015). All this demonstrates the influence of Muslims on formulated public policies in Cameroon.

Connections between religion and state activities have also been witnessed in countries such as Kenya and Tanzania, hence religious actors influencing politics and public policy (Chesworth, 2011; Bakari, 2012; Kopwe, 2014; Wanyonyi, 2016). Bakari (2012) analyses the divergent perspectives held by Tanzanian religious organizations on political and policy issues. Gathering data based on an in depth inquiry of six religious institutions (the Association for Islamic Mobilization and Propagation–Zanzibar, the Tanzania Episcopal Conference, the Christian Council of Tanzania, the Supreme Council of Muslims in Tanzania, the Mufti Office, the Supreme Council of Muslims in Tanzania and the Supreme Council of Muslim Organizations and institutions in Tanzania), he finds that there has been mistrust between religious communities, leading to religious groups holding differing opinions on a range of political and policy issues.

Examples include the public's protest against Zanzibar government's membership in the Organization of Islamic Community (in 1993) and Christian resistance to the establishment of the Kadhi's courts in mainland Tanzania (Bakari, 2012; Kopwe, 2014). Regarding Zanzibar government's membership in the OIC, the government changed its attitude on foreign policy after it was accused by the Christian community of straying from its secular principles (Bakari, 2012).

The debate over the reinstatement of Kadhi's courts on the Tanzanian mainland is examined by Kopwe (2014), highlighting the significance of religion and religious actors in the Tanzanian public realm even more. Using a qualitative research paradigm and in-depth interviews to gather empirical data, Kopwe reveals the dissatisfaction of Muslims in Tanzania over the operationalization of Islamic personal law (through secular or magistrate courts). The legal system of the United Republic of Tanzania recognizes Islamic religious law in addition to other sources when it comes to private matters such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance, despite the country's secular constitution (Bakari, 2012). Muslims demanded an independent system of Islamic courts which Christians and other groups opposed, arguing that doing so would violate the Constitution and destroy the state's secularity (Kopwe, 2014). It is worth noting, however, that while Kopwe underlines the debate over the reinstatement of Muslim courts in mainland Tanzania, the operationalization of Muslim personal law through secular courts still depicts how Muslims and Islam have shaped public policy in Tanzania.

Whereas Bakari (2012) examines conflicting viewpoints from religious organizations in Tanzania's public sphere and Kopwe (2014) explores the discussion surrounding the reinstatement of Kadhi's courts on the country's mainland, Zweep (2015) looks into how the application of Islamic law affects human rights in mainland Tanzania. According to Zweep (2015), although it is believed that applying Islamic family law would violate human rights principles, allowing minorities to preserve their own cultures and enabling the application of various family law systems within a single society does, depending on the situation, both threaten and promote individual autonomy, equality, and social cohesion. He thus suggests that in cases where minorities are granted the ability to apply their family laws, the state must be cognizant of the rights of minorities within the minority so that, if their rights are infringed, a workable opt-out option should be available. Here, worth underling is the fact that while Zweep's (2015) work emphasizes the application of Islamic law in Tanzania, it also reveals how Muslims and the Islamic faith have influenced the integration of Islamic concepts in Tanzania's public sphere.

Along with the application of Muslim personal law in Tanzanian courts, Islamic concepts have shaped Tanzania's banking and finance sectors (Omar, Yusoff, & Sendaro 2017; Kulshrestha & Ali 2018; Omah 2019; Ramadhani & Bilen 2024). As such, Mzee (2016) stresses the establishment of the Islamic Banking System in Tanzania as the Bank of Tanzania permitted Amana Bank's activities in 2008. As of 2010, there were five Islamic banks in Tanzania, one fully-fledged bank, and four windows (Omar, Yusoff & Sendaro, 2017).

Yet, Mzee (2016) observed that legislative obstacles, like the United Republic of Tanzania's secular constitution and the Banking and Financial Institutions Act of 2006, were detrimental to the country's Islamic banking industry.

Omar, Yusoff, and Sendaro's (2017) emphasis on the lack of a legislative framework that would permit high levels of conformance with Islamic accounting standards resonates with the claim made by Kulshrestha and Ali (2018:1) that *"no legislative framework addresses the establishment and operation of an Islamic banking system in Tanzania."* Due to the lack of appropriate legal frameworks and regulatory systems to harmonize the conventional and Islamic banking systems, some Islamic banking windows have been closed in Tanzania. Thus, Omar, Yusoff, and Sendaro (2017) and Kulshrestha and Ali (2018) suggest the adoption of regulations about Islamic banking by the Central Bank of Tanzania instead of regulating this sector traditionally. A cue can be taken from Malaysia's application of Islamic banking legislation (the enactment of the Islamic Banking Act and the modification of tax laws to accommodate Islamic banking) or exploring a harmonization approach that has been taken by the UK, Uganda, Nigeria, and Kenya (Kulshrestha and Ali, 2018; Wanjiru, 2018).

Accentuating the challenges to Islamic banking in Tanzania, Omah (2019) indicates that Mudarabah (an Islamic banking product where one or more parties provide capital and another party invests it and manages the business venture) activities have been ineffective due to the non-harmonization of the conventional banking regulations with Islamic banking regulations (sharia regulatory framework).

Omah (2019) also accrues Mudarabah's ineffective operations to the nation's limited infrastructure and varying Sharia components pursued by Islamic banks in Tanzania (Omah, 2019).

Disregarding the emphasis of Mzee (2016), Omar, Yusoff, and Sendaro (2017) and Omah (2019), who recognize the existence of Tanzania's Islamic banking system in spite of legislative barriers, Ramadhani and Bilen (2024) examine how customers view Islamic banks' observance of Sharia law in their business practices and what factors affect their decision to use an Islamic bank in Zanzibar and the Tanzanian mainland. Using a descriptive research design, where 305 Islamic banks clients were involved by answering a closed-ended questionnaire, Ramadhani and Bilen (2024) found that the majority of Tanzanian Islamic bank customers felt that their organizations complied with Sharia law. The study also revealed that Sharia compliance was the main factor influencing customers' preference for Islamic banks over conventional ones, with service quality ranking second (Ramadhani, & Bilen, 2024). Thus, while Ramadhani and Bilen (2024) do not examine how Muslims contributed to the formulation of public policy in Tanzania, their work illustrates the influence of Muslims on Tanzanian public policy as it documents the presence of elements of Sharia in Tanzania's banking industry.

Muslims have shaped Kenya's political and public spheres in a similar manner to Tanzania's (Mwakimako, 2007; Cussac, 2008; Abdi, 2017; Wanjiru, 2018; and Simiyu, 2020). Accordingly, Chesworth (2011) examines the history of Islamic courts (Kadhi's Courts) and shows that these courts have existed in Kenya since the thirteenth century.

Following Kenya's independence, Kadhi's courts were sustained because of the recognition and incorporation of their existence by colonial forces (Chesworth, 2011). The courts withstood modifications to the constitution under independent Kenya as well as throughout the 1998–2010 constitutional review process when the status of Islamic courts was the main source of disagreement between Christians and Muslims (Mwakimako, 2007; Cussac, 2008; Chesworth, 2011). A draft Kenyan constitution presented in 2010 kept the Islamic courts (Kadhi's courts) clause and was approved on the 4th of August, 2010, entrenching the Kadhi's courts as part of the judicial system in Kenya (Ndzovu, 2013). Consequently, Section 170 of Kenya's 2010 constitution emphasizes the jurisdiction of Kadhi's courts as being restricted to resolving Muslim personal law issues (personal status, marriage, divorce, or inheritance) where all parties affirm their Islamic faith and submit to the Kadhi's court's jurisdiction (Ndzovu, 2013). Underscoring the significance of Kadhi's courts in Kenya, Kimeu (2011) asserts that the preservation of Kadhi's courts was necessary because of the upcountry's predominately non-Muslim nationalistic movement and the need for Muslims in the Kenyan Protectorate to feel secure in upholding their religious courts upon independence. Kimeu (2011) extended his argument by pointing out that the argument that the constitution's establishment of Kadhi's courts constitutes discrimination ignores the fact that the enjoyment of rights and freedoms on an equal footing does not mean the same treatment in every circumstance (Kimeu, 2011).

While Kimeu (2011) argues in favour of the retention of Kadhi's courts in Kenya's legal system and Chesworth (2011) explores the history of Kadhi's courts in Kenya, Osiro

(2014) investigates whether Muslim women have been able to use and benefit themselves of Kadhi's courts. Following a series of in-depth interviews conducted in Kendu Bay and its surroundings and Kisumu, Osiro found that although women expressed strong opinions that Kadhi's courts should remain in the constitution, they were nonetheless disempowered for a variety of reasons(Osiro,2014). According to Osiro (2014), many non-Muslim women are disadvantaged in Muslim weddings as they are unaware of their rights, and Cultural practices which are at odds with Islamic practices have been followed, leaving the women in a difficult position. Additionally, the physical distance between the Muslim community in Kendu Bay and the Kadhi's Court in Kisumu, along with the unpredictable availability of the Kadhi's representative, further restricts the opportunities available to women to assert their rights (Osiro, 2014).

Similar to Osiro's (2014) focus, Wanyonyi (2016) examines how, since Kenya's constitution was adopted in 2010, Kadhis' Courts improved Muslim women's access to justice. Using ideas of legal pluralism and access to justice, Wanyonyi gathered primary data through interviews with Magistrates and Kadhis. While some respondents brought up Kenya's lack of developed Islamic jurisprudence and the uncodified Islamic law, overall, it was found that the Kenyan judiciary is independent, the courts are more easily accessible, decisions are rendered swiftly, legal fees are affordable, mediation is preferred over adversarial processes, and the public has confidence in the Kadhis' Courts (Wanyonyi,2016).

Thus, Kadhi's Courts, according to Wanyonyi (2016) have improved Muslim women's access to justice, in opposition to Osiro's (2014) study findings where the physical distance between the Muslim community in Kendu Bay and the Kadhi's Court in Kisumu, along with the unpredictable availability of the Kadhi's representative and non-Muslim women's unawareness of their rights in Muslims marriages, restricts the opportunities available to women to assert their rights in Kendu Bay. The improved Muslim women's access to justice due to the presence of Kadhi's courts as mentioned by Wanyonyi (2016) illustrates how Muslims have advanced legal diversity in Kenya.

Hashim (2024) highlights the challenges that Muslim women face when their relationships end through divorce or separation due to the application of Muslim personal law in the Kadhi's courts (which has highly been dependent on social customs that largely hinder women's access to their right after divorce). However, he notes that changes are taking shape in the religious underpinnings of Muslim personal law in the Kadhis' courts in Kenya to expand Muslim women's access to justice. Neo-Kadhi's courts according to Hashim (2024) are influenced by contemporary Muslim legal opinions, conventional legal trends and constitutional instruments such as the Constitution of Kenya (provides for gender equality, including equality in ownership of property and prohibits the state from making laws that arbitrarily deprive a person of property or the enjoyment of the rights or interests over property on any discriminatory grounds).

He elaborates that the Neo-Kadhis are championing the reform process that adopts a progressive approach in responding to emerging legal issues related to women litigants' rights to matrimonial property and divorce settlements rights in the form of Mata'a (consolatory gift) as opposed to the prevalent Islamic traditional approach in Muslim religious courts. Influenced by conventional court decisions, cases decided by the Neo-Kadhis in Kenya now consider wives' day-to-day household activities and monetary contributions in assessing matrimonial property rights after divorce (Hashim ,2024).

Muslims have also influenced Kenya's banking industry in a manner comparable to Tanzania (Wanjiru, 2018; Abubakar & Aduda, 2017). Accordingly, Simiyu (2020) examines the institutional and regulatory frameworks that are now in place and influence the development and functioning of Islamic banking business. He indicates that the operations of Islamic banking in Kenya are mostly undertaken through "a window of banking" as the existing framework was designed with the conventional banking industry in mind (Simiyu,2020). Thus, for Islamic banks to provide certain Sharia-compliant financial products, they need permission from the Central Bank of Kenya. This is because these products typically come under the Banking Act's category of forbidden business, which affects the banks' ability to operate (Simiyu,2020).

While Simiyu Underlines the deficiencies existing in the regulatory and institutional frameworks in Kenya, Wanjiru (2018) notes that Kenya has made noteworthy strides in modifying tax statutes to align with the Islamic banking business, though more needs to be done.

The partial alignment of tax laws with the Islamic banking industry shows how Muslims are contributing to the advancement of Islamic ideals in the nation's banking and finance industry.

Emphasizing the effects of Islamic banking on investment financing in Islamic banks in Kenya, Abubakar and Aduda (2017), reveal the existence of various Islamic banking products that Islamic banks use to finance their investments. Their findings also depict the various modes of financing used by Islamic banking such as profit and loss sharing, Ijara and murahaba. Abubakar and Aduda's (2017) work demonstrates how Muslims have shaped Kenya's banking sector, as evidenced by the existence of Islamic banking products and financing methods. This points to Kenya's banking and finance policies' conformity with Islamic finance principles.

Further to shaping Kenya's banking and financial sector, Muslims have influenced activities in Kenya's education industry. As a consequence, Abdi (2017) draws attention to the nation's blending of secular and Islamic education. Private schools are required by the Ministry of Education to offer secular education, but they also provide Islamic education (Abdi,2017). According to Abdi (2017), integrated education seeks to bring together two educational paradigms that have different ideologies. On one hand, Islamic education aims at inducting children into the Islamic faith to build their character and help in their upbringing to become responsible citizens and religious leaders who will promote the continuity of Islam. On the other hand, secular education prepares learners for productive employment and leadership (Abdi,2017).

Similar to the assertion made by Abdi (2017), Isaack (2018) points out that Islamic education actors took an inventive alternative education system which enables students to receive both types of education at the same time and place because Muslim children did not achieve the same level of academic success as children of other faiths. Muslim organizations and individual entrepreneurs established Islamic Integrated schools in predominantly Muslim regions (North Eastern, Coast province, Nairobi, Western province etc) to ensure that children benefited from formal education and still fulfil their religious obligation of getting the basic religious knowledge (Isaack,2018). The Islamic religious education curriculum was developed based on the tenets of Islam drawn from the first two sources of Sharia (the Quran and Sunnah) (Isaack,2018).

Contrary to Isaack's (2018) focus, who emphasizes the establishment of Islamic integrated schools in predominantly Muslim regions, Sheik (2013) explores the challenges facing Islamic education in Kenya with specific reference to Islamic Integrated schools that combine the national secular public school curriculum and Islamic education curriculum as taught in Madrasas and Quranic schools. Among the challenges to Islamic integrated schools are the concerns that have been raised about the amount of time children spend in the Islamic Integrated schools for the schools to cover two broad curricula. The *Madrasa's* are autonomous institutions outside the control of the education authorities and are not therefore supervised as to the quality of education provided (Sheik,2013). Despite the challenges, the schools have continued to provide a wholesome education, and in some areas bypassed the secular public schools in both enrolment and quality of education attainment (Sheik, 2013).

Exploring the potential and challenges associated with advancing the Muslim education agenda through policy dialogue and stakeholder engagement, Ali (2022) notes that Kenyan national education is strongly controlled by Christian missionaries and such being the case, the rights of Muslim students in mission institutions are extremely limited. Ali also mentions that the problem of historical discrimination continues to hurt Muslims as the government has yet to appreciate dualism in education in terms of policies and practices. For instance, in the 1990s, the government refused to register the Muslim teachers' college in Mombasa and this has contributed to the country's continued shortage of Islamic and Arabic teachers. As a consequence, Ali (2022) calls for restructuring along with support for the work of the Muslim Education Council to ensure Muslim education policy development, curriculum development, training, research, and partnership.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1 Introduction

The methodology used for conducting this study is presented in this section. It examines the population under investigation, sampling strategy and size, data gathering methods, data processing, ethical issues and study constraints.

3.2 Research Design

According to Parahoo (1997), a research design is a strategy outlining how, when and where data is collected and analysed. This study is exploratory, intending to determine how Muslims influenced the formulation of public policy in Malawi (2015-2023). This implies that the study utilised a qualitative research design. A qualitative research approach according to Denzin and Lincoln (2005) is a situated activity involving interpretive and naturalistic methods, where issues are studied in their natural settings and attempts are made to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of meanings that people bring to them. Golafshan (2003, p. 120) defines qualitative research as *‘any sort of research that yields conclusions not arrived at by statistical techniques or other means of quantification’*.

In qualitative research, the researcher collects data and explains trends more deeply and exhaustively (Schutt, 2003), thereby establishing and exploring the context and environment in which certain behaviours are acted out. This is made feasible by the use of open-ended questions which permit questioning and enable the collection of copious amounts of information from respondents.

Qualitative research has an advantage in that it allows the researcher to build a good rapport with the respondents, which is necessary to collect sensitive information and comprehend the experiences and sentiments of the respondents (Schutt, 2004). It is thus, in-depth in its inquiry, as participants express themselves freely and fully, emphasizing the context and participants' perspectives.

Although the use of qualitative research may limit the generalization of the findings, it is useful in this study as it enhances the depth of the research by investigating further complex problems (Cresswell, 2014). Here, the study objectives required gathering comprehensive and in-depth information, comprehending the context and environment of public policy-making, and exploring the intricate connection between religion and public policy. The design was thus, chosen to enable the researcher to explore the influence of Muslims in public policy formulation with a particular focus on the following specific objectives: examining the participation of Muslims in public policy formulation, assessing the channels for participation in public policy formulation (Muslims) and exploring the adoption of Muslim contributions concerning Islamic values, beliefs, and practices in formulated public policies in the specified period.

3.2.1 Study Location

This study was conducted in Malawi and was not confined to any geographical location, district, or region. This is because the study's design required the participation of key informants with expertise, experience or knowledge in public policy-making processes, including members of parliament, policy experts or consultants, faith group representatives or organizations, and academia. This collection of individuals who are experienced and knowledgeable of public policy-making resides across various regions of the country, making it challenging to assign them to a single location.

3.2.2 Study Population

A research population (sometimes called a target population) is a group to which the researcher's results have been generalized. In other words, the total group that one is interested to know more about (Johnson and Christensen, 2014). In this study, the population referred to those involved or knowledgeable of public policy making and these include members of parliament, bureaucrats, the academia, representation from MAM, QMAM, and PAC, as well as some individual Muslims. While respondents from MAM, QMAM, PAC and the academia were interviewed as non-institutionalized policy actors or those not holding official or public office and hence organize their demands and interests and persuade formal policymakers to take them into account, bureaucrats and MPs were interviewed as institutionalized or official policy actors (authorized by the constitution to formulate public policy and which do not rely on other branches or

agencies of government to carry out their formal policy-making functions) (Cahn,2012; Popoola,2016).

3.2.3 Sampling and Sample Size

The process of selecting respondents from a population is known as sampling (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). To comprehend the traits of the bigger group, a subset's characteristics were chosen during the sampling process. Because the study's objectives necessitated the use of a non-probability sampling technique, purposive sampling was chosen to engage respondents who were well-versed in policy issues and actively involved in the field. Respondents were selected based on their position and level of knowledge of the subject matter. Purposive sampling thus, involves a deliberate choice of each sample piece, typically due to their distinctive positions or their specialized understanding of the subject matter being studied (Schutt, 2004). It is also called judgemental sampling, involving the conscious and deliberate intention of the researcher in identifying research participants based on a particular criterion (Deacon, et al., 2021). Tracy (2013) further stipulates that purposive sampling is more appropriate when it is essential to conduct research with informants who have first-hand knowledge about the topic. Purposive sampling is regarded as poor since it is more prone to researcher bias than random sampling; yet, it was chosen because it consistently ensured that only individuals with extensive knowledge and expertise in public policy-making were interviewed.

To ensure that rich data was gathered through in-depth interviews, purposive sampling was used in this study to identify respondents from MAM, QMAM, PAC, parliament, government ministries, OPC, academia and all other actors knowledgeable about the formulation of public policy in Malawi. The study sample consisted of nineteen respondents (four members of parliament, five individual Muslims, six respondents from government ministries, one respondent from MAM, one from QMAM, and two respondents from PAC) and its size was determined by saturation point (the level at which additional data collected from respondents did not yield new information). Evans et al. (2000) define sample size as the number of participants included in the study. The inclusion of various categories of respondents(stakeholders) in the study was to ensure that diverse perspectives are taken on board for a thorough understanding of the subject matter, bias reduction (a wide range of respondents reduce the selection of respondents with preconceived notions), comparative analysis, generalizability (diverse sample enhances transferability of findings to other contexts or groups) and the solicitation of rich data(nuanced data capturing the complexity of human experiences and social phenomena).

Interviews with officials from PAC ensured that data on policy making from religious actors was obtained and individual Muslims as well as respondents from MAM and QMAM gave their responses depending on their experiences in the policy making world as members of the Islamic community. MPs as key policy makers also offered balanced views on public policy making and so did bureaucrats as primary policy makers.

Thus, study results obtained from PAC respondents were compared with those obtained from MAM and QMAM respondents. The approach made it possible to validate responses from MAM and QMAM respondents, hence increasing the validity of the study's conclusions. Likewise, the study made sure that members of parliament and bureaucrats were interviewed due to their experience and knowledge about how public policy is formulated.

Using purposive sampling, nineteen interviews were conducted as indicated below;

Table 1: The table below contains the data from the interviews conducted targeting different respondents

SERIAL No:	INSTITUTIONS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	CATEGORY OF RESPONDENTS
1	MAM	1	Senior Official
2	QMAM	1	Senior Official
3	PAC	2	Former Spokesperson / Member.
4	Individual Muslims	5	Zomba(3), Mangochi(1), Nsanje (1)
5	Parliament	4	Members of Parliament (one former speaker), one from Mangochi, one from Blantyre and two from Lilongwe Cities.
6	Bureaucrats	6	Trade officer, Foreign relations spokesperson, Curriculum development expert from Education, legal expert from the Ministry of Justice and Policy development expert from OPC.

3.2.3.1 Data Collection

Primary as well as secondary data sources were utilized in this study. Key informant interviews were employed as primary or empirical data sources, and documents were used as secondary data sources.

3.2.4. In-depth Interviews (key informants)

Interviewing is a method for gathering data in which a person asks another person questions (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Face-to-face interviews are referred to as in-person interviews, and phone interviews are referred to as telephone interviews (Teddle & Tashakkori, 2009). According to Cosham and Johanson (2019), key informant interviews happen to be qualitative in-depth conversations with people who are aware of what is happening in the community. He adds that key informants, as a result of various personal skills, or positions in society can provide more information and a deeper insight into what is happening around them. According to Johnson and Christensen (2014), depending on the answers provided by interview subjects, researcher bias may result from an interview. On the flip side, key informant interviews are beneficial as they afford the researcher a chance to build rapport with the respondents while getting an insider's perspective on the problem.

The use of Interviews in the study was pertinent since the study's objectives required that participants provide qualitative data.

This allowed for the generation of specialized knowledge, a complete understanding of the background and intricacies underpinning observable patterns, and the identification of sensitive information relevant to Muslims and the making of public policy. As such, seven interview guidelines were created to gather information from MAM, QMAM, and PAC, as well as from parliamentarians, officials in government ministries, the OPC and individual Muslims. This made it simpler to pose the pertinent questions understandably and directly to the various policy stakeholders and ensured the gathering of more accurate, detailed and context-specific information. With the respondent's consent, the researcher recorded notes and also used a recorder to collect data.

3.2.5. Review of Documents

In this study, several policy documents were reviewed to assess the influence of Muslims in their formulation. Specifically, the National Trade Policy (2016), the National Education Policy (2016), and the Malawi Foreign Policy (2019) were examined to gain an understanding of how Muslims shaped the content of these policies. The aforementioned policy documents were analyzed with an eye for critically examining the policies' content and contrasting it with Muslim inputs to that content. Through this analysis, the researcher was able to ascertain whether Muslim contributions were included in the policy papers and assess the potential influence of Islamic values, beliefs, and practices on the content of the policies. The researcher also reviewed newspaper articles concerning how the highlighted policies were formulated.

3.3 Types of Data Collected

3.3.1 Primary Data

The main source of data for the study was in-depth interviews (key informants) conducted with respondents who were well-versed in the formulation of public policy and came from MAM, QMAM, PAC, parliament (MPs), government ministries (trade, foreign affairs, and education), OPC and individual Muslims.

3.3.2 Secondary Data

Johnston (2014) writes that secondary data is knowledge that has previously been gathered by people or organizations for objectives unrelated to the current study. As conducting additional studies could be expensive and time-consuming, secondary data can be used to obtain a fresh perspective on the present study, to augment or compare the work or to employ portions of it (Johnston, 2014). This is crucial since it enables the researcher to better grasp the issue at hand and validate data gathered from observations and interviews. In light of this study, secondary data was gathered from government gazettes, books, peer-reviewed journals and newspaper articles among other sources. Thus, the National Education Policy (2016), the Malawi Trade Policy (2016), the National Foreign Policy (2019) and other real documents with policy-making discussions and debates were also consulted.

3.4 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Ibrahim (2015) describes data analysis as the process of extracting meaningful information for interpretation following the successful gathering of data using the proper approach or methods. Furthermore, this encompasses the compilation of a summary of the material that has been gathered and arranging it to address the research questions. Since the study is qualitative and depends on in-depth interviews with key informants, content analysis was practically employed. Content analysis according to Cresswell (2007) implies a method for grouping written or spoken items that follow comparable patterns. *‘A technique of classifying written or oral materials into identified categories of similar meanings and these categories represent either explicit or inferred communication,’* according to Berelson (1952, p. 138) is what content analysis is. This method is used to analyze communication materials like narrative responses, open-ended survey questions, interviews, focus groups, articles, books or manuals. It involves the subjective interpretation of data through a methodical classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns (Shava et al., 2021). It includes carefully examining the content (oral or written), grouping the data into manageable units, looking for patterns, noting what is significant and its meaning based on the opinions and beliefs of the author or respondent and deciding on what to present to others (Walliman, 2013). The statistical significance of the occurrence of a particular text or concept common in quantitative data analysis is insignificant, but patterns or themes that illustrate the meaning of phenomena are crucial (Shava, et.al., 2021).

In a bid to successfully arrive at the conclusions and interpretations in the discussion chapter, the researcher took notice of the similarities and differences that were gathered from the themes. The technique is notably described as objective since it follows an empirical, methodological, controlled, step-by-step procedure that results in an objective and systematic description of qualitative data (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011). This means that the accurate, systematic, regulated process that was used to grasp social reality limited subjectivity. Key informants were interviewed in-depth to gather data which was subsequently recorded and transcribed into Word documents. Later, the data was condensed and divided into several patterns so that the researcher could understand and interpret it appropriately.

The study employed the triangulation principle to guarantee the validity and reliability of the results. This idea is crucial when conducting studies because it makes qualitative evidence more reliable. Creswell (2007) explains that triangulation is the process of illuminating a topic or perspective by using confirming information from several sources. Using a variety of techniques or sources, this method incorporates systematic cross-checking of data and findings into the study and research process (Christensen & Johnson, 2014). In this study, data from members of parliament was compared with relevant papers, particularly policy documents, and replies from MAM and QMAM respondents were contrasted with those from PAC. Government officials' comments were compared with those of individual Muslims and so on. Subsequently, inferences were drawn regarding Muslim influence on public policy formulation in Malawi between 2015 and 2023.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

The researcher implemented suitable measures to guarantee that the study was carried out ethically, treating every participant with the highest respect. As such, the researcher recognized the freedom of each respondent to choose whether or not to take part in the study. Additionally, the researcher made sure that none of the respondents ran the risk of facing consequences or discrimination as a result of taking part in the study. This was made possible by assuring respondents that the information they provided would only be used for academic research and that their identity would remain protected at all times. The study also honoured the respondent's freedom to leave the study whenever they felt it was necessary. Therefore, no force was applied during the inquiry (Tracy, 2013).

3.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study by its nature had some limitations. The unavailability of some of the pre-targeted respondents such as MPs from parliamentary committees, other prospective respondents from MAM and QMAM as well as the unwillingness of some respondents to engage in face-to-face interviews. To address the first problem, other office bearers who have held comparable posts were enlisted and for the second challenge, phone interviews were conducted with the respondents.

3.7 Conclusion

This study is essentially qualitative owing to the nature of the topic being studied, as this chapter has demonstrated.

The study's use of a purposive sampling technique for engaging with experts and practitioners in the field of public policy-making has also been thoroughly shown. Likewise, data-gathering techniques and data analysis tools have been covered in this chapter. There has also been discussion of the study's limitations as well as the ethical guidelines that drove its conception and execution.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF STUDY FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

Essentially, the research results on the role of Muslims in public policy formulation in Malawi from 2015 to 2023 are presented and discussed in this chapter. The analysis of data in the chapter focuses on the following specific objectives: Examining Muslim participation in the formulation of public policy; assessing the channels through which Muslims participate in this process and finally; exploring the inclusion of Muslim contributions concerning Islamic values, beliefs and practices in the formulation of public policy.

4.2 Participation of Muslims in the Formulation of Public Policy in Malawi

The study acknowledges the involvement of multiple actors in Malawi's public policy formulation processes. In agreement, Dye (2013) asserts that government officials, agencies, associations of faith and private citizens can all be participants in the formulation of public policy. According to Magolowondo (2007), public policies that are in the best interest of the people are developed when an array of players participate in the policymaking process.

Thus, Muslim participation in the formulation of public policy in Malawi between 2015 and 2023 was disclosed by respondents from MAM, QMAM, PAC, OPC, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice and individual Muslims who were interviewed for this section. While some respondents said that Muslims were strongly involved in the formulation of public policy, others indicated that Muslim engagement was modest.

The majority of respondents stated that Muslims in Malawi were actively involved in the formulation of public policy at the time the study was conducted. This may be the case according to Abbink (2023), who cites the informal interplay between religion and politics, as secular constitutions are not a barrier to interactions between the government and religious (Muslim) policy actors. In support of the underlined claim, Radcliffe (2004), Pedziwiatr (2007) and Al-Anshori (2016) identified Muslims as significant players in the formulation of public policy in Britain and Indonesia. By indicating that Muslims actively participated in the formulation of public policies in Malawi, the respondents meant that Muslims were important actors in Malawian public policy development. While some respondents gave their responses outright, others gave their comments by citing instances in which Muslims were significantly engaged in the formulation of public policy. Among these respondents is a Muslim who works in the legal sector. This respondent claimed that Muslims played a major role in the policy-making processes of several government departments and agencies when he stated that:

“In Malawi, there are opportunities for involvement in the formulation of public policy, and I have seen several of us invited to policy consultation meetings at Capitol Hill ”¹

This statement is consistent with Kortmann's (2018) assertion that Western European nations elevated the integration of Muslims to a top political priority by creating advisory bodies that allowed for discussions with Muslims on matters relating to their aspirations. Using the Netherlands as an example, Kortmann (2018) stated that this was done to encourage minority groups to preserve and naturalize their ethnic identity. To substantiate the strong level of Muslim participation in the formulation of public policy, this respondent cited the involvement of Muslims in the formulation of the National Education Policy (2016), the National Inclusive Education Policy (2017) and the position taken by Muslim leadership on death penalty, which has influenced the current status of the law as evidence. Khan (2011) points out that involving Muslims in the development of education policies was the best way to resolve issues related to discrimination, inequity, and Muslim exclusion. Thus, though the state is in charge of formulating education policies through its institutions, Kosim et al. (2023) contended that the participation of institutions belonging to minority groups, such as Muslim organizations, was intended to implement policies that benefited the state and society as a whole.

Other respondents revealed that a wide range of policies were formulated with significant input from religious organizations such as the Evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM), Episcopal Conference of Malawi (ECM), Muslim Association of Malawi (MAM), and

¹ Key informant interview, Muslim respondent, judiciary

Quadria Muslim Association of Malawi (QMAM). This is in line with Fombad's (2015) assertion that religious denominations have been active and have the potential to play a greater role in promoting change and the common good in the public realm. While many respondents saw no issues with this, one Muslim respondent from the academic community expressed serious concerns regarding the nature of the participation that was occurring. According to this respondent, the majority of Muslim delegates to various policy consultation forums attend them not to speak for Muslim concerns but rather to amass benefits. He stated that;

“In most cases, our representatives are sent to important forums just for the accumulation of allowances, ignoring the involvement of competent people on matters at hand. This has not been the case when you consider our friends, the Catholics, who have appointed competent representatives to attend to important meetings such as those to do with policymaking.”²

The highlighted statement illustrates how significantly Muslims participated in public policy formulation in Malawi between 2015 and 2023. According to Santoso et al. (2021), Muslim participation in the formulation of public policy is essential because it enables the government to realize the welfare of the entire population and generate a fair allocation of requirements throughout the community. However, as the respondent above noted, the Muslim community's mere participation in the formulation of public policy may not always translate into success. Al-Momani et al. (2010) concurred with these findings, stating that the Australian government had worked with certain Muslim

² Key informant interview, Muslim respondent, academia

community leaders and representative bodies that were inadequately representing the diversity of Australian Muslims. According to Al-Momani et al., the leaders were either very traditional, too male-dominated, or purposefully prone to marginalize up-and-coming leaders. Considering this, the Muslim community, through its organizations, needs to ensure that it sends competent representatives to significant policy-making forums to take advantage of the opportunity and further the community's interests. This is crucial because, while the wrong choice of Muslim representatives would covertly remove the Muslim community from the process of formulating public policy, the appropriate choice of Muslim representation in significant policy making forums would enhance the chances of attaining their policy aspirations.

While the majority of the respondents emphasized the strong participation of Muslims in public policy formulation, a minority of the respondents indicated that Muslims were partially involved in the formulation of public policies in Malawi during the study period. These respondents primarily stated that Muslim participation in the formulation of public policies depended on the nature of the policy being developed. A respondent from the Ministry of Justice stated that;

“Among other things, our ministry is responsible for drafting legislation and when laws are being developed, a variety of stakeholders, including religious groups are involved. However, the involvement of religious groups in the formulation of laws or policies depends on the legislation or policy being prepared.”³

The claim at hand aligns with Werner's (2001) postulation, that Muslims were not fully involved in the formulation of public policy in non-Muslim nations. According to Werner (2001), the majority of Western nations, including Britain, are instances of countries where Muslims have not been fully included in public policy formulation. Werner argued that state legal systems' separation of religion and law was the reason for this. Thus, Muslims will only be partially involved in the formulation of public policy as long as state legislation limits their power to the religious domain. The respondent cited the exclusion of Muslims in the formulation of tax legislation and policies. He consequently saw this as normal since religion has no bearing on these laws in Malawi. In agreement, Aliyu et al. (2016) posit that since Islamic tax laws and systems diverge significantly from those of secular states, Muslims must have been excluded from the creation of tax laws and policies. Mostly, Islamic tax systems are based on Sharia or Islamic laws imposed on all people in Islamic states. Thus, involving Muslims in the formulation of taxation policies and legislation would directly link secular nations' policies with sharia or Islamic law, which secular states would not tolerate.

Likewise, a policy development expert working for the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) stated that religious groups were public policy actors that were only sometimes included in the formulation of public policy in Malawi. The statement aligns with Cahn's (2012) assertion that public policy is a result of institutional processes influenced by noninstitutionalized actors. Anderson (1979) further distinguishes participants in public policy-making into official and non-official actors.

He cites government agencies and the three branches of government, which are authorized by the constitution to formulate public policy and which do not rely on other branches or agencies of government to carry out their formal policy-making functions as official actors. Non-official policy actors according to Anderson do not hold official or public office and official policy actors determine their significance and influence over policies just as the policy expert from OPC suggests (Popoola, 2016).

In agreement with the statement given by the respondent from the OPC as well as Anderson (1979) and Popoola's (2016) assertion, a respondent from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that Muslims had little to no input in the formulation of Malawi's 2019 Foreign Policy as well as the 2017 Malawi Diaspora Engagement Policy. This is in contrast to the British and Indonesian experience where Muslims have played a considerable role in the development of foreign policy (Redcliffe, 2004; Al-Anshori, 2016). Affirming the low extent of Muslim participation in the formulation of public policy, the respondent stated that;

“Since Malawi is a secular democratic state, our ministry and religious organizations have interacted indirectly when it comes to the formulation of public policy. Typically, we involve PAC solely to provide the religious community a voice, rather than to advocate for particular member issues.”³

³ Key informant interview, foreign relations expert

This implies that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was primarily in charge of formulating foreign policy and that PAC was contacted to obtain a broad viewpoint from all religious organizations, and not that of individual religious groups as the groups would have wanted. This could be interpreted as a barrier to Muslims' ability to participate in the formulation of foreign policy as they would have preferred to directly influence the formulation of the policy through their contribution. In this regard, Werner (2001) contends that while Muslims have been granted the freedom of religion, they have not been granted the right to completely live out their Islamic identity, as they see Islam as a way of life.

The involvement of Muslims in the formulation of public policy as pointed out above, aligns with David Easton's political systems theory as well as the pluralist theory. Easton posits the policy-making process as a system that reacts to external demands (Osman, 2002). In this case, Muslim individuals and organizations form part of the environment from which inputs into the decision-making process originate. Thus, Muslim individuals or organizations have engaged relevant government authorities (political system) to influence public policy formulation (Anyebe, 2018).

The participation of Muslims in the course of formulating public policy is also consistent with Dahl's pluralist postulations (Hill, 2009). Dahl claims that in many Western industrialized societies, power is widely dispersed across groups, allowing each group a say in how public policy is formulated (Anyebe, 2018).

As such, the involvement of MAM, QMAM, ECM, and EAM in the policymaking processes of several government departments and agencies ensured their participation in the formulation of the National Education Policy (2016), the National Inclusive Education Policy (2017), as well as the 2014 Public Holidays act. This demonstrates the inclusivity of Malawi's public policy arena, allowing multiple groups a voice in the formulation of public policy (Anyebe, 2018).

4.3 Muslim Participation Channels in the Formulation of Public Policy

The study acknowledges that Muslims can influence public policy through multiple channels, enabling them to align policies with their values, beliefs, and practices. In accord, Dye (2013) asserts that channels of participation with the government are easily accessible in a plural society, enabling concerns to be forwarded to the appropriate authorities for consideration. Members of Parliament, the Academia, a former PAC spokesperson, a public relations officer from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a curriculum development specialist from the Ministry of Education, a trade officer from the Ministry of Trade, a policy development specialist from the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) and individual Muslims were all interviewed for this section of the study. According to these respondents, the Muslim community in Malawi engaged in Public Policy formulation in the study's period through Muslim organizations and individuals (Muslims).

4.3.1. Muslim Organizations as a Channel for Participation in the Formulation of Public Policy

The majority of respondents in this section stated that Muslim organizations like MAM and QMAM, which mostly used non-confrontational strategies to advance Muslim policy objectives, were the means through which Muslims in Malawi were active in the formulation of public policy. Mohamed (2012) reported that 12–15% of the population in Malawi was Muslim and was identified as belonging to MAM and QMAM.

Emphasizing the significance of Muslims organizations as a channel for participation in the formulation of public policy in Malawi (2015-2023) a Muslim respondent from Zomba mentioned that MAM and QMAM were important organizations that Muslims used to engage the government and influence the formulation of public policy in Malawi during the specified period. The respondent also claimed that contact and dialogue were used as tactics to advance Muslim policy interests and that rarely were confrontational strategies used. This reveals that Muslim organizations were primarily the voice of the Muslim community in their efforts to further desired policy agendas. Consistent with this argument, Pedziwiatr (2007) and Matthias (2018) underline the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), Contact Organization for Muslims and Contact Group Islam as being recognized advocates of the interests of Muslims in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. In a similar vein, Radcliffe (2004) recognized the MCB as a major player in British foreign policy, employing insider tactics to further Muslim public policy goals, though with limited success.

In favour of the assertion that Muslim organizations have rarely used confrontational tactics, Peace (2015) pointed out that Muslim organizations that maintain friendly ties with the government have not turned into puppets and have instead used outside tactics where necessary. One does question, however, how Muslim organizations that support the government of the day would begin to exert external pressure on it. Al-Momani et al. (2010) contended that this was highly likely because the majority of Muslim organizations were approached by the government to introduce the Muslim viewpoint into government business. Additionally, Muslim organizations in specific nations were able to represent Muslim communities and effectively communicate their interests because they had emerged to do so.

A respondent from the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) affirmed Muslim organizations as important institutions in the field of public policy and also underlined contact and dialogue as a participation technique. He stated that;

*“ Muslims have always valued contact and dialogue, and as a result, they have had the opportunity to engage with state presidents and other high-ranking government officials . ”*⁴

With the National Inclusive Education Policy (2017), National Education Policy (2016), the Marriage Divorce and Family Relations Act (2015) and numerous other policies accommodating Muslim policy aspirations, he argued that the use of non-confrontational strategies was a success.

⁴Key informant interview, official from OPC

These results collaborate with the claims made by Kandiero (2008) and Chunga and Tostensen (2020) that MAM and QMAM leadership had the chance to interact and communicate directly with high-ranking government officials during the democratic era (the likes of Muluzi and Muntharika). According to Chunga and Tostensen (2020), QMAM served as a platform for the Muslim community to be represented in the creation of public policies, but also acted as the government's watchdog and addressed issues of governance, human rights, youth and children, natural resources, women and development, health and HIV/AIDS through the Quadria development program. Though the authenticating evidence of Muslim organizations' influence in the formulation of public policy comes from a time frame before the study's period, it nevertheless offers an insight that Muslim groups were influential in Malawian public policy even at the time of the study. Thus, Lillevik (2020) asserts that Malawi accepted and embraced the bottom-up approach of formulating public policies by adopting a democratic system of governance, in which the government has taken into account a variety of viewpoints, including those expressed by Muslim organizations. This point of view is understandable given that under the one-party rule, the Muslim community and the general public were unable to influence public policy. This resulted from the top-down method of developing public policy, which was limited to Dr Banda alone (Kanyongolo, 2007).

On the same, a PAC respondent noted that MAM and QMAM were affiliated with PAC, Malawi's umbrella organization for religious organizations.

The reply emphasized that while MAM and QMAM collaborated with other religious groups to further the welfare of the Malawian people, as autonomous organizations, they expressly supported Muslim policy goals. The respondent also indicated that PAC used non-confrontational tactics. He maintained;

*“To accomplish our policy goals, we seek meetings with significant government figures, including the head of state .”*⁵

The results reflect the dedication of Muslim organizations (Organizations) to influencing public policy development through cooperative techniques, although they portray them as promoting ideas that serve the common good (under PAC) rather than the particular interests of Muslims.

A Muslim respondent from the academia pointed out the confrontational approach that Concerned Muslims on Hijab took (in Balaka) when they engaged in demonstrations to force Christian schools sponsored by the government to allow Muslim girls to wear headscarves (Hijab). This response further emphasized the dedication of Muslim organizations to using non-confrontational strategies. The interviewee said:

*“Like on the hijab issue, some Muslim quotas wanted to focus on protests, however, the Muslim Association of Malawi intervened and offered advice to engage government representatives through contact and dialogue.”*⁶

The results also demonstrate that Muslims, particularly individual Muslims, also employed aggressive methods of interaction when it was judged necessary.

⁵ Key informant interview, PAC representative, Zomba.

⁶ Key informant interview, Muslim respondent, Zomba.

A small number of respondents stated that lobbying was used by MAM and QMAM leadership to influence public policy. In support of this claim, a member of parliament from Lilongwe stated that Muslim leaders had lobbied parliament via parliamentary committees and members of parliament of the Islamic faith to advance their interests towards the modification of the Marriage Divorce and Family Relations Act (2017), which makes religious marriages legally recognized in Malawi. DeHanas (2010) provided strong support for lobbying as a non-confrontational approach to public policymaking. DeHanas observed that British Muslims employed a lobbying approach to sway the Single Equality Act (2010), a law that firmly forbids discrimination throughout Europe. According to Jan (2023), Muslim lobbying in Britain had a major effect on the community's political clout with the government.

4.3.2. Muslim Individuals as a Channel for Participation in Public Policy

Formulation

During the study period, Muslim individuals were additionally suggested as a means of engaging in Malawian public policy formulation. Nonetheless, few respondents endorsed this channel. Thus, it was primarily emphasized as a substitute for the frequently cited Muslim organizations (MAM and QMAM). For example, a Muslim respondent from academia acknowledged the role that religious groups have in the creation of public policy through organizations like MAM, QMAM, ECM, EAM, and others, but he also emphasized the influence that Muslim individuals have on the process.

The respondent cited the ascent to the presidency of a Muslim (Dr. Muluzi) as having provided the Muslim community in Malawi with a means of influencing public policy. He marked the introduction of religious studies in government schools to accommodate different religious groups, including Muslims and enhanced ties between Malawi and Muslim nations as instances where President Muluzi helped shape public policy in the interest of the Muslim community. While the highlighted instances of Muslim influence on public policy formulation fall outside the scope of the study, they nonetheless provide us with an overview of the influence that individual Muslims have had on the formulation of public policy. In agreement with the study findings, Amadou (2019) points out that President Ajidho shaped Cameroon's political landscape from an Islamic perspective. Among other things, he established the "Association Culturelle Islamique du Cameroun" (ACIC) in 1963 with the dual goals of organizing the Islamic educational system across the republic and managing central mosques (Amadou, 2019). Cameroon's foreign policy also gave preference to Arab and Islamic nations, fostering favourable ties with Saudi Arabia and Egypt as a result (Amadou, 2019).

Also underlining Muslim individuals as actors in the formulation of public policy, a Muslim study participant from Zomba cited specific Muslim roles as legislators, ministers, and advisors on religious matters to the president. He did, however, not hesitate to point out that Muslim members of parliament are a minority in the legislature, which makes it difficult for them to effectively advance Muslim policy concerns. Additionally, he indicated that the selection process for presidential advisers on religious matters left much to be desired. He insisted,

“Our head of state chose a Muslim representative as an advisor on religious affairs because he had sided with him when he was in opposition”⁷

These results indicate that an individual Muslim may just as well speak for the interests of the Muslim community as a whole. Concurring with these results, Al-Momani et al. (2010) contended that Muslim community leaders and other chosen Muslims might interact with the government on behalf of the Muslim community as a whole and fully represent their interests. Likewise, Mchombo (2004) asserted that President Bakili Muluzi individually represented the Muslim community to a significant extent during his tenure. He indicated that Bakili Muluzi chose Cassim Chilumpha, a Muslim, to be president Muntharika's vice president as a means of advancing the Islamic agenda. Though Muntharika and his vice president (Cassim Chilumpha) had disagreements, he nevertheless appointed some Muslim ministers, including the late Sidik Mia, Uladi Mussa, and Yunus Mussa, to further integrate Muslim interests (Chunga & Tostensen, 2020).

4.4 The influence of Islamic values, beliefs, and practices on the Formulation of

Public Policy

This section of the study sought to determine how Islamic values, beliefs, and practices affected the formulation of public policy in Malawi between 2015 and 2023. To gather the required data, respondents from MAM, QMAM, PAC, OPC, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Justice, and individual

⁷ Key informant interview with a Muslim respondent from Zomba

Muslims were interviewed. According to the respondents, Islamic values, beliefs and practices had a minimal to significant influence on Malawi's public policy formulation between 2015 and 2023.

4.4.1. The substantial influence of Islamic values, beliefs and practices on the formulation of Public Policy in Malawi.

The majority of respondents disclosed that between 2015 and 2023, Islamic values, beliefs, and practices had a significant influence on Malawi's public policy formulation. By highlighting that Muslims were important participants in the formulation of public policy in Pakistan and Turkey, Ganji and Ashtarian (2019) provided evidence in support of their claims. Thus, Ganji and Ashtarian contended that they witnessed a strong influence of Islamic values, beliefs, and practices on several policy areas such as judicial, education, and trade in Turkey and Pakistan.

A respondent from QMAM supported the assertion highlighted above. The respondent saw that Islamic values, beliefs, and practices had a notable effect on both the National Education Policy (2016) and the National Inclusive Education Policy of 2017. According to him, the National Education Policy (2016) and the National Inclusive Education Policy (2017) both explicitly endorse the non-discrimination of learners in public institutions based on race, ethnicity, or religious background.

Among other things, the National Inclusive Education Policy (2017) permits Muslim women and girls to wear Hijab (headgear) in public schools, something that was

previously prohibited. The wearing of the Hijab, according to Hopkins and Greenwood (2013), is a representation of the Islamic religion which signifies the modesty and strong beliefs of Muslim women and hence depicts the influence of Muslims in the public realm.

Another respondent from MAM endorsed the incorporation of Islamic values, beliefs and practices in the formulation of public policy between 2015 and 2023. The respondent stated that;

“We have made several contributions to public policy in Malawi, including the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act (2015), which formally recognizes religious marriages among other things. We have also made contributions to several policy areas such as health and education and shaped the Public Holidays Act (2014), which designates the day of Eid al-Fitri as a public holiday”.

The results show that between 2015 and 2023, Muslims played an important part in the development of public policy in Malawi. Though the influence of Muslims on the Public Holidays Act (2014) falls outside the study period (designation of the day of Eid al-Fitri as a public holiday), it nevertheless provides an insight into the importance of Muslim participation in public policy-making processes. Shu and Liu (2017) support these findings by arguing that Islamic values, beliefs and practices that Muslims championed remained at the center of public policy development in countries dominated by Muslims. By this, Shu and Liu meant that, at the request of the Muslim community, the majority of government policies incorporated Islamic values, beliefs and practices.

In agreement, Amadou (2019) pinpoints how Muslims contributed to the growth of Islamic learning and training centers, the inclusion of Arabic into public secondary school curricula and the creation of an academic system that combined French and Arabic curricula under Ajidho's presidency in Cameroon. Cameroon's foreign policy also gave preference to Arab and Islamic nations, fostering favourable ties with Saudi Arabia and Egypt as a result (Amadou, 2019). Furthermore, Fombad (2015) notes that public vocalization by Muslims contributed to the recognition of the Islamic holiday (Eid al-Adha) as well as the beaming of Friday religious programs produced by Muslims on state television and the transmission of Islamic religious services by state radio (Fombad, 2015).

4.4.2 The negligible influence of Islamic values, beliefs and practices on Malawi's Public Policy Formulation.

Some respondents were of the view that between 2015 and 2023, Islamic values, beliefs, and practices had little influence on the formulation of public policy in Malawi. According to these respondents, certain players' shaky representation was a result of the diverse array of policy actors involved in the development of public policies. This means that when public policies were being formulated, a small number of ambitions from a large number of policy actors were taken into account.

Consistent with the above statement, a policy expert from the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) stated that different policy actors had divergent points of view and that views that represented the interests of the majority of Malawians were considered when formulating public policy. This respondent said;

“There are always victors and losers when it comes to policymaking and because of this, some opinions are taken into consideration while others are not. The pursuit of the greatest happiness is thus given priority .”⁸

These results aligned with Kuru's (2009) claim. According to Kuru, the field of public policy is a battlefield where, depending on the circumstance, the period, or the nature of the policy being formulated, one side would win over the other.

While the Marriage, Divorce, and Family Relations Act (2015), National Education Policy (2016), the National Inclusive Education Policy of (2017) as well as the Public Holidays Act (2014) serve as examples of Muslim influence in the formulation of public policy in Malawi (formal recognition of religious marriages, Eid al-Fitri public holiday, non-discrimination of learners in public schools based on race, ethnicity and religious background), some respondents maintained that Muslim influence on public policy formulation in Malawi had been negligible. A Muslim respondent from Zomba underlined;

“Islam is a way of life that blends politics and religion, making it incompatible with democracy and secularism. As Muslims, we understand that Malawi is not an Islamic state and such being the case,

⁸ Key informant interview, respondent from OPC

we follow most of the laws that are enacted. However, we occasionally voice our opinions where we feel that our concerns ought to be heard”⁹

He cited Muslim parents in Muslim-majority districts (Mangochi) choosing to send their children to madrassa instead of afternoon classes (double shifting) in public primary schools in reaction to what they saw as the unfair application of education policies. By disclosing Malawi's non-Islamic national status, the respondent implied that ingraining Islamic values, beliefs, and practices was not the driving force behind the making of public policy in Malawi. As a consequence, Muslims were obliged to persuade the government to incorporate their interests into public policies (Popoola, 2016).

Respondents from the Ministries of Trade and Foreign Affairs concurred with the aforementioned claim indicating that their ministries seldom accepted contributions from specific religious groups (Muslims) due to Malawi's secular state status. The National Trade Policy (2016) and the National Foreign Policy (2019) do not, consequently, take Islamic values, beliefs, or practices into account. This is in order because it aligns with Malawi's informal application of Islamic law (Werner, 2001). Werner emphasizes how British secularism limits Muslim policy contributions to the religious domain, granting them religious freedom but denying them the ability to influence public policy insofar as they understand Islam to be a way of life.

Some respondents mentioned that because Muslims are a minority group, they have little influence on the formulation of public policy in Malawi.

⁹ Key informant interview, Muslim respondent Zomba

They held the opinion that Muslims lacked the resilience to challenge Malawi's long-standing Christian community in shaping public policy. A Mangochi lawmaker stated as follows:

“Parliament has representation (legislators) from various religious denominations and as Catholics, we collaborate on a variety of issues. Furthermore, we receive guidance from the clergy regarding how to handle specific bills that have a bearing on our religious values”¹⁰

The respondent continued by mentioning that the minority status of Muslims at the National level (12 per cent of the national population) is also reflected in the legislative arm of government, where Catholics or Christian members of parliament were in the majority. As a result, she claimed that one of the obstacles impeding the formulation of policies that advance Muslim interests in Malawi is the dearth of Muslim lawmakers in that country.

David Easton's political systems theory, incremental theory, and the pluralist theory all align with the inclusion of Muslim perspectives in formulated public policies between 2015 and 2023 as highlighted above. According to Easton, the policy-making process is a political structure that reacts to external pressures to produce a range of outcomes, such as laws, regulations, court rulings, executive orders, and the like, which constitute public policy (Osman, 2002).

¹⁰ Key informant interview, MP, Mangochi

In this case, Muslim individuals and groups (MAM and MAM) have been successful in influencing government decision-making by being part of the environment that makes demands of the political system. As a consequence, laws and policies (Marriage Divorce and Family Relations Act, 2015; National Education Policy, 2016; the National Inclusive Education Policy, 2017; the Public Holidays Act, 2014) that are consistent with Islamic values, beliefs and practices were formulated.

The Public Holidays Act (2014) and the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act (2015) are two examples of how the government simply expanded on previous regulations to accommodate Muslim policy demands. Thus, the incremental approach to public policy-making underscores the significance of feedback (in David Easton's Political systems model) and as Muslims demanded that Eid al-Fitri Day be recognized as a public holiday and that Muslim marriage be officially recognized (just as Christmas and Easter holidays, as well as Christian marriages, were formally recognized), their aspirations were met. According to Anyebe (2018), the notion of feedback implies that the political system, as well as the demands that arise from the environment, can change depending on the decisions made on public policy at a given time.

The integration of Muslim perspectives in the formulation of public policy between 2015 and 2023 also aligns with the Pluralist thesis, notably Dahl's propositions. Dahl underlines that power is extensively distributed across different groups in many Western industrialized civilizations, giving each group a voice in the formulation of public policy (Anyebe, 2018).

He claims that if a group is sufficiently determined, it will attain its policy interests. In the case at hand, study participants underscored the incorporation of policy perspectives from several groups (ECM, EAM etc.), including Muslims (QMAM and MAM) in the formulation of public policy. They cited the National Education Policy (2016), the National Inclusive Education Policy (2017), the Marriage Divorce and Family Relations Act (2015) and the Public Holidays Act (2014) as examples of policies that Muslims influenced in their formulation. Thus, the inclusion of Muslim perspectives in the highlighted policies reveals the extensive distribution of power among various groups in Malawi's public policy arena as well as Muslim's dedication to having their policy interests taken into account when policies are being formulated (Anyebe, 2018; Zeb-un-Nisa, et al., 2021).

4.5 Conclusion

The findings on "the role of Muslims in public policy formulation in Malawi between 2015 and 2023" have been given and analyzed in this chapter. The results show that Muslim organizations that have employed cooperative strategies (lobbying, contact and dialogue) to attain their policy objectives have enabled Muslims to take part in the formulation of public policy over the designated period (2015–2023). Yet, the findings reveal how little Muslim contributions regarding Islamic values, beliefs, and practices have been taken into account when formulating public policy. Thus, the secular democratic setup of Malawi has been cited for the low degree to which Islamic values, beliefs, and practices have been represented in policies formulated over the stated period.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The goal of the study was to understand the role of Muslims in the formulation of public policy in Malawi between 2015 and 2023. The study was compelled by the influence that religion, notably Christianity, has had on the formulation of public policy globally. Thus, the overview of the overall study, summary of the findings, implications, and recommendations are examined in this chapter.

5.2 Overview of the study

As indicated, the purpose of the study was to understand the role of Muslims in the formulation of public policy in Malawi between 2015 and 2023. Consequently, the role of Muslims in the formulation of public policy is discussed in several chapters of this study. The study's introduction, problem statement, objectives, research questions, study justification, and arrangement of chapters were all examined in the first chapter.

The second chapter reviewed relevant literature for the study with the following specific objectives in mind: examining the participation of Muslims in the formulation of public policy, assessing Muslim channels for participation in public policy formulation; and exploring whether Muslim contributions related to Islamic doctrines, values, and practices have been incorporated into the formulation of public policies. As theories that guided the study, this chapter explored David Easton's Political Systems theory and pluralist theory.

The third chapter examined the study's methodology, which covered the research design and method, the population under study, sampling strategy and sample size, data gathering methods, data analysis, ethical considerations, and study limits.

The presentation and discussion of the study findings were covered in the fourth chapter and the following specific objectives guided the analysis of the study's data: examining the participation of Muslims in public policy formulation; assessing the channels for participation of Muslims in public policy formulation; and exploring whether Muslim contributions concerning Islamic doctrines, values, and practices, were adopted in public policy formulation. The required data, which was submitted by the respondents, revealed how Muslims influenced public policy formulation in Malawi between 2015 and 2023.

5.3 Summary of the study findings

The study aimed at exploring the role of Muslims in public policy formulation in Malawi from 2015 to 2023. The findings of the study were based on the following specific objectives: examining the participation of Muslims in public policy formulation; assessing the channels for participation of Muslims in public policy formulation; and exploring whether Muslim contributions concerning Islamic doctrines, values and practices, have been incorporated in formulated public policies.

5.3.1 Participation of Muslims in the Formulation of Public Policy in Malawi

The study's first objective was to determine whether Muslims participated in Malawian public policy formulation between 2015 and 2023. According to the study, Muslims have played a significant role in the formulation of public policy in Malawi. The majority of respondents stated that the National Education Policy (2016), the National Inclusive Education Policy (2017), the Marriage Divorce and Family Relations Act (2017), the Public Holidays Act (2014), Muslims' stance on same-sex unions, the death penalty, and other issues were examples of the high degree of Muslim involvement in the formulation of public policies in Malawi in the specified period.

Although some respondents indicated that Muslims were not involved in the formulation of specific policies like the National Foreign Policy (2019), the Malawi Trade Policy (2016) and others, the open door policy of the Office of the President and Cabinet still gave Muslims and other groups a means of advancing their policy interests whenever

they were disregarded by line ministries, government departments, and agencies. Thus, in contrast to the elite who formulated public policy during the colonial and Dr Banda's authoritarian regimes, Muslims participated in the formulation of public policies in Malawi's democratic era (Chinsinga, 2007).

5.3.2 Muslim Channels for participation in the formulation of Public Policy.

The study's second objective was to assess the channels that Muslims in Malawi used to influence the formulation government policy between 2015 and 2023. According to the findings, Muslim organizations (MAM and QMAM) and the application of non-confrontational techniques were crucial to the Muslim community's involvement in Malawi's public policy formulation throughout the specified time frame. Thus, it has been shown that Muslims could interact with influential members of the executive, legislative branch, and many other prominent institutions to further their policy objectives using MAM and QMAM. It was also discovered that MAM and QMAM were members of PAC, an umbrella organization for religious organizations in Malawi that has fought for the national interest in matters of public policy. The mention of individual Muslims as a means of contributing to Malawi's public policy formulation was limited to serving as an adjunct to well-established and reliable Muslim organizations such as MAM and QMAM. In the simplest terms, Malawi in the democratic era has embraced the bottom-up approach to formulating public policy, in which the government has taken into account a variety of viewpoints, including those expressed by Muslim organizations (MAM, QMAM, etc).

5.3.3 The influence of Islamic values, beliefs and practices on the formulation of Public Policy in Malawi

The study's final objective was to explore whether Malawian public policy between 2015 and 2023 took into account Muslim contributions concerning Islamic values, beliefs, and practices. The study's findings in this regard showed that Muslim contributions to public policy formulation over the specified time had very little of an impact. It was discovered that a wide range of policy actors influenced the formulation of public policy, which in turn led to the weak representation of certain actors, such as Muslims. It was also observed that the degree to which Islamic values, beliefs, and practices could become ingrained in government policies in Malawi was constrained by the country's emphasis (constitution) on the separation of matters of the state and religion. Some examples of how Muslims have not been able to influence the formulation of public policy in Malawi include the non-embedment of Islamic values, beliefs and practices in the Malawi Diaspora Engagement Policy (2017), the National Foreign Policy (2019), and the National Trade Policy (2016). Thus, even with a few noteworthy exceptions, Muslims' influence on the formulation of public policy over the given timeframe has been correlated with Malawi's status as a secular democratic nation.

5.4 Implications of the Study Findings to Public Policy Formulation Discourse.

The literature review chapter delves into several studies that demonstrate how contemporary democratic nations have effectively isolated religion from state affairs, so restricting the influence of religious players on the development of public policy to the religious domain.

That said, it is important to note that the church had a significant early influence on the establishment of the modern state (the Westphalia state model), which is why some Christian ideals, beliefs, and practices such as Christmas holidays, Easter holidays and weekly work schedules (Sundays), were early incorporated into its framework.

It is clear from the responses obtained for this study that religion and religious organizations have had a limited influence on state affairs, particularly the formulation of public policy. This is illustrated by the fact that several public policies, like the Malawi Diaspora Engagement Policy (2017), National Foreign Policy (2019) and the Malawi Trade Policy (2015), did not involve religious groups in their formulation, and as a result, religious values, beliefs, and practices were excluded in the aforementioned policy papers. While it is recognized that during the specified time frame, the influence of all religious groups on the formulation of government policies has been restricted, the majority status of Christians in Malawi, which is essential for achieving policy victories, as well as the early incorporation of Christian values, beliefs and practices into contemporary state institutions (Christmas holidays, Easter holidays, weekly work schedules, Christian marriage etc.) places other religious groups including Muslims at a disadvantage. Consequently, in the area of public policy, greater coordinated efforts are needed to advance the concerns of minority groups, including Muslims.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Studies

This study looked at the role of Muslims in Malawian public policymaking between 2015 and 2023.

Although the study explored the participation of Muslims in the process of formulating public policy, how they did so through different channels, and whether their contributions concerning Islamic doctrines, values, and practices were incorporated into the process, it also noticed that the results were generally too narrow to be applied to a wide range of issues of the involvement of Muslims in the formulation of public policies during the specified period. The three public policies that were developed within the specified period, the National Education Policy (2016), the Malawi Trade Policy (2015), and the National Foreign Policy (2019), were generally used as the basis for the study. Practically speaking, these policies were insufficient to promote a wider application of the study's findings. Therefore, for the study's conclusions to be more reliable or broadly applicable, it suggests doing another study that includes a wider range of public policies developed within the specified period.

The results of this study also show that since Malawi's multiparty democracy began, a lot has transpired in terms of public policy formulation. While many argue that the democratic process of formulating public policy has taken a bottom-up approach, further research is advised by this study to ascertain how Muslims have integrated into the democratic public policy framework and, consequently, to evaluate any possible long-term influence that Muslims may have had on the formulation of policies

Finally, the study reveals how Muslims influenced the formulation of the National Education Policy (2016).

However, a broader methodology was used to generate the data. To get accurate information, the researcher advises doing a study with a focus on Muslims' contributions to the formulation of the National Education Policy (2016).

5.6 Conclusion

The study delved to ascertain "the role of Muslims in Malawian public policy formulation from 2015 to 2023." It examined the influence of Muslims on Malawian public policy from 2015 to 2023 as the main objective of the study. The study found that Muslims have participated in the formulation of public policies during the stated period through Muslim organizations, which used cooperative strategies (lobbying, contact, and dialogue) to advance their policy interests. This is based on evidence from key informants as well as the review of some policy documents such as the National Education Policy (2016), the Malawi Trade Policy (2016) and the National Foreign Policy (2019). The study findings, however, show how little Muslim contributions concerning Islamic values, beliefs and practices have been taken into consideration when formulating public policy. Thus, the secular democratic setup of Malawi has been cited for the low degree to which Islamic values, beliefs, and practices have been represented in policies enacted over the mentioned era.

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APPENDICES



Appendix 1: Interview Guide for Members of Parliament

My name is Tikhala Mkumbira. I am a student at Chancellor College pursuing a Master of Arts in Political Science. I am doing a study on the involvement of Muslims in the formulation of public policies in Malawi (2015-2023). Specifically, I would like to find out how Muslims have contributed to the formulation of various public policies in Malawi. The ultimate goal of the study is to find out the extent to which Muslims are involved when public policies are being formulated. Among other things, the focus of this study is on the specific roles that Muslims have played in influencing the formulation of public policy.

1. What is your name?
2. What position do you hold in this committee?
3. For how long have you been a member of this committee?
4. What are some of the duties of this committee?
5. In terms of religion, what is the composition of this committee?
6. Do you allow members of the general public to lobby for the formulation of policies?
7. If yes, which groups of the general public have approached this committee to lobby for this?
8. What are some of the policies that this committee has had a hand in formulating?
9. Do you involve religious groups on the issue of policy formulation?
10. If yes, can you mention such religious groups?

11. Were religious groups involved in the formulation of national education policy (2016)?
12. What strategies did religious groups use to influence the formulation of national education policy?
13. What strategies did the Muslim community use in the formulation of national education policy? Which strategy did the Muslim community prefer to use?
14. Were contributions of religious groups taken on board in formulating national education policy?
15. Were contributions of the Muslim community taken on board? If yes, to what extent?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING



Appendix 2: Interview Guide for Ministry of Trade

My name is Tikhala Mkumbira. I am a student at Chancellor College pursuing a Master of Arts in Political Science. I am doing a study on the involvement of Muslims in public policy formulation in Malawi (2016-2022). Specifically, I would like to find out how Muslims have contributed to the formulation of various public policies in Malawi. The ultimate goal of the study is to find out the extent to which Muslims are involved when public policies are being formulated and whether their values, beliefs, and practices have had a bearing on formulated public policies in Malawi.

1. What is your name?
2. What position do you hold at this ministry?
3. Do Muslims influence public policy formulation?
4. Did Muslims participate in the formulation of National trade policy (2016)? If yes, to what extent did they participate?
5. Which channels of participation did Muslims use in the formulation of National trade policy? And which of the channels if any, did they use often or prefer? And why?
6. Were Muslim contributions adopted in National trade policy formulation? To what extent were their contributions taken on board in the formulation of National trade policy? Have the contributions reflected their (Islamic) values, doctrines or practices in formulated National trade policy?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING



Appendix 3: Interview Guide for Ministry of Education

My name is Tikhala Mkumbira. I am a student at Chancellor College pursuing a Master of Arts in Political Science. I am doing a study on the involvement of Muslims in public policy formulation in Malawi (2016-2022). Specifically, I would like to find out how Muslims have contributed to the formulation of various public policies in Malawi. The ultimate goal of the study is to find out the extent to which Muslims are involved when public policies are being formulated and whether their values, beliefs and practices have had a bearing on formulated public policies in Malawi.

1. What is your name?
2. What position do you hold at this ministry?
3. Do Muslims influence public policy formulation?
4. Did Muslims participate in the formulation of National education policy (2016)?
If yes, to what extent did they participate?
5. Which channels of participation did Muslims use in the formulation of National education policy? And which of the channels if any, did they use often or prefer?
And why?
6. Were Muslim contributions adopted in National education policy formulation? To what extent were their contributions taken on board in the formulation of National education policy? Have the contributions reflected their (Islamic) values, doctrines or practices in formulated National education policy?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING



Appendix 4: Interview Guide for Ministry of Foreign Affairs

My name is Tikhala Mkumbira. I am a student at Chancellor College pursuing a Master of Arts in Political Science. I am doing a study on the involvement of Muslims in public policy formulation in Malawi (2016-2022). Specifically, I would like to find out how Muslims have contributed to the formulation of various public policies in Malawi. The ultimate goal of the study is to find out the extent which Muslims are involved when public policies are being formulated and whether their values, beliefs and practices have had a bearing on formulated public policies in Malawi.

1. What is your name?
2. What position do you hold at this ministry?
3. Do Muslims influence public policy formulation?
4. Did Muslims participate in the formulation of Malawi's foreign policy (2019)? If yes, to what extent did they participate?
5. Which channels of participation did Muslims use in the formulation of Malawi's foreign policy? And which of the channels if any, did they use often or prefer? And why?
6. Were Muslim contributions adopted in Malawi's foreign policy formulation? To what extent were their contributions taken on board in the formulation of Malawi's foreign policy? Have the contributions reflected their (Islamic) values, doctrines or practices in formulated Malawi foreign policy?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING



Appendix 5: Interview Guide for Muslim Association of Malawi (MAM) & Quadria Muslim Association of Malawi (QMAM)

My name is Tikhala Mkumbira. I am a student at Chancellor College pursuing a Master of Arts in Political Science. I am doing a study on the involvement of Muslims in public policy formulation in Malawi (2016-2022). Specifically, I would like to find out how Muslims have contributed to the formulation of various public policies in Malawi. The ultimate goal of the study is to find out the extent to which Muslims are involved when public policies are being formulated and whether their values, beliefs and practices have had a bearing on formulated public policies in Malawi.

1. What is your name?
2. What position do you hold in this organization?
3. For how long have you been a member of this organization?
4. Which criteria do you use in choosing members of this organization?
5. Does this organization participate in the formulation of public policies?
6. If yes, mention some of the public policies which your organization championed.
7. What are some of the strategies that you use in lobbying for the formulation of public policies?
8. To what extent, have these strategies been a success?
9. Have your contributions had an impact on formulated policies? To what extent have formulated policies reflected Muslim values, beliefs and practices?
10. Do you encounter any challenges in lobbying for the formulation of public policies?
11. If yes, what are some of the challenges?
12. Do you belong to the Public Affairs Committee?
13. If yes, what position do you have on that committee?
14. Does PAC respect your values and practices when lobbying for the formulation of public policies?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING



Appendix 6: Interview Guide for Public Affairs Committee Members (PAC)

My name is Tikhala Mkumbira. I am a student at Chancellor College pursuing a Master of Arts in Political Science. I am doing a study on the involvement of Muslims in public policy formulation in Malawi (2016-2022). Specifically, I would like to find out how Muslims have contributed to the formulation of various public policies in Malawi. The ultimate goal of the study is to find out the extent which Muslims are involved when public policies are being formulated and whether their values, beliefs and practices have had a bearing on formulated public policies in Malawi.

1. What is your name?
2. What position do you hold in this organization?
3. In terms of composition, where does this committee draw its members from?
4. Are members of different religious groups given the same opportunities in terms of leadership of this committee?
5. If yes, have you ever had a Muslim as a leader of this committee?
6. What are some of the functions of this committee?
7. Do you lobby for the formulation of public policies?
8. If yes, what are some of the policies that you have lobbied for the formulation by different government ministries?
9. What channels of participation do your members use when it comes to the issue of public policy formulation?
10. What is the role of PAC in promoting the interest of its members when it comes to the issue of policy formulation?
11. Do you lobby for the formulation of public policies on behalf of your members?
12. If yes, what are some of the policies that you lobbied on behalf of the Islamic community?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING



Appendix 7: Interview Guide for Individual Muslims

My name is Tikhala Mkumbira. I am a student at Chancellor College pursuing a Master of Arts in Political Science. I am doing a study on the involvement of Muslims in public policy formulation in Malawi (2016-2022). Specifically, I would like to find out how Muslims have contributed to the formulation of various public policies in Malawi. The ultimate goal of the study is to find out the extent which Muslims are involved when public policies are being formulated and whether their values, beliefs and practices have had a bearing on formulated public policies in Malawi.

1. What is your name?
2. Do Muslims influence public policy formulation?
3. Do Muslims participate in public policy formulation? If yes, to what extent do they participate? Which policies have Muslims been involved in formulating (2015-2023), if any?
4. Which channels of participation do Muslims use in public policy formulation? Which channel, if any, do they use often?
5. Are Muslim contributions adopted in public policy formulation? To what extent are their contributions taken on board in public policy formulation? To what extent do formulated policies in Malawi reflect (Islamic) values, doctrines or practices of Muslims?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING



Appendix 8: Interview Guide for Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC).

My name is Tikhala Mkumbira. I am a student at Chancellor College pursuing a Master of Arts in Political Science. I am doing a study on the involvement of Muslims in public policy formulation in Malawi (2016-2022). Specifically, I would like to find out how Muslims have contributed to the formulation of various public policies in Malawi. The ultimate goal of the study is to find out the extent to which Muslims are involved when public policies are being formulated and whether their values, beliefs and practices have had a bearing on formulated public policies in Malawi.

1. What is your name?
2. What position do you hold at this office?
3. What is the role of your office in policy formulation?
4. Does policy formulation take into account the existence of multiple religious groups?
5. Do Muslims influence public policy formulation?
6. Do Muslims participate in public policy formulation? If yes, to what extent do they participate? Which policies have Muslims been involved in formulating (2016-2022), if any?
7. Which channels of participation do Muslims use in public policy formulation? Which channel, if any, do they use often?
8. Are Muslim contributions adopted in public policy formulation? To what extent are their contributions taken on board in public policy formulation? To what extent do formulated policies in Malawi reflect (Islamic) values, doctrines, or practices of Muslims?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING