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THE INFLUENCE OF THE MALAY RELIGIOUS IDENTITY ON NON-MUSLIM PUBLIC ROLES: A SOCIO-RELIGIOUS ANALYSIS

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Dedication

For my beloved wife, Ding Nga Hung.

For my beloved sons, Wong Qin Xuan and Wong Qin Rui.

**"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit,
says the Lord of hosts." (Zechariah 4:6 - NRSV)**

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Abstract

Malay-Muslims have a typical understanding of themselves: as Malays and as Muslims. However, Malays are increasingly referring to themselves as Muslims (religious identity) rather than Malay (ethnic identity) due to Islamisation. Despite the importance of their religious identity for understanding themselves, it is also significant in intergroup relations with others in Malaysia, a democratic and pluralistic society. This study identified and examined the components of Malay-Muslim identity, socially and psychologically as well as examining the influences they have on non-Muslim public roles. The impacts of Malay-Muslim identity in Malaysia were understudied and overshadowed by Malay ethnic identity. Previous studies have not considered Malay-Muslim identity from a perspective of socio-religious psychology. The study involved questionnaire surveys and semi-structured interviews. The data collected were analysed using statistical and content analysis. The results indicate that the salient identity of Malay is Malay-Muslim, and the Malay religious identity displays substantial bias towards non-Muslims, especially when perceiving that non-Muslims should not participate in government employment and typically hold prominent positions. These responses, from the perspective of social identity, are due to in-group identification as land owner, and special position granted by the Federal Constitution, which created differentiation or boundary between Muslims and non-Muslims. The Quran does not explicitly advocate for the exclusion of non-Muslims from positions of public authority. Nonetheless, Quranic verses that encourage a sense of superiority and set boundaries between believers and non-believers are where prejudice and discrimination against non-Muslims rest. This study suggests that the social (religious) identity's psychological reaction is more than religious teachings, and the dimensions involved are strong self-identification and a sense of superiority as *ummah*, a differentiation and comparison between Muslims and non-Muslims. Hence, this study contributes to a broader knowledge concerning Islam (Muslim identity) from a perspective of socio-religious psychology. The study concludes that prejudicial acts towards non-Muslims are mainly due to religious identity's psychological reaction, and that represented one of the main influences for the exclusion of non-Muslims in public roles. The study proposes that the communities should emphasise and promote Malaysian identity instead of religious identity because religious identity demonstrates prejudice and bias.

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List of Abbreviations

A.D.	*Anno Domini* (Latin, designating Year of Jesus, Western dates)
A.H.	*Anno Hegirae* (Latin, designating Year of the Hijrah, Islamic dates)
BA	Barisan Alternatif (Alterative Front)
BN	Barisan Nasional (National Front)
DAP	Democratic Action Party
IKIM	Institut Kefahaman Islam Malaysia (Malaysian Institute of Islamic Understanding)
JAKIM	Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (Department of Islamic Development Malaysia)
MCA	Malaysian Chinese Association
MIC	Malaysian Indian Congress
NDP	National Development Policy
NEP	New Economic Policy
PAS	Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (Pan Malaysian Islamic Party)
UMNO	United Malay National Organisation

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 The Background

In Malaysia, Islam and Malay-Muslims have become increasingly dominant in almost every aspect of life – political, social, cultural and government offices, including non-Muslim public roles. The primary purpose of this study is to examine how the Malay-Muslim identity becomes a challenge to the public roles of non-Muslims in Malaysia, an understudied domain. The study applies a social identity theory to religious identity (Islam). This study hopes to contribute to knowledge in social psychology's understanding of Malay religious identity (Muslim identity) as one of the social identities. Besides religious and doctrinal teachings, according to social identity theory, it is suggested that in-group favouritism is more likely to occur when religious identity is experienced as a group (social) identity (Van Camp, 2010, p. 1) or collective identity.

This chapter serves to introduce the study first by portraying the background of the entire social phenomenon in Malaysia, in which Malay-Muslims have become increasingly dominant in almost every aspect of life in a pluralistic society. The chapter will then present the problem encountered by non-Muslims in Malaysia, the main and secondary research questions, the knowledge gap and need and value of the study.

1.2 The Trajectory of the Domination of Islam and Muslims (A Brief Overview of Islamising Malaysia, 1970-2020)

Malaysia is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country (for a better understanding of ethnic and religious groups in Malaysia, please see Appendix A. It will help to

differentiate between the Malays and non-Malays as well as Muslims and non-Muslims in Malaysia). According to the Malaysian 2020 census, the Muslim population is about 63.5 per cent. The non-Muslims comprise of about 36.5 per cent, which includes Christians (9.1%), Buddhists (18.7%), Hindus (6.1%), other (0.9%) and unknown (1.8%) (Department of Statistics, Malaysia, 2020, p. 33). Due to its religious population composition and where equal citizenship (liberal democracy) in Muslim societies is poorly institutionalised (Raina 2015b: 451), the following areas have become significant subjects of study since its independence (1963) by intellectuals and academics: (1) the public roles (political engagement and state employment) of non-Muslims, (2) the structure of power-sharing between different ethnoreligious groups, that is between Malays and non-Malays or Muslims and non-Muslims, and (3) the meaning of equal citizenship in the country that exercises an identitarian regime (Malaysia).

Over the past forty years, Malaysian society has undergone radical changes. On one hand, the country has experienced rapid economic growth. On the other hand, almost all areas of the country have been Islamised (Abbott and Gregorios-Pippas, 2010, p. 135; Nasr, 2001, pp. 82-101). Two factors influenced the Islamisation of Malaysia, namely, global and local. Globally, Mohamad Abu Bakar (1991) highlighted five aspects: (1) the spread of Islamic literature and knowledge over the globe, (2) the influence of Islam fundamentalist movements, (3) Malay students returning from studying abroad, especially from the Middle East, Indonesia, United Kingdom, and the United States, (4) the reaction to the Arab-Israeli War and the Iranian Revolution, and (5) the series of activities organised by International Islamic Organisations.

Among the five factors given by Abu Bakar, the most influential factor would be students studying overseas. Discussing the same point, Muzaffar (1985, p. 12) pointed out that Malay students who returned from Islamic universities in the Middle East brought reformist ideas and commitment to establishing an Islamic State. Equally significant were those returning from Indonesia. Due to Indonesia's *dakwah* (the act of inviting people to embrace Islam) movements, students who returned from Indonesia were known to have propagated Islamic renewal in Malaysia (Stange, 1993, p. 574). Another group of students who have contributed to the Islamisation of Malaysia are those who studied in England, especially at Sussex University and Brighton Technical College. They were influenced by the teachings of Abul A'la

Maududi'. He was an influential Islamic scholar and the key actor in making Pakistan an Islamic State and introducing *sharia*-tisation to Pakistan (Anwar, 1987, p. 27). Maududi's primary Islamic state tenets are (Maududi, 1977, pp. 276-299; Adams, 1986, pp. 121-122; Nasr, 1996, pp. 99-102): (1) an Islamic state would be an ideological state rather than a national democratic state, one that is defined by a territorial boundary; (2) an Islamic state would be controlled and administered solely by Muslims; (3) non-Muslims must be "rigorously excluded from influencing policy decisions"; (4) non-Muslims should not hold "key posts" in the government and other institutions; and (5) non-Muslims are not entitled to full political expression and equal citizenship rights with Muslims. As a result, according to Maududi, non-Muslims are inferior and second-class citizens in the Islamic state. Non-Muslims are justified in their inferior status because they do not adhere to the Islamic ideology (Adams, 1986, p. 122). These students later became the leaders of Malaysia who were ready and without reserve to implement Islamic values that would eventually turn the country into an Islamic state.

Locally, Mahathir Muhammad played a prominent role in Islamisation in Malaysia. He was the fourth Prime Minister of Malaysia, from 1981 to 2003. The Prime Minister of Malaysia is the head of the federal government and of the federal cabinet. The federal cabinet's members are appointed by the *Yang di-Pertuan Agong* (literally means King), but he is advised by the Prime Minister. Ajay Raina (2016, p. 850) describes Mahathir's version of Islamisation. Mahathir was reported as saying that he would "use all resources to strengthen Islam" (Mohd Yassin, 1994, p. 127). Batumalai, a Christian scholar, called him "the chief architect of Islamisation in Malaysia" (Batumalai, 1996, p. 246). As Prime Minister, Mahathir made use of government mechanisms to enhance Islam (Camroux, 1996, p. 855). At the same time, he ensured that all laws of the country and government policies had to be in line with the teachings of Islam (Bakar, 2012a, p. 373).

The following are but a few instances that linked Mahathir with Islamisation in Malaysia: expanding the Islamic Affairs Department, introducing *halal* (permissible or lawful, i.e., something that is prepared and carried out following Islamic rules) financing, enforcing *Shariah* courts and intensifying the Islamic educational system. In 1981, he introduced Islamic values into the government administration. This was achieved by expanding the Islamic Affairs Section of government, which came directly under the Prime Minister's purview. The department grew from eight staff to

more than six hundred and was given expanded roles to influence the nation's Islamic affairs (Mutalib, 1990a, p. 143). Subsequently, an Institute of Islamic Understanding (IKIM) was established for "strategising and implementing Islamic input into all government policies and mechanisms" (Raj, 2019, p. 42).

In April 1983, under Mahathir's leadership, the Islamic Banking Act was passed. He intended to create a *Shariah*-compliant financial facility for Muslims. In addition, in the same year, his government offered Islamic insurance for Muslims in the country who would prefer *halal* insurance. It is worth noting that both Islamic finance and insurance are not limited to Muslims. Rudnyckyj (2013) summarised this development in his work entitled, "From Wall Street to *Halal* Street: Malaysia and the Globalisation of Islamic Finance". According to him, "Malaysia's plans to become a transnational hub for Islamic finance represent an effort to globalise Islam from the top down, by mobilising religion to create a new economic network" (Rudnyckyj, 2013, p. 833). What Malaysia (actually Mahathir) is trying to achieve by deploying Islam is to become the centre of global finance that follows Islamic prescriptions. Malaysia wanted to be known as "Islamic Wall Street" (Rudnyckyj, 2013, p. 845) with a goal to replace Wall Street, if possible.

Shariah in Malaysia is another aspect into which Mahathir has poured much energy. In 1988, the Federal Constitution was amended, in which Article 121 (1A) was inserted that stated civil courts have no judiciary power over *Shariah* court affairs. Subsequently, the Department of *Shariah* Judiciary Malaysia was inaugurated to restructure, coordinate, and improve the Shariah courts' service. In this regard, the presence of *Shariah* and its development, according to Shad Saleem Faruqi (constitutional law expert), can be considered as the "silent re-writing of the Constitution" (The Star, 2006) where the "original secular foundation of the nation" has been seriously undermined (Raj, 2019, p. 43). Moreover, two religious bureaucracies of government (religion administration institutions) were formed in 1997, namely the Department of Islamic Development (*Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia*, JAKIM) at the federal level and the Council for Islamic Religious Affairs and Malay Customs (*Majlis Agama Islam dan Adat Istiadat Melayu*, MAIK) at the state level. The functions of these two bureaucracies are to develop Islamic institutions further and standardise Islamic legislation (Mohd Sani, 2016, p. 131; Raj, 2019, p. 43).

A last but extremely significant step in Islamising Malaysia is that Islamisation has entered education, primarily secondary and tertiary. The federal government of Mahathir took a series of actions to Islamise education. The activities included building more Islamic schools, funding and owning universities (for example, International Islamic University, 1983; Islamic Science University in 2007 and Global University of Islamic Finance, also in 2007), and sending more students to the Middle East to be trained as Islamic scholars (Barr and Govindasamy 2010, pp. 297-298).

Regarding Islamising education in Malaysia, little has been previously mentioned about the history textbooks for secondary schools published by the Ministry of Education of Malaysia. In 2003, the Ministry of Education introduced a new history syllabus and textbooks. These are compulsory for all Form 4 as well as Form 5 students. Previously, history was not a required subject. The old textbook, "World Civilisation History: Form 4" was used until 2002. It comprised six chapters: (1) "Early Human Civilisation", (2) "Islam Changed Human Civilisation", (3) "The Transition of the European Society and Its Impact", (4) "Revolution and New Phase of Human History", (5) "Western Imperialism and Local Reactions", and (6) "Moving towards International Cooperation" (Barr and Govindasamy, 2010, p. 301). In these textbooks, Islamic history was taught as a part of world history and civilisation. However, in the new revised version, Islamic history and civilisation occupy half of the syllabus and is central to the study of history for Form 4. The title of the textbook was changed to "Form 4 History Textbook". Five out of its ten chapters focus on Islam: "Islamic Civilisation and Its Contribution in Mecca, Islamic State in Medina, The Formation of Islamic Government and Its Contribution, Islam in South-East Asia, Islamic Reform and Its Influence in Malaysia before the Arrival of the Colonial Powers." The rest of the chapters examine the rest of world history and civilisation (Barr and Govindasamy 2010, pp. 301-302), which by right should occupy more space and weightage. Obviously:

> The imposition of an Islamic metanarrative at this point can be neither accidental nor incidental. It must be regarded as a deliberate attempt to impose a new form of identity on both the Muslim and non-Muslim children. This conclusion becomes even more targeted if we look beyond the teaching of history and consider that the Islamisation process has permeated the entire schooling experience for those students who attend national schools (Barr and Govindasamy, 2010, p. 304).

Islamisation in Malaysia, as mentioned above, on the one hand, is a political agenda. It can be considered as a manifestation of political competition (see Mutalib, 1990a, pp. 64-67; Camroux, 1996, pp. 858-861; Hassan, 2007, pp. 298-299; Raina, 2016; see also Beyers 2015). Islamisation in Malaysia is a competition between the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) and the Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS) to win over the Muslims' support because many Muslims would support any government that will turn Malaysia into an Islamic State (Mutalib, 1990a, pp. 1, 64-67; Camroux, 1996, pp. 858-861; Hassan, 2007, pp. 298-299; Raina 2016). On the other hand, it is a religious endeavour by Islamic bureaucracies (Mohamad, 2010, p. 506). Whatever the reason, Islamisation has changed the entire secular landscape and pluralist society of Malaysia. A good example is the case of Lina Joy where the court rejected to remove from her identification card the word "Islam" because she no longer is a Muslim (see Kortteinen, 2008). The fundamental argument of the case is religious freedom. However, it is also due to the gradual dominance of Islam and Muslims.

1.3   Research Problem

The gradual dominance of Islam and Muslims due to the Islamisation of Malaysia jeopardises the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims (Olivier, 2020, pp. 194-211) in which the impacts are rather poignant. The non-Muslims are inferiors and marginalised in their own country in all facets and levels, namely political, opportunities of entering public universities, serving in government sectors, and getting government construction projects. Yet, they are expected to contribute more to the development of the country (Barr and Govindasamy 2010, p. 307, see Raj 2019 Chapter Three: Polarisation, Marginalization and Political Hegemony), in the sense of paying more income taxes. Non-Malays, especially Chinese, are paying more income tax than Malays. The following are two remarks (titles) in newspapers which demonstrate a better picture on Chinese paying more income tax: (1) "Malays should stop getting angry with the Chinese" (Webmaster, 2018), and (2) "Zaid: Chinese pay more tax, ergo 'true patriots'" (Malay Mail, 2013).

Essentially, a space for public participation and government employment of non-Muslims in Malaysia has been eroded tremendously since 1980. These can be broadly discussed and explained in the following four areas: (1) increasing Islamic supremacy, (2) political development, (3) the low percentage of non-Muslims in government employment, and (4) a demand for Malay-Muslim' dominance.

In 1988 Article 121 1(A) of the Federation Constitution was inserted, and says "civil courts shall have no jurisdiction in respect of any matter within the jurisdiction of the *Shariah* courts". Another incident that marked the irreversible decreasing rights (roles) of non-Muslims is the legal case of *Meor Atiqulrahman bin Ishak & Ors v. Fatimah bte Sihi & Ors.* The judge of this case in the year 2006 (July) decided that "other religions must be arranged and directed to ensure that they are practised peacefully and do not threaten the dominant position of Islam, not just at the present but more importantly in the future and beyond" (Ling, 2006, p. 115). As can be noticed, Islamic supremacy in Malaysia is translated into law and government policy by the State endeavour.

The US House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission (2011, p. 1) on inter-ethnic relations in Malaysia commented with strong negative remarks. Three of the comments are as follows (see Appendix B for details):

1. The Federal Constitution basically establishes two classes of citizens, vide Article 153, the root of the racist system,

2. The State sponsors violence and threats of violence both directly and indirectly (outsourced) on the citizens to create fear among the non-Malay non-Muslims, and

3. The State explicitly and implicitly declares that the Malays are the masters (Malay Supremacy) and the sons of the soil.

Along with it, Malaysia's recent political development has intensified the discrimination and marginalisation of non-Muslims in the country. The practice that non-Muslims should not hold critical public roles is no longer kept among Malay-Muslims but has become a public resolution. After the coalition party of *Pakatan Harapan* (Alliance of Hope) came into power on 9 May 2018, the Prime Minister of Malaysia nominated two non-Muslims: one to be Attorney General and another to be Chief Justice. Their nomination, however, invited strong objections from the Malay

or Muslim societies. Malay is one of the ethnic groups in the plural society of Malaysia, but Article 160 of the Federal Constitution of Malaysia (2010) defines a Malay as a Muslim ("a Malay is a person who professes the religion of Islam"). The nomination also became the headlines of all newspapers in the country for a few days, see "Malaysians back Mahathir's attorney general pick amid online petition opposing non-Muslim appointment" (Today, 2018) and "Tale of two petitions shows Malaysians were divided on Tommy Thomas as Attorney General" (The Star, 2018). The Federal Constitution of Malaysia (2010) does not prohibit a non-Muslim or non-Malay to be an Attorney General. On the other hand, the opposition to the appointment was also due to Malay-Muslims worrying about non-Malays in power, even though they are in the majority (for this, see Zurairi, 2018). Since its formation in 1957, in Malaya and later Malaysia in 1963, the government had only twice appointed a non-Malay and non-Muslim Attorney General. The reasons given were simply because a non-Muslim can never be qualified to advise on matters about Muslims; non-Muslims, and as such, will act with a bias against Muslims and therefore cannot protect Islam as the state religion. The same principle will apply if a judge is a non-Muslim, especially if he or she is the Chief Judge, for example, Richard Malanjum, in 2018.

The *Menteri Besar* (Chief Minister) of a few states of Malaysia, such as Perak, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan, and Kedah, must also be Muslim because the state law says so [Article 12(2), *Laws of the Constitution of Perak*. However, it is also if the *Sultan* (His Royal Highness) may in His discretion waive the requirements] unless the Sultan otherwise appoints a non-Muslim chief minister. Yet, for the Sultan to appoint a non-Muslim as chief minister, this scenario is very unlikely to happen. The Democratic Action Party (DAP) in the year 2008 won the state election in Perak with a majority of seats. Still, the party's chairman was not appointed Chief Minister due to his Chinese identity. In contrast, a Malay-Muslim was sworn in as the Chief Minister. In other respects, there is a general but unwritten rule that the Prime Minister of Malaysia should be a Malay-Muslim (Hassan, 2007, pp. 287, 294).

This situation "is exacerbated by Malay demands for increased political and economic dominance" (Ling, 2006, p. 117). The Malay Dignity Congress, held on 6 October 2019 demanded many, but here are two examples:

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1. Main positions within the government should only be filled by Malay-Muslims;

2. Only Malay-Muslims appointed to the top positions within the government.

In other words, only Malay-Muslims should fill prominent and top positions within the government (Nazari, 2019). The main reason for such a demand was due to the slight increase in the number of non-Muslim Cabinet Members in the Cabinet of Mahathir Muhammad in July 2018. There were nine non-Muslim Ministers and 8 Deputy Ministers in the said cabinet, respectively. Nevertheless, the Malay-Muslims remained the majority of Cabinet Members; 15 of 24 Ministers and 15 of 23 Deputy Ministers are Malay-Muslims.

Although Malay-Muslims are most cabinet members, the cabinet's latest composition however, has seen a deteriorating number of non-Muslim members. On the one hand, the Malay Dignity Congress also urged the government to pressure Human Rights Organisations and the Malaysian Bar not to intervene in Islamic matters pertaining to human rights issues. Eventually, such demands were carried out, which caused the downfall of the then government. According to Welsh (2020, p. 41), it is the "identity-driven divisions" that "contributed to the collapse of the most inclusive, secular government in Malaysia's history." The current (March 2020) arrangement of Muhyiddin Yassin's Cabinet is a tangible and ubiquitous example of discrimination against non-Muslims but favouritism with Malay-Muslims; 30 out of 32 Ministers and 29 out of 38 Deputy Ministers were Malay-Muslims (see The Star, 2020).

Explicitly, non-Muslims have been left out, discriminated against, and marginalised (see Pietsch and Clark, 2014; Kuan, 2015) in public participation and government employment that emphasises Malay race and religion (Nair, 1999, p. 60; Wade, 2009, p. 1). The problem of inclusion and exclusion of non-Muslims in public participation and services has been dealt with from historical, sociological, constitutional, and ethnographical perspectives (please see the literature review, section 1.6 for details). However, the situation (problem) has not been studied from a perspective of socio-religious psychology. The inclusion and exclusion of non-Muslims in politics and policies are surrounded by identity and other factors (Lee, 2017, p. 2; Wade 2009). It is along this line, and therefore, this study will explore

whether the discrimination against and marginalisation of non-Muslims in public office is due to the religious factor or/and social identity factor, that is to say, Malay or Muslim, actually is the combination of both identities - Malay and Muslim.

1.4 Questions and Research Statement

- **The Primary Question**

How does social and psychological aspects of Malay-Muslim identity influence the public role of non-Muslims in Malaysia beyond religious teaching?

- **The Secondary Questions**

1. What constitutes a Malay's identity, especially a Malay's religious identity in Malaysia?
2. How does social and psychological aspects of Malay-Muslim identity develop in Malaysia?
3. How does Muslims in Malaysia define the status of non-Muslims in predominantly Muslim Malaysia?
4. How does Muslims in Malaysia interpret the public roles of non-Muslim Malaysians (with reference to the early Islamic period)?

- **Research Statement**

This study evaluates the role of the religious identity of the Malays and how it defines and impacts non-Muslims' public roles in Malaysia.

1.5 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

1. To study the origin and development of Malay-Muslim identity (ethnic and religious) in Malaysia, including the role of Islamisation and the state played in such development of Malay-Muslim identity.
2. To investigate the basis on which non-Muslims should not play important public roles from the teaching of Islam and its early history.

3.   To analyse the impacts/consequences of the Malay-Muslim identity on the public roles of non-Muslims in Malaysia.

1.6   Literature Review

There is a good number of works of literature on the meanings of Malay identity since the formation of the Federation of Malaysia in 1963. For example, Andaya (2001), Barnard (2001; 2004), Collins (2001), Lian (2001), Nagata (1974), Milner (2011), Shamsul (1996a; 1996b; 2001), Winstedt (1966, 1950). Barr and Govindasamy (2010), Chin (2020), Frith (2000), Harding (2012), Hoffstaedter (2011) are some of the literatures regarding relationships between the identity of Malays and its inter-ethnic dynamics in Malaysia.   Kloos and Berenschot (2017), Ling (2006), and Tay (2018) add to the literature in the sense that intergroup relations between Muslims and non-Muslims should be discussed and comprehended within Islam parameters (doctrine or teaching).

The following sections review the identity of Malay-Muslim and its implications on the non-Malay or non-Muslim in the context of Malaysia from five perspectives: socio-historical, federal constitutional, ethno-religious, social-psychological and religious. The five perspectives are arranged chronologically as well as in the order that is closely related to this study in terms of the knowledge gap.

1.6.1 Socio-Historical Perspective

The identity of Malays and its implications for other communities have been understood and studied within the socio-historical framework. Ling (2006), Harding (2012) and Tay (2018) studied the impact of the Malay identity within this framework. They based their studies on the Reid Commission Social Contract (hereinafter "Social Contract"), which discussed inter-ethnic relationships and Malay rulers' roles. However, there has never been a proper document called "Social Contract" in Malaysia. The Reid Commission Social Contract is typically taken to mean a *quid pro quo* agreement by the Malaysian founders nearing its independence. According to the "Social Contract", the Malays and *bumiputera* (literally, it means the prince or princess of the soils nevertheless, "sons of the soils" is more commonly used or it is

more commonly translated as "sons of the soils") have unequal standing (see Appendix A for explanations). The Malays and *bumiputera* of Malaya are to be recognised with special privileges, and this was carried over to Article 153 when the Federation of Malaysia was formed on 16 September 1963. The special privileges provided by Article 153 will be discussed in detail in the following section. Another empowerment that goes together with Malay-Muslims' special rights is their religious identity (Hoffstaedter, 2011, p. 51). The intricate interplay of ethnic and Islam identity of Malay-Muslims will be dealt with later in the section of ethno-religious perspective. In return, citizenship would be granted to non-Malays (Ling, 2006, p. 100; Harding, 2012, p. 70). Through this "Social Contract", Chinese and Indian communities and their future generations received "constitutional guarantees" of citizenship (Tay, 2018, p. 50).

Nonetheless, the agreement of this social contract does not apply to Sarawak because the Brooke government bestowed citizenship to all racial groups long before the founding of Malaysia. On the other hand, Malay nationalist historians argued that Malays are a "base society" whereas non-Malays are "splinter communities" (Kheng, 1996, pp. 67-71). The argument simply means that only Malays are the true and real people of the land, and other communities are "outsiders" or "foreigners", which means they should not enjoy rights as enjoyed by the Malays. In this respect, Kheng (1996, p. 72) rightly points out that the status of Chinese and Indian citizenships is thus called into question.

The premise for the social-historical perspective, i.e., "Social Contact" and Malays nationalism are built on Malaysia's historical, social composition with special reference to the pre-colonial period. Quoting Kheng's words, "history became an important means of determining the status and rights of individual ethnic groups in Malaysia's multi-ethnic society" (1997, pp. 71-72) or using Hooker's words, "history is the root of nationalism" (2003, p. 1). The history of Malaysia is generally divided into three periods: pre-colonial (before 1511), colonial and post-colonial (after independence in 1957). It is the pre-colonial period that is subjected to many debates. The colonial period began in 1511, and due to Western influence (written records), its historical authenticity does not cause many problems.

Malaysia's history has always started with the Malay-Muslim royal kingdom (Sultanate) of Melaka, which goes back to about the year 1400. This history of Malaysia has become the generally accepted and accurate version. The school and

university curricula adopted this version which is now called the official National History of Malaysia. In general, Malay-Muslims learned this version of history from school and thus believed that they were born with special rights. However, this official National History is recognised and accepted by the Malay-Muslim community only (Kheng, 1996, p. 35). Whereas, other communities, especially Chinese and Indians, refuted it because this version of Malaysia's history is used to prove that Malays are the first community that occupied and ruled the land. According to the Malays, the rationale is that those who come first to the land or are indigenous people possess ownership. This rationale cannot stand if one refers to the histories and cases of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States. The Malays also intentionally called the land Malaysia, especially West Malaysia (Peninsula Malaya), *Tanah Melayu* (Land of Malay), on the premise that the Malays are the "principal indigenous" (Abdul Rahman and Badriyah, 2003, p. 184) inhabitants of the country (Kheng, 1996, p. 72). To call Malays "principal indigenous" is to assert that other indigenous people are in a status that came after them.

Anwar et al. (2013) argues along this line to show that Malays indeed are the "sons of the soils", that is to say, indigenous people of Peninsula Malaysia. They highlighted that Malays are not migrants (pp. 76-78). In addition, they cite some literature to defend that the Malays are "themselves constituted the concept of sons of the soil and also the geo-political entity called *Tanah Melayu* (Land of Malay) long before the coming of foreign influences" (p. 79).

Nevertheless, *Tanah Melayu* is a term found in Malay literature, not in administrative or legal documents. We may call any place in whatever terms we like, such as the land of Wong, the land of Peter, or the land of John, but it has no legal significance. Second, it is hard to compose the history of Malay society due to the lack of written records (Kim, 1979, p. 251). Additionally, some Western historians concluded that the pre-colonial history of Malaysia was "legends and myths" (Kheng, 1997, p. 39). Hence, Winstedt's (1958, p. 133) writing on *A History of Classical Malay Literature* concludes that the history of this period should not be taken seriously. Third, there is evidence of Chinese, Indian and Arab settlements existing long before the recorded history of Malay in Malaysia. Hindu-Buddhist culture represents the primary influence between the 7th and 12th centuries. Malay and Islam came after that. Islam has grown as an influence from the 13th century, but it is not the only influence. It is painted as a major influence, and Melaka is set as a

central stage in Malaysia's peninsula aimed to achieve Malay nationalism. Yet, a version of history that does not emphasise Malay as the Indigenous people can be found at the National Museum of Malaysia, whereby Hooker calls this version official (see Hooker 2003, pp. 1-12). This version of history always induces Malays' unhappiness because it directly challenges their rooted historical identity as Indigenous ("base society"), thus losing the foundation to act more favourably towards their own ethnic group.

Historically, it cannot be denied that all races made significant contributions to the formation of Malaya in 1957 and later Malaysia in1963 (Fernando, 2015, pp. 540-546; Tay, 2018, pp. 48-50). Therefore, a common national history is needed that will lead to Malaysia's common identity rather than a particular race's national history that eventually will cultivate racism or ethnic nationalism. The history of Malaysia should not serve the political interest. It is necessary to go beyond the official national version (Hooker, 2003, p. 12), for one which is meaningful for unity and brings a better future for Malaysians.

The Malays identity and its impact on other communities studied within the social-historical perspective cover ethnic identity based on history. To this end, it describes the Malays as more like an owner whereas the others are treated as tenants. The citizenships of Chinese and Indians obtained through the "Social Contract" is at Malays' mercy. However, the Malay identity built on the history of Malaysia is not substantiable, with them as the original inhabitants since they are not generally recognised and accepted by all communities, not to mention the implications of the identity as master or lord of the land.

The following section will review the identity of the Malays within the constitutional perspective and how it progressively restricted the non-Malay communities' public sphere.

1.6.2 Federal Constitutional Perspective

The identity of the Malays and its effects on non-Malay communities has also been studied from a legal, or more precisely, constitutional framework. Ling (2006), Tay (2018), Chin (2020) discussed the Malay identity under the provision of Article 153 of the Federal Constitution of Malaysia (2010), which gives Malays a special position. Article 153 ensures the extensive allocation for the Malays and natives in Sabah and

Sarawak in the following four areas: (1) public service positions, (2) public university enrolment and training, (3) trade or business permits/licences, and (4) scholarships. This Article of the Malaysian Constitution invites the most controversy among many articles. It becomes an offence if it is discussed openly, whether one is opposed or in favour. This is because the discussion of the Malays' special position is deemed to challenge them; for example, the attempt by the government to ratify the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) has triggered the rage of the Malay communities in this country (see Paulsen, 2018, for details and on the relationship between ICERD and Article 153). ICERD is a United Nations convention. The main purpose of ICERD is to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination and to promote understanding among all races. There is basically no contradiction between the two. Many Malays especially the right-wing groups appealed that once the government ratified ICERD, Malaysia would soon sign the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). This, they claim, on one hand will remove their special rights and supremacy since ICCPR grants all citizens equal political rights (Chin, 2020, p. 291). On the other hand, Malays claimed that they enjoyed such many special privileges because they were the original inhabitants of the land. Such a claim is explained in great length in the Ministry of Education's Secondary School History textbook. The fact that the textbooks are allowed to be used directly indicates the government's position of a more exclusivist current of Malay nationalism and academics in positions of influence (Ting, 2009a, p. 51). The textbook goes on to elaborate in detail:

> The special position of the Malays has been made explicit to safeguard the rights of Malays as the original inhabitants of this country. This provision is also aimed at accelerating the progress of Malays who have been left behind in all aspects of life, so that they can achieve parity with the more advanced non-Malays (Kheng, 1996, pp. 67-68).

The above statement is partially true. The whole truth is that indeed Malays are in many areas left behind, particularly in economic achievements when drafting the Constitution. The special rights are granted not because they were the original inhabitants of the land, but to help elevate the living conditions in the shortest time possible of those who at that time mainly worked as fishermen and farmers. Unfortunately, practical steps were not taken to improve their economic backwardness (Huang-Thio, 1964, p. 10). In fact, the real intent of Article 153 is not

permanent (Holst, 2012, p. 41), but was to be reviewed 15 years after the independence or earlier. *Yang Di-Pertuan Agong* (literally means King), as the guardian of this Article, is responsible for calling for review from time to time. The founding fathers came to a consensus to review the special position of Malays 15 years after independence (Ting, 2009b, p. 41; Fernando, 2015, p. 543). Unfortunately, this was not written down in a binding document. It may seem to offend other communities' sensitivity, but Article 153 should be abolished after Malays have reached parity because there is no reason for it to continue its existence (Huang-Thio, 1964, pp. 12, 15). Moreover, this is in conjunction with the provision of Article 8, which guarantees equality to all citizens, without distinction of race, religion, place of origin or birth, in any law and in any appointment to public office by public authority. (Fernando, 2015, pp. 549-550).

As early as 1964, Huang-Thio rightly noted that the conferral of special position on the Malays was not purely motivated by economic factors. Malays as an ethnic group enjoyed such special treatment to emphasise that they are distinct. He shows that the provision under the Constitution was not of a sudden awareness of the economic depression of the Malays, but was merely a continuance of already enjoyed rights practised by British colonials. Hence, he writes that such preferential treatment "helped to engender in the Malay mind that Malaysia belongs to the Malays and therefore they are entitled *ipso facto* to special treatment" (Huang-Thio, 1964, p. 13). Moreover, the implementation of the New Economic Policy (NEP) since 1971 further engrained Malays' attitudes and their mindset as owners or masters of Malaysia. The original purpose of the New Economic Policy is to "eradicate poverty" after the 13 May Incident. It was a policy response to the race riots of May 1969 and sought to empower the poor which will ultimately achieve national unity (Jomo, 2004, p. 1). Eventually, the NEP turns into negative discrimination rather than positive discrimination and creates further inter-race tension.

The NEP established a variety of licenses and permits to run not only businesses, government contracts, shops, and houses/apartments, but also forest reserves, commercial areas, capital, and various funds to benefit Malays. Shares in publicly traded companies and new ventures were also distributed to Malays and *bumiputera* to increase their participation in trade and industry. The Malays and *bumiputera* were also given the majority of government scholarships and 55 per cent

of college/university places. Some government-funded colleges and universities are only allowed to enrol, Malay and *bumiputera* students. Special educational programmes and training are reserved only for Malays and *bumiputera*. The quota system has resulted in sacrificing academic quality and engendered more inter-ethnic polarisation (Ling, 2006, p. 109).

In this context, the perpetuation of preferential treatment of an ethnic group is likely to become the rock upon which any democratic system can be laid (Huang-Thio, 1964, p. 16). The consequences of this are long-term discrimination and erosion of other ethnic groups' civil rights within their own country. More than half of the century after independence, identity that clings to Article 153 may no longer function. Withal, ruling parties in Malaysia always have the upper hand over the interpretation of the Constitution to their political and racial benefit, let alone religious interests (Tew, 2016, pp. 695-696.). They are now the majority comprising of no less than 63 per cent of the population (Department of Statistics, Malaysia, 2020, p. 33). Identity engendered from the Malaysian Constitution should not find this way to marginalise others; it is insubstantial after more than 55 years of Independence.

An extension to the special position of the Malays according to Article 153 is the discourse of *Ketuanan Melayu*. *Ketuanan*, according to the authoritative dictionary of Malay by *Dewan Bahasa and Pustaka,* means "the right to rule or control a country, state or district" or simply means "sovereignty" (Iskandar, 2015, p. 1162). The root word of *ketuanan* is *tuan*, which literally means owner, master or lord. The term *ketuanan Melayu* was invented by Malay politicians to denote the special position of the Malays with the idea of Malay racial supremacism (Lee, 2005, p. 212). Apart from Malay politics, the Malay academicians as well as Malay nationalists used the term to signal Malay sovereignty and Malay supremacy, respectively.

It is a misconception that *Ketuanan Melayu* or Malay supremacy does not lead to discrimination and marginalisation of other communities. At its worst, other communities within the discourse of *ketuanan Melayu* are reduced to "second-class citizens" (Ting, 2009b, p. 37). It is also not as Tay (2018, p. 55) argued that *ketuanan Melayu* is:

A primarily political dominance accorded to the Malay community concerning the specific historical circumstances of the country, plus an assurance that the identity of the nation would be mainly (but not exclusively) associated with the Malay identity.

The unequal status between the Malays (United Malays National Organisation, UMNO) and non-Malays or so-called other *Barisan National* (National Front) party leaders is undeniable (Ting, 2009b: 49). The Chinese cannot rule simply because they are Chinese. The Democratic Action Party (DAP), with her alliance parties in 2008, won the state election in Perak with a majority of seats (18 out of 31). Still, the party's chairman was not appointed Chief Minister due to his Chinese identity (see The Star, 2008).

The studies reviewed above discovered that the relationship between Malays and non-Malays is one of difference, and as such, they are on an unequal level (see Tay, 2018, p. 53). This has resulted in the Malays and their establishment being unwilling to share power with non-Malays (Chin, 2020, p. 289). Furthermore, Chin (2020, p. 296) observes that "the *ketuanan Melayu Islam* (Malay Islam Supremacy) ideology was never going to allow a truly multiracial and multi-religious government to hold on to power". He advocated this ideology in the year 2016 (Chin, 2018). The book was first published in 2016. The 2018 edition has expanded from the previous edition. It was published after Malaysia General Election in 2018. The religious identity of the Malays is more salient at the moment and is the subject of focus, is tangible and has no boundary in space and time should be considered and studied.

On the matter of identity, the survey shows many of the Malays will choose their religious identity as the principal identity. The survey also shows that Malays increasingly identified themselves as Muslims and not through their ethnicity (Zurairi, 2015). The results correspond positively with the previous survey carried out by Patricia Martinez (2006), *Opinion: Thumbs up to living in Malaysian diversity*.

As noted, the studies of the Malay identity within socio-historical and constitutional frameworks are built on and around history. The identity stressed is ethnicity, and the consequences are Malay nationalism and supremacy, which constrict the other communities' public sphere. So far, the above studies do not include religious identity. Although Ling (2006) and Tay (2018) both mentioned Islam, their studies are not about the Malay religious identity and its impact on non-Muslims. Relatively, as Ling and Tay wrote, "over the years, there is an increasing

legislative and judicial bias towards Islam, showing a distinct movement to entrench Islam as dominant and majority religion, beyond the consensus forged during the making of the Federation" (Ling, 2006, pp. 111; 113; Tay, 2018, p. 59. See also Kumar, 2012).

Nevertheless, Chin (2020) on *Malaysia: the 2020 putsch for Malay supremacy* briefly discusses the Malays' religious identity and its impact. He claims that the downfall of the Malaysian government in February 2020 was due to *Ketuanan Malay Islam* (Supremacy Malay Islam). According to him, Malay-Muslims simply did not want the Chinese Democratic Action Party (DAP) to govern together with them. Malay-Muslims wanted total government control with other components having no real political power (pp. 294-295). Chin writes about both identities of Malay-Muslims, but no further explanations were given. Readers also have no idea of which of the two identities had a more prominent role in causing the downfall and were unwilling to share political power. Thus, further research is needed to find out.

The following section will consider and review the two pillar identities of the Malays, ethnic and religious. It will review how the two identities interplay and which is to prevail.

1.6.3 Ethno-Religious Perspective

The ideology and perception of *Ketuanan Melayu* which is based on the Federal Constitution tends to marginalise the others in various respects. However, whether Muslims deny the role of others in public office has not been studied in detail. Some have taken for granted that Malay is Muslim and Muslim is Malay in every aspect of their doing. According to the Federation Constitution, the Malays and Muslims are identical in Malaysia and are now called Malay-Muslims (see Siddique, 1981, pp. 78, 82; Hassan, 2007, p. 294). Therefore, it is meaningful in Malaysia to discuss race and connect it to religion. Nevertheless, it is difficult to determine if religion is or is not a factor contributing to discrimination because the two have been interplayed in Malaysian society for decades (Aminnuddin, 2020, p. 3).

Frith (2000), Barr and Govindasamy (2010) and Hoffstaedter (2011) studied the relationship between Malay-Muslims and others by coalescing two identities, namely ethnic and religious. Mohamed (2011, pp. 31-34) provides a good overview of composite identity. Most remarkably, the conflation of Malay ethnic identity and

religious identity in Southeast Asia, using Lily's terms, "was a political construct which was, in many ways, problematic as it has an effect of excluding non-Muslim indigenous peoples" (cited from Aljunied 2006, p. 376). Frith, Barr, Govindasamy, and Hoffstaedter adopted sociological, textual (secondary school history text book) and ethnographical approaches, respectively. Frith and Hoffstaedter, a span over a decade, drew the same conclusion. Frith claims that "in a plural context of Malaysia with its high degree of communal sentiments has led the Malay community to assert its ethnic identity over its religious identity in its dealings with non-Malays" (2000, p. 126). This argument is like Mutalib's argument which was put forward 10 years before Frith's. Mutalib (1990) argues that whenever the Malays feel their political dominance is threatened by non-Malay, ethnicity is surfaced sharply to defend their political interest (p. 26). However, on the issue of the universalism of Islam and particularism of ethnicity, Frith disagrees with Mutalib that Malays choose to override a religious identity because they are not aware of their two trait identities. According to Frith, on the practical issue of day-to-day living, the ontological security of Malays will always incline to ethnic identity to keep their taxonomy advantages. Frith further argues that Malays can live with the contradiction of the two, namely universalism and particularism because the contradiction does not damage their self-image and value system (2000, p. 126).

Nonetheless, Malays cannot go against Islamic teachings when they seek protection for their special rights as indigenous people because Islam disapproves of the demands made in ethnic nationalism since it upholds values of justice and equity. To this end, Frith presents a concise and precise dialectic:

> The Malay resolves this dilemma by subsuming Islam within the Malay ethnicity. Islam becomes the vehicle through which the demands of an ethnic group are made. Malays will either pursue their political objectives through their Malay ethnic identity (realising that communalism is antithetical to the universalism of Islam), or they will use Islam as a vehicle through which to assert their ethnic demands (2000, p. 127).

Retrospectively, it is worth reading Frith's example on the preference of Malay ethnic identity to a religious identity by using the 1986 Malaysia General Election (see Frith, 2000, p. 127).

Similarly, Hoffstaedter describes Islam as being used as a smokescreen for political and economic control in Malaysia (2011, pp. 225-226). He further describes

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the elite in all its forms, "using Malayness as a special constitutional position to make Malayness superior and all the while this system is diminishing popular Malay sovereignty by policing Islam" (p. 226). Although there is a clash between ethnic and religious identities in dealing with others, Islam (Muslim identity) has been used to achieve their ethnic goals and reinforce Malay hegemony (Frith, 2000, p.127; Barr and Govindasamy, 2010, p. 300; Miller, 2004, p. 3). In the same way, Barr and Govindasamy point out that the diminished accommodating of others seems to be caused by religious concerns, but appearance can be deceiving. Using the history curriculum of secondary schools, they argue that "religious nationalism is operating as a surrogate for ethnic nationalism and has in fact, intensified ethnic nationalism by raising the stakes for the communities that are outside the core national group" (2010, p. 293). Most notably, the governing Malay elite is using religion to reinforce Malay-centric ideology through schools since education always reflects the position and agendas of the state in Malaysia (2010, p. 302). In other words, Islam is at the expense of establishing a Malay-centric national identity. On Malaysia nation building since independence, Abdul Rahman and Badriyah (2003, pp. 184-186) precisely recount, from 1987 onwards, the core of the history syllabus has been endorsing the strong Malay-centric nationalism. The change of the core ideology in the history syllabus is enormous if it is compared to the core ideology before 1987. Their history promotes egalitarian multiculturalism before 1969 (one of the principal objectives of the history syllabus during this time is to teach young students to be more tolerant of one another). At this time, history teaching aimed to integrate multi-ethnic communities and all races were equally included and embraced (Abdul Rahman and Badriyah, 2003, p. 184). However, history teaching tended to emphasise Malay-centric multiculturalism from 1969 until 1987 (see also Barr and Govindasamy, 2010, p. 302).

Frith, Barr, Govindasamy, and Hoffstaedter's studies (see also Siddique, 1981) emphasise the relationship and interplay between ethnicity and religion, the two salient facets of Malay. Having considered and reviewed the intricate interplay of Malays' racial and religious identity, thus far, their studies have not considered the power of the religious identity of Malays within Islamic ideology and the impact of political Islam or Islamic revivalism in Malaysia. Besides, as Frith (2010, p. 118) said, empirical evidence must be thus needed to prove the arguments.

Siddique (1981) in analysing the *Malay-Muslim Ethnicity in Peninsular Malaysia*, however, stresses that the better approach is by adopting the perception of a hyphenated Malay-Muslim identity (pp. 86-87). She does not only discuss the conflated identity, but insightfully, she points out that to relegate "religion" to merely the "religious sphere", particularly the Malays, is too restrictive and possibly disingenuous. The role of religious dimension in the understanding of Malay-Muslim ethnic identity has social-cultural, political, and economic implications in the Malaysian context. Siddique's study has revealed the implications of the Malay identity to themselves, culturally, socially, politically, and economically. In simple terms, as Malays, it brings privileges and special positions, not just the identity *per se.* Unfortunately, studies of the implications of the hyphenated Malay-Muslim identity, especially the element of religion for others, namely non-Malays or non-Muslims, have not been carried out.

Previous studies have found that discrimination against minority groups, in most cases, is due to ethnocentrism. In addition, much of the literature on ethnic discrimination does not sufficiently consider the religious causes. Nevertheless, religious factors obviously play an important role in leading to discrimination, and the causes of religious discrimination have their uniqueness (Fox, 2000a). On the surface, many discriminations or conflicts seem to be caused by ethnicity. The primary causes may not be religious issues, but most prejudices do involve religious issues. Religion can cause discrimination when religious beliefs and laws are believed to call for discriminatory action (Fox, 2000b). Allport once said, "Religion makes prejudice, and it unmakes prejudice" (Allport, 1954, p. 444). Accordingly, this study hopes to find out and seriously consider the religious factors that lead to discrimination. It also examines how (in what way) the religious identity (social identity) of the Malay-Muslims in Malaysia causes the discrimination of non-Muslims, emphasising the non-Muslim's public roles.

1.6.4 Social Psychological Perspective

Malaysian society is divided into different ethnic groups and relations among Malaysians, thereby have been comprehended in ethnic terms since the British colonial period (Gabriel, 2015, p. 787). The "divide and rule" principle implemented by British rulers did not disappear from Malaysian politics. In addition, ethnicity

affects almost every facet of the life of each Malaysian (Verkuyten and Khan, 2012, p. 132). In principle, all aspects of life in Malaysia have been racialised: socially, politically, and economically (Aminnuddin, 2020, p.3; Fee and Appudurai, p. 2011) even to the extent of job application (Lee and Khalid, 2016). Ethnic differences in Malaysia always lead to discrimination against others and were found to be significant (Haque 2003; Mohamad, 2005). Mutalib (2007, p. 40) claims that Malaysian society is no longer a "plural" society but rather as "bi-modal". The society is consistently drawn between "Muslims" and "non-Muslims" in intergroup boundaries, relations and settings (Fernadez and Coyle, 2019, pp. 38, 49). As Brewer (1999, p. 439) points out, "in highly segmented societies that are differentiated along a single primary categorisation, such as ethnicity or religion, a direct relationship between intense in-group favouritism and out-group antagonism is expected." This is especially true if the categorisation is dichotomous, dividing society into two major sub-groups. However, in view of its significance, no studies have been conducted in Malaysia on examining "racial and religious discriminatory attitudes as proxies of actual discrimination" (Aminnuddin, 2020, pp. 1-2).

So far, including Aminnuddin, there are presently only two in-depth studies on this related issue which are studied within the discipline of social psychology. One of the major tasks of social psychology is to expound on how a human being relates and reacts to his/her social world. Accordingly, many models and theories have developed within social psychology fields for understanding, examining and explaining the intergroup relations: social identity theory, social dominance theory, system justification theory, common ingroup identity model, ingroup projection model, intergroup contact theory, *et cetera* (see Alexander, Brewer, and Livingston, 2005; Alexander, Levin, and Henry, 2005; Brewer, 2007; Brown, 2010; Cairns, Kenworthy, Campbell and Hewstone, 2006; Deaux, 1996; Dovidio, Gaertner, and Validzic, 1998; Ellemers and Haslam, 2011; Gaertner et al., 1994; Galinsky and Moskowitz, 2000; Gibson, 2006; Glanzer and Alleman, 2015; González and Brown, 2003; Grigoryan et al., 2022; Oakes, 2002; Owens, Robinson and Smith-Lovin, 2010; Reicher, 2004; Tajfel, 1970; 1982; Mummendey and Wenzel, 1999; Sidanius, Pratto, Van Laar and Levin, 2004; Turner and Reynolds, 2012, *et cetera*).

Verkuyten and Khan (2012), using the well-established social psychology approach, namely, the Common Ingroup Identity Model and the Ingroup Projection Model*,* study the inter-ethnic relations between Chinese, Indians and Malays. The

findings show that the common identity positively affects other groups, but the inclusive identity has adverse effects on intergroup relations. Nevertheless, the study takes ethnicity as a variable without measuring the real-life dimension, for example, who (which race) do you like to interact with the most or who (which race) will you choose to be public servants. The limitation is also on using a limited number of items to assess some of the constructs (p. 138). They suggest that future studies should examine the role of religious group identification, social representations of history, and feelings of group threat. The present study considers religious group identification and feelings of group threat where these are the main factors that will cause in-group favouritism and out-group bias, thereby enhancing and contributing to the literature in this field, particularly in religion.

Aminnuddin's (2020) study on intergroup relations among Malaysians considers real-life experiences of Chinese and Malays. He also utilises social psychology methods: intergroup contact and social identity theory. Aminnuddin finds that Malays want neighbours of the same race and religion. It means Malays would prefer to have contact with Malays and Muslims only. In contrast, the Chinese do not show the same preference factors for neighbours. It is found that the Chinese have less than half the likelihood to discriminate based on race and religion compared to the Malays (Aminnuddin, 2020, p. 14). The study further shows that both Chinese and Malays conflate race identity and religious identity. Nonetheless, the universalism of Islam tends to suggest that Muslims should not have preferences for the race and religion of their neighbours. According to Islam, no discrimination should be allowed in the selection of neighbours or employees (see Quran 4:1; 49:13; 3:195).

Fernandez and Coyle (2019) rightly claim that there is relatively little psychological research on how Malaysians understand and engage with one another religiously, even though there are theories of intergroup relations and valuable resources for understanding these interactions and developing interventions to promote constructive engagement between religious groups (p. 38). The study by Fernandez and Coyle has filled this gap by utilising a social identity approach (social identity theory and self-categorisation theory) to develop an understanding of the psychological factors and processes that influence how Malaysian Muslims currently and, in the future, interact at the inter-religious level. Their research intends to prevent and avoid potential inter-religious conflicts in the future through their findings

and suggestions. However, they have not addressed the relationship between the religious identity of Malay-Muslims and the current pressing issue of excluding non-Muslims from government employment. In this respect, the social identity approach has not best served its function where it could offer a sound understanding, especially on the relationship between religious identity (social identity) and prejudice. Hence, they have recommended that "future research in the political psychology of religion should attend closely to the complexity of religious groups' social identities" (Fernandez and Coyle, 2019, p. 37).

The study hopes to speak to this gap not on the political psychology of religion but on the social psychology of religious identity and carefully examines how the exclusion of non-Muslims from significant public positions is due to the Malay-Muslims' religious identity, which has never been conducted before. Studying the Malay-Muslims' religious identity is vital as it contains Malays' self-understanding. It is also a salient identity that responds pragmatically and rationally to an environment (social phenomenon). Furthermore, it is also why religious identity is often linked to the other concept of identification (Barry, 2012, p. 24; Mitchell, 2006, p. 1149; see also Van Camp, 2010, pp. 15-20; Hogg, Terry and White, 1995; Oldmeadow et al., 2003; Turner and Reynolds, 2012, pp. 399-417) thus producing in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination.

1.6.5 Religious Perspective

Religious identity is one of the important identities of the Malays as far as Malaysia are concerned. However, no specific study focuses on the implications of religious identity for non-Muslims. The roles of non-Muslims in Malaysia are always framed and shaped by Islamic terms and regulations over which religious authority and organisation have power. This has resulted in "the emergence of new forms of religious authority and organisation," which leads to "blurring boundaries between state and religious institutions" (Kloos and Berenschot, 2017, pp. 201-2). According to Kloos and Berenschot, however, it is best to address the issue of non-Muslim citizenship and rights (roles) in the public sphere by engaging in debates that are "taking place within Islam" (2017, p. 203). Furthermore, Kloos and Berenschot are also right in pointing out that Muslims in Malaysia and Indonesia are engaging these issues with a scripturalist approach. The scripturalist approach interprets the Qur'an

and Hadiths literally. This approach does not consider the text's context. Scripturalists argue that Muslims must follow the commands in the text. Whereas substantial or contextual interpretation encourages Muslims to engage in the substance of Islam. Contextualists demand a flexible interpretation of the texts based on the situation of day-to-day living. On the other hand, other Muslims may adopt a less scripturalist interpretation, that is, a substantial or contextual understanding of Islam, to deal with a similar issue (Kloos and Berenschot, 2017, p. 202). As a result, a proper understanding of non-Muslims' rights (roles) in the public domain within Islam in Malaysia, particularly from the perspective of the Qur'an, is critical.

Apparently, Islam's special position in Article 3 (1) of Malaysia's Federal Constitution does not mention that only Muslims should be employed in public services. In addition, the special position of Islam also does not state that Muslims will not and should not/never govern together with other religious followers. In other words, as far as Article 3(1) is concerned, there is no direct link between Islam and the exclusion of non-Muslims from public employment. However, in *Meor Atiqulraham bin Ishak & Ors v. Fatimah bte sihi Ors*, the judicial opinions stated that Islam as the dominant religion should not be limited to rituals and ceremonies (Ling 2006: 110-111). Noticeably, such a statement contradicts the original intention of Islam as the religion of Federal Malaysia, which refers only to rituals and ceremonies of government functions as well as personal and family laws applicable to Muslims (Ling, 2006, p. 111; Fernando, 2006). In his view, Islam is not like every other religion in Malaysia. Muslims and Islam are at different levels from other faiths (Ling, 2006, pp. 110-111). These religious nationalists who place Islam and its followers at the centre of Malaysian society convey that the other communities are inferior. In another development, Islam's special position as the religion of the Federation has indeed affected freedom to convert out of Islam, but this is not the subject matter of this study.

Additionally, some studies have offered insights on religious tolerance among Muslims, both in majority Muslim countries (including Malaysia) and Muslim minority countries. Abdul Ghani and Awang (2017) have written a review on religious tolerance in Malaysia. The paper reviews the literature on racial and religious tolerance in Malaysia from the 1960s to date (2020). In sum, the promotion of religious tolerance so far is done basically at an individual level, mainly focusing on a

proper understanding of Muslims and the teachings of Islam. Literature welcomes the roles of government in minimising intolerance. Unfortunately, it still only encourages a better understanding of Islam but does not include other religions' understanding and interaction.

On the one hand, these studies reveal that levels of tolerance of Muslims tend to be relatively low, even in non-Muslim majority countries such as Western Europe (Verkuyten et al., 2014) and the United States of America (Djupe and Calfano, 2012). Muslims living in these countries are found to be less tolerant (Sumaktoyo, 2018, p. 17). On the other hand, Catholics in Catholic-majority countries comparatively have higher levels of tolerance (Gu and Bomhoff, 2012; Sumaktoyo, 2018, p. 17). A study by Sumaktoyo (2018, pp. 36-37) has eliminated the possibility of religious differences. The second-largest faith in the Muslim majority countries is always Christianity, whereas in the Catholic-majority countries, it is not Islam, but other traditions of Christianity. The supposition is that it may be easier for Catholics to befriend Christians than for Muslims to befriend non-Muslims. In other words, the religious difference between Catholicism and other traditions of Christianity is less than between Islam and Christianity. The empirical evidence shows that it is not the religious difference that caused the religious intolerance of Muslims.   Rather, it is the religious inward-looking relationships (in-group religious identity) that contribute to Muslims' intolerance in Muslim majority countries and Muslim minority countries (Sumaktoyo, 2018, pp. 41-42). This finding shows that the religious identity of Muslims indeed contributes to intolerance towards non-Muslims. It also agrees with the theory that religious identity "has been shown to lead intolerance toward and rejection of religious outgroups" (Sumaktoyo, 2018, pp. 24-25; Bloom, Arikan and Courtemanche, 2015).

Allport (1966) outlined three contexts of religious intolerance, namely (1) theological context, (2) socio-cultural context, and (3) personal-psychological context. However, scholars drew also three significant perspectives on the antecedents of Muslim religious intolerance around the globe that followed Allport's three contexts: (1) theological perspective, (3) institutional perspective, and (3) psychological perspective.

Theological, the first perspective, views that Muslims' low religious tolerance is due to the teaching of the Quran, which discourages them from being friends with non-Muslims. It is also argued that Islamic doctrines would encourage Muslims to

just to obey, resulting in less engagement with non-Muslims (Sumaktoyo, 2018, p. 20). This perspective, of course, may not represent the entire Islamic world.

The second perspective is the institutional factor. The state administration of Countries with a Muslim majority do not generally separate state and religion. As such, it is so believed that this administration method is always privileging Islam over others. Consequently, it would be understandable that certain groups are discriminated against when the "government demonstrates through its laws that not all citizens are equal" (Sumaktoyo, 2018, p. 21).

The third perspective concerning the intolerance of Muslims is the psychological aspect. Individuals are more likely to tolerate a group they perceive to be of little or no threat. However, political activities can increase the threat perception of outgroups. Besides that, intolerance of Muslims has been linked to doctrinalism. The higher the religiosity of a person is, the less the person's tolerance (Saroglou, 2002; Gibson, 2010). Consequently, Muslim countries that are more religious might explain the lower intolerance. Again, such a perspective is not universal since Muslim-majority countries such as Indonesia and Iran generally show a higher level of religious tolerance. Although Dilmaghani (2017), Ekici and Yucel (2015), and Kuosmanen's (2020) studies do not focus on Islam and Muslim-majority countries, their findings may shed little light on the reasons, particularly from the perspective of identity.

An obvious limitation of the above perspectives is that they overlook the effects of social identity and group categorisation on the "prejudice-religion relationships" (Batson and Stocks, 2005, p. 423). The *ummah* concept of Islam, the notion that all Muslims are brothers and sisters, arguably is more conducive to religious bonding (group category) in which people are connected by religious identity (social identity), which subsequently acts prejudicially against the people outside their group. As Bernard Lewis explains, this is because "Islam is not only a matter of faith and practice; it is also an identity and a loyalty – for many, an identity and a loyalty that transcend all others." According to Islam, Muslims must make their common faith the most important marker of identity and the *ummah islāmiyah* (Islamic community of believers) the most essential collective to which they can - and should – belong (2003, p. 17).

The above perspectives are also ineffective in answering the question of why different people in the same country have different levels of religiosity but exhibit

similar intolerance toward out-groups. The social identity and self-categorisation theories can help better understand and answer why in-group bias is uniform via social (religious) identity (see Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999). Last, to know the impacts/consequences of religious identities, one needs to determine the causes that lead to the salient difference in group identities and the conditions that lead people to behave in group-relevant terms (Gibson, 2006, p. 697) (Chapter 4 is aimed to study these – ethnic ethnocracy and religious autocracy). Thus, the study tries to fill this knowledge gap by finding the implications of the Muslim religious identity towards the non-Muslims in Malaysia.

1.6.6 Religious Identity (Muslims) and Its Implications as Social Identity

Religion plays a significant role in determining an individual's as well as a group's identity. However, as claimed by Van Camp (2010, pp. 15-20), "religion is absent from both the theory and the study of identity, and identity is absent from both the theory and the study of religion." Many conceptual frameworks explain that religion serves as a marker or as a supportive element of ethnic identities. Others do not even consider religious identity (see Peek, 2005, pp. 217-219). Thus, religious identity is usually undermined or overlooked. In contrast, Mitchell (2006, p. 1149) argues that "religion provides authentic substance", not just the preserving or maintaining of identities (see Bernhardt, 2014; Karpov, Lisovskaya and Barry, 2012, p. 640; Sarmani, 2014, pp. 68-69). In other words, "individuals and groups often call on substantive religious content to construct identifications" (Mitchell, 2006, p. 1149. See also Hogg, Terry and White, 1995; Oldmeadow et al., 2003; Turner and Reynolds 2012: 399-417). Moreover, Barry (2012, p. 27) utilises the concept of ethnodoxy and draws a similar conclusion, in which he writes, "affiliation to an ethnic group's dominant religion is essential for constructing and maintaining a group's identity".

Religious identity differs from the conventional identity features described in the literature (Deaux et al., 1995) and is unlike other identity associations such as race and gender. Religious identity is often one that is freely chosen. This may explain why it is frequently rated as more essential or salient to people's self-concepts than other identities like race, gender, and class (Freeman, 2003. For the discussion on the issue of identity, see Bastos, Ibarrola-Armendariz, Sardinha,

Westin and Will, 2006, pp. 202-210). Religious identities are also unique in that they are social groupings based on internal, guiding, yet unfalsifiable belief systems (Burris and Jackson, 2000; Ysseldyk, Matheson, and Anisman, 2010). It is a unified system of meaning (Silberman, 2005) that also serves to bind people into a moral community (Graham and Haidt, 2010). It also influences the relationships of the members of religious out-groups (Haji, 2008). Religious identity can be so dominant in people's lives because, in addition to any sense of belonging to group identity, this belonging is even more authorised by members who decisively adhere to personal beliefs in the way in which this belonging to the eternal group will benefit their beings - to be or in this life or afterlife. Furthermore, while other social identities such as ethnicity and gender may provide consolation in times of hardship, it appears likely that the belief system that comes with religious group membership may be especially helpful in times of pain or uncertainty (Van Camp, 2010, pp. 17-19; Hogg, Adelman and Blagg, 2010; Ysseldyk et al., 2010).

Mutalib (1990, pp. 6-7) in his study on *Islam and Ethnicity in Malay Politics* avoided adopting any conceptual framework to discuss the relationship between Islam and politics. However, he acknowledged the significance of Islam in a Muslim's life. He argued that Islam is more than a "religion" encompassing politics. Islam governs ideology, laws, morals, and practices in general. It should be observed that he continued, unlike other universal faiths, Islam declares its inseparability from politics, claiming that religion and politics are inextricably interwoven. Both the *ummah* (people) and the *imāmah* (leaders) are political and religious concepts. Islam is belief and law, religion and state, and a value system that unites spiritual and temporal activities. Despite Muslim scholars' general acceptance of Islam as more than a code that governs an individual's moral conduct, but rather a corpus of rules and regulations that provides for every need and all requirements, the debate over the precise relationship between Islam and politics continues. He further asserts that any models adopted "are not mutually exclusive" and one of his primary concerns is to probe further the relationship and relative strength of the two most prevalent aspects of Malay identity: Islam and ethnicity.

Contestably, the inseparability of Islam and Muslim identity is subjective and depends on the theoretical framework adopted. With Islam as religion and Malay (Muslim) as *ummah*, the Malay-Muslims' identity in Malaysia is best viewed as two components: Malay as ethnic and Muslim as religion. Thus, it can be said that ethnic

identity and religious identity are the "two forms of the association through which Malay-Muslims pursue their interests" predominantly pertaining to economic and political gain in the context of modernity (Frith, 2000, p. 124). As noted, the Malay religious identity may not necessarily unite with the interests that relate to religion.

As religious identity is increasingly recognised as an important yet often overlooked social identity, research has begun to explore whether some of the identification processes and outcomes associated with other social identities can be applied to religious identity. For example, the social identity component of religion has been proposed as a mechanism through which religion positively influences achievement. Religious identity, like social identity, can provide both a sense of belonging and social support. However, religious identification appears to have advantages over analogous secular group memberships, providing more evidence of the distinctiveness of religious identity and the need to research it (Ysseldyk et al., 2010, pp. 62-63). This, of course, indicates that religious identification provides benefits other than the life purpose and guidance offered by the belief system with which it is related. Indeed, religious affiliation is an intriguing combination of a powerful individual system of faith and significant community membership (Van Camp, 2010, p. 30). In other words, individuals and communities engage with one another, implying that "communities of faith" rather than faith or community alone, generate the greatest well-being (Ysseldyk et al., 2010, p. 63. See also Abeysekara, 2004).

Graham and Haidt (2010) take a social-functionalist approach and argue that religious stories, rituals, and practices help to form moral communities. They are among the social psychologists who advocate a strictly social method for the study of religion. These narratives and practices emphasise moral obligations to the in-group (but not, by definition, to the out-group). While all social identities, including religion, result in self/other-categorisation, religious identification may be especially vulnerable to intergroup processes such as in-group love and out-group bias (Brewer, 1999). However, some of the more negative consequences of identification, such as prejudice, can be minimised by the moral principles of many of the world's religions (Goalwin, 2018; Hunsberger and Jackson, 2005). More recently, Hall and colleagues (Hall, Matz, and Wood, 2010) did a meta-analysis of data relating religiosity to racial prejudice and showed that a strong religious identification was connected with contempt for racial out-groups and that individuals

were religious out of concern for social conformity because as social norms change, they were more likely to exhibit decreased racial discrimination (Van Camp, 2010, pp. 30-31).

This inconsistency in findings may be partly due to the multiple meanings associated with religion (cognitive, motivational, social, intergroup), which may differentially support or hinder prejudice against others (Hunsberger and Jackson, 2005). In his landmark article on religion and prejudice, Allport (1966, p. 447) proposed that "there is something about religion that makes for prejudice and something about it that unmakes prejudice" (see also Hunsberger and Jackson, 2005, p. 807; Silberman, 2005, p. 655). Indeed, while the moral component of religiosity appears to have a unique ability to inhibit prejudice in some ways, other parts of religious identity have a unique ability to reinforce intergroup processes such as prejudice. For example, one feature of religious identification that may contribute to increased intergroup conflict is the belief that one's religion is true and other religions are false (Wellman and Tokuno, 2004). Furthermore, perceived attacks against one's religious group may be perceived as particularly harmful and threatening, not only because they threaten self-esteem through the social identity formation process, but also because they are attacks against fundamental worldviews and belief systems, and thus against essential personhood (Ysseldyk et al., 2010). Finally, according to Silberman (2005), religions and religious communities, as collective meaning systems, create shared realities that help explain everyday experiences, including interactions with other groups (Van Camp, 2010, pp. 31-32).

While one could theoretically argue that religion and religious affiliation are or are not connected with common intergroup processes like bias, research in this area is limited. Some research on the relationship between religion and racial prejudice has already been identified. But what about intergroup processes involving religious out-groups? As claimed by Van Camp (2010, p. 32), there is no systematic research that directly examines evaluations of religious out-group members. In the Malaysian context, there is no systematic study concerning the implications of Malay-Muslim identity on non-Muslims, particular on non-Muslim public roles.

1.6.7 Non-Muslim Rights and Public Roles

There are many studies discussing the rights of non-Muslims in Muslim-majority countries, including the rights of non-Muslims in a multi-racial, multi-ethnic and multi-religious society such as Malaysia (for example, Abu Hassan, 2021; Alibašić, 2007; Bsoul, 2014; Chuah, 2006; El-Seoudi et al., 2012; Ghazi, 2007; Muztar, 1979; Sentuk, 2005). Relatively, there is limited writing on the public roles of non-Muslims in a multi-ethnic Muslim majority society, particularly in Malaysia, either by Muslim scholars or non-Muslim academicians. When discussing the non-Muslim rights within a Muslim-majority society, very few mention non-Muslim rights in governing and administrating the country. In other words, not many writings are about the political power-sharing of Islam with non-Muslims in governing the country, including Malaysia. Thus, it gives rise to the following thoughts: (1) It is not an issue for Muslims where Islam does not permit political power-sharing with non-Muslims from the very beginning. Hence, not too much ink should be spent on this subject; (2) It is an issue only to non-Muslims because they are not in position to change if there shall be any undesirable situations. There is nothing wrong for the majority to be in full power and control; (3) Only a liberal democratic system demands equal citizens' rights and shares political power among their people regardless of faiths. There are many governing systems and Islam is only one of which is different from democracy. Islamic system should not be judged by the democratic system.

The discussions on non-Muslim rights in a Muslim majority society are mainly on fundamental human rights, for example, the right to live, the right to own property as well as the security of such property, the right to work, the right to freedom of movement, the right to freedom of religion, the rights to be treated justly and fairly (see Abu Hassan, 2021; Alibašić, 2007; Chuah, 2006; El-Seoudi et al., 2012; Muztar, 1979; Sentuk, 2005). Sentuk's *Minority Rights in Islam: from Dhimmis to Citizen* is a good piece of work. Unfortunately, non-Muslim rights to politics and public offices are not discussed in detail in modern Islamic societies. Sentuk only mentions that "under classical Islamic law, non-Muslims were allowed to serve as minister and prime minister (*vizier*), but not as the ruler of the state" (2005, p. 86). On the other hand, one should not take the reformed Islamic law granting equal citizenship to all individuals as equivalent to Western modern nation-state citizenship. Using Anjum's term, it is "nearly equal citizens" (2016a, p. 31) because non-Muslims are not granted the right to be the head of the state (2016a, p. 44). Sarakhsi, a Muslim

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jurist, sums it up well in the following words: "non-Muslims are like Muslims as far as the civil matters, and the dealings of this world are concerned" (quoted from Ghazi, 2007, p. 71). But the notion is thus limited to non-Muslims' lives, property and wealth. Muslims and non-Muslims should note that the rights of non-Muslims do not mean equal holding of significant government positions and political rights that Muslims possess.

1.7   Knowledge Gap, Need and Value of Study

The study of literature above shows that the inter-ethnic, inter-religion relations between Malays and non-Malays, and Muslims and non-Muslims in Malaysia have been studied from socio-historical, federal constitutional, ethno-religious, social psychology, and religious perspectives. Put differently, previous studies were focusing on Malay's historical identity, constitutional identity, social identity, ethnic and religious identity at the level of sociological understanding and Muslim (Islamic) identity. Strictly, none of the above can be considered as an in-depth study of the relationship between Malay's identity and its impacts on non-Malays, particularly the religious dimension when hyphenated identity is considered. It appears that a study on religious identity (a kind of social identity) and its implications for other communities has been overshadowed by the Malay ethnic identity studies. At this point, no comprehensive study has been carried out on the Malay-Muslim religious identity and its implications (effects) on non-Muslims' public roles.

Moreover, intergroup relations between Malay-Muslims and non-Malay Muslims have not been addressed in detail from the perspective of religious identity. Also, the answer why different individuals in the same country have different levels of religiosity but show the similarity of intolerance towards out-groups is found missing. The literature review also informs that the religious identity is a salient identity of Malay-Muslims in Malaysian context where it significantly impacts behaviour towards others. As noted, the Malays' identity has gradually shifted away from ethnic towards religious over the years. The religious identity is now the salient identity of the Malays, but to know the impacts/consequences of religious identities, one needs to determine the causes that lead to the salient difference in group identities and the conditions that lead people to behave in group-relevant terms (Gibson, 2006, p.

697). Seemingly, religious identity is not the only determining factor of action of the Malays; for example, it may be influenced by ethnicity or nationalism. Nevertheless, how far the discrimination of non-Muslims in public appointments is caused by religious identity, how the sacred text plays a part, and how far it is socially motivated are found missing and need to be studied. This study aims to fill these knowledge gaps by studying systematically Malay-Muslim identity and its implications for non-Muslims, particularly on non-Muslim public roles.

In other respects, in the researcher's opinion, there is a need to critically examine Malay-Muslims' public resolutions that only Malay-Muslims should hold the leading and top positions in the government from the perspective of religious identity, which is another dimension of the majority Muslims' understanding of others in public participation. The religion of Islam, to a certain extent, has been capitalised on by politicians for their political and personal gain (Hassan, 2007pp. 298-299; Raina, 2016, pp. 857-858), especially on account of the current development of preventing the non-Muslims from holding important positions in the cabinet and public sectors (see resolutions of Malay Dignity Congress, Nazari, 2019). Addressing this critical but lacking aspect in Malaysia could contribute to the essential knowledge of, as well as Muslims' understanding of, the participation of non-Muslims in public roles. Furthermore, this study has value in dealing with the issue between Muslims and non-Muslims from within Islam itself. Any topic related to Islam and the Muslim community is best to be discussed and argued about within their religious perspective (Islam) (see Olivier, 2020, p. 200; Kloos and Berenschot, 2017, p. 203). This approach is thus considered not to be attacking Muslims and Islam but to try to reduce the threat to Islam to its minimum level. This study utilises some aspects of social identity theory, one of the social psychological methods used to understand intergroup (inter-ethnic and inter-religious) relations. Hopefully, this study will contribute to a broader body of knowledge concerning religion (Van Camp, 2010, p. 11), particularly Islamic social psychology.

1.8   Thesis Structure

This thesis comprises eight chapters, including the Introduction and Conclusions chapters.

Chapter 1 outlines the general overview of the research. It starts with Islamisation in Malaysia, which radically changes the pluralist society. It spells out the rationale, objectives, questions, and statement underpinning this study. The literature review includes five perspectives, namely, socio-historical, federal constitutional, ethno-religious, social-psychological, and religious. It reviews the past literature in Malaysia about Malay ethnic identity and its intergroup relations, the relationship between discrimination and identity, and discrimination due to religious identity. The focus is on reviewing studies that are related to the understanding of socially constructed religious identity and the implications of such identity for the out-groups' public roles, particularly non-Muslims in Malaysia. The chapter also addresses the knowledge gap, as well as the need for and value of the study.

Chapter 2 addresses the theoretical framework used in this study, namely social identity theory and social identity framing. This chapter also covers research methodology and design. The study adopts a mixed methods research approach (quantitative and qualitative analysis). The chapter also explains data characteristics and methods used in the analysis. The chapter ends by outlining a few research limitations.

Chapter 3 addresses the question of non-Muslim public roles in Muslim-majority societies. First and foremost, non-Muslim employment in the early Islamic period will be examined. Then, the chapter addresses topics concerning Islam and *dhimmis*. The chapter also provides insight into whether the dismissal of non-Muslims in the early Islamic period is or is not due to religious factors.

Chapter 4 first provides a picture of the origins of the Malays in Malaysia. It then traces the development of the Malay, Muslim, and Malay-Muslim identity from Malaysia's pre-independence period to the contemporary one. The chapter also seeks to interpret this development, its meanings, and its implications in relation to other ethnic groups. The chapter also discusses the impact of Malay-Muslim identity from the standpoint of social identity theory. Finally, this chapter analyses the ethnicity of the Malays in Malaysia within Islam parameters.

Chapter 5 offers an understanding and a picture of the non-Muslims and their engagements in Malaysian government employment. The chapter studies power-sharing in Malaysia before and after independence. Next, the chapter analyses the status of non-Muslims within traditional and modern Islam, including the status of

non-Muslims in Malaysia. The chapter also examines equal citizenship in a pluralistic and democratic Malaysian society.

Chapter 6 shows empirical evidence of the effects of Malay religious identity on non-Muslim public roles in Malaysia. The evidence is based on questionnaires and semi-structured interviews collected from university students and working adults. The results will show if the religious identity played a substantial role in excluding non-Muslims from government employment. The results also showed the meanings of religious identity from a social-psychological perspective.

Chapter 7 draws together findings presented in Chapters 3 to 6. Attempts are made to show that the study objectives have been achieved, especially if the main research question has been answered. The chapter further summarises the knowledge contributions of this research. Last, the chapter puts forward the future directions for study.

1.9   Conclusion

This chapter outlines Islamisation in Malaysia, which radically changed the pluralistic and democratic community. The chapter then explains the rationale, objectives, questions, and statement underpinning this study. The literature review covers the perspectives of socio-historical, federal constitutional, ethno-religious, social-psychological, religious, religious identity, and non-Muslim rights. The focus is on reviewing studies that are related to the understanding of socially constructed religious identity and the implications of such identity for the out-groups' public roles, particularly non-Muslims in Malaysia. Nonetheless, it is unclear how non-Muslim discrimination in public appointments is caused by religious identity, how the sacred text is involved, and how it is socially motivated. This study aims to fill these gaps. The chapter also addressed the need for and value of the study.

The next chapter will discuss this study's theoretical framework and research methodology. It includes the explanation of data characteristics as well as methods of analysis, which are crucial for the study.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework and Research Methodology

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the theoretical framework underpinning the study. Many theories could be used to understand intergroup (i.e., inter-ethnic or inter-religious) relations, and the study utilises social identity theory (social psychological framework) for this purpose. Meanwhile, social identity framing within the social movement framework is adopted to explain the framing of Malay religious identity in Malaysia, especially from a political perspective by political leaders.

The chapter also explains the study's methods, design, data collection, data characteristics and methods used in the analysis. This study employs a mixed methods research approach (qualitative and quantitative). The employment of quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (semi-structured interview) research methods aim to complement each other, thus making the study more comprehensive. Finally, the chapter also discusses the limitations of the study.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This section explains the theoretical frameworks that are used in this study. It is divided into two sub-sections. First, it discusses the conceptual framework of social identity theory. Second, it describes the theory of social identity framing.

2.2.1 Social Identity Theory

Intergroup relations have long been a topic of study in the fields of social psychology, political psychology, and organisational behaviour. Three theories provide a helpful understanding of intergroup relations, particularly intergroup discrimination: System

justification theory, social dominance theory and social identity theory. The first two theories intended to replace social identity theory by putting forward a detailed critique as a justification for developing their novel approaches (Rubin and Hewstone, 2004, p. 827). Huddy (2001) has also given a critical examination on social identity theory and Kinnvall (2004, pp. 749-752) on a review of social identity theory. However, because Oakes (2002) has already responded to Huddy, it will not be discussed further here.

According to the system justification theory, people have a positive attitude not only toward themselves (ego-justification) and the groups to which they belong (group-justification) but also toward the broader social structures in which they are embedded and to which they are beholden (system-justification). Advocates of system justification theory contend that there is a general ideological motivation to justify and defend the existing social order. Additionally, when the passive comfort of maintaining the current system is weighed against the possible cost (financial, social, and psychological) of moving against the *status quo*, a shared environment emerges in which the existing social, economic, and political arrangements are preferred. Alternatives to the *status quo* are often dismissed, allowing inequity to persist. This system-justifying purpose can result in out-group favouritism, which is the acceptance of inferiority among low-status groups and a good image of relatively higher-status groups. Thus, a basic premise in system justification theory is that individuals are both supporters and victims of system-imposed standards (Jost, Banaji and Nosek, 2004; Osborne, Sengupta and Sibley, 2019; Rubin and Hewstone, 2004, pp. 833-834). As noted, the aim of this study is not about the discrimination due to low- and high-status groups or group-based discrimination (for example, Bahamondes, Sibley and Osborne, 2021). It is also not about the out-group favouritism but about the out-group discrimination. The study aims to find out the implications of religious identity as a type of social identity rather than to study the favourable attitudes toward the existing social order and the *status quo*.

Social dominance theory suggests that all human societies create group-based hierarchies that either promote or attenuate intergroup hierarchies. In a social hierarchy, some people have more reputation, influence, or income than others. A group-based hierarchy differs from an individual-based hierarchy in that the former is founded on a socially constructed group, such as race, ethnicity, religion, social class, linguistic group, and so on, whereas the latter is founded on athletic or

leadership ability, high intelligence, artistic abilities, and so on. Individuals with a strong social dominance orientation want to build intergroup hierarchies and have their in-groups dominate their out-groups (Rubin and Hewstone, 2004, p. 835; Sidanius, Pratto, Van Laar and Levin, 2004).

Sidanius et al., (2004, p. 857) define social dominance theory as a personality theory of discrimination in the sense that "people's ethnocentric orientations and sociopolitical attitudes are reflections of, and rooted in, personality and cross-situationally consistent behavioural predispositions." As a result, social dominance theory is open to broad objections of discriminatory personality theories. Personality theories provide highly rigid explanations of intergroup discrimination because they explain discrimination disparities in terms of personality differences that are thought to be constant across settings. Consequently, personality theories struggle to explain how the same person might exhibit substantially different degrees of discrimination in different settings. Furthermore, personality theories struggle to explain how members of the same social group can exhibit dramatically different degrees of discriminating in various settings (Huddy, 2004; Reicher, 2004; Rubin and Hewstone, 2004: 837).

Most critiques of social identity theory focus on research biases among social identity researchers rather than conceptual weaknesses in the theory itself. The system justification and social dominance theories should encourage social identity theory scholars to focus more on the phenomena of out-group favouritism, institutional discrimination, social consensus, and out-group derogation. Reicher (2004, p. 922) is correct in asserting that, despite more than 30 years of research, the social identity tradition should be viewed as a "propitious beginning" rather than a "finished article" (Rubin and Hewstone, 2004, p. 838).

Social identity theory was developed to explain self-perception and intergroup behaviour (Tajfel and Turner, 2004). The theory seeks to explain how groups develope, how they evaluate themselves and others, and the social incentive for group membership, interaction, and conflict (Hogg, 2016, p. 6). The core idea of this theory is that social identity provides group members with a common identity through which members judge who they are, what they believe, and how they should behave within their group and regarding other groups. A variety of major theories and concepts in social identity theory explain various elements of group formation as well as intragroup and intergroup behaviour. Although they each contribute to a different

field of behaviour research, they function together to produce a coherent explanatory framework (Russel, 2020, p. 12).

In social identity theory, social groups such as religions, nations and ethnicities are called "imagined communities". They share the same norms, values, and ethnic and religious identities (Al Raffie, 2013, p. 76). In Islamic terms, they are called *ummah* (for the detailed meanings of *ummah*, see Denny 1975. This study will take *ummah* as the contemporary understanding, that is the religious or Muslim community). According to Anderson (1983), imagined communities are not the same as small social communities and networks where interaction, communication, and connection happen every day. That is why they are imagined. However, the normative expectation on members of an imagined community does not diminish compared to those who stay connected and interact face-to-face. At the same time, "Individuals feel pressures of conformity and social desirability as members of a large imagined community just as they do in smaller, more intimate groups" (Barry, 2012, p. 21; Brubaker and Cooper, 2000).

Social identity theory propositions that a social group is a collection of persons who identify as members of the same social category, not just intellectually but also via the attachment of values and feelings (Brewer, 2007, p. 698; Deaux, 1996, p. 778). Individuals who identify with the same social category or group are motivated to distinguish their group from others to maintain a high self-esteem or achieve self-enhancement (Deaux, 1996, p. 778; Negy at al., 2003; Tajfel and Turner, 1979; Ysseldyk et al., 2010, p. 61). This self-categorisation or self-identification subsequently promotes social environment as consisting of an in-group and various out-groups. It should be made aware that identifying with the same religious group might enhance or gain more self-esteem and security than other identities (for example, ethnic group and nationality), perhaps arising from highly organised support networks (Ysseldyk et al., 2010, p. 61).

Social identity theory also provides a helpful and fundamental understanding of ethnic and religious identities as social identities and their implications for others. Social identity theory suggests that "larger, supra-individual forces influence individuals". In other words, individuals' self-concept, self-evaluation, values and emotions are always subjected to the normative expectation of a particular group (Barry, 2012, p. 21). Hence, social identity theory is significant in examining popular connection to social groups and categories (for example, ethnicity and religion).

Thus, and so, social identity theory can be used to explain individuals' self-perception as members of large, intangible imagined communities that conflate ethnic and religious identities (Barry, 2012, p. 21). Focusing on religious identity *per se*, social identity theory "emphasises individual identity as conforming to particular social category norms and expectations that is to say, individuals will present a certain religious identity because it is socially, culturally and legally required" (Barry, 2012, p. 24). One's social environment shapes what is considered an appropriate and inappropriate act and behaviour. In this respect, the inflow of information through social networks at a national level will play a determinant role in shaping in-group favouritism and outgroup discrimination (Huckfeldt, Mendez and Osborn, 2004).

Nonetheless, merely identifying and placing individuals into arbitrary social categories, even religious groups, is sufficient to generate in-group and out-group discrimination and prejudice (Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 521). In-group and out-group bias and derogation will occur even without any interaction with other group members or without any history of competition or conflict between groups (Brewer, 2007, p. 697; Deaux, 1996, p. 779). Religion is, to some extent, partly responsible for group animosity because religious groups work on the same principles as political, ethnic, or other groupings. These principles imply that a proclivity to respond to people based on their collective identity (in-group or out-group members) may be widespread among those who identify with their religious group rather than individual religion (Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 510). In other words, it is a differentiation between "us" and "not-us" or "me" and "them" or "us" and "them". Simply put, it is between "us" and "others", a distinctive identification of who is "us" and who is "others" – a rule of exclusion as well as inclusion. Bias stemming from differential "us" – "others" results from upholding from out-groups (others) favours and benefits that are extended only to the in-group (us) (Brewer, 1999, p. 438; 2007, pp. 696-697; Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 511).

Bias can also arise from comparison or competition, where an out-group is perceived as a threat to the integrity, interests, or identity of not only oneself but also the in-group as a whole. The threats may have appeared in the forms of competition for the position, political representation and limited resources, promotion of one's values and protection of one's status (Brewer, 2007, p. 697; Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 510). Through the comparison process, individuals always

differentiate their group from other groups and place their group in a more positively valued status (Deaux, 1996, p. 790). Because of religious belief and content, religious groups are likely to make intergroup comparisons and place their own group in a higher or better position (Ysseldyk et al., 2010, p. 60; Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 511). Stereotyping in-group members as superior and out-group members as inferior such as infidels, immoral, and/or enemies, could serve this esteem-enhancing function (Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, pp. 511, 521. See also Hugenberg and Sacco, 2008; Johnson, Schaller and Mullen, 2000; Nelson 2016; Krueger and DiDonato, 2008).

However, the conflation or interwind of two identities for a group that is equally significant must be duly considered as well. The conflation of ethnic and religious identities (ethnodoxy) is always exclusive by nature, especially when it is so believed "that to be part of a particular ethnic group, one must also need to be a member of that group's dominant religious tradition" (in the case of Malaysia, it is called as Malay-*Muslim*), and *vice-versa* (Barry, 2012, p. 28). Besides, ethnodoxy "implies an active attempt to secure an advantaged social position for a particular group" (Barry, 2012, p. 29). As a result, the creation of the notion of in-groups and out-groups is inevitably inclined "to perceive other ethnic and religions as harmful to the group's unity and well-being" (Barry, 2012, p. 27; Karpov, et al., 2012, p. 644). In social identity terms, these are called in-group favouritism (biases) and intergroup prejudice (discrimination) (Tajfel, 1986, p. 23; Mcfarland, 1989; Cairns, et al., 2006; Van Camp, 2010, pp. 32-35). Notably, the salient identity is always accentuating the bias or discrimination (Van Camp, 2010, p. 141).

Brewer (2007, pp. 696-697) points out that bias arising from in-group–outgroup differentiation processes can have three different positions. One type is in-group favouritism, which has been the focus of much intergroup research conducted within the social identity theory tradition. The emphasis here is on distinguishing the in-group from everyone else (the "us" – "not us" distinction). There may or may not be an explicit out-group in this case; the generalised "others" suffices. Prejudice and discrimination result from a differential favourability and positivity toward those who share this in-group identity, but no corresponding negativity or hostility toward non-in-group members. Discrimination occurs when others are denied favours and benefits that are extended only to the in-group.

A second type of bias, perhaps the most virulent, is focused on the out-group and does not require any explicit in-group identification. The key distinction here is between "them" and "me", an explicit dissociation of the self from the target out-group, which is typically accompanied by negativity and hostility toward that group. Discrimination based on out-group prejudice (hate) is actively directed at harming or disadvantaging members of the out-group, regardless of whether any personal benefit is gained in the process.

Finally, a third type of bias arises from the interaction of an in-group with specific out-groups – the classic "us" – "them" distinction. This is the type of bias that arises when intergroup comparison and competition is activated, resulting in in-group benefits at the expense of out-group benefits and *vice versa*. It is the type of bias that arises when the out-group is perceived as a threat not only to the self, but also to the in-group's integrity, interests, or identity as a whole. This type of bias results in discrimination motivated by in-group protection (rather than enhancement) as well as antagonism toward the out-group.

According to the theories reviewed above, social identity theory provides an adequate framework for understanding and explaining the phenomena of excluding and preventing non-Muslims from public services (services provided by the government to citizens, for example, civil service or state administration, court systems, education, law enforcement and fire departments, hospital, and statutory corporations) that have occurred in Malaysia due to the identity dimension. This study hopes to explore their salient identity, namely, Malay, Muslim, or Malay-Muslim identity.

Nonetheless, the theoretical framework must consider the dynamic nature of religious identity. Anthony Giddens (1990, p. 38) noted that "all human action is defined by reflexivity". Reflexivity is a reaction to modernity where "social practices are constantly examined and reformed in the light of incoming information. Those reactionary practices and adjustments, thus constitutively alter and shape their character" (Giddens, 1990, p. 38). Applied to the case of Malays in Malaysia, it would be likely to believe that the Malays are also able to be reflexive, both in terms of the circumstances and process. The condition of the political environment and Islamisation inevitably requires, Malays to be reflexive and responsive and engage pragmatically with others either regarding their ethnic or religious identity or ethnic and religious identities (see also Huckfeldt et al., 2004).

2.2.2 Social Identity Framing (Social Movement Theory)

The study of identity, for example, religious identity must also consider social identity framing, a social movement's theoretical framework because identity (religious identity) and movements are closely related to social movements (see Beckford, 2003, pp. 154-192. See also Bernstein, 2005; Morais, 2008. Morais' study focusing on identity framing of Malay as an ethnic). Thus, the development of Malay religious identity and its influences on non-Muslim public roles are also closely related to social identity framing in social movements in Malaysia, especially those that involve political establishments. Any discussion of religious identity should commence by investigating the theoretical foundations of the sociological study of self-identity and collective identity (Napi, 2007, p. 14). Sociologist Cerulo elucidates:

> The study of identity forms a critical cornerstone within modern sociological thought. Introduced by the works of Cooley and Mead, identity studies have evolved and grown central to current sociological discourse. Micro-sociological perspectives (social psychology, symbolic interactionism), perspectives focused primarily on the individual, dominated work published through the 1970s. Sociologists focused primarily on the formation of the "me", exploring the ways in which interpersonal interactions mould an individual's sense of self (1997, p. 385).

Collective identity has emerged as the catchphrase for the new social movements within European sociological perspectives. Melucci (1980) asserts that in defence of identity, new social movements emerge (p. 218). The development of a collective identity is viewed in the new social movement studies as a continuous process that occurs when the members of the social movement engage with one another and their social surroundings (Napi, 2007, p. 14), including deeply divided communities (Milan, 2022). The development of a collective identity is essential to the formation of a social movement (Mellucci, 1988, pp. 342-343).

Social movements are a collective action taken by a group of people sharing the same idea (interest/need/problem) and same identity (collective) to bring societal change or achieve societal interest (Aroopala, 2012, p. 193; Diani, 1992, p. 2; Della Porta and Daini, 2006; pp. 20-28; Jasper, 2016, p. 24; Polletta and Jasper, 2001, p. 286. See Touraine, 1985 for an excellent introduction to the study of social movements). Discourse analysis and framing are two important mechanisms in social movements (see Pan and Kosicki, 1993). Meaning and context analysis are

the focus of discourse analysis. Texts and speeches can reproduce and shape social meanings and forms of knowledge; they are not "neutral" communication instruments. Discourse analysis thus secures social facts from texts and speeches, shapes social identities, and creates and reproduces social meanings. Primarily (though not solely), social movement studies contributed to the development of the related idea of the interpretative frame. According to Snow, Rochford, Worden, and Benford (1986), framing refers to the process by which actors define social and political reality and give meaning to their actions (p. 469). Framing creates frames, which are described as cognitive instruments that help people make sense of the outside world (Snow and Benford, 1992). Two frames are relevant to this study: oppositional frames, which identify adversaries and assign guilt, and identity frames, which define the self (Caiani, 2023, p. 196). In summary, frames articulate and connect disparate events, experiences, and interests to create a meaningful unity, simplifying the outside world and emphasising certain situations (Entman, 1993, p. 52).

Nonetheless, social identity framing is an extension of social identity and social categorisation theory. According to social identity framing theory, the first step towards bringing about social change is articulating a compelling vision for a group targeting their identity. Den Hartog and Verburg (1997, pp. 359-361) claim that framing [a group identity] is a necessary step in the communication of a vision. Thus,

> For a vision of change to resonate with followers, social identity framing postulates that the vision must be framed in a way that highlights its compatibility with in-group prototypes [identity]. If a vision of social change deviates substantially from in-group prototypes, group members may resist social change because it does not fit into their ideas of who the group is (Seyranian, 2014, p. 469. See also Wondolleck, Gray and Bryan, 2003, p. 210).

It can also be understood as,

> When identity or characterization frames are invoked, they often signal the presence of strongly held values/or psychological or cultural dimensions. Identity framing not only reflects a strong sense of belonging, but it also induces a powerful, gut-level response when challenged (Wondolleck, Gray and Bryan, 2003, p. 210).

The social identity of the group might need to be reframed to better align with "who we are" and "who we are not" (Mols, 2012, p. 332; Seyranian, 2014, p. 469) to bring social change or to effectively mobilised followers (in-group) for leaders' interests or purposes. In other words, for social change to happen, society is divided or differentiated into in-groups and out-groups; that is, "us" and "not us" or "them". To a certain extent, society becomes regarded as "them", or a threat to "us" (Mols, 2012, p. 332. See also Mols, 2012, p. 329).

In sum, from a social identity framing perspective, social identities are framed to influence people's (in-group) preferences. This frame targets the self-understanding of a group that enables them to redefine "us" that paves the way for new norms, behaviours or choices. This process of developing an "identity" creates "us" by being clear about who may not join "us" (Mols, 2012, pp. 332-333). Put differently, people's identities are framed to bring social change or to achieve a particular purpose, but it is exactly that these identities also divide people, which, according to social identity theory, induces in-group bias and out-group discrimination (see Orofino, 2021).

Leaders, politicians or social "identity entrepreneurs" (Mols, 2012, p. 332) shape frames often, giving individual activists the context they need to locate their actions (Caiani, 2023; Gamson, 1988; Mols, 2012, p. 331; Seyranian, 2014, p. 468; Snow et al., 1986, p. 472). This applies to social movements that are left-wing or right-wing. Like any group, the extreme right also needs to inspire people to act by giving their current and prospective supporters reasons to support and participate in their establishments. To serve as a foundation for action, discontent, resources, threats, and political opportunities must be cognitively perceived and constructed rather than being merely 'out there' in the outside world (Caiani, 2023, p. 196).

Benford and Snow (2000) contend that the ability of a social movement establishment to articulate and communicate common ideas through framing activities effectively determines how successful it is in encouraging participation (p. 615). Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2013) suggest that a means of achieving this is through the development of a collective identity that identifies the group's representative and highlights their shared fate and similarity (p. 890). To create a collective identity, people must come to feel a sense of "we-ness" that inspires them to become activists. The primary means by which it is created and communicated are its leaders, fellow activists, protests, and 'cultural materials' such as its "name,

narratives, symbols, verbal styles, rituals, clothing, and so on" (Polletta and Jasper, 2001, p. 285).

The emergence of collective action depends on frames (Aroopala, 2012; Della Porta, 2022). A demand must be cognitively connected to something the authorities want or disapprove of, such as how they handle social issues or interests (Della Porta, 2022). For collective action to arise, normative concerns (such as that Malay and Islam are under threat) or group identification must be taken into consideration. In this regard, frames seem especially helpful for studying the dynamics of conflict and provide insight into the critical subject of how movements are executed in reaction to danger. Threats or crises, whether political, social, cultural, or religious, do not always result in reactions from social movements or other collective actors. They present doors of opportunity as well as obstacles that could help or hinder group action within social movements. Social movement studies tend to place greater emphasis on the ability of collective actors, such as social movement establishments, to adapt to contextual resources and constraints, seizing opportunities and expanding upon them while acknowledging the existence of grievances (Rydgren, 2003, p. 49).

However, frames are dynamic, not only within the same mobilisation process but also outside of it. Instead, they are placed in a multi-actor field where actors must constantly negotiate with one another. The notion of frame alignment, which involves framing and counter-framing, holds significant relevance in this regard. It is a crucial component of social mobilisation or movement. When separate frames start to link in complementarity and congruency, it is called frame alignment (Caiani, 2023, p. 198). Frame alignment is thought to be a necessary condition for movement participation. Different individuals, establishments, or even institutions may have developed different frames. However, they can converge in a single interpretation of social and political reality using a process called frame alignment (Ketelaars, Walgrave and Wouters, 2014). Thus, it can be concluded that both master and collective action frames contribute to our understanding of the meaning-making processes that precede the emergence of social conflict. It follows that although frames are products of social processes, they are not always the end result of those processes and instead have a very dynamic nature (Snow, 2004, pp. 393, 405). The leadership of UMNO and PAS incessantly frame Malay religious identity for their political advantages but as a threat to opposition, using discourses (political

speeches, newspapers, and organisation's publications) clearly manifesting this aspect of framing.

Using discourse and framing, two of the mechanisms of social movements, the study will examine the development of Malay religious identity framed by leaders of political establishments in Malaysia, especially post-independence. The political establishments in Malaysia utilise discourse and framing to shape Malay religious identity (collective or social identity). This explains why Malay religious identity is central to Malaysia's political discourse and framing. Moreover, the Malay religious identity becomes the centre of political opportunities and threats created through interpreting events (see Napi, 2007, pp. 257-270). Also, the identity shapes frame alignment (framing and counter-framing of identity), competing for who is the true Muslim and which version of Islam is better.

In sum, the social identity theory provides the sociological and socio-psychological implications of Malay religious identity. Because of the identity dimension, social identity theory offers a sufficient framework for comprehending and elucidating the phenomenon of excluding and prohibiting non-Muslims from public service that occurs in Malaysia. The social identity framing, a theory in the social movements' framework, gives an overview of the development of Malay religious identity within Malaysia's context, especially in its political setting.

2.3 Research Design, Methods and Data Collection

This research aims to discover Muslim religious identities as well as the relationship between Muslim religious identities and the public roles of non-Muslims in Malaysia. In other words, the research attempts to explore the relationship between the exclusion of non-Muslims from Malaysian public appointments and Muslim religious identity by utilising the social identity theory (social psychology). This research adopts a mixed-methods approach (qualitative and quantitative) of the descriptive method. Descriptive research systematically describes the characteristics, situations, or phenomena of the population (Kothari, 2004, p.15; Kumar, 2011, p. 30. See Crotty, 1998 for research process: its foundations, meaning and perspective). The qualitative method (which aims at understanding something) was selected because it aims to find out the salient religious identity of Muslims in Malaysia and, at

the same time, understand how the religious identity of Muslims comes about. Second, this research is aimed to know the view of Muslims on governing the nation together with non-Muslims. Third, this research also intends to determine whether Muslims' views have any doctrinal basis. The information gathered was analysed, interpreted, and summarised into concepts, categories, and themes.

This research also uses a quantitative method (which seeks to confirm something) to understand that there is a relationship between Malay religious identity and the exclusion of non-Muslims from public offices. Furthermore, it hopes to show that the social categorisation of a community also plays a role in preventing non-Muslims from holding important public offices. The relationship is presented in numbers and tables. A survey by questionnaire was conducted among Muslims to understand and know the implications of their religious identities on their views and acceptance of governing the nation together with non-Muslims.

Muslim undergraduate students are selected because they are Malaysia's young intellectuals and future leaders (see Fernandez and Coyle, 2019, p. 48). They are expected to be reflexive of the circumstances and processes both in political and religious terms. Furthermore, in Malaysia, policy of state-led Islamisation began in the 1980s and impinged on the education system in the early years of 2000. Such Islamisation was achieed by changing the history textbooks of Form 4 and Form 5 to emphasise only Islam and Malay ideologies. The current undergraduate students are the immediate second-generation (fruits/products) of such ideologies.

According to Roscoe, sample sizes between 30 to 500 are appropriate for most research. However, if there are subsamples [male/female, student/non-student (adult)], subsample sizes should not be smaller than 30 for each category (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016, p. 264, Memon et al., 2020, p. vi). Another rule of thumb for sample size is called sample-to-item ratio, where a ratio of 5-to-1 should be the minimum requirement. For instance, a study with 20 items (questions) would require 100 participants (Memon et al., 2020, p. iv). Therefore, 200 Malay-Muslim students from the Faculty of Islamic Studies and Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at the National University of Malaysia (*Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia*, UKM) are prospects. They were asked to fill out an online Google Form (questionnaire, Appendix C). The data and information collected from the students was analysed, organised, and presented in statistical patterns (frequency), trends and potential relationships between variables by using Chi-Square or/and Correlation Methods

(descriptive statistics). There is no particular reason to choose UKM because these students have undergone quite similar curricula to the others during their secondary education, except those students of Islamic studies had an acceptable pass in Arabic and Islamic Law. However, in a recent study, the Muslim youth have become more concerned with the leaders of the country, who should be equipped with Islamic values (Azeh, Yunus and Yaakob, 2023). Considering these factors, the students of the two faculties should be the best candidates for reflexivity, especially those with the Faculty of Islamic Studies. This survey was conducted with assistance from a professor in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities whom the researcher knows.

Although the undergraduate students are the chosen prospects, they cannot represent the entire picture of Malay-Muslims in Malaysia. Islamisation of Malaysia happened and has impacted all facets and levels of society since 1970 (see Roff, 1998 for Islamisation in Malaysia before 1970). Many dimensions, including the religious identity of Malay-Muslim adults, was inevitably influenced. The views and opinions on non-Muslims holding important public offices must not be ignored. Hence, the survey also includes 200 Malay-Muslim adults (the same number as Malay-Muslim students; the ratio of 1-to-1 is to ensure that the balanced respondents are taken into account); they are from various occupations/professionals in public and private sectors, such as clerks, teachers, police, nurses, doctors, lawyers, managers or supervisors, cashiers, imams, businessmen, retirees, *et cetera* (almost all levels of the working class are represented). Their ages are 21 and above (the voting age in Malaysia. This age and above made a difference to the political demographic as most of them have started working at this age). However, on 10 September 2019, the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18 (Chai, 2022). The original plan was for them to answer the same questionnaire as the students by filling out the Google Form with little difference in personal information. These 200 Malay-Muslim adults are the friends of friends of the researcher throughout the country. The researcher planned to send the Google link to friends and make sure that only their Muslim friends or relatives above 20 years old fill out the Google form. In addition, the researcher would remind his friends not to send the link to a "big group of friends" in WhatsApp or similar media. The reason is to avoid homogeneity, even though it is easy to achieve the targeted number. Including Malay-Muslim

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adults will consolidate the research, and the findings will thus be more comprehensive.

However, the situation after COVID-19 did not allow this plan to happen. Hence, a semi-structured interview replaced the survey of 200 Malay-Muslim adults. 24 people of various working classes and occupations in the public and private sectors, namely clerks, teachers, cashiers, imams, business people, and retirees, were invited. An adequate sample size for a semi-structured interview is between 5 and 25 (Bremborg, 2011, p. 314; Creswell, 2007, p. 61; Saunders, 2012, p. 45). Their ages are 21 and above. The researcher invited a few friends as participants. The interview aimed to know the participants' thoughts, experiences, responses, and feelings about the research topic. In other words, the participants were encouraged to speak more in-depth about the research topic. The researcher prepared some predefined questions (Appendix D) based on the research objectives so that the interview would be informal but guided. The predefined questions also allow the researcher to make comparisons between the responses. Each interview was recorded, and the duration was kept between 45 minutes to an hour.

The significant variables such as religious identity, public offices, Quran, Islam, non-Muslims, and governing together will be analysed using Chi-Square or/and Correlation Methods to see their relationship. The results can tell among others: (1) the relationship between Muslims religious identity and the discrimination of non-Muslims in public appointments, (2) the relationship between Muslims religious identity and Islamic doctrines, (3) relationship between Islamic doctrines and the exclusion of non-Muslims from public service, and (4) relationship between Muslims social environment and the exclusion of non-Muslims from public service. In addition, the results can also show the exclusion behaviour according to gender and the students'/respondents' place of origin.

The study also utilises qualitative content analysis (thematic) aimed at understanding the beliefs and practices of social actors (Malay-Muslims are the social actors in this study) and how these relationships and interactions actively construct reality (Suddaby, 2006, p. 636). The emphasis of qualitative content analysis is always on answering the research questions (White and Marsh, 2006, p. 39), which is the purpose of this study. The exclusion of non-Muslims from public roles is a phenomenon in Malaysian society, and this study is about Malay-Muslims' lived experiences. Hence, the study seeks to gain a deeper understanding of this

phenomenon, focusing on understanding socially situated meanings, behaviours and practices from the experiences of individuals (Muslims). This enabled common, implicit, or hidden social practices and meanings to become more apparent and understandable to others (Matua and Van Der Wal, 2015, p. 25). The study is also about Malay-Muslim practices due to their social or/and religious identity, which considers their context/environment (Bengtsson, 2016, p. 9) and social psychological states (Krippendorff, 2004, pp. 11, 46). In addition, the study intends to discover the relationships between their beliefs and identity, and a phenomenological study is interested in participants with similar characteristics who could offer descriptions of their lived (faith) experiences and consequently make meanings out of these experiences (Flynn and Korcuska, 2018, p. 35; Kirsberg, 2019, p. 143; Pham, 2021, p. 265; Starks and Trinidad, 2007, p. 1372). In other words, phenomenological interpreters attempt to capture and describe the meaning and common traits, or essences, of an experience or event. As an abstract thing, the truth of the event is subjective and only known through embodied awareness – meanings emerge from the experience of movement through place and across time (Starks and Trinidad, 2007, p. 1374). Perceptibly, this study falls into the phenomenology study as explained.

In addition to the data gathered from the questionnaires and interviews, the following materials are studied and examined as well:

1.   Scholarly writings on Muslim identity and its reciprocity in Malaysia.
2.   Related Islamic scripture and early Islamic documents.
3.   Other related sources include books, journals, conference proceedings, ethnographies, legal and government documents, statistics, census data, dissertations, websites, film, television and video recordings, official publications, and news.

The following two sections will explain the data characteristics and analysis methods before analysing the data collected from the student questionnaires (participants) and working adults' semi-structured interviews (respondents). It will then present the results and findings in chapter 6.

2.4 Data Characteristics

This section explains the data characteristics for each informant group (student and adult). The purpose is to help to understand the results better, particularly the meanings of the figures or numbers. It should be noted that whenever the term "informants" is mentioned, it refers to both students (participants) and working adults (respondents). However, participants always refer to students and respondents always referred to working adults. R01-R24 denotes Respondent 01 – Respondent 24.

2.4.1 Students (Participants)

66 students responded, 49 females and 17 males. They comprised 50 (76%) students from the Faculty of Islamic Studies and 16 (24%) from other faculties, mainly from the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities and the Faculty of Built Environment. They are all adult citizens aged 18 and above (between 19 and 26). The students were not keen to respond. They said their Professor kept encouraging the students to fill out the questionnaire. Despite many times (7-8 times) of encouragement in four months, many students were still unwilling to respond. After discussing with the Professor, it was decided to end the data collection by the end of March 2022. The poor response may be due to the online classes where physical encouragement and meetings were impossible. It should be noted that due to COVID-19 Malaysia's universities were running online classes when the data was collected.

However, 66 participants can yield meaningful and significant results. Sample sizes for Ysseldyk, Matheson, Anisman (2011) and Lino and Hashim (2019) are smaller than 66, 63 and 40, respectively. In addition, Wilson, Carmen and Morgan (2007, p. 48) point out that for Chi-square analysis, sample sizes of more than 20 are acceptable. Providentially, there are a few things to note in the data. First, it covers almost the entire area of Malaysia (see Appendix G), except the states of Pahang and Perlis and the Federal Territory of Labuan. There are no indications if the students are from rural or urban areas. However, the study is not intended to determine the differences between rural and urban students. Second, the data is also aggregated quite equally according to the population density of Malaysia,

meaning more participants are from the highly populated states, such as Selangor, Johor, Perak and Kelantan. Last, it is well responded to from traditional Malay-Muslim states: Kelantan, Terengganu, Kedah, and Johor (33/66 = 50%). Although the sample size is only 66, it is considered representative and substantial.

2.4.2 Working Adults (Respondents)

Appendix G shows the general information about the 24 respondents. There is some important information to be noted about the 24 working adults of Malay-Muslims. First, it covers almost the entire area of Malaysia, both East (Sabah and Sarawak) and West Malaysia, except the following areas of West Malaysia: Labuan, Perlis, Pulau Pinang and the Federal Territory of Putrajaya. Second, 12 female and 12 male respondents represented both the private and public sectors, that is, 42 per cent and 58 per cent, respectively – a well-balanced respondent of sex and sector. Third, respondents aged below 40 comprised 75 per cent. However, the participants included all levels of age. Finally, academicians responded well, especially Islamic religious teachers (*ustaz* and *ustazah*). The many responses by academicians make the results more conducive and significant, especially as it involved 3 levels of public education – primary, secondary and tertiary.

2.5   Methods of Analysis

Rather than report all the figures and items here, the study only reproduces the wording of illustrative figures and items when discussing the results. The conclusions are based on conventional statistical analysis to test for the significance of differences between group means using the Chi-square test when discussing empirical findings. This is how the formula looks:

$$x^2 = \Sigma\,(O - E)^2 \div E$$

where Σ is the summation across all the cells, O is the observed frequency (obtained from the survey), and E is the average of all cells. It also reports the 'effect size' of any differences in line with the latest statistical norms (Al Ramiah, Hewstone and

Wolfer 2017: 16; Cumming 2012; Hedges, Tipton, Zejnullahi and Diaz, 2023). The effect size used in this study is Cohen's *w*, where *w* is $\sqrt{(x^2 \div N)}$, x^2 is the Chi-square test, and *N* is the total number of participants. Effect size shows whether a result is not merely 'statistically significant', but also 'practically significant' or 'substantial' (meaningful in the real world). It also provides a way of comparing variables with different scales. For effect sizes, the study used the convention of Cohen's *w* that the small effect is *w* = 0.1, the medium effect is *w* = 0.3, and the large effect *w* ≥ 0.5 (Cohen, 1988, pp. 215-271). The study compared means using analyses of variance, which test for the statistical significance of any differences (* = p < 0.05, 95% of confidence interval). The 95% confidence interval is an estimate of the range of these possible values (more precisely, 95% of this range). The following formula is used for calculating the standard error.

$$p \pm (z_{critical})(s_{\pi}),$$

where the $z_{critical}$ is the critical value, which is 1.96 whenever the normal distribution is used (Esri 2023). Whereas $s_{\pi} = \sqrt{\pi(1 - \pi)}/n$, π is the null hypothesis value (i.e., the proportion expected if there is no difference between two variables), and *n* is the sample size. Thus, the 95% confidence interval is computed by the upper confidence limit (UCL) minus the lower confidence limit (LCL) and multiplied by 100%. The *margin of error* is commonly expressed as half of the confidence interval and is usually given as a percentage (Newsom 2022; Myers, Well and Lorch 2013: 108). Further, when discussing the empirical findings, it relies on tests of the association between variables, which assess the extent to which different variables correlate. The correlation of variables is tested by Chi-square analysis, x^2. The computed value is compared to a critical value obtained from the Chi-Square Distribution Table (Appendix F). It is a 1-*degree* or *multiple-degrees of freedom* (*df*) test.

      A qualitative content method is adopted for data gathered from interviews. The qualitative content method is commonly used for analysing qualitative data and is widely applied to religion studies (for example, Neville Miller and Teel, 2011; Badzinski, Nelson and Woods, 2011), nursing studies (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008, p. 107) and social research (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 17). It is a flexible method to

analyse data from tape recording, written/print or electronic communication channels (Azizan, Smith, Cooper and Abu Bakar, 2018, p. 40). It is noted that "a person's or group's conscious and unconscious beliefs, attitudes, values, and ideas often are revealed in their communication" (Fraenkel, Wallen and Hyun, 2012, p. 478), especially in verbal or written forms. A number of analytical methodologies can be used in qualitative research, such as phenomenology, hermeneutics, grounded theory, ethnography, phenomenography, and content analysis. Unlike qualitative research methodologies, qualitative content analysis is not tied to a certain science and has fewer rules to follow. As a result, the chance of misunderstanding philosophical concepts and discussions is minimised (Bengtsson, 2016, p. 8).

This study uses Atlas.ti software provided by the University of Pretoria for textual data management. In the examination of data (content analysis), all transcripts and responses were imported to Atlas.ti. In Atlas.ti, the coding process could be done, which is a better alternative to manual coding. Coding communicates the data patterns or conceptualises the data (McCann and Clark, 2003, p. 12). Each piece of data is coded to give it significance and make it easier for the researcher to compare it to other pieces of data (Charmaz, 2006, p. 42). The coding is done by initial coding and focused coding. Since the study is to explore how the identity of Malay-Muslims plays a role, the questions have been asked to uncover interviewees' opinions regarding governing the country together and the importance of offices being held by non-Muslims. Hence, the initial codes are Malaysian, Malay, Muslim, non-Muslim, governing, managing, agreed, disagreed, bias, fairness, oppress, justification, implications, *et cetera*. However, it is best to use interviewees' words as much as possible to generate codes.

The second step is to group the initial codes or to categorise the initial codes into focused codes. Focus coding is the "advanced ways of reorganising and reanalysing data" (Saldana, 2013, p. 207). It is the process of examining coded data and grouping it into a broad preliminary category. Among the factors utilised to influence the focused coding of this study were the frequency of code occurrence and codes that were seen as relevant or essential to reflect the research issue (Wan Mohd Ghazali, 2016, p. 176). Throughout this procedure, constant comparison was used to create and perfect the attributes of each particular code or category. Some codes were subsumed under different categories, renamed, or eliminated throughout this process (Wan Mohd Ghazali, 2016, p. 177).

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The third step is to explore the relationship between the codes/concepts/categories. Focused coding, such as the religious and social identity of Malay-Muslims prompts this study, and the relationships and patterns between these codes/categories should be noticed (Charmaz, 2006, p. 94). The categories are then grouped into themes and themes are construed (Azizan et al., 2018, p. 43) that eventually led to the results and findings. As described in step two, the themes are statements of relationships rather than just simple categories or concepts. The Chi-square test analyses the relationship between themes or statements to see if two or more statements are positively or negatively related to each other.

Due to the human nature, coding errors cannot be eliminated. However, they can be minimised. Generally, 80 per cent is an acceptable margin for reliability (O'Connor and Joffe, 2020, p. 9). In order to preserve the reliability and validity of qualitative content analysis as far as possible, the researcher maintained the consistency of coding the same data in the same way, grouping the categories in the same way, and classification of text corresponding to a standard or norm statistically (Bolognesi, Pilgram, and van den Heerik, 2017; Elo et al., 2014; Grigoryan et al., 2022; Potter and Levine-Donnerstein, 1999; Schnurr et al., 1986). Last, the respondents were properly selected and screened, though the refusal rates were very high (75%), meaning it was extremely difficult to get respondents to participate. Nevertheless, they were informed of the study's nature and purpose. This ensures the willingness to participate and the right to withdraw at any time. By doing so, the research could foster honesty, and the data (texts) gathered were trustworthy (Shenton, 2004, p. 66). Put differently, the credibility of information is kept. In addition, the researcher has all the opportunities to clarify the meanings of the questions when the interviews are carried out.

It is worth noting that the very high refusal rates (most of them rejected after reading the questions) to participate in this research might demonstrate that they are uncomfortable or embarrassed by the contraction between the exclusion of non-Muslims from public offices as required by Islam and their conscience or own concern for justice, equality and friendship fostered during their schooling. In other words, they do not want to betray Islam and tell lies. It might also demonstrate that Muslims reserve their loyalty and affection for Muslims only because the researcher introduced himself and clarified that he is a non-Malay and non-Muslim. The loyalty

to Muslims only is based on the concept of *al-walāʾ wa-al-barāʾ* (loyalty and disavowal), where Muslims should befriend and help only Muslims (see Shavit, 2014. See also Wagemakers, 2012; 2009; 2008). It may also be worth knowing the loyalty or social trust of Christians – Roman Catholics and Protestants and the relationship between religiosity and trust. For these purposes, see Dilmaghani (2017) and Ekici and Yucel (2015).

2.6　Research Limitations

There are five limitations to the study. First, the Federation of Malaysia adopted the Westminster Parliamentary System and is operating within a constitutional monarchy. The governance of Malaysia consists of federal and state governments. This research studies only the federal level because the state government is obliged to implement the policies and laws passed by the federal government, with the exceptions of matters of land, agriculture, water, state holidays, *et cetera*. Moreover, the discrimination and marginalisation of non-Muslims that are mentioned in the 'Research Problem' (Section 1.3) is a phenomenon at this level. Although it does happen at the state level, each state shows different circumstances and substances.

Second, Malay-Muslim religious identity is the focus of this study and what their views or opinions are concerning building a multi-racial and multi-religious government. It is nearly impossible to do a survey covering all Muslims in Malaysia; therefore, the survey was focused only on one government university, namely the National University of Malaysia (*Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia*, UKM).

Third, the study intended to discuss briefly the public roles of non-Muslims of the first five Islamic centuries, the most significant in Islam's history, development, and doctrinal formation. However, the authenticity of the historical documents of Muslim traditions has always been the subject of debate. This research examined the arguments for and against Muslim traditions and drew a careful conclusion. The study used English translations of the documents.

Fourth, many aspects of non-Muslims' living are discriminated against, such as getting a place to study in local government universities, employment as government staff, granting of scholarships to study at local or oversea universities, *et cetera*. All aspects are significant, but this study intends to cover only public roles. If

there were to be a reason for choosing public roles, it is due to the fact that the impact lasts longer compared to other aspects of non-Muslims' life.

Last, the identity of the researcher is made known to informants before they take part. Put differently, the study is carried out by non-Muslims; it is about Malay-Muslims' responses and the religious teachings practised towards non-Muslims. In view of this, the informants may not be sincere in answering and giving opinions or views. However, for those who willingly participated, opinions, views, and answers given or provided by them are deemed sound for the analysis and will make the study successful in one way or another. The only verification of the truthfulness of the data is that the same study would to be carried out by a Malay-Muslim.

2.7   Conclusion

The social identity theory provides the sociological and socio-psychological implications of Malay religious identity, and the social identity framing within the social movement's framework gives an overview of the development of Malay religious identity within Malaysia's political context. This study utilises a mixed method research approach. Data are collected from university students (questionnaire) and working adults (semi-structured interview). Informants are from the entire Malaysia. Despite the limitations, there are many challenges during the data collection due to COVID-19 and the high refusal rate (75% refused to participate). However, the amount of data collected is considered sufficient to generate substantial results. In other words, the data provided by informants can yield meaningful and significant results. The data collected from the students (quantitative) will be computed and analysed using the Chi-square test and effect size. The data collected from the working adults (qualitative) will be imported to Atlas.ti (textual data management software). It will then examine and analyse using content analysis methods.

The next chapter will examine the issue of non-Muslim public roles in early Islamic history. It includes the discussion of Islam and the non-Muslim's rights as well as non-Muslim employment in the public positions of the early Islamic period.

Chapter 3

Non-Muslims and Their Public Roles in the Early Islamic Period

3.1   Introduction

This chapter will deal with the issue of non-Muslim public roles in early Islamic history. In the first place, the chapter will discuss Islam and the non-Muslim's rights. Later, the chapter will examine non-Muslim employment in the public positions of the early Islamic period from three areas: rulers' actions, juristic views and literary work. The chapter then discusses the issue of direct competition of resources between Muslims and non-Muslims in early Islamic history. Last, the chapter will study the concept of *ummah* from the perspective of social identity and imagined community, which will give a sound understanding of the implications of *ummah* identity on non-Muslims during the early Islamic period.

The following section will analyse the position of non-Muslims in early Islamic history. The section will cover the position of non-Muslims from the perspectives of the Quran, prophetic traditions, *sharia*, and politics. The purpose is to discover non-Muslims' (political) rights in early Islamic history.

3.2   Islam and non-Muslims in Early Islamic Period

Historical analysis shows there is no single relationship pattern between Muslims and non-Muslims (Scott, 2010, p. 13) as well as Muslim governance and non-Muslim state officials, which means that at different stages and times in history, Muslims treat non-Muslims differently, including non-Muslims' political rights. Consequently, it is always doubted by non-Muslims if Muslims and their religious traditions tolerate religious minorities (Emon, 2012, p. 2). The essence of this suspicion is whether Muslims can live in harmony with others in light of faithful obligations and treat all people with dignity and equal respect (Emon, 2012, p. 1).

Non-Muslims who stay within Muslim territory are called *dhimmī* (or protected people). *Dhimmī* is first or originally applied to Jews and later to Christians and Zoroastrians. Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians are considered "People of the Book" in Islam (Lewis, 1984, p. 13). This term later carries a broadened meaning to include all non-Muslims, such as Sabians (Q2:62, 5:69, and 27:17), Sikhs, Hindus, Jains, and Buddhists. Based on Muslim traditions, *dhimmī* will be granted protection and enjoy certain rights if they pay *jizya* (taxes). Protection and residency rights of non-Muslims within lands ruled by Muslims in return for taxes is referred to as *dhimma* (literally means treaty, social contract, covenant, or Pact of protection). The Quranic basis for the *dhimma* is not extensive, yet it is narrow and limited in sense. There are only two references to *dhimma* in the Quran, both in the same chapter: 9:8 and 9:10 (Ayoub, 1983, p. 173; Scott, 2010, p. 17):

> How (can there be a treaty) while, if they gain dominance over you, they do not observe concerning you any pact of kinship or covenant of protection (*dhimma*)? They satisfy you with their mouths, but their hearts refuse (compliance), and most of them are defiantly disobedient (9:8, Quran version of Saheeh International).

> They do not observe toward a believer any pact of kinship or covenant of protection (*dhimma*). And it is they who are the transgressors (9:10, Quran version of Saheeh International).

Both verses 8 and 10 regard non-believers' (*dhimmī*) words that cannot be trusted or non-believers as untrustworthy, and they will not observe any treaty between them and you because they are transgressors. Additionally, 9:29 emphasises that the non-believers are treacherous people, and a call of fighting is issued until they are humbled and pay the *jizya* (poll tax) for protection and to acknowledge the superiority of Islam (Scott, 2010, p. 17):

> Fight those who do not believe in Allah or in the Last Day and who do not consider unlawful what Allah and His Messenger have made unlawful and who do not adopt the religion of truth from those who were given the Scripture – (fight) until they give the *jizyah* willingly while they are humbled (Quran version of Saheeh International)

Muhammad's dealings with non-Muslims are critically significant for anyone who wishes to learn about the relationship between Islam and non-Muslims. The Constitution of Medina represents the first recorded document of Muhammad's

dealing with non-Muslims. According to traditions, the Constitution of Medina is the political compromise of Muhammad in 622. However, the revisionist historians doubted the authenticity of the Constitution of Medina. The Constitution establishes the terms of agreements between Muhammad, his religious community and the eight tribes of Medina. The Constitution states that "to the Jews who follow us belong help and equality. He shall not be wronged, nor shall his enemies be aided." Jews, therefore, received the protection of the state and were allowed to follow their religion and to own property (Scott, 2010, p. 17). Al-Tabari records another example of Muhammad's dealings with non-Muslim. According to al-Tabari, Muhammad attacked the Jewish tribes at Khaybar, southwest of Mecca, forcing them to surrender their land and pay the *jizya*. Muhammad agreed to employ them on the property and allowed them a half share of the product on the condition that "if we want to make you leave, we may" (al-Tabari, p. 123).

The above formed the Quranic and prophetic precedents for the development of *dhimma*, a pact that assured protection for *dhimmī*. In exchange for protection, they are expected to acknowledge the dominance of Islam. The actual consequences of the *dhimma* in terms of its specific rights and responsibilities were not clearly stated in Islamic sources before this period. Islamic law and the *dhimma* gained importance in the context of the growth and strengthening of the established Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates. Yet, the application of this law varied from place to place and from era to era. Many ways of treating the dhimmi involve a degree of respect and emphasise the inferiority of the *dhimmī* – have Zoroastrian and Byzantine origins in the treatment of religious minorities (Scott, 2010, p. 19). Bat Ye'or observes that some *dhimmī*'s regulations have been adopted from the Byzantine Code of Justinian (A.D. 534) (1996, p. 94; Pulcini, 2002).

In comparison to Muslims, *dhimmī* had fewer legal and social rights. Early caliphs began tightening control of the *dhimmī* to affirm Muslims' separateness, differentiation, and higher status. Muslims increasingly treated the *dhimmī* as subordinate (Lapidus, 2014, pp. 154-155), and in certain respects, it was inferior to that enslaved person (Ye'or, 2002, p. 89). During the reign of al-Mutawakkil, the tenth Abbasid Caliph, several restrictions cemented *dhimmī*' status as second-class citizens and forced their villages into ghettos. For instance, they had to distinguish themselves from their Muslim neighbours by dress. They were not permitted to build new churches or synagogues but only to repair old ones (Lapidus, 2014, p. 155).

Concerning the *dhimmī'* behaviour, the law required *dhimmī* to walk with a humble attitude, eyes lowered, and a hastened pace. They had to give way to Muslims, stand in their presence, and be silent, only speaking to them when permitted. They were forbidden to defend themselves if attacked. Any criticism of the Quran and Islamic Law annulled the protection contract. In addition, the *dhimmī* were duty-bound to be grateful since Muslims spared their lives (Ye'or, 2002, pp. 103-104).

However, Muslims will counter-argue that Islam is a tolerant religion in which they allow the *dhimmī* to live in their lands and protect them. This speaks exactly of the tolerance Muslims have towards the *dhimmī*. Maltreating the *dhimmis* was not a universal phenomenon and only happened to particular caliphs, regimes and historical periods, argued Muslims. Such an argument is historically baseless and defenceless (see Durie, 2010, pp. 155-178). The defenders of Islam should notice that claiming that their society in the past accorded equal status to non-Muslims is a recent development by the Muslims. Equality of rights and opportunities are of Western origin, not Islamic. Traditional Islamic societies neither accorded such equality nor pretended that they were so doing (Durie, 2010, p. 177; Lewis, 1984, pp. 3-4).

On the other hand, as stressed by Ye'or (2013, p. 119), toleration and dhimmitude are historical domains, but they are two opposed concepts. Tolerance is a theological concept; it is unchanging and monolithic. It expresses the *ummah*'s point of view, which is tolerance's ideological, legal, and theoretical foundation. Whereas the dhimmitude is analytical; it refers to the historical experience of the tolerated peoples, who are the human material of dhimmitude. Henceforth, it is a clash between theology and experience. According to their values, the *ummah* will always regard its tolerance as just, and the *dhimmī* will always regard Islamic tolerance as a dehumanising regime.   Whatsoever, it must be noted that toleration status was granted due to the Islamisation of conquered lands. In other words, "the only source of legitimacy for the *dhimmī* rights is the *ummah*. What the *ummah* accepts is lawful; what it rejects is prohibited" (Ye'or, 2013, pp. 119-120). Perceptibly, Islamic tolerance is not our understanding of tolerance in modern society. Hence, Lewis (1984, p. 3) is right to claim that tolerance is also a new virtue or modern concept.

The *dhimmī* are restricted in and to political activity, which is the fruit of Muslim jurists. In the medieval period, Muslim jurists imposed more stringent

regulations on non-Muslims (see Section 2.3.3 for details). It is generally believed that *dhimmī* should not hold authority over Muslims based on Quranic verses 4:141 and 4:144:

> Those who wait (and watch) you. Then if you gain a victory from Allah, they say, "Were we not with you?" But if the disbelievers have a success, they say (to them), "Did we not gain the advantage over you, but we protected you from the believers?" Allah will judge between (all of) you on the Day of Resurrection, and never will Allah give the disbelievers over the believers a way (to overcome them) (4:141, Quran version of Saheeh International).

> O you who have believed, do not take the disbelievers as allies instead of the believers. Do you wish to give Allah against yourselves a clear case? (4:144, Quran version of Saheeh International).

Dhimmī with considerable power is perceived as going against the teaching in the Quran. In addition, it is "viewed as disruptive to the social balance and perceived social order, which is regarded as a violation of the concept of justice, that is to say, giving each his due" (Scott, 2010, p. 24). Islamic jurisprudence makes no presumption of equality. The principal value of the classical and medieval Islamic order is justice which is equivalent to "fairness" or giving to each his due (Scott, 2010, p. 22). The violation of the concept of justice here or giving non-Muslims their due is that non-Muslims should not have authority over Muslims. Muslim jurists decried the practice of *dhimmī* holding any position of authority over Muslims and occasionally pressured rulers to dismiss non-Muslim state officials (Scott, 2010, p. 24). The position toward *dhimmī* hardened over time, and this attitude is reflected in Islamic jurisprudence. They increasingly interpreted regulations concerning *dhimmī* in a restrictive way. One example is the imposition of the *ghiyar* – a distinctive dress and behaviour (for the development and requirements of *ghiyar*, see Yarborough, 2014, "Origins of the *ghiyar*"), but practice often fell short of the restriction (Scott, 2010, p. 27). As Islam changed from being the religion of a ruling elite to being the dominant faith, the necessity for Muslims to interact with *dhimmī* receded until the point of zero interaction (Hourani, 1991, p. 118).

It should be noted that the formation of the *shariah* in terms of the role and status of *dhimmī* occurs gradually and informally in tandem with the context in which that law is formulated. The Quran does not provide concrete and detailed guidelines for *dhimmī* treatment or political rights. The *hadith* frequently responded to specific

circumstances rather than providing overarching rules and regulations for the treatment of *dhimmī*. Nonetheless, Islamic doctrine aimed to replace and correct the errors of Christianity and Judaism and promoted the belief that *dhimmīs* were inferior to Muslims. In the conditions of a victorious Islamic empire, this theological position acquired not only political and social form but also political and social significance. At the same time, Islamic law developed a general framework of views and rules regarding the treatment of *dhimmīs* and their status, but these general provisions are subject to different interpretations and depend on the whims and policies of various rulers. Therefore, the Islamic legal position on the role of *dhimmī* is the result of a complex interaction between Islamic ideas/principles and political/social circumstances (Scott, 2010, p. 32).

According to Islamic law, Naim (1987, p. 11) says non-Muslims (*dhimmī*) are not allowed to participate in the public matters of an Islamic state. They are prohibited from holding any position of authority over Muslims. However, he continues:

> The systematic analysis of the nature and actual development of Shariah clearly establishes the obvious fact that Shariah is not the whole Islam but rather the early Muslims' understanding of the sources of Islam (1987, pp. 14-15).

Therefore, he urges the "modern Muslim jurists to state and interpret the law for their contemporaries even if such statement were to be, in some respects, different from the inherited wisdom" (Naim, 1987, pp. 16-17. See also Ahmad, 2005, especially for the cases in Malaysia). He emphasises that modern Islamic law should not in any form, shape, or degree authorise discrimination against non-Muslims (Naim, 1987, p. 18). In other words, Islam's rules, regulations, laws, and practices can be altered and improved to suit the circumstances (see An-Naim 2005). Furthermore, there is an allowance for different interpretations of the Quran, giving room for mutual relationships between Muslims and non-Muslims. Indeed, there is positive progress on the matter. Fahmi Huwaydi, an Egyptian reformed Islamist, champions the discourse to call for equal civil rights of all non-Muslims based on modern nation-state citizenship in Egypt. His *Citizen, not Dhimmis*: *The Place of Non-Muslims in the Society of Muslims,* remains royal to Islam, but a rereading of Islamic history in light of the universal values self-evident in Quran, a

reading intended to replace premodern Islamic worldview (Anjum, 2016a, p. 35). However, justifying non-Muslims to have more political rights from Islamic discursive tradition has still a long way to go. Non-Muslims are granted unequal citizenship rights in an Islamic state, and they are not allowed to hold the position of head of the state as it is only reserved for Muslims. Even Huwaydi himself is hesitant to let non-Muslims be the head of the state or to rule on the grounds that the majority population are Muslims. While Egyptian Qaradawi, Pakistani Mawdudi and Iraqi Zidan maintain that non-Muslims should not be the head of the state on religious concerns (Anjum, 2016a, p. 44).

The following section explores one aspect of interactions between Muslims and non-Muslims in the early Islam period (some are referring to it as the classical period of Islam): the exclusion of non-Muslims from state employment. It aims to work towards a more thoroughly informed and nuanced understanding of whether the exclusion of non-Muslims from state employment in early Islamic society is religiously based or due to other factors. It should be noted that Islam expanded greatly during this period, politically, legally, religiously, and theologically.

3.3   Early Islamic Society and Public Employment of non-Muslims

Early Islamic history is sometimes called the Islamic Golden Age. It refers to a period in Islamic history that is traditionally dated from the 8th to the 13th centuries when much of the Islamic theology, law, philosophy, science, medical and cultural works thrived (King, 1984; Renima, Tiliouine and Estes, 2016). It is a remarkable history of Islam, in particular. Muslims always look to this early Islamic period for principles, precedents, and precepts. Therefore, this study begins with the non-Muslim public roles in the early Islamic period, focusing not only on the Islamic Golden Age but also on the Rashidun period, which is from the mid-7th century. In addition, as R. Stephen Humphreys explains, Islamic history is more than just the history of Muslims alone. From its inception, non-Muslims have always been at the centre of Muslim government administration. Understanding the role of non-Muslims in the early development of the Muslim "state" is challenging if their role is overlooked (Humphrey, 1991, p. 255; Sirry, 2011, p. 1).

Employment of non-Muslims as state officials troubled many Muslims, not specific in our age, but from the beginning of Islam. On the one hand, the practice of employing non-Muslims as state officials remained widespread until the late Bahri Mamluk period (A.D. 1250-1382) (Yarbrough, 2012, pp. 1-2). Comparatively, the review of related studies shows that Umayyad (A.D. 661-750) and Abbasid (A.D. 750-1258) caliphates employed numbers of non-Muslims in their government offices, such as scribes, tax collectors, treasurers, governors, administrators, prefects, *et cetera*. Non-Muslims were employed even in important positions such as secretaries and *viziers* (Prime Minister). For a good study on the origin, idea, and scope of *viziers*, see Kimber (1992), *The Early Abbasid Vizierate*. On the nature of non-Muslim *vizierate*'s political power, see Sirry (2011), 'The public role of *Dhimmīs* during Abbasid times.' There are two categories of *vizierate*: "*vizierate* of delegation and execution" (Sirry, 2011, p. 189). The *vizierate* of delegation "implies that full powers are entrusted to the holder; such a *vizier*-in-charge is practically independent, exercising full power and authority." *The vizierate* of execution "merely executes the caliph's orders, with no independence or power to change anything the caliph has decided or commanded." Since the *vizierate* of execution's functions is substantially limited, the qualities required of him are less stringent, and therefore, "a vizier of execution may be of the people of *dhimma*" (Sirry, 2011, p. 189).

In fact, throughout the Umayyad and Abbasid empires, effective state administration is equal to the employment of Jewish, Christian, and in Persia, Zoroastrian officials (Sirry, 2011, p. 191). The studies also explore the prominent role that the non-Muslims played during the Fatimid Empire (A.D. 909-1171) in Egypt (Arnold, 2002, p. 63-64; Sirry, 2011, pp. 188-192; Tritton, 1930, pp. 19-20). The above government offices can be categorised into four areas: (1) scribes or secretaries, (2) those with treasury, (3) the military, and (4) ministers or governors. The last area was found to hold positions of power and authority over Muslims, which strikes directly at the heart of this study (Grafton, 2003, pp. 39-43). On the other hand, the employment of non-Muslims in such positions of state administration never goes without objection from the scholars (for example, Abū Yaᶜlā, al-Juwaynī and Asnawī) whose views came to constitute mature Islamic law and statecraft (Sirry, 2011, pp. 190-191). They, in general, held that non-Muslims should be excluded from state employment on the grounds of religious criteria (Perlmann, 1942, p. 846; Yarbrough, 2012, p. 3) (Islam medieval literature has a lot more to say

about the forbidden and dismissal of non-Muslim state officials than classic literature. Perlmann's work is a good example). In other words, it is religiously impermissible to employ non-Muslim officials for the Muslim government. How accurate and valid are these claims?

3.3.1 Rulers' Actions

According to Muslim traditions, ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, commonly known as ʿUmar I, the second Caliphate (reigning from 634 until 644), was the first Caliphate and a prominent Muslim who prohibited the non-Muslims in Muslim polity. Although forbidding non-Muslims to play any public role by ʿUmar I is not spelt out in the document called *Shurūt ʿUmar* (the Pact of ʿUmar), it comes as a condition for protection and exemption from military service (Marcus, 1938, pp. 13-15, Yarbrough, 2012, p. 23). The Pact of ʿUmar has served to govern the relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, particularly Jews and Christians (Marcus, 1938, pp 13-15). The condition that non-Muslims should not be hired as state officials appears in various reports. Based on the contents and literary works, Noth and Cohen take the position that the Pact of ʿUmar indeed was the work of ʿUmar I (Cohen, 1999). However, Yarbrough (2012, p. 32) studied related reports using chains of transmission and found out that none of them can reach back to ʿUmar I. It is now being argued convincingly that the document of the Pact of ʿUmar is actually a product of the ninth century (Grafton, 2003, p. 32; Levy-Rubin, 2011, p. 62; Lewis 1984, p. 24; Marcus, 1938, p.13; Yarbrough, 2012, p. 32). The finding is significant because it directly proves that the perception that non-Muslims should have no place in the governance of Islam is a later idea/practice, not one during the Rashidun (early) period. Khalek (2015, p. 518) also points to the same fact that the act of writing is placed into a prophetic context. Khalek repeats the fact that the hostility to non-Muslims being public officials rose during the late ninth and tenth centuries. Furthermore, other studies have shown that happenings and stories which had actually taken place during the late ninth and tenth centuries were being put to the mouth of or credited to the work of prominent figures, such as caliphs and prophets (see Afsaruddin, 1999; Brown, 2009; Melchert, 1996).

If it is not ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb who issued an edict to dismiss non-Muslims from Muslim polity, then it is important: (1) to find out who issued the edict, (2) to find

out the reason that non-Muslims should be excluded from state employment, and (3) to find out any religious premise for such an edict. Some argue and claim that the Pact is more than likely attributable to the Umayyad caliph ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz or commonly known as ʿUmar II (reigning from 717 until 720) (Grafton, 2003, p. 31). There are Arabic documents that can be securely dated to the reign of ʿUmar II (Yarbrough, 2012, p. 126), but as far as the documents are concerned, all of them are unable to come to a coherent conclusion that ʿUmar II really dismissed non-Muslim officials by fiat (Yarbrough, 2012; p. 128). It is claimed that the non-Muslim officials decreased significantly because of the edict. However, at least three questions need answers: (1) if the edict was so widely and successfully implemented, why is there a lack of clear evidence of it in Christian and Muslim historiographies not until the eleventh century, particularly in the eleventh century, the writing of Muslim jurists? (2) how to explain the coexistence of the reports that describe the caliph's kindness and solicitude, which instructed to empower non-Muslims? and, (3) how plausible to dismiss all non-Muslim officials within an empire where the vast majority of the population is non-Muslims and had from the beginning been run by non-Muslim officials at local and regional levels? Several explanations have been offered: (1) the edict is only a minor, localised affair after all, for which wide attestation is not to be expected, (2) although the edict concerned all types of non-Muslim officials when it was executed only applied to non-Muslim officials who exercised direct authority over Muslims. This is the fundamental issue (religiously or psychologically) of the Muslims. Muslims as a whole cannot accept that non-Muslims should have power and authority over them with the understanding that they are the special people on the earth. Muslims, in general, have no issue employing non-Muslims as state officials, but not those positions that have authority over them (Yarbrough, 2012, p. 321), and (3) the evidence of the documents is intractable, thus should not be taken only at face value, but to read the documents with an alternative. The most attractive alternative is to read the documents as pseudepigrapha composed by Muslim officials for Abbasid ruling elites. The competition for important offices of the Abbasid dynasty certainly gives sufficient motive for the composition of such documents (Yarbrough, 2012, pp. 128-133).

Evidently, it is less controversial than al-Mutawakkil ʿalà Allāh (reigning from A.D. 847 until 861) who did instruct that no non-Muslim should be in government service (Tritton, 1930, p. 23). Inevitably, they are those who opposed the stand.

Western scholars, in general, agreed that al-Mutawakkil's decree was actually the first in Islamic history to remove the non-Muslim administrators from his state (Yarborough, 2012, p. 11). Of course, the intent and basis for issuing such a decree are as meaningful as whether it is al-Mutawakkil who issued it. During al-Mutawakkil's reign, there was a conflict between rulers and jurists as well as ʿulamā on the issue of authority over religion. In order to claim his authority on Islam and gain support from Muslims, both in the political and scholar elites, he has thus taken the step to forbid the state from employing non-Muslims. It is also argued that his restrictions on forbidding the employment of non-Muslims as state officials are without clear religious basics (i.e., not based on the teaching of Islam). The attempt is more to his own advantage (Yarborough, 2019, p. 105). In addition, the issue of the edict to dismiss the non-Muslim bureaucrats is to stress Muslims' or their distinction from and superiority to non-Muslims and Shiites (Yarborough, 2019, p. 105). In any case, the explanations for dismissing the non-Muslim bureaucrats are given as follows (Yarborough 2019: 103):

1. Muslims do not need help from non-Muslims;
2. Non-Muslims are enemies of the true religion and thus are untrustworthy;
3. Non-Muslims will not do good to Muslims because Muslims have conquered and reigned over them;
4. The Quran forbids Muslims to be friends of non-Muslims in 3:118, 4:144, and 5:51;
5. Righteous Muslim forebearers forbad non-Muslims from involving in any of Muslims' affairs;
6. Non-Muslims are hopeless and unbelievable;
7. Non-Muslims ought to be humbled because (a) God commanded it, and (b) they are corrupted;
8. The caliph is primarily responsible for upholding the religion and restoring the rule of the Quran and the example of the prophet.

Most of these reasons are ascribed to ʿUmar I and II, even without substantial evidence.

Notwithstanding, early caliphs forbade the employment and dismissal of non-Muslims for various and thoughtful reasons. However, the fact that many non-

Muslim civil servants continue to work indicates that such employment is more likely to be a personal choice and preference of a particular caliph rather than a general and customary practice based on the holy text and religious belief.

Conversely, jurists' earliest opinions on the matter do not show a very mixed view. However, they set a precedent for progressively more detailed justification for later scholars. Both the comments and the rationale indicate continued concern on the issue (Yarborough, 2012, p. 148).

3.3.2 Juristic Views

There appears to have been no opinion by Abu Hanifa (d. A.H. 150/A.D. 767) that concerned his contemporaries to note down. This fact is striking because there are numerous links between early Hanafis and the Abbasid state. *Kitāb al-kharāj* (Book of taxation) contains a great deal of information about the administration and non-Muslim population but is silent on whether non-Muslims should be employed as state officials (Yarborough 2012: 148). Another work discussing administrative matters, *Kitāb al-amwāl* (The Great Books of Islamic Civilization) is found irrelevant to the employment of non-Muslim functionaries (Yarborough, 2012, p. 68). Despite these silences, the earliest surviving Hanafis' views do not oppose the employment of non-Muslim officials (Yarborough, 2012, pp. 148-149).

Al-Awzāⁱ (d. A.H. 157/A.D. 774) was a jurist from Lebanon, and he was one of the leading figures of the second century (Solaiman 1991: 17). Awzāⁱ's school flourished in Syria and Al Andalus but was eventually taken over by the Maliki school of Islamic law in the 9th century. However, some claim that Awzāⁱ belongs to the school of Maliki (Grafton, 2003, p. 45). During the end of the Umayyad empire, al-Awzāⁱ was at the centre of politics (Grafton, 2003, p. 44). He dealt with the issue of non-Muslims in his *siyar*, under the discussion of war. A prominent theme in al-Awzāⁱ's thought is the categorisation of Arab versus non-Arab. He often made rulings that claimed privileges for Arab non-Muslims over non-Arab Muslims. According to al-Awzāⁱ, it was better to be Arab and a non-Muslim than to be a non-Arab Muslim. According to social identity theory, this is typically in-group favouritism, or sociologists might call it ethnocentrism (for a better understanding of ethnocentrism, see Bizumic and Duckitt, 2012). It can also be understood as a feeling of superiority or positive sentiment due to one's ethnicity (or religion, idea, *et*

cetera) that is directly related to out-groups' aversion (Brewer, 1999, p. 430). In a letter to Salih ibn Ali, the governor of Syria, al-Awzāᶜī warned the governor not to exact collective punishment upon the non-Muslim community. This was an indirect contradiction to the later received tradition of the Pact of ʿUmar. Throughout al-Awzāᶜī's works, it is clear that Arab Christians living in the Islamic state should be granted specific rights and responsibilities based on an agreement. Therefore, Grafton (2009) argues on the premise of the special privileges granted to Christians that it is hard to believe Christians are not allowed to serve the state (pp. 44-46).

The opinion of al-Shāfiʿī is to be found in the section of his *Kitāb al-Umm*. It has the character of a *fatwa* in which no justification is given:

> No judge or governor of the Muslims, in my view, ought to take a *dhimmī* scribe or to place a *dhimmī* in a position whereby he is made superior to a Muslim. We ought to strengthen Muslims so that they have no need of those not of their own religion. The judge has of all people the least excuse in this matter (cited from Yarborough, 2012, p.150).

This is the textual background to the most famous defence of the state employment of non-Muslims; non-Muslims ought not to be hired because they ought not to occupy positions of authority over Muslims. The concern here is not truly on the authority of non-Muslims but maintaining the hierarchy of Muslims. This, Yarborough (2012, p. 150) rightly points out, is not built on caliphs' views and not with a scriptural basis either. As noted, the prohibition is only limited to non-Muslim scribes where Muslim leaders have excuses of varying degrees of legitimacy for not complying with the prohibition.

As recurrent in *Ahl al-milal* by al-Khallāl: "non-Muslims' assistance is not to be sought in anything". This statement, too, has the form of a *fatwa,* and no explicit reason is offered. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. A.H. 241/A.D. 855) is deemed to have concurred with the statement supported by the scripture, Q3:118 and 5:51. However, the statement's context is military, not administrative and the candidate where the assistance is needed is a *mušhrik* (a person who rejects *tawḥīd* [oneness or unity of God]; an idolater, a polytheist), not non-Muslims in its general sense. Ibn Hanbal is reported to permit the employment of Jews and Christians in certain roles. In another report, ibn Hanbal reaffirmed that there is no harm in hiring Jews and Christians in some state affairs (Yarborough, 2012, p. 151).

The opinions of foremost early Muslim jurists and scholars thus display a high degree of unevenness, from the apparent unconcern of Abu Hanifa to the favouritism shown by al-Awzāʿī and further to the light support of al-shafiʿī and ambiguous opinions of ibn Hanbal. It appears clear that the juristic or scholarly thought on hiring non-Muslim state officials is merely of an *ad hoc* nature (Yarborough, 2012, p. 153).

3.3.3 Literary Work

Early Arabic literature can broadly be classified into the primary and small genres. The primary genre includes *hadith*, *sunnah*, *tafsir*, *sira*, *maghazi*. Those other than those of the primary genre are called small genre. Different genres serve different purposes. Some small genres or Arabic literary works are made specially for politically influential Muslims and those in senior positions (usually, the intended audiences are caliphs, sultans, emirs or ruling elites) in order to influence them so that they will agree with the authors to exclude non-Muslims from state employment. Three types of literature may be distinct: (1) books of advice for the ruler (*nasiha*), (2) practical manuals for administrators, and (3) books of religious law as it pertained to politics (*siyasa shar'iyya*) (Yarborough, 2012, p. 240). The common theme and work found in these classical kinds of literature is a piece of advice about whom the ruler or high official should hire or associate with. Also common is that these did not really specify those people should be Muslims (Yarborough, 2012, p. 241). They may not have believed that this was actually a requirement in some cases. Other literary works set forth requirements for state officials without stipulating religious affiliation; for example, *Siyāsat al-mulūk* (also known as Siyāsatnāmeh, is the most famous work by Nizam al-Mulk, the founder of Nizamiyyah schools in medieval Persia and *vizier* to the Seljuq sultans Alp Arslan and Malik Shah), *Sulūk al-mālik*, *Kitāb fi l-siyāsa*, *Mirror for Princes: the Qābūs Nāma*, *et cetera* (see Yarborough, 2012, p. 242 for details).

However, the authors of medieval literature work, such as *Ḥusn al-sulūk al-ḥāfiẓ li-dawlat al-mulūk* by Ibn al-Mawṣilī, *al-Durr al-thamīn* by Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, *Tajrīd sayf al-himma* by ʿUthmān b. Ibrāhīm al-Nābulusī and *al-Radd ʿalā ahl al-dhimma wa-man tabiʿahum* by Ghāzī b. al-Wāsiṭī (cited from Yarborough, 2012, pp. 244, 247, 248) all urged the permanent dismissal of non-Muslim officials (Yarborough, 2012, p. 265). This literature also reminds their audiences or readers

of the *dhimma* pact and the religious criterion for state employment. The principal

notion is that non-Muslims are irredeemable enemies of God and of believers. *Ibn*

al-Durayhim writes, cited from Yarborough (2012, p. 269):

> [God] has reported (2:105) that these sects are characterised by desiring no good for the Muslims, and God's report is the truth… Many ignorant Muslims believe that the Christians are more skilled than the Muslims in administrative service. However, they disregard this verse. Even if matters were as they think, this verse would prevent their appointment, for they cheat and bear ill will because they desire no good. Their usefulness does not compare to the damage they cause.

Nevertheless, he does not study the Quran entirely, where he establishes that

non-Muslims are enemies of God. Thus, Muslims should also consider non-Muslims

their own enemies (Yarborough, 2012, p. 269). Q3:118 is in no way shows that non-

Muslims are enemies of God and believers, but then the religiously motivated

political exclusion is a pervasive feature at this period in history.

It should be perceived that the literary works would provide the authors with

direct and tangible personal benefits. That is, the objections to the authority of non-

Muslims over Muslims do not have to represent dishonest manipulation of religious

pretexts, stubborn and fanatical pride, or mechanical enforcement of Islamic law.

Instead, they represent the initiatives of individuals personally reliant on the symbolic

resources of Islam to protect those resources, their own access to them, and their

capacity to exchange them for social and economic benefits. Put differently, the

authors of many such literary works are living in a world struggling for social power,

status, authority, and prestige. Non-Muslim authorities presented a threat to these

scarce resources at all three levels. Using a term of social psychology, this is called

"out-group homogeneity bias" (Nelson, 2016, p. 269), or discrimination or more

commonly "out-group homogeneity effect" (Brown, 2010; Kite and Whitley, 2016).

The following section will discuss this in detail.

In a nutshell, Muslim ruling authorities hire non-Muslims at all levels of

administration. However, Muslim legal thinkers and scholars have, in hindsight,

tended to disapprove of such appointments. A pious opposition countered this

practice by disapproving reports, remonstrating with the ruler, and fomenting

widespread disturbances (Yarbrough, 2012, p. 21-22). The reissuing of these

disapproving decrees, as well as reporting, only highlights the fact that the exclusion

and dismissal of non-Muslim officials are not carried out or enforced consistently. Before the third/ninth century, there was never a clear understanding that non-Muslims (*dhimmī*) could not hold positions within the Islamic government (Grafton, 2003, p. 59). In the fifth/eleventh century, the juristic debate on whether or not non-Muslims could be appointed to public office became more apparent (Sirry, 2011, p. 191).

The small genre of the early Islamic period reveals that the exclusion or opposition to the employment of non-Muslims in state administration is due to competition for limited/scarce resources rather than anti-Christian propaganda (Yarbrough, 2012, p. 304). Nevertheless, it manifests in various forms: political critique, religious unfitness and immorality (dishonest, disloyalty, greedy, ingratitude, untrustworthy, et cetera). Therefore, negative characterisations of non-Muslim state officials are forged for easy dismissal (Khalek, 2015, p. 519). In contrast, it appears not in professional inabilities. Muslim writers are generally far from concluding that an infidel can be preferable to a Muslim; the maxim is moral and emphasises the importance of justice, not really on infidels to rule over Muslims (Sadan, 1980, p. 115). In reality, non-Muslims, especially Christians, are preferred (Sirry, 2011, pp. 202-203). It can also be noted that the disapproval of the state non-Muslim functionaries can hardly have the support of the Quranic verses.

On the one hand, the studies go against the general public understanding that non-Muslims are to be excluded entirely from the Muslim government. On the other hand, the studies indicated that the objection to the employment of non-Muslims is not firmly scriptural or theologically grounded. Nevertheless, this does not mean that "hostility to the Jew is non-theological". Lewis claims that the hostility to the Jew "is not related to any specific Islamic doctrine, nor any specific circumstance in Islamic sacred history" (1984, p. 85). However, Durie strongly disagreed with Lewis. According to Durie, "Islamic hostility to the Jews is theological to its bootstraps". Quran verses and Muhammad's traditions support the hostility to the Jews (2010, p. 207). The quoting of the Quranic verses is always without sound exegesis but more on the personal opinion of the jurists. It implies that such employment is more likely to be the preference and decision of a single caliph, rather than a general and standard practice guided by sacred text and religious doctrine.

3.4　Direct Competition for Scarce Resources with non-Muslims

Rationally, the expansion of any organisation, including religion, will sooner or later face competition for resources in terms of position, status or standing. It is predictable, but not trivial, that when scarce resources were not fiercely contested in the early days of Islam, there was little reason for arguments of contestation and exclusion to emerge (Yarborough, 2012, p. 326). The observation that those who struggled to exclude non-Muslims from office, in both Umayyad Kufa and Mamluk Cairo, did so in climates of intense competition for state favouritism, often motivated by specific personal grievances and motives, suggests a broader and more robust framework for understanding religiously based exclusion. Yarborough disagrees that the *ulama*'s motive - most commonly those who consorted with rulers and were open to receiving state patronage - "was a social-economic one, disguised as religious", or that their personal and economic motivations coincided with a religious commitment to the maintenance of hierarchy. Instead, he argues that religious exclusion, whatever its motivations, is best understood as a competition for fungible, scarce resources. Such resources, which derive their value from convergent societal consensus and can take the form of symbolic, social, and economic capital, among other things, are scarce and, therefore, contested in all societies. When elites lamented the authority wielded by non-Muslims over Muslims, they were defending their own personal and, more loosely, class interests in concentrating, building, and accessing fungible symbolic capital rather than a static hierarchical imperative allegedly inherent in Islam. The opposition to the employment of non-Muslim officials was motivated not by static legal principles inherent in Islam or borrowed from the Byzantines but by the interests of religious elites competing for scarce resources, of which the state was the primary dispenser (Yarborough, 2012, pp. 17, 84, 266).

Moreover, many rejections of the employment of non-Muslim administrators in Ayyubid and Mamluk society can be best understood in the context of threats to Muslim official positions. Nevertheless, individual *ulama* faced multiple threats to their economic and social positions, not just competition from non-Muslims. Specifically, non-Muslim authority created a threat to Muslims on various levels, particularly to their capacity to exchange their assessment of scarce resources and positions for social and economic goods (Yarborough, 2012, pp. 266–268). This is

why objections to the employment of non-Muslims tended to emphasise not only a violation of institutional regulations (citing neither religious imperative nor doctrine nor the Quran or the precedent of earlier Muslims), but the inopportune relationship between a Muslim patron and his non-Muslim subject; notwithstanding, non-Muslim officials were known for their effectiveness and loyalty. Furthermore, rulers saw in non-Muslim officials' competent servants lacking pre-existing ties to competitors who might supplant them or undercut their power (Yarborough, 2012, pp. 309-310). By undercutting their power, Muslims can minimise the threats posed by non-Muslim competitors in accessing scarce resources and positions.

To understand the above in the context of social psychology, favouritism of Muslims can also come from comparison and competition where the out-group (non-Muslims) is perceived as a threat to the integrity, interests, or identity of not only oneself but also the in-group as a whole. The threats may have appeared in the forms of competition for the position, political representation and limited resources, promotion of one's values and the protection of one's status (Brewer, 2007, p. 697; Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 510). Through the comparison process, individuals always differentiate their group from other groups and place their group in the more positively valued status (Deaux, 1996, p. 790). In addition, because of religious belief and content, religious groups are likely to make intergroup comparisons and place their group in a higher or better position (Ysseldyk et al., 2010, p. 60; Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 511). Stereotyping in-group members as superior and out-group members as inferior, such as infidels, immoral, and/or enemies, could serve this esteem-enhancing function (Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, pp. 511, 521). Put differently, this is the type of bias that arises when intergroup comparison and competition are activated, resulting in in-group benefits at the expense of out-group benefits and *vice versa*. The bias of this type results in discrimination motivated by in-group protection (rather than enhancement) as well as antagonism toward the out-group. It is noted that Muslim authorities in the early Islamic period (Ayyubid and Mamluk society) faced this kind of difficulty, resulting in the exclusion of non-Muslim employment from state officials.

To summarise, the exclusion or opposition to the employment of non-Muslims in state administration stems from competition for limited/scarce resources and positions, not anti-Christian propaganda or religious principles. According to theories

of social identity and self-identification, it is in-group favouritism and out-group bias where Muslims are preferred over non-Muslim officials.

The following section will explore the prohibition or disapproval of the employment of non-Muslims as state functionaries from the perception of *ummah* as a religious identity or social identity.

3.5 *Ummah* and non-Muslims Public Roles in Early Islamic Period

The word *ummah* appears sixty-four times (Akram 2007: 383) in sixty-two Quranic verses (Akram, 2007, p. 383; Awang, 2000, p. 58, Denny, 1975, p. 43). It denotes various meanings and concepts in the Quran (Awang, 2000, p. 58; Urban, 2012; 2013). However, "it usually refers to the human community in a religious sense" (Denny, 1975, p. 34) in general concept to a more specific "reference to the emerging Muslim community" (Akram 2007: 384). The Quranic verses that contain *ummah* which are exclusively applied to Muslims are 2:128, 2:143, 3:104, and 3:110 (Denny, 1975, p. 68). These *ummah* verses describe the Muslim community as a godly, religious community that not only hears the law but observes and enforces it. 3:110 is the climax of them all which explicitly declares Muslim *ummah* the best *ummah* (community) ever produced for people on the face of the earth that order what is right, forbid what is wrong, and believe in God (Bakar, 2012b, p. 445; Denny, 1975, p. 69). Although such feelings of superiority are likely to provide comfort in times of uncertainty and robust coping resources in the midst of distress, paradoxically, fully embracing superiority is apt to have deleterious effects on religious intergroup relations (Ysseldyk, Matheson and Anisman, 2010, pp. 61-62). Later part of this section will examine the implications of Muslims embracing superiority in detail within the framework of social identity.

As declared in the Quran, the *ummah* community concept proposes a single, clear criterion for membership in the "new" community. As the community develops, it departs from community criteria in the same way that "new" religion departs from "traditional" religion. According to van Nieuwenhuijze, the operational significance of the neologism *ummah* during its formation must have been that it represented the abstract entity standing for the cohesion of all Muslims as Muslims. As an abstract entity, it could function as a force that maintains and stimulates the same cohesion.

Therefore, it serves as a symbol of cohesion and cohesive force for all Muslims at once (1959, p. 13) – categorisation and identification within the *ummah* community (Arjan, 2014, pp. 21-26). This is why it is possible to say that the concept of *ummah* presupposes the so-called alternative concepts of community, which can thus be understood as a self-sustaining (self-esteem) process (van Nieuwenhuijze, 1959, pp. 9-10; see also Deaux, 1996, p. 778; Tajfel and Turner, 1979; Ysseldyk, Matheson and Anisman, 2010, p. 61). In other words, the *ummah* is more likely to form religious bonds (group categories) based on religious identity (social identity), for they know of only one community (van Nieuwenhuijze, 1959, p. 20). As a result of the *ummah* in-group categorisation and identification, non-*ummah* out-group would expectedly be sidelined (Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 521).

Additionally, van Nieuwenhuijze was among the first to study *ummah*'s meaning within social identity theory. He says, "The *ummah* is the unique principle of social identity valid in Islam. It makes for the only Islamic community, of which any Muslim is a member simply by virtue of being a Muslim" (1959, p. 20). He is correct in saying that within the social identity framework, the [*ummah*] community is to be stressed more than the individual. However, it is within this community that individuals are made more relevant. He goes on to say that social identity should be used as a general tool for analysing socio-cultural processes and that *ummah* should be viewed as a concept that allows for this type of analysis in the context of Islam (1959, p.14). van Nieuwenhuijze continues:

> The concept is meant to be a comprehensive indication of a self-perpetuating process, including the factors involved therein, due to which certain phenomena, common to a number of people, gain their recognizability, their character, their form, their appearance. It is experienced 'from inside' as well as 'from outside' (1950, p. 14).

His primary point is similar to the theory of social identity, which has yet to be fully developed at his time. According to the theory, on the one hand, the repercussions of categorisation and identification of the individual as a member of a group will result in a better and more positive self. On the other hand, out-group members are not to be favoured.

Urban (2013), however, takes the Quran as a historical document and as a text by itself, arguing convincingly that the term *mawla* (pl. *mawali*) in the Quran

(33:5) serves to emphasise the belonging of all Muslims to a particular vision of society, that is *ummah*. She further argues that the Quran uses the term to express Muslim's salient social identity. *Ummah*, as an expression of Muslim's salient social identity, simultaneously created a boundary between Muslims and foreigners or insiders and outsiders (Urban, 2013, p. 39). If it were to use Lindstedt's terms, "the believer in-group" and other groups do not belong to "us" but to "them" (2022, p. 309). Urban's study provides the earliest historical example of how the Muslim society (*ummah*) set boundaries, designated belonging, instituted group affiliation and most significantly, self-identification in early Islamic history (Urban, 2013, p. 38. See also Kanani et al, 2017).

In other respects, Bakar (2012b) defines *ummah* as a knowledge community (Quranic-based) as well as a just-balanced community (*sharia*-based or Muhammad *Sharia*). As he argued, Muslim identity must be understood within these knowledge and just-balanced communities that give substance to Muslim identity. Thus, Muslim identity is rooted within the framework of Quranic theory and Muhammad's *Shariah*. Accordingly, the identity of the Muslim *ummah* is called "*ummatic* identity" (Bakar, 2012b, p. 442), the identity that covers all collective affairs, namely *Islamic politics*. As such, the Muslim *ummatic* identity serves as an umbrella term for the discourses, beliefs, and practices that envision and express the *ummah* and its divine mission, foster solidarity, and address and manage socio-cultural, political, ethical, and religious issues (Anjum, 2023). More precisely, the *ummah* as a socio-political identity creates a division between Muslims and non-Muslims: what is that of Muslims, and what is that of non-Muslims. Irrespectively, *ummah* as a socio-political community and *ummah* identity a socio-political identity or *ummah* as a religious community and *ummah* identity a religious identity, the implication of social identity principle is the same – in-group favouritism and out-group prejudice.

Equally, *ummah* is also a form of an imagined community or collective identity. *Ummah* is viewed as a collective identity from a sociological (socio-psychological) perspective. As Urban claimed, on the one hand, Muslims might understand themselves as individual concepts of self. On the other hand, Muslims might also perceive themselves as a collective concept of self (Urban, 2013, pp. 38-39), that is, collective identity. In this respect, this (*ummah*) consciousness shapes the image of the 'self' and that of the 'other'. As part of the collective or imagined community, it allows Muslims to identify with other Muslims (Hassan, 2018, p. 59;

van Nieuwenhuijze, 1959, p 20).   Consequently, Muslims always identify themselves with other Muslims as a community of beliefs, namely the community called *ummah* (see Ysseldyk, Matheson and Anisman, 2010, p. 61).

Imagined community or collective identity is based on the socialisation process of human society. People develop it and first identify themselves for their society's value, purpose and belief (the normative expectation on members of an imagined community does not diminish compared to those who stay connected and interact face-to-face). In addition to building an individual identity, this process also creates a collective identity. Social rituals and ritualised behaviour further strengthens the society and give its members a sense of identity, especially in relation to "others" whose collective identity is different (Hasan, 2018, p. 58). Moreover, the tenet of believing that one's own religion is the truth might sanction religious (collective) identity (Kinnvall, 2004; Wellman and Tokuno, 2004; Ysseldyk, Matheson and Anisman, 2010, p. 61). From this perspective, "the *ummah* would constitute a collective identity of Muslims in the sense that it refers to Muslim's identification with the sacred domain of Islam and its incorporation into their individual consciousness" (Hassan, 2018, p. 58). Hence, collective identity and social solidarity influence the distribution of resources and the structure of rights of group members *vis-à-vis* outsiders (Hasan, 2018, p. 58).

In addition to the categorisation and collective identity of the *ummah*, the *ummah* is more than a religious community. It is also a political society (Husain, 1995, p. 31). Although *ummah* can be described as an "imaged [sic] community" (Hassan, 2018, pp. 5, 59. See Anderson, 1986, p. 6 for the meaning of imagined community), it bonds Muslims together by the same religious norms, values, and practices. It is worth noting that Muslim religious identity may not always be the only identity, and such identity is not necessarily adversative to nationalism. However, this personal religious identity is more compelling to Muslims (Berggren, 2007, p. 86). Quran justifies this:

> Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah. If only the People of the Book had faith, it were best for them: among them are some who have faith, but most of them are perverted transgressors. (Quran 3: 110 – version of Yusuf Ali)

Other translations read, "You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind" (version of Saheeh International), "You are the best Ummah ever raised for mankind" (version of Mufti Taqi Usmani), "Ye are the best community that hath been raised up for mankind" (version of Pickthall), and "You are now the best people brought forth for (the guidance and reform of) mankind" (version of Tafheem-ul-Quran - Abul Ala Maududi). There are various translations (such as versions of Dr. Ghali and Abdul Haleem) worth viewing, all giving the positive sentiments that Muslims are the best people on earth. Put differently, Muslims take the idea that they are the best community on earth. Whereas non-believers are called *kāfir*, which according to Quran, means ungrateful (people) toward God (Björkman, 2012). The term is used 482 times in the Quran (Schirrmacher, 2020, p. 81) and is often translated as deniers of the truth (Sevinç, et al., 2018, p. 2) and rejecters (Akhtar, 1990, p. 90).

Q3:110 is the climax of which explicitly declares Muslim *ummah* the best *ummah* (community) ever produced for people on the face of the earth that order what is right, forbid what is wrong, and believe in God (Bakar, 2012b, p. 445; Denny, 1975, p. 69). This favourable intergroup comparison may foster a perception of superiority relative to other religious groups, a "glorification" of the in-group, and thus reinforce the centrality of belonging to this group in one's self-esteem (Haslam et al., 2009). While such feelings of superiority are likely to provide a sense of security in times of uncertainty and a reliable coping mechanism in times of disaster, paradoxically, fully embracing a sense of superiority may have a negative impact on religious intergroup relations (Ysseldyk, Matheson, Anisman, 2010, pp. 61-62）。

This positive sentiment towards one's religion and negative attitudes towards others (out-groups) will uncompromisingly generate believers' (in-group) superiority but non-believers' (out-groups) prejudice. The Quran seems to contain both. According to Summer, positive emotions toward in-groups are directly related to aversion, disgust, and hostility toward out-groups (Brewer, 1999, p. 430). Although in-group love may not be necessary for out-group hate, "the very factors that make in-group attachment and allegiance important to individuals also provide a fertile ground for antagonism and distrust of those outside the in-group boundaries" (Brewer, 1999, p. 442). Not forgetting, simply classifying and categorising

individuals into religious groups is sufficient to produce in-group and out-group discrimination and bias (Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 521).

In sum, applying Jackson and Hunsberger's conclusion, *ummah* as an expression of social and collective identities (imagined community) entailed the same values, beliefs, and rituals is sufficient to generate in-group and out-group discrimination and prejudice (1999, p. 521). Even without interaction between *ummah* and non-*ummah* or any history of competition or conflict, out-group (non-*ummah*) bias and derogation will still occur (Brewer 2007, p. 697; Deaux, 1996, p. 779). As long as Muslim society (*ummah*) sets boundaries, designates belonging, institutes group affiliation and, most significantly, self-identification (Urban, 2013, p. 38; Lindstedt, 2022, p. 309), a distinctive identification of who is "us" and who is "others" – a rule of exclusion as well as inclusion is unavoidable. Consequently, bias stemming from differential "us" – "others" results from with holding from out-groups (others) favours and benefits that are extended only to the in-group (us) are predicted (Brewer, 1999, p. 438; 2007, pp. 696-697; Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 511). Moreover, the Quranic verse (3:110), which declares that the *ummah* is the best community, creates in-group superiority, according to Jackson and Hunsberger (1999, p. 521), and inevitably generates prejudice against religious out-groups. The teaching of the sacred text thus indirectly or unintentionally encouraged in-group favouritism and out-group bias because of the Muslim religious identity. Muslims generally understand that there should not be any superiority between Muslims and non-Muslims (among humanity). However, due to their religious identity and superiority, it is understandable why non-Muslims are to be excluded from public employment.

3.6   Conclusion

The chapter shows that, in most cases of the early Islamic period, non-Muslims were appointed as prominent state officials, preferable to Muslims. The chapter also shows that the forbiddance and dismissal of non-Muslim state officials became apparent not during the early Islamic empire but during the medieval Islamic period (10th to 14th centuries AD) when non-Muslims still occupied many important state positions. The chapter further shows that the forbidding and dismissal of non-Muslim

state functionaries is barely because of religious criteria but mainly due to the competition for limited sacred resources by Muslims and non-Muslims. In addition, it can also be explained with the help of social identity theory as in-group favouritism and out-group bias when the concept of *ummah* is studied from the perspective of social and collective identities, where social identity theory well explains these phenomena. In this aspect, besides religious factors, Muslim identity turned out to be one of the factors that became a great challenge for non-Muslims to be employed as state bureaucrats. The chapter continues to show that the out-group bias is due to the positive sentiment of *ummah* inscribed in the Quran. The Quranic verse 3:110 declares that the *ummah* is the best community. It may foster in-group superiority and inevitably lead to prejudice against religious out-groups. Because of the Muslim religious identity, teaching sacred texts may indirectly or unintentionally encourage in-group favouritism and bias against out-groups. Therefore, Muslim religious identity and a potential sense of superiority may or inexorably generate in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination, which unescapably exclude the employment of non-Muslim public functionaries.

The chapter also demonstrates how the status and role of *dhimmī* evolve gradually and informally in accordance with the circumstances surrounding the formulation of the law. The Quran does not provide specific and detailed guidelines for *dhimmī*'s treatment or political rights. Often, the *hadith* responded to specific circumstances rather than providing overarching rules and regulations for the treatment of *dhimmī*. However, the idea that *dhimmī* are less than Muslims was influenced by Islamic doctrine, which asserted that it was superior to and could rectify the mistakes of Judaism and Christianity. Within the framework of the victorious Islamic empire, this theological position acquired political and social significance as well as a political and social form. Concurrently, Islamic law established a broad framework of beliefs and regulations regarding the status and treatment of *dhimmī*.   These are open to varying interpretations and the decisions and practices of different governing bodies. The Islamic legal stance on *dhimmī* is thus the outcome of a complicated interplay between political and social factors and Islamic ideas and principles (Scott, 2010, p. 32).

Hence, this chapter answers research objective number 2 by showing that non-Muslims were appointed as prominent state officials in the early Islam period. The dismissal of non-Muslims from state functionaries is barely due to religious

criteria but competition for limited sacred resources. In addition, the Quran does not provide guidelines for the treatment and rights of non-Muslims. However, *ummah* (religious) identity and a potential sense of superiority may cause in-group favouritism and out-group bias, which results in the exclusion of employment of non-Muslim from public offices.

The next chapter will analyse the development of Malay identity and religious identity. The chapter aims to determine which identity plays a prominent role in dealing with others. It will also discuss how Malaysian society frames Malays' religious identity, which has developed into a challenge for non-Muslims to take part in government offices.

Chapter 4

The Origin and Development of Malay-Muslim Identity in Malaysia

4.1   Introduction

The origin or more precisely the indigeneity (a person's or group's identity that ties them to specific places) of the Malays in Malaysia is highly contested (Reid, 2002). Its origin (indigeneity) is employed to validate the ethnocracy (*see* Anderson 2016 for the meanings of ethnocracy) of the Malays (Wade, 2009, pp. 27-28). It also has long-term implications for Malaysia, whether for the Malays or the non-Malays. For the Malays, it is used to strengthen their identity, legitimising political domination (Malay supremacy) (Nah, 2003, pp. 512-514) and control of resources and public service and administration (Wade, 2009, p. 23). The origin (indigeneity) of Malay also becomes an instrument to subordinate the interests of the other ethnic groups, that is, the non-Malays (Wade, 2009, p. 24) and promote religious autocracy (Wade, 2009, pp. 24-25). Consequently, the interethnic and interreligious relationships are greatly influenced by ethnocracy and religious autocracy in Malaysia.

This chapter aims to trace the Malays' origin in Malaysia in view of its significance. The chapter will then examine the development of Malay ethnic and religious identities. Communally, the ethnicity and the religiosity are two critical aspects of the Malays' identity in Malaysia. This chapter will first study the origins of the Malays in Malaysia. It will then trace the development of the Malay-Muslim identity from Malaysia's pre-independence period to the contemporary one from a socio-historical perspective. The chapter also seeks to interpret this development, its meanings, and its implications in relation to other ethnic groups. The chapter will also discuss the impact of Malay-Muslim identity from the standpoint of social identity theory. Finally, this chapter will analyse the ethnicity of the Malays in Malaysia within Islam perspectives (parameters).

4.2   The Origin of "the Malays" in Malaysia

It should be noted at this juncture that this is not a detailed study of the formation of Malay ethnicity, but rather an account that is only related to the Malaysian case and serves as a basis for this study and chapter, that is, who the Malays are in Malaysia. For a better understanding of the origin of Malay, especially its migration and language, see Andaya (2001; 2002) and Winstedt (1950, pp. 7-17).

Four main theories trace the origin of Malays, namely Yunan, Taiwan, Seafarers and Sundaland (Fahmi, 2014; Parthipan and Ishar, 2022), but their origin is still questionable (Embong et al., 2016, p. 235). Noticeably, none of the theories demonstrate that Malays originated from Malaysia (Peninsular Malaysia). In the contemporary understanding, however, "the Malays" is a general term that denotes a particular population of Brunei, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand, the Marino of Madagascar, Chams of Cambodia and Vietnam, the "Cape Malay" community of South Africa, and the Malay of Sri Lanka. Some of these people are Malay descendants, whereas others are not but speak Malay. Others observe the Malay way of living. Not all of them embrace Islam. Considering these, Milner (2011, p.1) would rather pen about Malayness than "the Malays". Concerning the Malays as a concept of race, he writes, "a notion of community that is by no means fixed but, rather, open to redefinition or refashioning" (p. 235). If it were to refer to Malay as a local race of the Malaya Peninsular, Milner (2011, p. 236) proposes a Melaka-Johor flavour that would not relate to Malay by descent (see also Yahaya, 2012, p. 258). According to him:

> The manner in which 'Malay' in Melaka-Johor had developed into much more than a river-based identity does not evoke specifically 'racial' thinking. The phrase 'Malay ways' (reported by Europeans early in the sixteenth century), and the mention in *kerajaan* writings of 'Malay customs', 'Malay dress', 'Malay music' and so forth, suggest 'Malay' had begun to be understood more as a culture, or perhaps more accurately, a civilisation (pp. 236-237).

Despite that, the term "Malay" has been used from the second century (A.D.) onward. Different sources from different periods referred to Malay in different places; for example, Ptolemy, the Egyptian geographer, inserted the toponym "west Malay" somewhere near the southern border of Burma today. In the seventh century's Chinese records, "Malay" appears to be a more specific kingdom to the north Srivijaya empire. The Chola Tanjore inscription of 1030 identifies "Malay" as

one of Sumatra's ancient kingdoms. By the time of the thirteenth century, "Malay" is centred primarily in Jambi area, no longer in Palembang. "Malay" thus appears to be an old toponym (Reid, 2001, p. 297).

The idea that the Peninsula is mainly "Malay" appears to have been English. In his late eighteenth-century work, *The History of Sumatra*, William Marsden believes that referring to the Peninsula as "Malayan" or "Malay" is exclusive of European invention (see also Winstedt, 1950, p. 4), which had led many to mistake the Peninsula as the place of Malay origins (Reid, 2001, p. 303). In fact, other Europeans usually called the Peninsula, "Malacca" after its most famous city – Malacca (*Melaka*). Calling the Peninsula as Malay is almost exclusively a British invention (Fernandez, 1999, p. 47; Winstedt, 1966, pp. 8-9) and "at the same time having a sentimental attachment to the Malays as the 'original' inhabitants" (Milne, 1967, p. 26). The term "Malayan" dates back at least to Alexander Hamilton in the early eighteenth century, notably in the term "Malayan coast" to refer to the ports of Kedah and Perak. However, until around 1800, English maps, like French and Dutch ones, called the Peninsula more often by the name of Malacca. With the founding of Georgetown in Penang in 1786, the British became increasingly concerned with the Peninsula and seemed to have generally adopted the usages "Malay" or "Malayan" for the Peninsula (Reid, 2001, pp. 303-304).

Nevertheless, "Malay" did not become a name for a people before the eighteenth century, not to mention a nation (Shamsul, 1996, p. 18). The most common term to designate the people of the Malay Archipelago (Indonesia and Malaysia) is "Jawa". This term is also used by the Chinese of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as well as by the Vietnamese and Cambodian. The first Chinese source to use "Malay" rather than "Jawa" to refer to the same broad cultural area (including the Philippines) was a text from 1730. Surprisingly, (Peninsula) Malay language sources themselves do not use this term but cite Bukit Si-Guntang (a small hill by this name in the modern city of Palembang) as a place of origin of their kings (Fernandez, 1999, p. 43; Reid, 2001, pp. 297-298).

When Melaka is at war with Siam, Majapahit, and other states, its opponents are the Siam and Jawa people. Those from Melaka are referred to as Melaka people, not Malay people. Once Melaka embraced Islam and established the Muslim kingdom, the term Malay people began to appear interchangeable with Melakans (Reid, 2001, p. 298; Winstedt, 1938, pp. 108, 117-118). In addition, only

with the Melaka kingdom in the fifteenth century by Malay immigrants from Palembang (Indonesia) did the Peninsula become part of 'Malay' (Andaya, 2001, p. 328).

In Malaysia, *Melaka*'s oral and written traditions (history), especially after embracing Islam, became the 'primordial' identity of the Malays. In other words, Islam has grown into the most significant and internalised religion of the Malays (Ali, 2022, p. 90). Historical evidence of Malay antecedents other than that found within the Peninsula is rarely mentioned and discussed (Andaya, 2001, p. 316). Furthermore, pre-Melaka inhabitants of the Peninsula are never considered to be part of the people of the lands (Andaya, 2001, p. 328, cf. Ali, 2022, p. 88). Therefore, for the Malays to claim to be the first to own the land is far from the truth. For the Malays to claim, the land's first people is more of a political interest (governmental directives and academic scholarship corporation) than a historical endeavour (Andaya, 2001, pp. 328-329). As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the implications are used to authenticate their ethnocracy. It is employed to strengthen their identity, justifying their hegemony in politics, resource control, and public administration and service. Additionally, Malay indigeneity is used as a tool to advance religious autocracy and subjugate non-Malay interests (Wade, 2009, pp. 24-25).

4.3   The Development of Malay-Muslim Identity

The development of Malay-Muslim identity in Malaysia can be divided into three distinctive periods: (1) pre-colonial period, (2) colonial period and (3) post-independence.

4.3.1   Pre-Colonial Period

In an analysis of some of the earliest Malay indigenous writings, such as *Sejarah Melayu* (History of Malay) and *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (story of *Hang Tuah*) to the Peninsula to discover how Malays expressed their identity as a people, Matheson (1979, p. 370) writes that the term *Melayu* (Malay) is used exclusively for royal or noble descents, and is associated with elitist areas of culture, for example,

adherence to court protocol and expressions of culture through court-recognised art forms (not crafts), particularly related to the Malacca court traditions and later to the Johore. These centres are considered the representative of what is "truly Malay and they set the standard for Malay culture" (Matheson, 1979, p. 370). The pre-colonial Malay Peninsula consisted of several competing polities, each headed by a ruler or raja whose influence depended on his personal ability and political skill in dealing with internal oppositions and external invasions. The *raja*, as Milner (1991, p. 113) puts it, "is not only the 'key institution' but the only institution, and the role he plays in the lives of his subjects is as much moral and religious as political". The subjects are regarded not so much as subjects but as extensions of the raja. In addition, the raja is the primary object of loyalty, the bond holding people together, and the window through which the community perceives and experiences the world (Milner, 1991, p. 113). Malay existence is comprehended within these institutions or political conditions as "living not in states or under governments but in a *kerajaan*, in the 'condition of having a raja'" (Lian, 1997, pp. 60-61; Milner, 1991, p. 114).

Like most pre-colonial Southeast Asian countries, the structure of Malay society is domineered by a long-standing tradition of patron-client relationships. The ties between clients and patrons – the raja, the district chiefs, and the village headmen – are built on personal bonds and kinship connections. In pre-colonial Malaya, the identity of the Malays is tangled with their Sultan (Fernandez, 1999, p. 43; Lee, 2010, p. 37), meaning that the identity is grounded mainly on personal ties to their clients.   The identity is thus hardly ever by any sense of ethnic affiliation or territory (Lian, 1997, p. 61; Shamsul, 1996, p. 18). The key to maintaining patron-client relationships with their subjects or followers is not so much control over land as it is influence over people. In these circumstances, Malay identity is confined by rulers' and chiefs' personal influence, ability, and political skill but unlikely to be linked to some notion of a fixed territory. The "we" versus "them" sentiment appears only between *kerajaan*, not among ethnic groups. The notion of an imagined Malay ethnic identity is non-existent (Fernandez, 1999, p. 45). The Malay ethnic identity did not begin until British colonisation – the arrival of the Chinese and Indian immigrants and the growing uniform administration associated with a modern state (Lian, 1997, p. 61).

4.3.2 Colonial Period (British)

Portuguese, Dutch and British colonised the Peninsula Malaya, Malay states and Malaya. Among the three, the British colonial administration has the most profound and long-lasting impact on people's perceptions of ethnicity and the structure of ethnic interactions. The British colonial government of Malaya regarded the migrant and Indigenous populations through the concepts of "ascriptive ethnicity". By ascriptive ethnicity, Taylor (1982, pp. 7-20) means "ethnicity is conceptualised as an ascribed attribute and assumes that instinctive and primordial antagonisms exist between different groups". Hence, British administration over Malay, Chinese, Indian and Indigenous people differed on the basis of these assumptions. Such administrative practice is often called divide and rule, but a better term should be understood as categorise and rule. Ascriptive ethnicity and colonial practice reinforced inter-ethnic stereotypes and potential antipathies, eventually shaping the "political development of Malay identity" (Lian, 1997, p. 62). The British acknowledgement of categorisation and rule not only weakened inter-group relationships (Holst, 2012, p. 35) but created inter-racial antagonism (Fernandez, 1999, p. 47) to maximise their economic gain and remain in power (Holst, 2012, pp. 35-38).

The Malays' perception of identity as linked to territory and physical boundaries also developed in the context of British colonisation and the need to establish administrative control over the Malays (Holst, 2012, p. 37). The expansion of colonial rule in the 19th and early 20th centuries laid the foundations of the early modern states on the Peninsula. It formally demarcated the territorial boundaries of each of the Malay states. These are responsible for institutionalising the positions of Malay rulers (sultans). By 1919, the British controlled almost the entire Peninsula to different degrees. Singapore, Malacca and Penang remain under the close and direct control of the British government through the Straits Settlement. The Malay Federated States of Perak, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Pahang are indirectly governed by British residents. Unlike the Unfederated Malay State, the governing bodies of the two administrative systems are closely aligned (Andaya and Andaya, 1982, p. 205). The monarchs of the Unfederated Malay States, including the sultans of Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan, Terengganu, and Johore, all asserted their liberation by entering into "separate agreements with the British colonial government to respect

the autonomy of their respective states" (Lian, 1997, p. 63). British advisers are appointed to assist in administrating these states (Lian, 1997, p. 62).

Nonetheless, the rulers' ability to wield practical influence differs from state to state, with the unfederated states having the most authority. The combination of modern administration, rulers and territories provides bureaucratic continuity. It had previously been absent and became a primary focus of subsequent Malay identity and political commitment, *albeit* split among individual state loyalties (Lian, 1997, p. 62). This identity of Malay, which is given legitimacy by the British administration system, is limited to its local origins. The Muslims of South Indian and Arab heritage of the Straits Settlements established and articulated a regional identity that attempted to make sense of the Malay position through the worldwide Islamic *ummah* (religious identity). Notably, both groups have consciously sought to identify with the Malay community (Lian, 1997, pp. 64-65).

After the First World War, the question of origin was fundamental to Malay identity, initiated by educated local-born Malays. The notion is that non-Malay Muslims should not speak on behalf of the Malay community. Historically, the Malay-Muslim community's leadership has been dominated by Arabs and *Jawi Peranakan* (local-born Muslims who are persons of South Indian Muslim descent from a Malay woman or of such descent) (Roff, 1980, p. 188). The foreign and local communities highly respect the Arabs and Malay-Arabs because they possess religious piety, knowledge, wealth and generosity. When the Asian representative to the Straits Settlements Legislative Council is nominated, there is a demand to appoint a Muslim representative of Arab descent (Roff, 1980, p. 190). On the other hand, the Malays wanted their representative, and the British agreed.

In 1939, Abdul Rahim Kajai, a prominent Malay journalist, viewed Islam as a religion, not a *bangsa* (race/ethnicity). Correspondingly, he rejected the idea that Islam is a bond that tied the Indian and Arab Muslims to Malay race or ethnicity (Omar, 1993, p. 17). Also, he advocated the offensive descriptions of *Darah Keturunan Keling* (of Indian blood descent) and *Darah Keturunan Arab* (of Arab blood descent). He declared that only those of patriarchal Malay descent could be called the Malay race. In doing so, he effectively detached the Malay race from Arabs and Indian Muslims and introduced the idea of *Melayu jati* (an authentic or genuine Malay) (Lian, 1997, pp. 65-66).

However, despite the best efforts of Malay intellectuals to evoke comprehensive attitudes related to race – that is, a shared language, culture, territory, and even the glorious history of the great Malay kingdom, the concept of race has not fully matured. *Ummah* is a concept that is too universalistic to help focus on the condition of the Malays in Malaya. Undoubtedly, British racial categorisation featured the Malay identity to some extent. However, as Lian (1997, p. 68) and Pepinsky (n.d., p. 29) argued, the full realisation of the racial identity will have to wait for the Japanese occupation. Lian (1997, p. 68) further contended that the British plans to establish the Malayan Union also played a significant part in inducing the full realisation of the Malay race identity.

In evaluating the impact of the Japanese occupation on Malay politics, Stockwell (1977, p. 9) writes:

> The demands of war, the changes in government and the dislocation of society combined to arouse within the Malay community a greater political awareness than had existed in the placid pre-war period.

Furthermore, Shamsul (1996, p. 22) precisely puts:

> It was during this period that the concepts of 'Malay community', or *Bangsa Melayu*, as an imagined community' in the Andersonian sense and as a focus of identity for organised political activism was fully articulated, developed and institutionalised in Malaysia.

For their purpose, the Japanese engendered political activity at all levels of the Malay community, where they favoured Malays but persecuted Chinese (Holst, 2012, p. 52). To gain support from Malay society and assistance in local administration, the Japanese encouraged the Malays to participate actively in politics (Omar, 1993, p. 28). Malay activists backed the Japanese government, hoping to accelerate independence through an alliance with Indonesia, a strategy that backfired when Britain returned to Malaya (Lian, 1997, p. 69).

Not long after the Japanese surrender, violence erupted between Chinese and Malay communities, which is recognised as a fundamental divide between the "victimised" Chinese and the "favoured" Malays, irrespective of Malays' distinctive descent in Malaya or elsewhere. In this context, a general understanding of "Malay" emerged as an identity defined by religious belief and cultural practice rather than

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genealogical heritage. Identifying as Javanese rather than Arab or *Melayu jati* (pure Malay) carried no particular weight during the Japanese occupation. This account also explains how people of the Malay community might hold other ethnic identities at the same time because no aspect of the process demanded the renunciation of other identities (Pepinsky, n.d., pp. 31-32).

Following this development, the British decided to develop a plan to create a unitary state known as the Malayan Union, among the Federated and Unfederated Malay States and the Straits Settlements. The Alliance represented a major departure from the pre-war Malayan colonial policy of recognising Malaya as a Malay state. The sovereignty of Malay sultans in Federated and Unfederated Malay States would be handed over to the British Crown (Andaya and Andaya, 1982, p. 255). Citizenship in the Union would be extended to all, and all citizens enjoy equal rights. Predictably, the Malay protest was vigorous and impulsive. The traditional Malay elite of both the Federated and Unfederated Malay States greatly backed the Pan-Malayan Malay Congress in early 1946 (Stockwell, 1977, p. 72). In the same year, the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) was established because of this historic congress. UMNO has dominated both Malay and national politics ever since (Lian, 1997, p. 69) until 2018, when UMNO, as a ruling government, lost in the 2018 general election for the first time.

The traditional, loyal relationship between ruler and subjects, already strained by the political disruption due to the Japanese occupation, was openly questioned during the Union crisis. The acquiescence of the Malay rulers to British plans was portrayed as a betrayal by the aristocracy. Their relationship is irrevocably changed (Tan, 1988, pp. 15-16; Cheah, 1988, pp. 22-23). It is argued that the position of the Malays could only be protected by themselves, that is to say, the Malays. Malay leaders who organised opposition to the federation warned the sultans that they would be seen as disloyal to their race if they attended the formal inauguration ceremony of the Malayan Union on 1 April 1946 (Omar, 1993, p. 198). They base their Malay identity on a love of race and *tanah air* (homeland). However, these elites know that they must work closely with the sultans to mobilise grassroots Malay support. As Milner (1991, p. 110) comments, "Even in the last years of the colonial period, only a small proportion of Malays thought of themselves primarily as 'Malays' rather than subjects of sultanates." The concept of race elicited by the Malay-

educated intelligentsia remained too abstract for most Malays to relate to, in contrast to the idea of *kerajaan* (state of having a raja) (Lian, 1997, p. 70).

The establishment of the Malayan Union was abandoned and replaced by the Federation of Malaya Agreement in 1948. One of the features of alteration is formalising the status of Malays against non-Malay immigrants (us against not us); the former is singled out for positive discrimination after 1969 (will be discussed next) (Lian, 1997, pp. 70-71). Commenting on the formation of the Federation of Malaya, Reid (2001, p. 309) writes, "The Federation of Malaya was emphatically designed to be a state constructed around not simply a core culture, but a core ethnic." Furthermore, it also consists of the special position of the Malays in education, government service, promotion, land ownership, and business and commerce licences (Lee, 2002, p. 179). Omar (1993, p. 18) thus articulated, "The Malays have rights not because they were born here but because they belong to the Malay *bangsa* (race) and are the first *bangsa* (race) that owns the land." What is entailed in the Malay race as an identity and enjoyment of a particular position is the differentiation between "us" (the Malays) and "not us" (non-Malays) or what Shamsul (1996, p. 23) terms as ethnic classification between "us" and "them". To differentiate between "us" and "not us" is the basis of prejudice and bias (Brewer, 2007, pp. 696-698), and its impacts and consequences will be explored in Section 6.4. As with all such development and temperament, it finally came to Malaya and later Malaysia's independence in 1957 and 1963, respectively.

At this juncture, it is worth noting that ethnic expressions are relatively strong, and religious idioms have not been used to defend their interests (Lee, 2010, p. 39). Of this, Malays are willing to protect their ethnic interests, even if against non-Malay Muslims (Mutalib, 1990, p. 20).

4.3.3 Post-Independence

After independence, Malay-Muslim identity gradually developed into what is currently known as Malay-Muslim. Nevertheless, it can be discussed mainly by (1) racial identity, (2) religious identity, and (3) constitutional and institutional identity.

4.3.3.1 Racial Identity

Malays are finally in control of their country in a spirit of optimism. However, Malay optimism slowly turned to disillusionment towards the end of the 1960s as they noticed that the economy, education, business, and state progress were not as expected in their favour. Despite that, Malay political dominance is greatly challenged in the general election of 1969. The election results marked a critical stage in the development of Malay identity as a *bangsa* (race) (Lian, 1997, p. 71). Put simply, Malays fear that they will become nobody and have-nots in their "own land", economically and politically. Their status as the so-called landowners is threatened by outsiders (immigrant community). Eventually, these led to the 13 May race riot in 1969, and the remedy was the institutionalisation of the New Economic Policy (NEP). The NEP can be seen as "the rise of Malay leadership dedicated to the translation of Malay constitutional privileges into actual policies" (Freedman, 2000, p. 57).

The NEP was launched in 1971 to restructure the nation's economic distribution, hoping the Malays would enjoy economic parity with other ethnic communities. A few significant steps were taken: (1) to increase Malay equity participation in industry, (2) to increase Malay occupational participation, (3) to reduce and eradicate Malay and nationwide poverty, and (4) to increase the Malay share capital in the corporate sector to own at least 30 per cent. The excessive measures taken are also in the hope that the NEP will achieve one of its primary aims: to foster national unity. However, the preferential treatment of Malays (racial or positive discrimination of others) in economic development from 1971-1990 (20 years) resulted in a clear distinction between Malays and non-Malays in all government policies. Supposedly, the benefits and privileges associated with the NEP are specifically targeted at those who occupied *bumiputera* status (Indigenous or native peoples, such as the Dayaks and Melanau of Sarawak, Kadazans and Bajaus of Sabah) and Malays. Malays are the ones who become the primary beneficiaries, and the other indigenous peoples only get minimum benefits. The independence constitution had created two forms of citizenship, namely *bangsa Melayu* (Malay race) with special rights and *kaum pendatang* (immigrant community, or literally means 'outsider'). The NEP exaggerated and intensified the distinction and division between Malays and non-Malays for the duration of 20 years. The government now employs ascriptive ethnicity, introduced by the British

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administration, to assuage the deep insecurity of the Malays when they nearly lost political power (Lian, 1997, pp. 71-72). Moreover, the racially-charged government's authority claims in economic and ethnic harmony reinforced Malay identity's intricate, relational construction to non-Malay identities.

The impact of NEP on Malay economic conditions, although it did not meet the expected outcomes (Jomo, 1989, p. iv), significantly improved Malay living standards in various aspects. Many of them moved to an urban environment and settled down. Their migration to an urban environment had two main consequences: (1) an increased distance from the traditional protective structure of their rural environment. In other words, they led to the weakening of loyalties to the Sultan's state and (2) the influence of Islam on Malay identity in changing circumstances as Malays turned to religion to express their power and position (Lian, 1997, pp. 72-73).

In the late 1970s and 1980s, as the full impacts of the NEP began to be felt across the Peninsula, a parallel development of Islamic revivalism, commonly known as the *dakwah* (missions) movement, took place (Lian, 1997, p. 73). The more educated, young, middle-class, and professionals involved dramatically in the movement who had been described as missionaries, heterogeneous, and unarranged (Nagata, 1984, pp. 81-130). It places no emphasis on the Malay nationalism of the past – which emerged after the war as a reaction to the Malayan Union (Milner, 1986, pp. 61-62). The *dakwah* movement also contrasts with traditional royalty. Nagata (1984, p. 185) suggests that the traditional bases of Malay identity, namely language and culture – no longer appealed to disillusioned Malay youth who live in towns and cities. The beneficiaries of the new generation of Malays are Islamic fundamentalists (Lian, 1997, p. 73).

What is evident since the 1970s is that Malay identity has undergone radical changes. The economic success of the Malays offers two alternative sources of Malay identity. One is a UMNO-led *bumiputera* Malay, ready to fully participate in a modern economy, including working in partnership with non-Malay business partners. The other is religious-oriented, to the point of isolating themselves from contact with non-Muslims and temptations (Nagata, 1984, pp. 127-28). The conflict between UMNO and PAS on Malay religious identity is immense because both, in order to draw support from Muslims, are trying to portray who is more religious. PAS, the Islamic fundamentalism political party remains a political threat to UMNO, the largely secularised and pro-development political party. The spread of religious

fundamentalism in urban areas now poses an even greater challenge for UMNO. If the latter is seen as a direct attack on such movements, it risks losing the support of large numbers of Malays. However, it had major success in selecting some of the key leaders of the urban *dakwah* movement and, in the process, depreciating the appeal of fundamentalism (Lian, 1997, p. 73).

With the continued success of the economy and weakening of the traditional loyalty, not specifically state-ruler relations, UMNO eventually gave birth to the *Melayu baru* (the new Malay) – a new Malay identity. Whether it is a political construct or a middle-class Malay movement, new Malays are the new middle-class Malay, who consist of managers, administrators, lawyers, accountants, doctors, lecturers, and so on (Embong, 2002, p. 62). It means someone "who possesses a culture in keeping with the times, who are capable of meeting all challenges, able to compete without assistance, learned and knowledgeable, sophisticated, honest, disciplined, trustworthy and competent" (Embong, 2002, p. 170). The concept of *bumiputera*, although wholly abandoned, is outdated and no longer suitable to describe the transformation of Malay identity in the 1990s (Lian, 1997, p. 74).

Nevertheless, the impact of NEP on national unity and interethnic relations are negatively affected to great extent (see Jomo, 1989; Koon, 1997). The damage is primarily on state ethnic inequality policies or affirmative policies that discriminate against other ethnic communities (Lee, 2002, p. 179). In comparison, the social psychology dimension of inter-ethnic group relationships should not be taken lightly because it has a lasting impact on how Malays treat other ethnic societies. Regardless of whether the identity is 'authority-defined' or 'everyday-defined', as Shamsul (2001, p. 365) terms it, either is a social identity that brings the consequences of intergroup relations.

Notably, 'Malay' as ethnicity in Malaysia should be understood more as a 'cover term' – allowing one to be, for instance, 'Malay' and 'Arab' simultaneously (ethnic oscillation) (Milner, 2011, pp. 232-233). Nevertheless, ethnic oscillation occurs, according to Nagata (1974), due to the impression of that ethnic group from other ethnic groups. In other words, Nagata terms it a situational selection of ethnic identity. Religious identity, that is, Muslim, does not allow such accommodation. However, it is subjected to be framed and reframed by authorities and politicians.

The following section will discuss how UMNO and PAS frame and construct the Malay religious identity, causing tremendous out-group bias.

4.3.3.2 Religious Identity

The primary aim of this section is to provide an understanding of how religious identity is constructed within the framework of identity frames and oppositional frames (political opportunities and threats), in the contests between Malaysia's two main political parties. These rival political parties in Malaysia are influenced by different social movements and religious identity construction, which leads them to emphasise their religious values and beliefs in response to opportunities and threats (Napi, 2007, p. 1).

Zuriet and Lyausheva (2019) point out that "the formation of religious identity is influenced by religious institutions, organisations, and associations" (p. 4). In this respect, Malaysia's Muslim identity is momentously influenced by political parties. UMNO and PAS are the leading contenders for Malay support (Ratnam, 1985, p. 144) as well as identity. Therefore, this identity has been "something of a political tool between the Malaysian Islamic Party, PAS, and the Malay nationalist party, UMNO" for the past 30 years or more, especially in recent times (Peru, n.d., Ostwald, 2014, pp. 56-106; Ostwald and Subhan, 2020, p. 37). Each party has been trying to 'out-Muslim' the other with various Islamisation policies. "These have transformed Malay-Muslim consciousness towards a more Islamic slant, thus creating a niche for the industrialisation of Islamic identity in Malaysia" (Peru, n.d.).

UMNO and PAS have their conceptions of the Malays' religious identity, and each would want their perception to represent the main and correct one. The party whose conceptions are accepted by the majority of Malays is likely to be the government. Therefore, there has been an ongoing conflict in defining identity between UMNO and PAS, and each political party must have a sense of collective identity about itself and its opponent; each side believes that the fight is between "us" and "them" (Napi, 2007, p. 18).

4.3.3.2.1 UMNO's Influence on Malay Religious Identity

UMNO was established in 1946 as a political party to express Malay rights. UMNO is made up mainly of urban, middle-class Malays. These people are highly trained, knowledgeable, and self-sufficient individuals whose religious identities are moulded by liberalism and secularism. UMNO follows Islam Sunni Shafi'i sect as dogma and practices Islam *Hadhari* or "Civilisation Islam". Islam *Hadhari* was officially launched

in 2004 by the then Prime Minister, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (2004-2009), intending to promote moderate, secular Islam (separation of religion and civic affairs. See Malaysia Kini, 2006). According to Tunku Abdul Rahman, the first Prime Minister of Malaysia, Malaysia is a secular country, not an Islamic state, where Islam is the official religion of the state.

The religious styles advocated by UMNO created an atmosphere in which Islam is less visible in public, and religion is considered merely a private matter of Muslims. This has faced a challenge from PAS, who push public space for Islam (Napi, 2007, p. 21). In fact, the ruling UMNO actively uses Islam to regulate the daily life of Malays and profoundly influence their beliefs, attitudes, and values. While governing, UMNO spent hundreds of millions of Ringgit Malaysia (RM) building mosques, Islamic institutions, and universities, organising religious activities, such as international recitation of the Quran, seminars, and social work. For 2021, the government allocated RM12.5 billion for Islamic development and affairs (Malaysia Now, 2020). Islamic Key Performance Index (KPI) on eight major sectors in Malaysia indicates that Islamic values are penetrating all major aspects of Malaysia. At the launch of the first-ever *shariah* (Islamic religious law) index of the world in 2015, eight areas were selected to serve as targets to determine if a country is fulfilling Islamic values' objectives. A *shariah* index is an indicator of organisations (companies) that follow principles of the Quran or Islamic canonical law. According to Islam, the underlying idea is that business must be done religiously. In this case, the index (indicator) is in percentage. These eight areas were the justice system, economy, education, infrastructure and environment, politics, social, culture and health (The Star, 2015). Two years later, in 2017, according to the then Prime Minister, the country's national *shariah* index score improved to 76.06 per cent compared with 75.42 per cent two years previously (The Star, 2017). The *shariah* index of the Malaysia government alone clearly shows that Islamisation has penetrated almost all aspects of Malaysian society and shows that UMNO, by all means, is an organisation upholding Islam and making Islam public.

As part of the Alliance, the UMNO unavoidably had to moderate its policies to accommodate the welfare and interests of Malays and non-Malays. PAS constantly attacked this, accusing UMNO of not protecting Malay benefits and identity, namely religion (Ratnam, 1985, p. 146).

4.3.3.2.2 PAS's Influence on Malay Religious Identity

PAS (*Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*) is an Islamist political party. It was founded in November 1951 with the name Malayan Islamic Organisation (*Persatuan Islam Se-Malaya*) and changed to its current name in 1973 (see Funston, 1976 and Ibrahim, 1981). The ultimate goal of PAS is to establish an Islamic state (Mutalib, 1993, p. 36) in contrast to UMNO (Roff, 1998, p. 218). Therefore, the PAS approaches identity from an Islamic point of view (Napi, 2007, p. 24), whereas UMNO's identity inclines to ethnic (new Malays), though both take religious identity seriously but differently. The PAS Islamic doctrine believes that all Muslims belong to the *ummah* regardless of ethnicity. For PAS, the nation is without the territorial boundaries of an individual state. What matters is religion. PAS rejects squarely on nationalism and Malay ethnicity (Napi, 2007, p. 26). As time passes by, this ideology grows more vital where progressively turning from Malay ethnonationalism to Islamism, and political PAS disagrees with the separation of power of religion and political Islam. In addition, they argue that, past and present, UMNO-led governments have seen Islam not as a living, vital faith, but as a legitimising instrument (Noor, 2003). Again, according to PAS, the government led by UMNO does not actually intend to establish the Islamic state. It does not cover the religious commitment and the religious identity of the religion that requires respect and piety (Napi, 2007, pp. 23-27). Besides, PAS insists Muslims are forbidden (*haram*) to cooperate politically with non-Muslims (Ratnam, 1985, p. 146).

In sum, there are two Malays and two Muslims: UMNO's and PAS's differing conceptions of religious identity. Malay identity is inseparable from Islamic religious practice (Napi, 2007, pp. 31, 33). It is two Muslim political parties struggling to define Muslim religious identity. On the one hand, they are two leading contenders for Malay support based on their identity narrative. On the other hand, they are two main contractors building their identity narrative in relation to the "other" – Muslim identity (us) and non-Muslim identity (them).

Using Hunt's terms, the narrative of Muslim identity is a trajectory plotted in relation to the "other". In the case of Malaysia, it is:

> The non-Malay, non-Muslim resident in Malaysian society that both preceded the colonial era and yet whose presence was strengthened and transformed by colonialism, but not so much the Western or secular "other" external to the nation (2009, p. 581).

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In addition, it is forbidden for non-Malays to figure or even discuss the evolving narrative of Malay-Muslim identity. Malay political leaders declared that during the 1980s and 1990s, all issues pertaining to the importance of Islam in national governance, the prevailing role of the Malay language, the advancement of Malay culture, and the privileged position of Malays in the economic system were "sensitive" and could not be publicly discussed or queried by non-Malays. Consequently, it seemed as though the "other" had been excluded from having a space or place on the Malay-Muslim narrative (Hunt, 2009, p. 586).

Having highlighted the different perceptions of religious identity between these two main religious contractors, it is worth noting that religion does not derive its political significance in Malaysia from the conflict between different faiths. Ratnam (1985, pp. 148-149) rightly pointed out:

> The issue must be viewed primarily as a component of the more general rivalry between the Malays and the non-Malays. Religious appeals for political ends are confined to the Malay community and are, in the main, directed at unifying that community by emphasising its separate identity and interests. Religious and anti-non-Malay slogans almost always go hand in hand and are aimed at persuading the Malays to be more vigilant in safeguarding their pre-eminence in the country's political life and, as a corollary, to be less compromising in their relations with the other communities.

He argues that:

> The most crucial factors that explain the political importance of religion are to be found not in the traditional versus modern but rather in the Malay versus non-Malay continuum. The conflict between traditional and modernising interests might have become the dominant factor only if the Malays had constituted the entire population or if the communal differences between the Malays and the non-Malays had failed to assume much political significance. In actual fact, however, intra-communal differences have to be very overshadowed by the more serious conflicts between the Malays and non-Malays.

The sudden fall of the Pakatan Harapan (PH) government on 21 February 2020, barely two years after winning the historic May 2018 general elections, is unambiguous evidence. According to Chin (2020, p. 295), the collapse is mostly attributable to the idea of *Ketuanan Melayu Islam* (Malay Islam dominance). During

its six decades of leadership, UMNO put this theory into practise, and UMNO fiercely pursued the "Malay First" strategy in all fields. In practise, this translates into an assortment of benefits for the Malay population under the NEP's affirmative action scheme. The Malay polity originally recognised the PH government when it came to power in May 2018 since Malays occupied the two highest positions of prime minister and deputy prime minister. They believe Mahathir since he was the prime minister who extensively implemented the racially discriminatory NEP from 1981 to 2003. Mahathir is known as a champion of *Ketuanan Melayu Islam* (Chin, 2020).

After decades of being brainwashed with the supremacy of Malay Islam, most Malays and Malay polities are subject to this ideology. They cannot now receive Malaysia as a multicultural or multireligious country. Most Malays and the establishment are not ready to share political power with non-Malays, let alone give government public posts to non-Malays. More importantly, they deny equal political rights to non-Malays. They were told that Malay supremacy and Islam would be threatened if the Chinese (DAP) came to power. The only option for the Malays to continue their political control is to deny equal political rights to Chinese and other non-Malays. The use of the narrative "social contract" completely distorts the political thought of the vast majority of Malay regimes. Many young Malays actually think there is nothing wrong with Malay supremacy because non-Malays "consent" in exchange for citizenship (Chin, 2020, p. 295).

Furthermore, Malay religious identity in Malaysia, like other social identities, is mainly framed and constructed to distinguish between Muslim and non-Muslim, or ingroup ("us") and out-group ("them" or "other") (Brown, 2009; Chin, 2022, pp. 455-456). As early as 1980, Nagata notices Islam's power in shaping the Malays' identity and its consequences. She writes, "Not only has religion [Islam] become a source of identity for various elements in Malaysian society, distinguishing Malays and non-Malays, but it also lies at the centre of a crisis of legitimacy now emerging among the various elites of Malay society" (p. 405). Islam is central to Malay politics, government, ethnicity, and dominance (Nagata 1997: 130). Although *dakwah* brought little disunity to Malay communities (see Abdullah-Bukhari, 1998), the new official code caused by the *dakwah* movement is Muslim and non-Muslim (Nagata, 1980, p. 435). The attempt to include references to the religious identity of the Malays clearly constitute an essential source of communal solidarity (Ratnam, 1985, p. 144).

Additionally, Brown (2009) observes a transition in identity identification from a dominant ethnic Malay and non-Malay dichotomy to a more religious Muslim and non-Muslim contradiction. Naturally, this shift has typically been seen as primarily societally driven. However, a careful reading of the shift suggests otherwise. Brown (2009) finds that the state is involved in identity construction and boundary-making as a means to discipline the population and exert social control. To this end, it is right to argue that Malaysia's shifting ethnic and religious politics must be comprehended within the bureaucratic politics of identity. As a result, religion's increasing legibility *vis-à-vis* ethnicity makes it easier for Malaysia to differentiate and stratify its citizenry.

As expected, the relations between Muslims and non-Muslims in Malaysia since then, especially since the late 1970s, have been jeopardised, and ethnic/religious polarisation appeared to be sharpening. While the preoccupation with *dakwah* promotes intra-Malay solidarity, it not only sets boundaries between Muslims and non-Muslims but also reduces interaction between Malays and non-Malays [or Muslims and non-Muslims] (Nagata, 1980, p. 436).

4.3.3.3   Constitutional and Institutionalised Identity

Malay*,* unlike other ethnic groups in Malaysia, is the only ethnic group whose features are overtly defined in the Federal Constitution of Malaysia. Article 160(2) of the Federal Constitution of Malaysia defines "a *Malay* as a person who professes the religion of Islam, habitually speaks the Malay language and conforms to Malay custom." Theoretically, the definition of a Malay instituted by the Federal Constitution of Malaysia does not focus so much on ethnic distinction but "is a purely cultural one" (Nagata, 1974, pp. 335, 337) or on cultural measures (Lian, 2001, p. 873). It tends to suggest two things. First, anyone born of a Malay ethnic (race) is compelled by law to be a Muslim. Second, anyone who converts to Islam, speaks the Malay language, and practices Malay customs, regardless of ethnicity, is considered a Malay (Dahlan and Daud, 2016, p. 217; Majid, 2018, p. 215). It is, therefore, the Malaysian Constitution that gives a Malay "a specific legal identity" (Andaya, 2008, p. 13), constructs Malayness (Vickers, 2004, p. 26) and provides "constitutional advantage for ethnic Malays" (Stilt, 2015, p. 1).

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There are several reasons for including a legally-defined identity in the Malaysian Constitution. First, it tells how the British viewed the Malays in contrast to the Chinese and Indians on the eve of independence, of whom each had their distinctive religions and customs. Second, the legally-defined identity of a Malay is to safeguard the special position of the Malays (Chandia and Choong, 2015, pp. 359-360). The legal definition must be understood and read together with the Article 153 of the Malaysian Constitution, which states that:

> it shall be the responsibility of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong to safeguard the special position of the Malays and natives of any of the States of Sabah and Sarawak and the legitimate interests of other communities in accordance with the provisions of this Article.

Third, by emphasising cultural criteria rather than descent (ethnic), many others would qualify as citizens. Including those would offset the numerical dominance of the non-Malay population (Lian, 1997, p 70). Last, the legal definition can be interpreted as a policy of radical assimilation of the Malays (Lian, 1997, p. 70).

The Malaysian Constitution, defining all Malays as Muslims, is a unique case. It conflates ethnic and religious identities where Islam becomes an immutable trait of a Malay, which confers group identity and serves the purpose of ethnic solidarity (Chandia and Choong, 2015, pp. 355, 357). Since the constitutional account of Malay is undistinguishably linked to Islam, the favoured treatment of the Malays is enhanced through state support of Islam as the country's religion (Means, 1978, pp. 384-385). This is done far and foremost through the education system that brings a long-lasting impact on creating the specialness of Malay identity. Now, Islam is not only an identity marker but also a main substance. In 1986, per constitutional requirements, the Ministry of Education, in accordance with the Educational Act of 1961, incorporated Islamic education within national curricula that will uphold Islamic values. The contents of primary and secondary schools' syllabi thus included a moral worldview based on Islamic ethics (Ebrahimi and Yusoff, 2020, pp. 248, 250). Besides that, in 2003, the Ministry of Education introduced a new history syllabus and textbooks. In the revised version, Islamic history and civilisation occupied half of the curriculum and were central to studying history (Barr and Govindasamy, 2010, pp. 301-302). Apparently, the adoption of an Islamic metanarrative at this juncture appears to be neither unintentional nor coincidental (Barr and Govindasamy, 2010,

p. 304). It creates a thought that Islam is above other religions, and Muslims are sentimentally better than others, whereas others have to follow Islamic values and teachings. This situation is worsened by the *Pondok* Schools (religious schools) whose religious education contains the radical elements and ideas that non-Muslims are the enemies of Muslims (Chin, 2022, p. 455; Fathil and Oktasari, 2017).

Second, public policies towards religion blend almost seamlessly with those relating to Malay special position, as stated in Article 153. Therefore, the government promotes Islam above other religions through significant investments of public funds. The public funds are thrown in for constructing *surau* (small buildings for prayer and ritual), mosques, Islamic research centres, Islamic schools and universities, Islamic financial institutions, museums, and other related constructions that give Islam a visible presence (Chandia and Choong, 2015, p. 362; Hoffstaedter, 2011, p. 19; Means, 1978). All these Islamic measures not only strengthened the ties between the Malays and Islam, which is the main symbol of Malayness but also provided a platform for the Malay community to progress socially and economically.

Third, over the years, there has been a growing legislative and judicial bias in favour of Islam, demonstrating a clear drive to establish Islam as the dominant and predominant religion, going beyond the agreement reached before the formation of the Federation (Ling, 2006, pp. 111, 113; Tay, 2018, p. 59). In 1988, Article 121 1(A) was inserted into the Federation Constitution, and says "civil courts shall have no jurisdiction in respect of any matter within the jurisdiction of the Shariah courts". Another incident that marked non-Muslims' irreversibly decreasing rights (roles) is the legal case of *Meor Atiqulrahman bin Ishak & Ors v. Fatimah bte Sihi & Ors.* In July 2006, the judge who presided over this case made the following ruling:

> Other religions must be arranged and directed to ensure that they are practised peacefully and do not threaten the dominant position of Islam, not just at present but more importantly in the future and beyond (Ling, 2006, p. 115).

As can be noticed, Islamic supremacy in Malaysia is translated into law and government policy by the State endeavour.

Although Ebrahimi and Yusoff (2020, p. 249) claim that the government implemented moderate approaches to Islamised educational systems and institutions, the teaching of Islamic values in schools, its support of Islam above

other religions, and the interpretation that Islam is predominant in the judiciary have compromised ethnoreligious equality between *bumiputera* (prince of the soil) and non-*bumiputera* and sacrificed equality between *bumiputera* Malay and non-Malay *bumiputera*. In other words, it has produced an in-group and out-group mentality with Malay-Muslim supremacy. Henceforth, Malay-Muslim developed into the salient identity that draws identification and attracts privileges, inevitably generating out-group discrimination. The latter are mainly non-Muslims and, therefore, not beneficiaries of all developed infrastructure (Chandia and Choong, 2015, pp. 361-362).

In addition, together with Article 153 (special privileges and rights of Malays and natives), it creates meritocracy on the grounds of ethnicity and religion. It compromises egalitarian pluralism and human equality, with other ethnicities and religions on the periphery (Chandia and Choong, 2015, p. 375). The Constitution is pointed to as a justification for pro-Malay politics or positive discrimination against other ethnicities and faiths. As Lee (1986, p. 33) writes, "thus the legitimation of selected cultural characteristics as ethnic identifiers is an important strategy in fortifying political interests and maintaining ethnic exclusiveness" (cited from Freedman, 2000, p. 57).

Nevertheless, Wan Husain (2021, p. 135) makes it even simpler. He claims that if anyone tries to discuss the special privileges and rights of Malays provided by the Article, it is considered a sensitive issue. He argues, "such a position has been lawfully accorded according to our constitutional provision as stipulated in Article 153". However, Kim (2010, pp. 271-276) argues that the special position provided in Article 153 never implies special privileges and rights as claimed by certain individuals and groups. By some means, the special position has become special rights (Holst, 2012, p. 129). He convincingly argued that the special position only safeguards and protects the Malays from being dominated by other races. The Federal Constitution will not, in the first place, create a privileged class of citizenship. However, these provisions went far beyond the original intention of the framers of the Malaysian Constitution, who provided that Article 153 would remain in force for up to 20 years after independence (Harding, 1996, p. 34, see Chapter 2, the section on Federal Constitution Perspective for detailed discussion). This religious-ethnic identity is a solid instrument to set boundaries between Malay ethnicity and other ethnic groups (Wan Mohd Ghazali, 2016, p. 273) since setting boundaries between

one ethnicity from other ethnic groups can be understood as differentiating between "us" and "not us".

4.4 Features (Attributes) of the Malay-Muslim Identity in Malaysia

Having examined the Malays' ethnic and religious identity in the context of Malaysia before and after independence, there are three features (attributes) to note on Malay-Muslim identity in Malaysia.

First, colonial racial ideology played a critical role and significantly impacted the Malay character (Nah, 2003, pp. 511-512; Nair, 1999, p. 65). The current understanding of ethnic identity is a legacy of British colonists. It shaped different categories of society. However, Milne (1967, p. 26) would argue otherwise. According to him, the British "tried to hold a balance between the races", and shaping the society into different categories is valid only to some degree. Nonetheless, colonists in a so called attempt to hold a balance between different races undeniably drew boundaries between self (coloniser) and other (colonised) on the ideology of superior self (coloniser) and inferior other (colonised). Unfortunately, the current understanding of ethnic identity, be it of the practice, ideology, or psychology, is an extension of the coloniser's (Nah, 2003, pp. 512-514; Nair, 1999, pp. 65, 68), that is, division of ethnicity (for example, political parties are ethnically based, public officials are appointed with race and religion as the primary considerations) as well as between superior self (Malay or Muslim) versus inferior others (non-Malays or non-Muslims). It was not so before the arrival of the British. Hirschman quotes William George Maxwell, who served as Chief Secretary of the Federation of Malaya, among other positions:

> From the very earliest days of British protection, the Rulers have welcomed the leaders of the Chinese communities as members of their State Councils, and have paid the greatest deference to their opinions and advice. Other non-Malayans [non-Malays] are now members of the State Councils. The policy of keeping non-Malayans out of the administration owes its inception to British officials, and not to the Rulers (Maxwell cited in Hirschman, 1986, p. 353. See also Holst, 2012, p. 35).

Generally, diversity of ethnicity is not a problem in any society or nation and should not become a reason for favouritism or bias. Learning to appreciate diversity and accept differences is crucial to living in a multicultural and multireligious society. Manickam and Pepinsky are correct regarding policies implemented during British colonial rule that affected post-colonial Malaysia, and the British did not confer onto independent Malaya and Malaysia a set of fixed racial groups. Instead, post-independence politics cleverly crafted those ethnic categories to their advantage and promoted certain aspects of these identities in ways that British colonial officials would not have identified. Malaysia's ethnic order is a post-colonial development, as the institutions that support it are functional responses to authoritarian control after independence (Manickam, 2009; Pepinsky, n.d., p. 38). The study of identity for post-independence above evidenced it. The Malay-Muslim identity is constructed and framed as such by authorities, institutions, and politics for political mobilisation and gain. To maintain power, authorities emphasised the racial policies and selected religion, knowing the damage it would cause to national unity. Directly and indirectly, society is now clearly divided into us and others as well as superior and inferior that followed colonial practices. Henceforth, inter-racial antagonism, prejudice and positive discrimination remain. However, this does not imply that it will remain forever. One should note the changing nature of ethnicity, which is one's choice.

Second, identities are neither static nor stable (Abdul Hamid, 2018, p. 65; Kausar, 2013, p. 186; Klein and Azzi, 2001; Pepinsky, n.d., p. 38; Saroglou, Yzerbyt and Kaschten, 2011; Shamsul, 1996, p. 17) and Malay ethnic identity does change according to social circumstances (Noor, 1999, pp. 76-77). On the one hand, who should be defined or included in Malay as ethnicity changes over time, but one should "attribute the emergence of ethnic identity to colonial politics" (Pepinsky, n.d., p. 26). Different censuses carried by the British and Malaysia government demonstrate the changes (Hirschman, 1987; Pepinsky, n.d., pp. 33-34). On the other hand, the social identity of Malay is constitutional, "constructed yet situational" (Pepinsky, n.d., pp. 33-34. See also Menchik and Pepinsky, 2018; Nagata, 1974), where it is never preordained for permanency. Malay ethnicity is not primary. It will alter depending on circumstances, and "universalistic norms of self-interest always override the concern for ethnic preference" (Noor, 1999, p. 61). Studies also reveal that ethnic alignment interacts with and is influenced by most of the institutions

(Noor, 1999, p. 78). To avoid being deceived by the changing character of ethnic relations in modern Malaysia, ethnicity should not be considered as a given, ready-made, primordial, fundamental, or *sui generis* (of its own kind or peculiar) (Noor, 1999, p. 76). Man's actions will ultimately determine whether ethnicity is *sui generis* or subject to different processes of being redefined, reconstructed, reconstituted, and altered when the individual interacts with other social, religious, political, and economic elements in society (Banton and Noor, 1992; Noor, 1999, p. 76; Shamsul, 1996). It will also modify according to the out-groups' perception and evaluation (Fernadez and Coyle, 2019, p. 49). Fumivall's plural society, in which he considered each ethnic group as isolated and compartmentalised from the others, with no value consensus to connect them, has been refuted by Coppel (1997) as a failure to appreciate the dynamic character of society. Because ethnic preference is influenced by not only institutions and societal change, a more accurate understanding of prevalent ethnic identity and group boundary formation, as well as the factors of ethnic alignment, is thus required (Noor, 1999, p. 78). Therefore, besides self-interest, what, how and who will cause the alteration of Malay-Muslim identity is paramount for future study.

Third, Malay identity is religious in nature but subject to theological and social location influence. On the individual level, Malay identity is religious in nature with theological criteria (Fatima, 2011, p. 345; Meer, 2010, p. 63). The Islamic theological standard varied according to sects and thus affected Malays' ways of living and practices. It cannot be denied that certain aspects of identity is a matter of human choice but must be understood as a form of categorisation based on the specific sorts of claims Muslims make for themselves, *albeit* in varied and potentially contradictory ways (Meer, 2010, p. 64). Nevertheless, there are clear political ramifications to having a controversial theological standard of Muslim *ummah* and an imposed homogeneous conception of what it means to be a part of it on the other. Furthermore, being a part of the collective, whatever it means to every individual, cannot be considered a distinct, separable, or personal aspect of the self (Fatima, 2011, p. 345). Correspondingly, the identity ascribed to Malays by others can be a significant force in forming their self-concepts so that, while self-consciousness is subjective, it does not liberate them from the impact of what others say and do. This appears to be especially true for minorities at times of extreme objectification,

making the issue of adopting Malay identities considerably more complicated (Meer, 2010, p. 64. See also Ahmad, 2011).

On the social level (as a people), the Malay (*ummah*) identity is shaped with a religious mould but politically driven. The central purpose is utilising a religious identity for a political cause (Fatima, 2011, p. 342; Kausar, 2011). Rahman and Nurullah (2012, p. 119) are imprecise in arguing that Islamic awakening in Malaysia is to strengthen religious faith among Muslims, that is to say, it touches only individual piety rather than to dominate others politically. Islamisation and *sharia*-tisation indeed help Muslims to become more pious and religious. However, it should be noted that unlike elsewhere in the Muslim world, those in Malaysia are not merely addressing Muslim listeners, but specifically *Malay-Muslim* listeners (emphasis is made to differentiate between Malay-Muslim and Chinese-Muslim or Indian-Muslim). This precipitated a widespread, government-sanctioned Islamisation push that cut across governments and parties. The drive has prioritised Malay-Muslim rights over other religious and ethnic groups while also radicalising larger Islamist discourse (Wain, 2021, p. 41). It has also promoted Malay-Muslim identity above other identities. As a result, local studies show that Malay Muslims prioritise their religious identity over other identities. Also, the studies carried out abroad show that among Muslims in Southeast Asia, Malaysia Muslims are the Muslims most strongly identified with religion (Abdul Hamid, 2018, p. 63). However, one cannot argue that all Muslims thus inherit similar practices globally. Instead, Fatima (2011, p. 351) claims that the Muslim political agent is a multifaceted self, where the evolution of factors causes them to differ in political leaning but share fundamental beliefs.

4.5 Social Identity Theory, Social Identity Framing and Malay-Muslim Identity

According to social identity theory, a social group is a collection of persons who identify as members of the same social category, not just intellectually but also via the attachment of values and feelings (Brewer, 2007, p. 698; Deaux, 1996, p. 778). Individuals who identify with the same social category or group are motivated to distinguish their group from others to maintain high self-esteem or achieve self-

enhancement (Deaux, 1996, p. 778; Tajfel and Turner, 1979; Ysseldyk, Matheson and Anisman, 2010, p. 61). This self-categorisation or self-identification subsequently promotes social environment as consisting of an ingroup and various out-groups. It should be aware that identifying with the same religious group might enhance or gain more self-esteem and security than other identities, perhaps arising from highly organised support networks (Ysseldyk, Matheson and Anisman, 2010, p. 61).

Nonetheless, merely identifying individuals into arbitrarily different social categories, even a religious group, is sufficient to generate in-group and out-group discrimination and prejudice (Jackson and Hunsberger. 1999, p. 521). The above will occur even without any interaction with other group members or without any history of competition or conflict between groups (Brewer, 2007, p. 697; Deaux, 1996, p. 779). Religion is, to some extent, partly responsible for group animosity because religious groups work on the same principles as political, ethnic, or other groupings. These principles imply that a proclivity to respond to people based on their collective identity (in-group or out-group members) may be widespread among those who identify with their religious group rather than individuals' religion (Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 510). In other words, it is a differentiation between "us" and "not" – "us" or "me" and "them" or "us" and "them". Simply put, it is between "us" and "others", a distinctive identification of who is "us" and who is "others" – a rule of exclusion as well as inclusion. Bias stemming from differential "us" – "others" results from upholding from out-groups (others) favours and benefits that are extended only to the in-group (us) (Brewer, 2007, pp. 696-697; Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 511).

Bias, however, can also come from comparison and competition where the out-group is perceived as a threat to the integrity, interests, or identity of not only oneself but also the in-group as a whole. The threats may have appeared in the forms of competition for the position, political representation and limited resources, promotion of one's values and protection of one's status (Brewer, 2007, p. 697; Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 510). While through the comparison process, individuals always differentiate their group from other groups and place their group in the more positively valued status (Deaux, 1996, p. 790). Because of religious belief and content, religious groups are likely to make inter-group comparisons and place their own group in a higher or better position (Ysseldyk, Matheson and Anisman,

2010, p. 60; Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 511). Stereotyping in-group members as superior and out-group members as inferior such as infidels, immoral, and/or enemies, could serve this esteem-enhancing function (Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, pp. 511, 521). According to the theories reviewed above, social identity theory provides an adequate framework for understanding and explaining the phenomena of excluding and preventing non-Muslims from public service that occurred in Malaysia due to Malay, Muslim or Malay-Muslim identity.

Mohd Muzhafar, Ruzy and Raihanah (2015, p. 2) disclose that a careful reading of *bumiputera* which originally or initially "used to designate the Malays and other natives of Malaysia, later came to be, in effect, equated with only the Malays." This suggests attestation "to differentiate and distance Malayness from other social classes and ethnicities" to the degree of priority and superiority. The categorisation of Malays (in-group or us) and non-Malays (out-groups or others), especially by the state (highly organised support body/system/network), has become the mental framework of society (Lee, 2002, p.179). Ethnic marginalisation and discrimination, therefore, are expected and inevitable. Some individuals and groups will claim to be Malay/*bumiputera* to enjoy preferential policies (Lee, 2002, p. 179).

Mauzy (2006, p. 50) insightfully noted that a key feature of Malay nationalism in the country is "its highly developed sense of 'us versus them' and its keen sense of purpose in defending everything considered Malay". Hoffstaedter (2011, p. 215) claims that Malay groups (NGOs) practise the same thing as Malay nationalists. The accent of nationalism at the end turned to the threat to the "others" posed to the essential survival of the nation. For Malays, the "others" are mainly the Chinese, in which the Chinese and ethnic groups are relegated to second-class citizens.

Likewise, the NEP gives special treatment to Malays, resulting in a clear distinction between Malays and non-Malays in all government policies, thus serving as a tool of "state-imposed racial categorisation" (Stark, 2006, p. 387; Wan Mohd Ghazali, 2016, p. 281) that magnified the differentiation between Malays and non-Malays. This categorisation and differentiation are institutionalised by the independence constitution, which created two forms of citizenship: *bangsa Melayu* (Malay race) with special rights and *kaum pendatang* (immigrant community, or literally means 'outsider'). The NEP exaggerated and intensified the distinction and division between Malays and non-Malays for more than 20 years because similar policies were extended for another 20 years after 1990 by the National Development

Policy and National Vision Policy. The continuous Malay-centric policies only contribute to the deepening of the difference between "us" (Malays) and "others" (non-Malays) that can hardly be reconciled (Wan Mohd Ghazali, 2016, p. 309). Consequently, more discriminations are expected due to the Malay identity.

Additionally, Malay religious identity in Malaysia, like other social identities, is mainly framed and constructed to make a distinction between Muslim and non-Muslim (Hunt, 2009, p. 581; Ratnam, 1985, pp. 148-149) or in-group (us) and out-groups (others), especially by UMNO and PAS. As early as 1980, Nagata notices Islam's power in shaping the Malays' identity and its consequences. She writes, "Not only has religion [Islam] become a source of identity for various elements in Malaysian society, distinguishing Malays and non-Malays, but it also lies at the centre of a crisis of legitimacy now emerging among the various elites of Malay society" (1980, p. 405). Henceforth, Islam is central to Malay politics, government, ethnicity, and dominance (Nagata, 1997, p. 130). The new official code caused by the *dakwah* movement is a differentiation between Muslims and non-Muslims (Nagata, 1980, p. 435).

Similarly, overemphasising Islam in public appearances further accentuates the distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims. Thus, the repetition and visibility of Islam throughout the country induces the interpretation that Islam and Muslims are superior to others. The public visibility mentioned is Islamic finance (banking and insurance), mosques and Islamic architecture, Islamic universities and centres (so far there is no other religious university in Malaysia other than Islam), *halal* (lawful or permitted according to Islamic dietary law derived from Islamic teachings) restaurants, and television and radio programmes that strongly emphasise Islamic education and values. If other religions try anything similar to be outstanding, authorities will quickly take action to stop the exposure (Wan Mohd Ghazali, 2016, p. 274). Muslims claim that Islam is superior to others and should not be taken for discussion and interpretation as other faiths because Islam is the state religion and should occupy a special position (Ling, 2006, pp. 115-116).

Although Malay ethnicity remains a key factor in political decisions, the attachment to Islam further reinforces Malay-centric policies since it has a strong constitutional basis. Wan Mohd Ghazali (2016, p. 314) argued that Islamic ideology is used for strengthening Malay-oriented policies, but she has not demonstrated the Islamic ideology. However, as far as Malaysia is concerned, the researcher would

present Islam as a state religion that prescribes the superiority of Malay-Islam identity rather than Islamic ideology. Consequently, Islam is used for strengthening the Malay political domination and legacy and adds authorisation to their dominance. Thus, Islam has been associated with deepening the difference between "us" and "other". This agrees with Mauzy (2006, p. 50), who presciently claims that Islam is more substantial than ethnicity as an identity marker. Islam not only serves as a marker of Muslim identity (Lee, 2010, p. 19), it is regarded as a chief component and definitive criterion of Malay Identity (Abdul Hamid, 2018, p. 62; Ratnam, 1985, p. 143). Apparently, this contradicts the claim made by Barr and Govindasamy (2010), Ufen (2009), Miller (2004), and Frith (2000) that Islam holds only a subservient position (Wan Mohd Ghazali, 2016, pp. 313-314). However, Lee (1990, p. 483) gives the view that religion is as significant as ethnicity. But Yahaya (2012, p. 256) concludes that Malay identity is constantly wavering between ethnicity and religion depending on political interests. In other words, their identities are elusive, continually corresponding to UMNO and PAS ideologies (Yahaya, 2012, p. 257). He suggests that the Malays are a contradiction of race and religion, conflicting for dominance (Yahaya, 2012, p. 265). Standing on the ground of instability of identity and also on the increasing legibility of religion, the state engineers and accentuates religious identity rather than ethnic identity in differentiation and exerting social control (Brown, 2009). It is hard to determine which identity will prevail; ethnic, ethno-religious or religious only, but for sure the regime will prioritise one or more for their political advantages and interests.

Nonetheless, the state will attempt to include references to the religious identity of the Malays since this constitutes an essential source of communal solidarity (Ratnam, 1985, p. 144) and for protecting their interests. Therefore, Muslims ("us") and non-Muslims ("others") identification and differentiation inevitably brings discrimination against non-Muslims (out-groups). Thus, so far, it is the identity of Muslims or identification of salient identity (Muslims) that causes discrimination, not necessarily the substance of Islamic teachings. Muslim identity alone is sufficient to cause the exclusion of non-Muslims from Muslims' ("us") as dominant government functionaries.

Apart from this, non-Malays and non-Muslims are periodically portrayed (framed) as a threat (oppositional frames) to the Malays and Islam. This is a repeated hot topic among Malays fashioned particularly by political leaders to

emphasise their shared fate (community problem) and enlist their collective identity (sense of 'we-ness') that motivates them to support the ideas of the leaders. Since independence six decades ago, the Malays have been told in political speeches and newspapers to distrust both Chinese and non-Muslims because the latter, as the narrative (discourse) goes, want to dominate them. The Malaysian state under UMNO actively promoted this fear that Malays are marginalised and that Christianity challenges Islam (Johnny, 2008). There is no evidence of this, but ethnonationalism is based on irrational fear and ethnic solidarity against the "other" (Chin, 2020, p. 296). However, many Malays continue to see non-Malays as threatening outsiders, believing that formal ethnic discrimination is both essential and desirable to alleviate historical inter-ethnic imbalances (Jomo, 1989, p. 38). Malay leaders would like to produce this form of knowledge and social identity through speeches and texts, especially during state election campaigns. State elections become great opportunities for leaders to frame who they are (identity frame) and counter-frame who their enemies are (oppositional frames). The following paragraph gives but one example.

Malay political addresses often paint minority groups as an alleged threat to the special position of Malays and Islam, which the Federal Constitution granted so that Muslims will pick up negative impressions against other ethnicities (Chin, 2022; Wan Mohd Ghazali, 2016, p. 284). For example, whether the position of Islam and the Malays are under threat is a narrative that has kept appearing in public since 2000, especially during the state election of Malaysia. PAS President Abdul Hadi Awang, during the Cameron Highlands campaign, said that Muslims in Malaysia had been hit hard by the change of government in General Election 14. Although many prominent Malay political leaders had previously counter-argued that after a five-decade rule, Malays cannot be under threat by non-Malays (Malay Mail, 2014), and such a claim is just nonsensical political rhetoric (Malaysia Kini, 2019), the narrative has succeeded in capturing the imagination of the Malays. Many Malays expressed discomfort and anxiety about the situation of Islam and Malays (Azman, 2019). According to Hilman Fikri Azman, political fearmongers are against the principles of justice in Islam, but why is fear such a vital element then? Azman correctly says, "because fear makes the politics of identity relevant. We can see clearly that changes may not be driven by economic factors but by identity. In the end, identity politics is still practised for utilitarian reasons" (Azman, 2019). On the one hand, it is

well recognised that the most fundamental part of identity politics stems from two claims: identity is linked to interest, and politics is interest-based, with one's interests determined by social group membership (Fatima, 2011, p. 339). On the other hand, for identity politics to work well and shape political contestations, a clear distinction between "us" and "them" is necessary (Eriksen, 2001, p. 61; Holst, 2012, p. 114). Thus, the best way is none other than the construction and perpetuation of power relations that divide "us" from "other" and set boundaries between ethnic and religious groups (Wan Mohd Ghazali, 2016, p. 285).

Brewer accurately summarises,

> Social category differentiation provides the fault lines in any social system that can be exploited for political purposes. When trust is ingroup-based [*ummah*], it is easy to fear control by outsiders [non-Muslims]; the perceived common threat from out-groups increases ingroup cohesion and loyalty; appeals to ingroup interests have greater legitimacy than appeals to personal self-interest. Thus politicisation—an important mechanism of social change—can be added to the factors that may contribute to a correlation between ingroup love and out-group hate (Brewer, 2007, p. 703).

Hence, the political establishments in Malaysia continuously utilise discourses and framing to shape Malay religious identity (collective or social identity) for their political gains. It explains why Malay religious identity forms a very significant part of the discourse, framing, and frame alignment in Malaysia by political establishments (particularly UMNO and PAS) through media. In addition, the Malay religious identity becomes the centre of political opportunities and threats created through interpreting events (see Napi, 2007, pp. 257-270). Also, the identity shapes framing and counter-framing (frame alignment) for who the true Muslim among UMNO and PAS is.

Another tactic Malay leaders often use is to demonise non-Muslims (Chin, 2022, p. 456; Johnny, 2008), especially DAP. As he recalled the past and how he had painted one of the Chinese parties at a DAP-*Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia* (PPBM) talk in Alor Star, Mahathir Mohammad openly admitted that he portrayed DAP as an evil party (Daily Express, 2017). He also admitted that he has contributed to the poor image of the DAP by demonising it via the language he used: namely that the DAP will threaten the Malays if DAP wins the election, and her leader will be vowed as the prime minister of Malaysia (Free Malaysia Today, 2017). This discourse of Mahathir was successful in social movements because it damaged

the DAP's reputation to a certain extent with the Malays (Daily Express, 2017; Free Malaysia Today, 2017). "By demonising the other, the self becomes sufficiently sacralised" (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 754). Hence, it legitimises control of power. In other words, "by ordering the other structurally and psychologically, a discourse of exclusion is constructed" (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 754). Kilp (2011, p. 204) clearly stated that "the narrative about a devil is as necessary for any social organisation as is the perception of the boundaries of exclusion."

Given that these identities [national and religious] frequently overlap (Muldoon et al., 2007), it may be difficult to distinguish their differential consequences. Although levels of religious and ethnic identification were comparable within individuals, researchers discovered that religious discrimination elicited more negative affective and emotionally charged coping responses than ethnic discrimination among high identifiers. Researchers also contend that, while threats to other group identities are not innocuous, individuals may be better prepared to deal with threats that do not directly target their religious belief system (Ysseldyk, Matheson and Anisman, 2010, p. 67).

4.6   Conclusion

This chapter examines the origin and development of Malay-Muslim identity (ethnic and religious) in Malaysia, including the role of Islamisation and the state played in such development of Malay-Muslim identity. Therefore, it answers the research question number 1.

In Malaysia the Malay origin is uncertain and it is a term that denotes persons who embrace Islam, speak the Malay language and practise Malay customs. It is not referring to a particular genealogical ethnic group. Despite that, the substance of Malay identity has undergone various transformations and changes over time in response to its social change and environment. In the pre-colonial period, Malay identity was based on kinship and personal loyalty connections. The prominent figure was the sultan, and loyalty was the main ingredient of identity in kinship and personal relationships. The colonial phase by the British began the process of ethnicisation because the British implemented the policy of category and rule. The ethnic identity of the Malays during this period started to emerge with the concept of

territory. The Japanese occupation led to the awareness of Malay nationalism. At this point, ethnic expressions are relatively strong, and religious idioms have not been mobilised to defend these interests. However, in the years following independence, Malay identity became entrenched in exclusionary terms in response to deep anxieties about potential Chinese economic and political dominance. The NEP and the provision of a special position of Malay grounded in the Constitution manufactured the Malay supremacy identity. As that sense of insecurity appeared to be receding in the 1990s, Islam revivalism and Malay-centric ideology advocated by UMNO and PAS led to the Muslim supremacy identity. At best, it can be described as an intertwining of race (Malays) with faith identity (Islam), which confers advantages and attracts privilege.

This chapter also shows that the Malays' religious identity is a product of ascription, political framing, construction and the Constitution. One cannot deny that Muslims follow religious teachings at their best at the individual level. Nevertheless, at the social level, Muslims identify with special positions and thus act unfairly toward non-Muslims, coupled with the threat created by demonising others. Whatsoever, Malay's ethnicity and religious identities are not permanent, and the oscillation between ethnicity and religious identity is situational and one of choice. As far as Malay or/and Muslim identity is concerned, according to social identity theory, it is an inevitable phenomenon of in-group favouritism and out-group bias. It should be noted here that religious discrimination is always greater than ethnic discrimination. This aspect will be examined further in the next chapter.

The next chapter will analyse non-Muslims and their engagement in employment with the Malaysian government. It aims to show the political rights of non-Muslims from the formation of Malaysia until the present day (2020). It will explore what was relevant in the early Islamic period as this chapter has discovered that still applies to non-Muslim public roles in modern Malaysia.

Chapter 5

Non-Muslims and Their Public Roles in Malaysia

5.1   Introduction

Malaysia is a Muslim-majority country. Due to the composition of its religious
population (63.5 per cent Muslims, 18.7 per cent Buddhists, 9.1 per cent Christians,
6.1 per cent Hindus, 2.7 per cent other and unknown) and where equal citizenship in
Muslim societies is poorly institutionalised (Raina, 2015b, p. 451), the following
topics have become significant subjects of study: (1) the public roles (political
engagement and state employment) of non-Muslims, (2) the structure of power-
sharing between different ethnoreligious groups, that is between Malays and non-
Malays or Muslims and non-Muslims, and (3) the meaning of equal citizenship in the
country that exercises an identitarian regime (Malaysia) where the system is
supposed to be liberal democracy.

This chapter is divided into four main parts. First, the chapter will analyse
non-Muslims' engagements in Malaysian government employment. The chapter
also studies power-sharing in Malaysia from its beginning (1963) until the present
(2020). The chapter will then analyse the status of non-Muslims within traditional
and modern Islam, including the status of non-Muslims in Malaysia. Finally, it will
examine the concept of equal citizens in a democratic and pluralistic society in
Malaysia, a Muslim-majority country. The concept of equal citizenship will be studied
from constitutional and liberal democracy perspectives.

5.2   Non-Muslims and Malaysia's Public Sphere

Muzaffar (1996), in his *Accommodation and Acceptance of Non-Muslim
Communities within the Malaysian Political System: The Role of Islam*, urges the
non-Malays and non-Muslims to have an internal view of Malaysian history to

understand the political pre-eminence of Malays fully. Muzaffar claims that "there is so little understanding and appreciation of the non-Malays" due to the Malays' being scared of surrendering the Malay nation to give equal citizenship to non-Malays and thereby become a multi-ethnic nation.

Muzaffar further claims that since her independence (1963), non-Malays and non-Muslims have been given a significant political role in Malaysian society; for instance, more than 30 per cent of the Malaysian Parliament is non-Malay and non-Muslim. However, he is aware that the ethnic riot of 13 May 1969 has resulted in a decline of the non-Malay political role. According to Muzaffar, both the accommodation and acceptance of non-Malays in Malaysia's political system are mainly due to the teaching of Islam, which has been incorporated into the Malay value system. The essence of the value system is inclusive, less exclusive. In addition, justice and fairness are the central values of the Malay system due to Islamic values and principles. It allows no discrimination in whatever sense. Without prejudice, it accommodates and accepts non-Malay and non-Muslims into the political system, which duly should be Malay.

Muzaffar is very proper to say that non-Malay and non-Muslims occupied more than one-third of the Malaysian Parliament. Nevertheless, it is not due to the accommodation and acceptance of Malay or Islamic values. Malaysia practices Parliamentary Democracy with Constitutional Monarchy where there is a general parliamentary election on average every five years. As such, non-Malay and non-Muslim representatives are elected, not appointed by Malay per se. In contrast, Muzaffar should have employed the total number (percentage) of non-Malay and non-Muslims in a government office as his example of Malay accommodation and acceptance of non-Malay and non-Muslim. Moreover, it should also be noted since Mahathir's era (1981-2003) that the percentage of non-Muslim parliament members is no longer in proportion to the population of non-Malay and non-Muslim. The current ratio in parliament of non-Muslim is less than 30 per cent, but it should be about 36.5 per cent if it is according to the religious ratio of Malaysia 2020 census (see The Official Portal of the Parliament of Malaysia, 2024; Office of International Religious Freedom, 2022a; Department of Statistics, Malaysia, 2020, p. 33). In addition, there is only one non-Muslim (a *bumiputera* from Sarawak) out of 72 parliament members of *Perikatan Nasional* (National Alliance) (see The Official

Portal of the Parliament of Malaysia, 2024) and National Alliance is a combination of Muslim majority parties.

Table 5.1 and Table 5.2 clearly show that Malay-Muslims filled the central portion of Malaysia's civil service and policy-making positions. Table 5.1 shows that Malay-Muslims were more than 77 per cent of Malaysia's public servants even though they only represented 53 per cent of the population. This shows a 16 per cent increase since 1971, indicating that Malay-Muslims have indeed become more entrenched in the Malaysian public sector (Pietsch and Clark, 2014, p. 309).

Table 5.1: Composition of Ethnic within the Civil Service, Malaysia.

	Malay (%)	Chinese (%)	Indian (%)	Others (%)
1971	60.8	20.2	17.4	1.6
2005	77.04	9.37	5.12	8.47

Source: Human Rights Foundation Malaysia (2013, p. 5)

Table 5.2: Representation of Ethnic Leadership within the Civil Service, Malaysia.

Ethnic Group	Top Management (%)	Management & Professional (%)
Malay	83.95	81.65
Chinese	9.25	9.37
Indian	5.08	5.12
Other *bumiputera*	1.41	3.22
Others	0.31	0.63
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: Human Rights Foundation Malaysia (2013, p. 11)

Table 5.2 shows that Malay-Muslims occupied almost 84 per cent of top management or decision-making positions in the Malaysian civil service. Thus, according to the ethnic distribution of the population, the percentage of Malay-Muslims in government administration is gravely disproportionate (Pietsch and Clark, 2014, p. 310). As can be noted, the data are relatively "old" because the government discloses no up-to-date data. The data is sensitive to some extent

because it reveals that the exclusion of other ethnic groups in public sectors happened over time and became more serious.

Once ethnically diverse, the public service sector has made the sector nearly homogeneous in terms of ethnicity. Although Malays dominated the public service sector before the implementation of the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1971, there was still a significant Chinese and Indian presence. The civil service became a Malay enclave by the 1990s due to the systematic preferential hiring of Malays at the expense of hiring non-Malays (Guan, 2005, p. 216). Wade makes the same assessment. According to Wade (2009, p. 23), over the last 20 years, efforts have been made to replace almost entirely non-Malay civil servants with Malays. In the 1950s, the Reid Commission recommended that "not more than one-quarter of new entrants [to a particular service] should be non-Malays" (cited from Wade, 2009, p. 23). However, in the past 40 years, it has been ignored, and since 1969, more than 90 per cent of new employees of various ministries and agencies have been Malay. This is especially true for police and the army, with more than 96 per cent. Petronas, Tenaga Nasional, and other government-linked or owned companies engage in similar hiring practices.

The ethnicity of Malaysian government officials assigned to foreign missions can be determined by visiting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs official website at Wisma Putra (personal information is no longer displayed). A survey of 100 Malaysian overseas missions found the following ethnic breakdown among diplomatic staff, military attaches, and a few Malaysian Tourism Promotion Board staff (Wade, 2009, p. 23):

Malay: 654 (91.7%) Other: 59 (8.3%) Total 713 (100%)

Furthermore, Malaysia's government has 28 federal ministries. If one examines, for example, the staff of the Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Heritage (*Kementerian Kebudayaan, Kesenian dan Warisan*) as provided on the Malaysian Government official portal website (personal information is no longer displayed), one finds the following figures for officers (Wade, 2009, p. 23):

Malay: 351 (96%) Other: 14 (4%) Total: 365 (100%)

Similarly, the Minister of Defence (*Kementrian Pertahanan*) administration officer's website (personal information is no longer displayed) lists Ministry staff (excluding armed forces personnel). Of the 692 people listed, 670 (96.8 per cent) are Malay (Wade, 2009, p. 23).

The Mahathir government appears to have intended to Malayize the entire public service and defence forces, as complete control over the public administration is critical to achieving and maintaining Malay ethnocracy (Wade, 2009, p. 23).

The percentage based on Wade (2009, p. 23) is higher than Table 5.1 and Table 5.2. It posts a question of which is more reliable. However, Raina (see 2015a, pp. 51, 58) provides figures which are closer to Wade's.

This situation "is exacerbated by Malay demands for increased political and economic dominance" (Ling, 2006, p. 117). The Malay Dignity Congress (see Nazari, 2019) held on 6 October 2019 demanded that only Malay-Muslims should fill prominent and top positions within the government. The said top positions are prime minister, deputy prime minister, chief ministers (Malaysia comprises 13 states, and the head of each state is called the chief minister), as well as top positions in the finance, education, defence, and home affairs ministry. The Congress also requested that only Malay-Muslims be appointed in the top positions within the government, including the chief justice, attorney-general, secretary-general to the government, inspector-general of police, and the chief of defence forces. The main reason for such a demand is due to the slight increase in the number of non-Muslim Cabinet Members in the Cabinet of Mahathir Muhammad in July 2018. There were nine non-Muslim Ministers and eight Deputy Ministers in the said cabinet. Nevertheless, the Malay-Muslims remained the majority of Cabinet Members; 15 of 24 Ministers and 15 of 23 Deputy Ministers are Malay-Muslims.

Although Malay-Muslims are the majority of cabinet members, the cabinet's latest composition has seen a deteriorating number of Muslim members. On the other hand, Congress also urged the government to pressure human rights organisations and the Malaysian Bar not to intervene in Islamic matters pertaining to human rights issues. Eventually, such demands have materialised. The current arrangement of Muhyiddin Yassin's Cabinet (March 2020) is a tangible and ubiquitous example of discrimination towards non-Muslims but favouritism of Malay-Muslims; 30 out of 32 Ministers and 29 out of 38 Deputy Ministers are Malay-Muslims (The Star, 2020). Furthermore, *Parti Islam SeMalaysia* (Malaysian Islamic

Party, PAS) urges the government to amend the Federal Constitution of Malaysia so that only a Muslim can become prime minister (Augustin, 2017). In other words, PAS is trying to limit the office to Muslims and exclude non-Muslims from the position. Hassan, based on the understanding of Islam as the state religion, also shares a similar view that "the prime minister of Malaysia should be a Muslim" (2007, p. 287). Hassan even goes to the extent that the prime minister should be a Malay from United Malays National Organisation (UMNO).

On the same issue, Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dr Khoo Kay Kim, a well-known historian in Malaysia, appealed from a historical perspective and said almost the same thing. He says, "The prime minister of Malaysia must be a Malay Muslim even though there is no article in the Federal Constitution that prevents non-Malays from holding the post because most of the country's citizens are Malays." Khoo further called all Malaysians to accept the fact that historically, Malaysia has been a "Malay State" and ruled by Muslim sultans whom the British also recognised (Webmaster, 2012). However, former law minister Datuk Zaid Ibrahim disagrees with the suggestion and says that:

> Any Malaysian can aspire to be prime minister. Zaid also told non-Muslim politicians to take a more positive stance instead of saying that they did not want the top government position. They need to say that every Malaysian — even if they are Chinese — can become the Prime Minister as long as the majority of Malaysians are happy with the choice (Malay Mail, 2017).

Essentially, if one were to read the arguments and ideologies carefully, non-Muslims would have been explicitly discriminated against and marginalised from public roles (see Pietsch and Clark, 2014; Kuan, 2015).

If Muzaffar rightly argued that the accommodation and acceptance of non-Malay and non-Muslims in the Malay political system are due to Islamic values and principles, what has gone wrong lately that seems to be a severe deterioration in accommodation and acceptance? Therefore, it is important to consider whether the argument based on Islamic values and principles no longer stands or whether an alternative explanation may be that the Malay value system has changed.

Appendix E demonstrates four prominent government offices in Malaysia: Attorneys General (Table E.1), Inspector General of Police (Table E.2), Governor of the Central Bank (Table E.3), and Chief Secretary to the Government of Malaysia

(Table E.4). For the past 60 years since the independence of Malaysia, only one non-Malay has been appointed to an important position (except the first Governor of the Central Bank of Malaysia). His appointment, however, was not welcomed by many Malay-Muslims. Tommy Thomas (2018-2020) is the first-ever non-Malay and non-Muslim attorney general of Malaysia. When he was nominated as attorney general, the Malay community felt very uneasy and angry. The four government offices mentioned above only comprise a very small portion of the overall situation. What can be concluded is that non-Muslims are excluded from playing and are unlikely to play important public roles in their own country.

The above phenomenon is similar to that of the early Islamic period (see Section 3.3). What had happened before in the early Islamic period (non-Muslims should not be employed as state officials though such prohibition is more likely to be a personal preference of a particular caliph), Malaysians are facing a similar situation and are dealing with it now. The fundamental or central issue is that Muslims in general and in principle cannot accept that non-Muslims should have power and authority over them due to their understanding that they are special people. The resolutions of the Malay Dignity Congress manifested this central issue precisely and incontestably. Therefore, it is crucial to discuss the following subject – power-sharing of Muslims and non-Muslims in Malaysia.

5.3   Power-Sharing in Malaysia

Power-sharing is a leading institutional approach usually adopted to manage unstable societies (divided societies) or ethnic conflict (McCulloch and McEvoy, 2020, p. 109). The general sense is that the stability of any given democratic society requires the cooperation of majorities and minorities. Lijphart (1977, see also 2006) proposes four (4) models of power-sharing: (1) grand coalition, (2) mutual veto, (3) segmental autonomy and (4) proportionality. The grand coalition model gives all significant groups executive power to enter into an alliance that will then form the government. In contrast, the mutual veto model stresses the rights of a minority to reject a decision made by the majority. The segmental autonomy model allows each group to exercise its sovereignty on matters pertaining to its affairs, and the proportionality model involves allocating resources proportionally to all. Simply put,

power-sharing arrangements guarantee that each party involved in government benefits and has power or rights according to the agreed negotiation (Bormann et al., 2019; McCulloch, 2014; McCulloch and McEvoy, 2020, p. 110; McCulloch and McEvoy, 2018).

Coming to power-sharing from an Islamic perspective, Islamic scholars commonly accept the principle (practice) that if Muslims cannot establish an Islamic government, they will work with non-Muslims. This principle is based on the Quran 2: 233, where "No person is charged with more than his capacity" (version of Saheeh International). Hence, God will not hold them responsible if it is beyond Muslims' ability to install a -compliant government. Nevertheless, Muslims have a responsibility to establish an Islamic government. They will participate in the secular Alliance. However, they will, without doubt, request a *shariah*-compliant coalition with the ultimate end to establishing an Islamic state (Thaib, 2014). So far, there is an unanswered question that Muslims are trying to avoid, "will they co-govern with non-Muslims in the Muslim majority country?" Thaib (2014) mentions that there are Muslim majority countries whic happen to be ruled by nationalist parties. However, he has not named any specific countries (see Thaib, 2014, p. 24). Among 49 countries in which Muslims are the majority population (The Pew Forum, 2011), less than 7 have non-Muslims heading the government, formerly or presently (2022). These Muslim majority countries but which are secular states are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Chad, Lebanon, and Sierra Leone. However, in Bosnia, Herzegovina and Lebanon the non-Muslim state's heads are instituted in their constitution. Indonesia and Senegal once had non-Muslims as presidents, but it was decades ago (Indonesia, 1947-1948 and Senegal, 1960-1980). In addition, "17 countries with religion-related restrictions on their heads of state maintain that the office must be held by a Muslim" (Theodorou, 2014). As a note, Albania, Burkina Faso, Chad and Sierra Leone are neutral in matter of belief, prohibit discrimination based on religion, and political parties are not racial or religion based (see Office of International Religious Freedom, 2022b; 2022c; 2022d; 2022e). In other words, we have yet to see Islamic states (*shariah* law is the supreme law) as well as Muslim majority countries (in secular states, where civil law is the supreme law) which will share ruling power with non-Muslims that are not grounded in ethnic and religious identities. The crucial piece of information found missing is the power-sharing model or structure of those Muslim majority countries. The progress of power-sharing in

Muslim majority countries must be studied over decades to see the changing structure and power, not just at the start of the coalition. Consociation may cease functioning after some time and bring the reverse results (Nagle, 2020, p. 137), Malaysia is a good example where non-Muslims were gradually dismissed from power. Other countries such as, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen are facing collapse and dysfunctional governance (Nagle, 2020, p. 138. See also Dadoo, 1994). It is not the purpose of this thesis to discuss the dysfunctionality of consociation, but Nagle (2020) may give a good overview.

For Malaysia, there was no conflict between various ethnic groups before its independence in 1957. In fact, ethnic groups, namely Malay, Chinese and Indian, worked together for Malayan (1957) and later the federation of Malaysia (1963) independence. Malaya comprises nine states located in the Peninsular of Malaya. Malaysia consists of Malaya, Sabah, Sarawak, and Singapore. In 1965, Singapore separated from Malaysia to become an independent country. Looking at the political parties represented by each major ethnic group before and after independence, Malaysia utilises the grand coalition model where each political party jointly cooperated to form an alliance (Kartini Aboo et al., 2013, p. 277; Sriskandarajah, 2005, p. 70). United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), and Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) are represented by Malays, Chinese and Indians, respectively. With other minor ethnic group parties, these three parties form an alliance called Barisan National (BN) or National Front. Other minor ethnic groups are the Sabah Democratic Party (political party representing the people of Kadazan, Dusun and Murut), United National Kadazan Organisation (UNKO), Sarawak United Peoples' Party (SUPP, the first Sarawak political party established in 1959), National Party of Sarawak (Parti Negara Sarawak, PANAS), etc. During this period, Malays, Chinese, Indians, and other minorities were equally represented and had the opportunity to voice their needs and achieve a common good. No ethnic group sacrificed its values, affairs, or principles. Instead, they accepted suggestions from each member party.

However, things started changing after Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore joined the Federation, in which the Chinese population increased to 40 per cent. UMNO leadership felt the insecurity of their positions with such an increase. Moreover, the People's Action Party (PAP) of Singapore seemed to go against the wishes of UMNO's leaders and eventually caused Singapore's removal from Malaysia's union.

On 7 August 1965, Malaysia's Parliament in Kuala Lumpur was ordered by the leadership of UMNO to vote for the resolution to have Singapore expelled from the Federation. Singapore's independence became official on 9 August 1965. The expulsion of Singapore once again ensured the Malay' place as the largest ethnic group of the "new" Federation. Thus, without Singapore, the Alliance guaranteed the predominance of UMNO within the coalition. Consequently, all non-Malays who disobeyed the top leaders of UMNO were banned from taking part in the political system (Kua, 2007, p. 28).

In the 1969 Malaysian general election, the Alliance's majority's governing coalition was significantly reduced. The result showed that the Alliance had won less than half of the popular vote, an enormous setback for the ruling coalition. The considerable setback generated unhappiness, especially among the Malays when the Chinese celebrated their election victory. A riot took place between Malays and Chinese. The official reports stated that it was caused by an economic imbalance between Chinese and Malays but were reluctant to blame the Malays. The reports also concluded that the Malays began to feel a threat to their public services after the election.

Nevertheless, Kua (2007), in his *13 May: Declassified Documents on the Malaysian Riots of 1969*, otherwise has challenged "the Malaysian government's official position on the cause of the 13 May Incident." He rejected the official version that "the cause was opposition parties' creating tensions after the 1969 elections." In contrast, Kua (2007, pp. 23-28) found that the "ascendant state capitalist class" in the UMNO deliberately staged the uprising with the support of the authorities, especially the police and the military, as a *coup d'etat* (a sudden, violent, and unlawful seizure of power from a government) to overthrow Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman and implement the New Malay Agenda.

Regardless of the reasons, after the 1969 riot, UMNO embarked on restructuring the political system to reinforce its power. UMNO advanced a notion of *Ketuanan Melayu* (Malay Dominance) whereby "the politics of this country has been and must remain for the foreseeable future, native [i.e., Malay] based".   According to UMNO, it is their "secret of stability and prosperity, and that is a fact of political life which no one can simply wish away" (Lee, 2002, p. 178). Individual, social identity, politics, economics, education, and state are now measured in terms of ethnicity that are defined by and benefit the Malays and UMNO (Lee, 2002, pp. 178-181). In a

nutshell, *ketuanan Melayu* has become an overdetermining notion in Malaysia. Malays thus, think, act, live, and rule within the notion of *ketuanan Melayu* and their special privileges.

Adekanye (1998, p. 27) on listing the states that fail in implementing the power-sharing shares the same tack but is more succinct:

> In Malaysia, *hegemonic Malay*, rather than power-sharing with other constituent groups, has been the dominant strategy of ethnic conflict management adopted since 1969.

In a word, the equality and balance found within the power-sharing of the grand coalition had reached its summit in the May 13 incident (13 May 1969) – ethnic riot. The riot galvanised the notion of Malay Supremacy (1970-1990) and later Islam Supremacy (1991 - present) with the implementation of the New Economic Policy in 1970. It is argued that instead of resolving inter-ethnic tension, the NEP is more towards promoting and elevating the Malays' needs and special interest. In addition, the NEP serves as a "state-imposed racial categorisation tool that magnified the interests or privileges of Malays as the dominant group in terms of its greater special rights or preferences" (Wan Mohd Ghazali, 2016, p. 281. See also Stark, 2006, p. 387; Haque, 2003, p. 245). With the strengthening of Malay hegemony, ethnic minorities continue to be marginalised by the core state. The marginal status of minority groups relative to core groups can be assumed from the dichotomy of 'us' and the 'other' (Wan Mohd Ghazali, 2016, p. 281). Prejudice arising from in-group – out-group differentiation processes have been:

> The focus of much of the research on intergroup relations conducted within the social identity theory tradition. Here the focus is on differentiation of the in-group from everyone else (the "us" – "other" distinction). In this case there may or may not be any explicit out-group; just the generalised "others" is sufficient. Prejudice and discrimination arise from differential favourability/positivity toward those who share this in-group identity, but without any corresponding negativity or hostility toward non-ingroup members. Discrimination results from withholding from others favours and benefits that are extended only to the in-group (Brewer, 2007, p. 696).

The grand coalition has only existed in name without substance since the 1970s. Other power-sharing models (such as mutual veto, segmental autonomy, and proportionality), where the rights and interests of all parties are well taken care

of, have never been implemented in Malaysia. In other words, Malaysia did not have a full coalition government from the beginning: no proportional distribution of power, no minority veto (Riana, 2015a, p. 10). Kartini Aboo et al. (2013, p. 277) claim that the *Wasatiyyah* (Islamic moderation) model is a moderate Islamic coalition approach that advocates tolerance and respect. In addition, referring to Egypt's situation, Wickham (2004, pp. 207-212) argues that the leaders supporting the *Wasatiyyah* approach must be moderate in achieving their goals and should be open to new ideas provided by the democratic system. Wickham (2004, pp. 207-212) further argues that moderation promoted via the *Wasatiyyah* model becomes an alliance strategy for getting a parliamentary majority. As such, the *Wasatiyyah* model endorses pluralism and supports equal rights for all citizens. However, this Islamic moderation approach has never brought favourable outcomes but failed miserably in Egypt (Kartini Aboo et al., 2013, p. 277). Understandably, the main concept and purpose of the *Wasatiyyah* is to provide an alternative for encountering extremism or terrorism (Bahri, 2012, p. 18; Hassan, 2014, p. 25) by a middle way or via a moderation approach. It is also meant to promote inter-faith culture dialogue (Hassan, 2014, p. 25). *Wasatiyyah* is created as a moderate way of Muslim living, not as a coalition system for the administration of the state.

Undoubtedly, Malaysia once vigorously promoted the *Wasatiyyah* model throughout the country (see Mujani, Rozali and Zakaria, 2015) but has now ceased to implement it. The *Wasatiyyah* model was introduced by the fifth Prime Minister of Malaysia, Mohd Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak in September 2010. The reasons for introducing it were: (1) contending against religious extremism and Islamic resurgence at the national level, (2) gaining support from the Malay-Muslims, and (3) strengthening the government's role to represent the Muslims against its competitor PAS which was known for its "extreme demand to implement the *shariah* law" (Othman and Sulaiman, 2014, p. 173). However, as Mohd Najib stepped down from leadership, his successors did not continue the *Wasatiyyah* ideology and the Global Movement of Moderates Foundation that was set up to advocate and disseminate *Wasatiyyah* ideology was shut down in 2018 (Malaysia Kini, 2018).

Whatsoever, Malaysia no longer practises power-sharing between member parties, affirms no proportional powers or equal rights to resources, but espouses majoritarianism. Currently, only Malays are in real/actual power. Resources are distributed based on ethnic group, not on need. At the same time, civil service

positions are reserved for a particular race, not on the propositional representation of the population. Subsequently, the non-Malays can hardly have any influence on the national political and economic discourses (Shekhar, 2008, p. 24). This is precisely aligned with Waters' (2006, pp. 15-16) proposal. Waters (2006, pp. 15-16) intends to propose a governance model vested in cultural communities. His model is patterned on the Roman concept of *jus gentium* (law of nations), in which every person is granted a right to a system (legal) but not a right to certain substantive rights. Likewise, non-Muslims (non-Malays) in Malaysia are guaranteed a right to a parliamentary democracy system, but they are not given the right to hold prominent and top positions within the government.

5.4 The Compatibility of Islam and Democracy and the Status of Non-Muslims

John Keane (1993) raises deep concerns whether Islam can appreciate the pluralism promoted by the democratic system in his article entitled, *Power-Sharing Islam?* Keane writes, "A plurality of groups with different and often conflicting beliefs can live their differences and get along without murdering or dominating each other" (1993, p. 28). He continues, "Democracy institutionalises the right to be different, and democracy rejoices in hotchpotch, melange, and controversy" (1993, p. 28). Therefore, he doubts Islam can accept and appreciate these basic features of democracy. He says, "For the moment, there remains a profound tension between democratic pluralism and dogmatic forms of Islam because Islam is a special form of religion that presents itself as a totality or complete way of life" (1993, p. 29). Islam as a total life system means the *ummah* (Muslim, the community of the faithful) provides guidance for the whole conduct of any individual or group. If religion and state do not separate, it makes power-sharing more complicated, where religious competence is required in order to hold the highest offices in Muslim countries. Take Salman Rushdie, for example, who wrote that for Islam "power-sharing with apostate secularists is wicked" (1993: 30). Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* is viewed by Islamists as pernicious because it challenges the authenticity of Quran's revelation and thus strikes at the heart of the whole Islamic code (Keane, 1993, pp. 29-30). Hence, power-sharing with non-*ummah* is ideologically nearly impossible.

In contrast, Syarif (2009) argues in his work *Islamic Political Discourse on non-Muslim Leadership in the Muslim State* that in some unanticipated cases – for instance, when Muslims face political pressure (fear towards evil that is done by the unbelievers) – they are permitted to select a non-Muslim as their leader. But most reputable scholars are resolute in their belief that according to the Quran and *sunnah*, in general, Muslims living in a Muslim state (Muslim majority country) should not select a non-Muslim head due to the prohibitions in the Quran and *sunnah* regarding non-Muslim leadership. Despite that, Syarif (2009) further argues that a small number of liberal Muslim intellectuals who lack a background in *shariah* will continue to hold support for the election of a non-Muslim head. The misconceptions resulting from the lack of possession of *shariah* have led to the consensus that Muslims in a Muslim nation have the freedom to select a non-Muslim head in any situation. This is because according to these groups of liberal Muslim intellectuals, the prohibitions found in the Quran and *sunnah* that prohibit Muslims from electing a non-Muslim head are no longer relevant (pp. 223-224).

In modern days, many studies (for example, Bhat, 2023; Hasan, 2015; Scott, 2010; Warren and Gilmore, 2014; 2012) argue that Muslims have embraced the democratic ideology which is compatible with modern human rights declaration in which non-Muslims enjoy equal citizenship as Muslims (Anjum, 2016b). In addition, scholars like Fahmi Huwaydi, Muhammad Salim al-Awwa, Ahmad Kamal Abu al-Magd, Muhammad Imara, Syed Z. Abedin and Yusuf al-Qaradawi are committed to advocating the equal rights of non-Muslims in Muslim society (Anjum, 2016; Bhat, 2023; Nielsen, 2003). These studies and scholars are limited to Egypt. The premises of their argument are (1) the context for *dhimmī* no longer exist; it is historical and therefore no longer relevant, (2) the basis of the state for modern societies, especially those independent from imperial rule and autocratic monarchies, is the collective citizenship, and (3) communities and states are established on a shared belonging. Put differently, "the *dhimma* (community of *dhimmis*) was a historical expression of rights and duties guaranteed in the founding documents of Islam, namely Quran and *sunnah*, and that the conditions originally necessary for the institution of *dhimma* are no longer present" (Nielsen, 2003, p. 330).

In other respects, the general principle of Quran and *sunnah* is to deal kindly and in a just manner with everyone, regardless of faith. For this reason, the concept

of citizen is better for modern society because it treats non-Muslims and Muslims or anyone fairly and justly. Muslims are obliged to utilise their intellect and reasoning (*ijtihād*) to disregard any decisions in classical *shariah* that contravene the principle of kindness and justice (Nielsen, 2003, p. 329). However, the debate on non-Muslim status in Muslim-majority countries and the Islamic States is still going on in Malaysia and worldwide (see Mayer, 2013 for a thorough study of Islam and human rights of non-Muslims). Only a handful of Muslim intellectuals, such as Fahmi Huwaydi and Tariq al-Bishri insist that Islam has been reduced to humanist objectives and a marker of identity. The legal and theological tradition of *dhimma* has bowed out (Anjum, 2016a, p. 47; Hasan, 2015, p. 79). Also, the key contradictions between classical *shariah* and modern state citizenships "have all been resolved through a thoroughgoing embrace of the nation-state" (Anjum, 2016a, p. 48).

Nevertheless, theological and political views concerning the status of non-Muslims in the Muslim society and state do not meet each other in the modern nation-state ideology. Theologically, within Islamic discourse, no one has convinced those opposed to equal rights. Those who are committed to equal rights of non-Muslims and Muslims still contend that the absence of *shariah* in Muslim society would fatally flaw Islam (Nielsen, 2003, p. 330). In contrast, non-Muslims welcomed the idea that they have equal political and civil rights, including full employment rights, as Muslims, but most Muslims dislike it. However, most of the time, it is not the theological discernment or doctrinal argument that runs the cause. The status of non-Muslims will usually depend on the local political movement and situation as much as anything else. Politically, the degree to which the authority is under pressure from Islamic organisations and the balance of power among Islamic political parties play a significant role in affecting non-Muslim status and position (Nielson, 2003, p. 332).

In Malaysia, non-Muslims enjoyed equal citizenship when their country became independent. Non-Muslims and Muslims worked together for independence from the British colonial rule, that is to say, Malaysia was founded on shared belonging. The issue is not the non-Muslim status at the beginning, but on Malays enjoying special positions which indirectly treats non-Malays (non-Muslims) as lower-class citizens (positive discrimination); they do not enjoy privileges as much as Malays do. Recently, the narrative emphasises that non-Muslims in Malaysia are *kāfir harbī* (non-Muslims who are enemies of Muslims on whom war can be waged)

or *kāfir dhimmī* (non-Muslims living under the protection of Muslims) of which the connotation is that non-Muslims are not citizens and therefore do not enjoy full rights as citizens. In response, 44 civil society groups reject the categorisation of some citizens as *kāfir harbī* and *kāfir dhimmī*. They are right in pointing out that:

> The relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims is one of fellow citizens with equal rights and equal responsibilities. They are neither enemy to each other, nor 'the protector' on one side and 'the protected' on the other (Malaysia Kini, 2016).

Articles 8 and 10 of the Federal Constitution of Malaysia guarantee the equality of all citizens before the law and the freedom of expression for citizens regardless of ethnicity and faith, respectively (Malaysia Kini 2016). In sum, historically and constitutionally, non-Muslims in Malaysia are citizens rather than *dhimmī*. Malaysia should practice "People" supremacy, not Muslim supremacy (Suaedy, 2010, p. 1).

5.5   Equal Citizens in Malaysia (Identitarian Regime)?

As pointed out earlier in this study (Section 3.2), the rights of non-Muslims living in Muslim-majority societies (old days or modern) are limited to life, property, wealth, work and the freedom of religion.   Since this study focuses on non-Muslims in Malaysia, it is about a democratic system, and the fundamental questions must be: (1) What does it mean to be equal citizens in Malaysia? and (2) Does Malaysia exercise equal citizenships, a federal constitutional democratic monarchy system in a pluralistic Muslim-majority country?

Malaysia practises parliamentary democracy with constitutional monarchy. Malaysia is also a country that practises a system of democracy based on the Federation system (The Official Portal of the Parliament of Malaysia, 2013). Within the federal constitutional democratic monarchy system, each citizen is granted equal rights before the law. On equality, Article 8(2) of the Federal Constitution states:

> Except as expressly authorised by this Constitution there shall be no discrimination against citizens on the ground only of religion, race, descent or place of birth in any law or in the appointment to any office or employment under a public authority or in the administration of any law relating to the acquisition holding or disposition of property or the establishing or carrying on of any trade, business, profession, vocation or employment.

In other words, Article 8(2) provides equal citizens, which implies equal respect, concerns, and opportunities. However, another provision or Article of the Constitution is seen to violate or minimise the equality granted by Article 8(2). Article 153 of Malaysia's Constitution grants the *Yang di-Pertuan Agong* (King of Malaysia) responsibility for "safeguard[ing] the special position of the 'Malays' and natives of any of the States of Sabah and Sarawak and the legitimate interests of other communities" and specifies ways to do so, such as establishing quotas for entry into the civil service, public scholarships, public education, trade and business licences.

Hitherto, Article 153 is one of the most contentious provisions in the Malaysian Constitution. It creates an unnecessary distinction between citizens of different ethnic backgrounds, as it has resulted in the ethnocentric implementation of affirmative action policies that benefit only the Malays, in particular, who make up the majority of the population. In addition, the provision allows preferential treatment that violates both meritocracy and egalitarianism. Although Article 153 was drafted initially as a temporary provision to the Constitution (Holst, 2012, p. 41; Ting, 2009b, p. 41; Fernando, 2015, p. 543) – the entitlement of special positions is indefinite, and discussing its repeal is technically illegal, including in Parliament (members of Parliament are usually free to discuss anything without fear of external pressures) (Petrova, 2012). Despite this prohibition on discussion (for the purpose of allegedly regulating racial relations, thereby creating the appearance of detente and avoiding ethnic hatred, ethnic conflicts and ethnic violence), Malaysians are intensely divided (Balasubramaniam, 2007), both privately and publicly, over the Article's continued perpetual retention and implementation, while ostensibly supporting special race-based privileges.

Nonetheless, many people regard the Article as a sensitive issue, and politicians who support or oppose it are frequently labelled as racist and engaging in social exclusion (Means, 1972). Not everyone is aware that, the Alliance proposed the temporary provision of Article 153 (Fernando, 2002, p. 127), and the temporary measure was not publicly announced. Later, the drafting group, led by Tun Abdul

Razak, argued that the temporary provision was unacceptable to Malays, so it was dropped (Fernando, 2002, p. 127; Raina, 2015a, p. 43).

Muslim et al. (2012) argue that Article 153 does not conflict with the principle of equality in both Malaysian law and Islam. They claim that granting the special position to the Malays is to rectify political, economic, and social imbalance. They offer four reasons from the equality principle in Islam, which, in simple terms, are that non-Malays have not been affected by the special position of the Malays irrespective of economic, political and education. They add that this special position is an agreement between ethnic groups. However, these arguments are far from the truth. On the one hand, the Malays are especially dominant in political arenas. On the other hand, not all non-Malays are well-advanced in economics and education. Furthermore, the special position is only a provisional measure to help the Malays. It is supposed to be reviewed and removed after 15 years of independence (Raja Aziz Addruse and Ting, 2008). However, discussing the special position is now an offence and not a subject of debate.

Wan Husain (2021) justifies Article 153 from the socio-economic perspective that the purpose is to balance the economic life and improve social disparity. The main concern of Wan Hussian is social injustice, which is that government affirmative or preferential policies should affirm the special position of the Malays. Indeed, the New Economic Policy and other policies that followed improved the Malays' condition in various ways: economy, education, position, status, income, and business. Nonetheless, Wan Husain should be aware that the affirmative or preferential policies only benefited a small group of the Malays and social disparity remains, particularly among the Indians. As a result, other ethnic groups face long-term discrimination and erosion of their civil rights within their own country. More than a half-century after independence, identity based on Article 153 may no longer function. Furthermore, ruling parties in Malaysia always have the upper hand in interpreting the Constitution for their own political and racial benefits, let alone religious interests (Tew, 2016). They are now the majority, accounting for 63 per cent of the population. Identity derived from the Malaysian Constitution should not be used to marginalise others.

In his *Special Rights: Getting to the Bottom of Article 153*, Kim (2004) correctly argued that anyone who has read through Article 153 may be surprised to discover that the provisions favouring Malays are, in fact, relatively moderate and

indeed not as broad in intensity and scope as politicians would like the people to think. Similarly, the provisions protecting non-Malays as a counterbalance to the special status of Malays under this Article are well thought out and fair. Read in conjunction with Articles 8 (Equality) and 136 (Impartial treatment of public servants on grounds of race), Article 153 cannot be interpreted as significantly violating the egalitarian principles of the Constitution, contrary to what is often heard. In other words, Article 153 is limited by Article 136 (The Equal Rights Trust, 2012, p. 249). Given that the Federal Constitution's egalitarian nature remains largely intact despite the presence of Article 153, why has it developed such a bad reputation as the legal root of all kinds of racial inequalities in this country? The issue is not with the Constitution but with politicians who twist, misinterpret, and abuse it (Kim, 2004; Raja Aziz Addruse and Ting, 2008).

Nevertheless, Article 89 (Malay Reservation Lands) should be brought into the picture on equal citizenship. It is very significant because it forbids non-Malays to hold land that has been declared a Malay reserve. Article 89 establishes favouritism based on race, which, if not met by the criteria for positive action, amounts to racial discrimination and citizen inequality. Hence, constitutional protections for the rights to equality and non-discrimination are under serious threat (The Equal Rights Trust, 2012, p. 253). Besides, the continuity of Article 153 manipulated by certain politicians poses a severe challenge to the equality that citizens in Malaysia are provided with under liberal democracy. Every birthright citizen should be indistinguishable, and they must be able to participate in the democratic society and life of the state on the same terms (van Waas and Jaghai, 2018, pp. 12-13). There shall not be seen as "not one of us", the differentiation by ethno-religious identity.

Affirmative action or policy is an effective tool for accelerating progress toward substantive equality for specific groups. It is a fundamental component of the right to equality. However, the Malaysian case exemplifies the worst practice of affirmative policies, which were ill-conceived from the start despite their initially legitimate purpose. Today, the Malaysian case is an example of racism through the inappropriate application of the great concept of preferential treatment, which contributes to the marginalisation of ethno-religious minorities such as the Chinese and Indians while favouring an ethno-religious majority (Petrova, 2012; Ratuva, 2013; Thillainathan and Cheong, 2016). Following the long run of affirmative action

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and policy, it develops into, using Riana's terms, identity-based differential rights. In the case of Malaysia, it turns out to be an identitarian regime. In other words, an institutionalised identity-based inequality implies unequal citizenship (2015a, p. 36. See also Bajpai and Brown, 2013).

A democratic system can almost impossibly endow equal citizenships and equal rights to every citizen regardless of ethnicity and religiosity that satisfy all citizens (see Armstrong, 2006; Sardoč, 2011). However, the underlying principle of liberal democracy is equal citizens (Raina, 2015a, abstract), which includes equal concern, equal respect, and equal opportunity (Dworkin, 2013). It would be better if equality takes into account the recognition and accommodation of diversity (Sardoč, 2011, p. 234). Nonetheless, an institutionalised identity-based inequality in identitarian regimes manifests primarily as unequal consideration of citizens' preferences, unequal opportunity (to state employment) for citizens, and, where applicable, unequal respect and concern for citizens' beliefs (Raina, 2015a, p. 36).

Equal respect, concern and opportunity imply that all non-ceremonial public offices and employment are equally available to every citizen. In Malaysia, non-Malays "are often excluded from authority structures of policy implementation" (Raina, 2015b, p. 459). A 25 per cent Civil Service quota proposal for non-Malays was never complied with since 1952 (Raina, 2015a, p. 34). Tables 4.1 and 4.2 clearly show the distribution of government employment according to ethnicity. Minority groups have a sense of exclusion due to a lack of diversity. However, the debate remains polarised and impenetrable, with non-Malays opposing the problems in absolute terms of Malay "domination", "racial policy", and discrimination. At the same time, Malays incessantly hold on to the *status quo*, frequently invoking "Malay rights" (Lee, 2023, p. 2). Esman (1972) captured it best even decades ago (quoted from Raina 2015a: 43):

> The Malays gained political independence, control of government, and a polity which was to be Malay in style and in its system of symbols. In return the Chinese gained more than overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia had dreamed of – equal citizenship, political participation and officeholding, unimpaired economic opportunity, and tolerance for their language, religion and cultural institutions.

Malaysian polity became Malay in all its institutional aspects, not just style and symbols but substantively (Raina, 2015a, p. 43). Malay is dominating the

government and politics. As a result, equal concern, respect, and equal opportunities are, therefore, in their rational self-interest. Addressing identity inequalities does not require sacrificing the moral concept of "positive freedom," a more important role for the state (Raina, 2015b, p. 460).

Religion is another aspect in which non-Muslim Malaysians experience inequality of citizenship. Harding (2022, p. 215) says, "In recent years, religion has played a larger role even than ethnicity in defining identity and interest in this complex and contested polity." Mauzy (2006, p. 50) avers that Islam is more substantial than ethnicity as an identity marker for Malays. Therein, Islam serves as an identity marker (Lee, 2010, p. 19) and is regarded as a principal component and definitive criterion of Malay identity (Abdul Hamid, 2018, p. 62; Ratnam, 1985, p. 143). In this ontology of identity conceptions, Malaysian society is divided into Muslims and non-Muslims. According to Mutalib (2007, p. 40), calling Malaysia a plural society is insufficient. Malaysia should be defined and recognised as a society of "bimodal" – Muslims and non-Muslims (see also Fernandez and Coyle, 2019, p. 49). Non-Muslims, as a minority and the out-group "other", the Chinese and Indian, are seen as a legacy load, tolerated but not held equal to Muslims, the majority (Raina, 2015a, p. 76).

Harding (2022) cautiously warns of the asymptotic possibility of the institutionalisation of religious inequality in terms of Islam-Constitution tension:

> Islam largely concedes, in practice and for the time being, that Islamic law is not the fundamental basis of the constitutional and legal order, while the constitutional order itself concedes that strict equality between Muslims and non-Muslims will not apply (p. 232).

Lee (2010, pp. 95, 55) believes that Islamisation has reached a stage where "others" are unable to "participate in the public realm equally, not even in principle. They have become marginal to if not totally, excluded from, all civil law making" (Raina, 2015a, p. 77).

In another development, almost all Islamist groups in Malaysia argue that non-Muslims should not be allowed to participate in any discussion of Islamic issues because they do not practise the faith. In Malaysia, Islamic organisations do not support formal dialogue with non-Islamic groups. For years, the Malaysian Consultative Council of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, and Taoism has

invited JAKIM (*Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia*, Department of Islamic Development Malaysia) and other Islamic authorities to engage in interfaith dialogue. Each time, these authorities have refused to participate in their official capacity and argued that they could not participate in non-Islamic faith dialogue and that other faiths cannot be treated equally with Islam in Malaysia. They further argued that interfaith dialogue promotes religious pluralism, which they see as anti-Islamic (Chin and Tanasaldy, 2019, p. 975).

Therefore, unlike a liberal democracy that presupposes equal citizens (equal consideration, respect and opportunity), the Malaysian regime is a regime that legally distributes "rights" in a discriminatory manner according to the ethnic and religious identities of its citizens. In other words, the real source of claims against the state is not a free, equal and autonomous people. Instead, this is the original general identity in which the "individual" is allegedly alienated. Moreover, the space of communal identities is fully ordered by a dominant relationship that assigns a "rightful" place to each identity.   This relationship underlies the Malaysian public sphere and defines its majority (Muslims) and minorities (non-Muslims). It becomes a structural, as claimed by Raina (2015), rather than procedural infirmity. In Malaysia, an identitarian regime, a minority is a dominant identity, while a majority is a dominating one (Raina, 2015).

When the Ottoman Empire declared the constitution system, it meant that it shifted from religious to secular and ethnic content. Nevertheless, the project to integrate all religious communities into a single national identity has failed, as the ethnic group has become a minority with separate identities. Since the Islamic method has been silent in the structure of this new relationship based on ethnicity, the Ottoman Empire was not prepared for the new wave of this secular nationalism. Under the old millet system (religious communities ruled by their religious leaders based on their religious and cultural identity), non-Muslims had been treated differently. Meanwhile, the newly formed Ottoman constitution clearly states that all state citizens are equal. In reality, nevertheless, Turkey is a living example of a Muslim country with a secular legal system with a minimal number of minority rights. The secularisation of the Turkish legal system has not automatically solved the problem of minority issues – equal citizenships and equal political opportunities. As stated in the Turkish Constitution, equal citizenship has not taken place; instead, ethnic differences have become significant (Sentuk, 2005, pp. 86-90). It was also

discovered that religious minorities are more likely to face religious discrimination under Islamic constitutions (Gouda and Gutmann, 2021) and regimes that promote totalitarianism, for instance, Islam (Bernholz, 1991). Muslim countries with secular and religious regimes provide numerous examples of discrimination and the undermining of equal citizenship rights (Sentuk, 2005, p. 89). Thus, even though Sentuk's (2005, p. 70) claim that Islam has already or can ever provide equal rights to ethnic and religious minorities remains open, it is always suggested that Islam cannot provide equal rights to ethnic and religious minorities within a democratic and pluralistic system of governance.

5.6   Conclusion

In terms of state officials' employment in Malaysia, Malays occupy the majority of public offices. Malays also dominate the political arena. They are the dominant group whereas non-Malays have a minor role to play. Non-Malays are unlikely to play any important public roles in their own country. In addition, power-sharing has shifted from Alliance to Malay hegemony after the May Riot in 1969. Only Malays can hold the highest positions in the cabinet. The accommodation and acceptance of non-Malays (non-Muslims), claimed because of Islamic values, faded slowly, especially when the resolutions of the Malay Dignity Congress were aired.

Regarding the status of non-Muslims in Malaysia, theological and political perspectives diverge. Within Islamic discourse, whether Islam is compatible with democracy or is incompatible, no one has convinced the opposition (i.e. it is unconvinced that Islam is compatible with democracy. On the other hand, it is also uncertain that Islam is incompatible with democracy). As shown in previous chapters (3 and 4), the status of non-Muslims (in Malaysia) is closely linked to the identity of the Muslims (Malays). However, this chapter showed that the status of non-Muslims also depends on the political movement and situation, even though the Federal Constitution of Malaysia guarantees the equality of all citizens before the law. Nevertheless, certain politicians have manipulated Article 153 of the Federal Constitution for their self-interest, undermining each citizen's equality. The chapter also showed that Malaysia is an identitarian regime where citizen rights are allocated differentially according to their ethno-religious identity. The valid source of claims on

the State is not accessible, equal, and autonomous for non-Malay citizens.   In other words, non-Malays are unequal compared to Malays even though the Federal Constitution says all citizens of the State are equal – equal for concern, respect, and opportunity. Non-Malays become the "other" and "not one of us" in Malaysia. So far and again, it has been noticed that the identity factor appears to be prevailing.

The next chapter will try to answer the main research question by showing how the Malay religious identity is significant in excluding non-Muslims from public roles through social identity theory and offer a framework for comprehending Malay-Muslim identity within a socio-religious framework.

Chapter 6

Malay Religious Identity and Its Implications for Non-Muslims in Malaysia

6.1   Introduction

This chapter will try to suggest a possible answer to the main research question: how does the Malay religious identity in Malaysia exclude non-Muslims from participating in public roles, and what are the possible implications for Malaysian society? Consequently, this study fills a possible knowledge gap by finding the implications of the Malay religious identity on the non-Muslims' public roles in Malaysia, which have not previously been studied. The chapter will first and foremost determine and examine the identity the informants identified with, that is, their primary or salient identity. It will then analyse the relationship between that identity and non-Muslim public roles, religiously and socially, meanings, the Malay-Muslim identity, and its implications for non-Muslims' public roles. Last, this chapter will present the consequences if non-Muslims were not included in public roles from the respondents' perspectives. It should be noted that the results and findings are presented in relation to non-Muslim public roles.

6.2   Determining Identity

First and foremost, this section will determine which identity the Malay-Muslims claimed. By doing this, it will put this study in context and perspective.

In Malaysia, "the Malays" can be known: (1) Ethnically, they are called Malays. Before and shortly after Independence, it carries the connotation of ethnic nationalism. (2) Constitutionally, the hyphenated Malay-Muslims is the term or word used to refer to them. According to Article 160 of the Federal Constitution of Malaysia, Malays must be Muslims. (3) Religiously, Malays and Muslims are synonymous. In Malaysia, calling the Malays Muslim is always acceptable in any

situation. Calling them Muslim is to emphasise their faith. Last, (4) Citizenry, the Malays are Malaysians. However, when Malays choose to be recognised as Malaysians in the country, they are bringing the message that Malaysia is a home for all citizens, regardless of races and ethnicities. Nevertheless, 'the Malays' will introduce themselves with a different identity depending on the context, location, circumstances, and purpose. Unlike the Chinese and Indians, ethnicity is always the marker and substance of their identities. Malaysian Chinese and Indian are not recognised by their faith, unless filling in personal information about their religion which is a requirement.

From the students' and working adults' responses, Table 6.1 summarises their choice of identity. Whereas Graphs 6.1 and 6.2 illustrate their choice of identity in charts. The results show that students and adults identify mainly with Malay-Muslim identity, 65.2 per cent among students and 37.5 per cent among adults compared to other identities, namely, Malaysian, Malay, or Muslim. Put differently, the conflation of the identity of race and religion (ethno-religious) is the dominant or salient identity among them (informants). Unexpectedly, neither of the groups identify race (Malay) identity as their salient identity. The computed values of the Chi-square test for students and adults are 63.58 and 8.33, respectively. These values are compared to a critical value obtained from the Chi-square table. It is a 1-degree-of-freedom (*df*) test with a value of 3.84. Both values exceed 3.84, so participants/respondents (student and adult) were significantly more likely to identify with Malay-Muslim identity. The computed effect sizes for students and adults are 0.98 and 0.6, respectively. These values are larger than 0.5, which means it has very large effects according to Cohen's *w*. In other words, the Malay population very significantly identifies with Malay-Muslim identity. In addition, the calculated 95% confidence interval is 16.86 per cent for students and 21.56 per cent for adults. Yet again, the confidence interval for both groups is more than 5% or $p > 0.05$. Therefore, it is suggested and concluded that the results are significant.

Table 6.1   Determining Identity

	Malaysian	Malay	Muslim	Malay-Muslim	Total
Students	15	0	8	43	66
Adults	7	0	8	9	24
Student (%)	22.7	0	12.1	65.2	100
Adult (%)	29.2	0	33.3	37.5	100

Graph 6.1   Determining Identity - Students
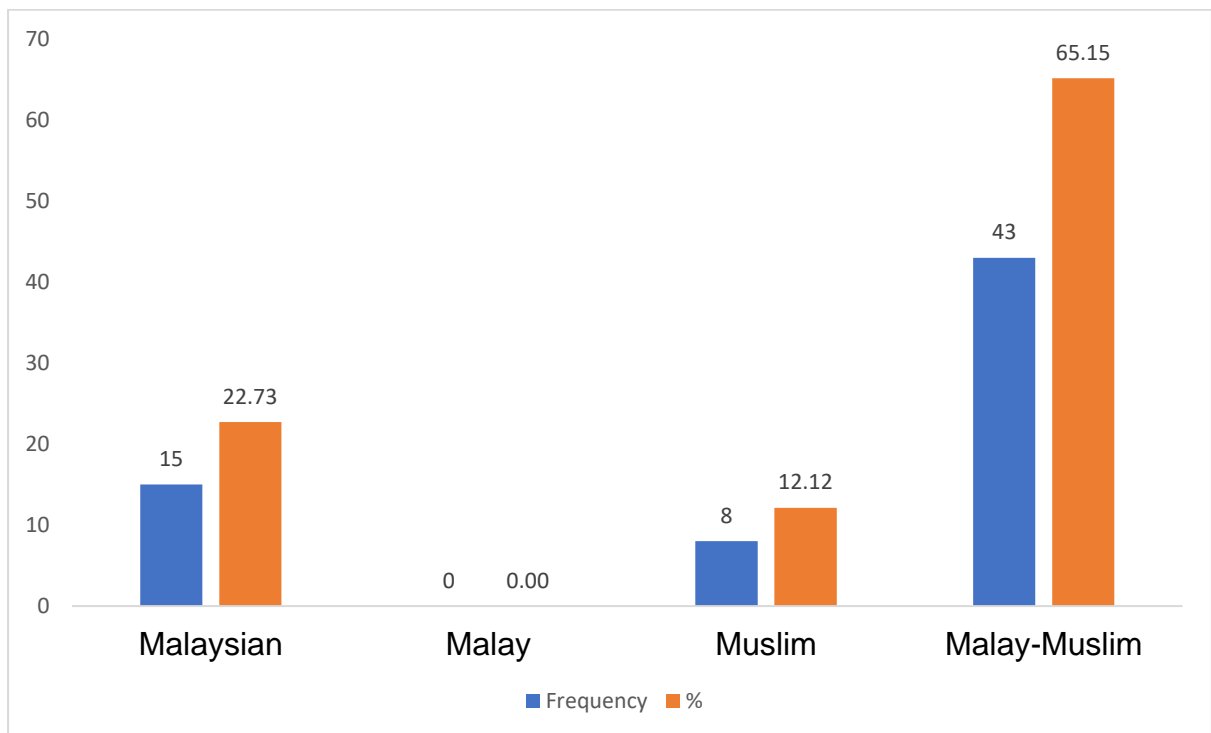
Graph 6.2   Determining Identity - Adults
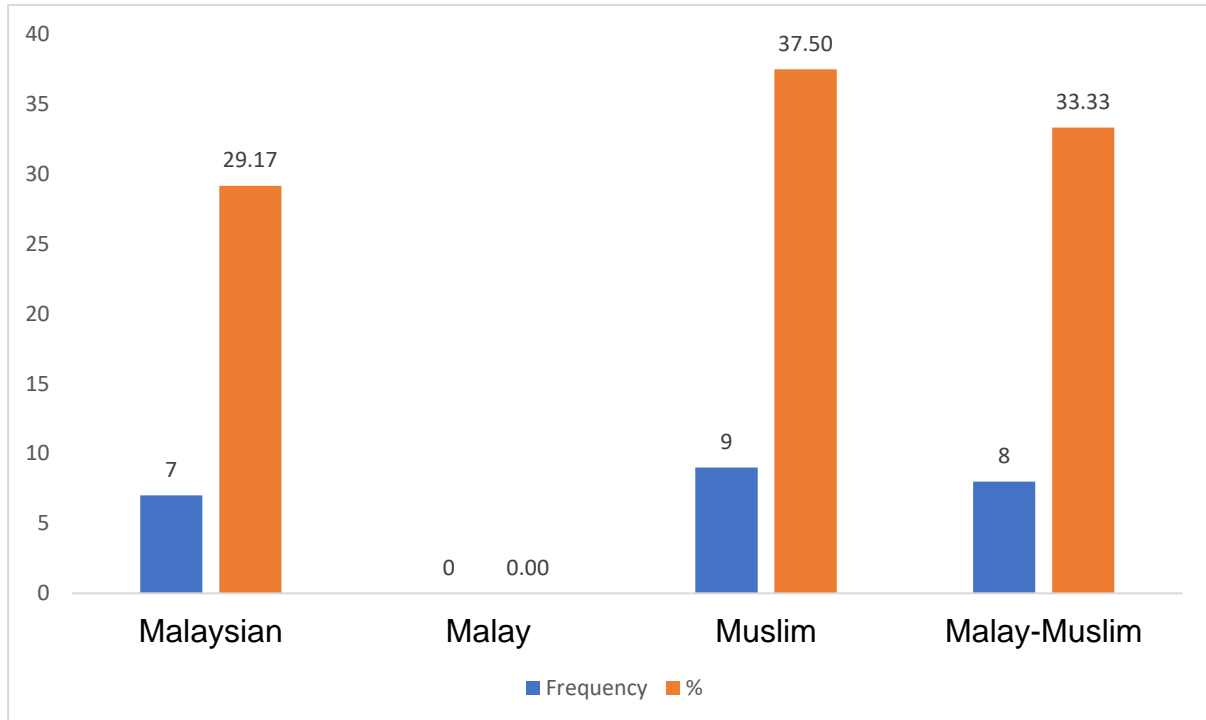
The following are statistically and practically substantial based on the Chi-square test, effect sizes and 95% confidence interval. Table 6.2 shows that students of the Faculty of Islamic Studies and other faculties share a very similar percentage in terms of identification with Malay-Muslim and other identities.   It is 66 per cent for Faculty of Islamic Studies students and 62.5 per cent for students of other faculties. The difference between Muslim identity is smaller at 0.5 per cent and Malaysian identity at 3 per cent. Furthermore, Table 6.3 demonstrates that the percentage distribution of females and males for all faculties and Malay-Muslim identity are very close. It shows a slight difference, less than 2.5 per cent. Likewise, Appendix H displays that age, sex and occupation for adults have no significant influence on the choice of identity. Religious teachers (*ustaz* - male *and ustazah* – female) also do not have a special preference for identity, such as Muslim or Malay-Muslim, which is expected to be the case.

Meer claims that the perception of identity depends on one's attachment to a place (2010, p. 83) and life experience/travel. This is true for those adult respondents who chose Malaysian as their salient identity. Their identity identification must be understood in a context where they recognise that Malaysia is a multiracial, multicultural, and multireligious nation, and they acknowledge as well as appreciate it (R01, R05, R11, R12, R18). Another context where respondents identified with Malaysian as their main identity is when they studied overseas and used to mix with people from overseas. They say introducing themselves as Malaysian makes more sense than emphasising their race or faith. Malaysian as their preferred identity is more inclusive than ethnic and religious identity (R02, R06 and R07).

Table 6.2   Determining Identity (Students)

	Malaysian	Malay	Muslim	Malay-Muslim	Total
Faculty of Islamic Studies	11	0	6	43	66
Other Faculties	4	0	2	10	16
Faculty of Islamic Studies (%)	22	0	12	66	100
Other Faculties (%)	25	0	12.5	62.5	100

Table 6.3   Determining Identity (Students) – Percentage (%)

	Female	Male	Total
All Faculties	49	17	66
Malay-Muslim	31	12	43
All Faculties (%)	74.2	25.8	100
Malay-Muslim (%)	72.1	27.9	100

Malay-Muslim as the preferred/chosen identity is further significant if it were to be studied carefully from the data. Many studies informed about the conflation of Malay and religious identity. So far, there are four suggestions for conflating Malay and Islam identity. First, Mauzy (2006, p. 50) claims that Islam is more substantial than ethnicity as an identity marker for Malays. In this aspect, Islam serves as a marker of Muslim identity (Lee, 2010, p. 19) and is regarded as a chief component and definitive criterion of Malay identity (Abdul Hamid, 2018, p. 62; Ratnam. 1985, p.

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143). Second, Barr and Govindasamy (2010), Ufen (2009), Miller (2004), and Frith (2000) argue that Islam holds only a subservient position. Islam is used to manifest ethnic identity and Malay supremacy. Third, Lee (1990, p. 483) gives the view that religion is as significant as ethnicity, that is to say, Malay-Muslim is inseparable, and both identities are salient. Lastly, Yahaya (2012, p. 256) concludes that Malay identity is constantly wavering between ethnicity and religion depending on political interests. In other words, their identities are elusive, continually corresponding to UMNO and PAS ideologies (Yahaya, 2012, p. 257). He suggests that the Malays are a contradiction of race and religion, competing for dominance (Yahaya, 2012, p. 265). Standing on the ground of instability of identity and also on the increasing legibility of religion, the state engineers accentuating the religious identity rather than ethnic identity to differentiate and exert social control (Brown, 2009). Thus, it is hard to determine which identity will prevail: ethnic alone, ethno-religious or religious only.

However, the data collected enables one to explore this complexity of identity in more depth. Table 6.4 shows the responses of those students who view that the Malay-Muslim identity can be separated and either one will take precedence. There were 32 respondents, and 25 chose Muslim. Put differently, 78 per cent of the responses take Muslim as the identity of precedence. To comprehend it more accurately, Muslim identity comprised of 33 (25 + 8) out of 66. It means that half of the students identified with religious identity, eight directly and 25 indirectly. Accordingly, the computed value of the Chi-square test is 10.12, which exceeded 3.84, so it suggests that "Malay-Muslim" participants were significantly more likely to identify with religious identity. The computed effect size is 0.57. This value is larger than 0.5, which denotes very large effects. In other words, it can be concluded that the Malay-Muslim population is very significant in identifying with religious identity. Moreover, the calculated 95% confidence interval is 17.3 per cent, where it is more than 5% or $p > 0.05$. Hence, the results are significant.

Table 6.4   Islam as Malay Identity Marker

	Malay	Muslim	Total
Students	7	25	32
Percentage (%)	22	78	100

As shown, the results of this study tend to agree with the views of Mauzy (2006) and Lee (2010), where religion is more substantial than ethnicity as an identity marker. In the same line, the survey result (Students, Question 10) shows that 89.4 per cent of Muslims are strongly and very strongly attached to and identify with each other. A strong identification with other *ummah* is predicted to act prejudicially against non-Muslims (see Ysseldyk, Matheson and Anisman, 2010, p. 61). Findings of Al Ramiah, Hewstone and Wolfer (2017, pp. 45-46) on *Attitudes and Ethnoreligious Integration: Meeting the Challenge and Maximising the Promise of Multicultural Malaysia* confirmed it. They concluded that greater religious identification was associated with a more negative attitude towards religious out-groups, where Muslims have the most potent identification with religion compared to Buddhists and Hindus.

In sum, the data thus provide a good ground for the following analysis, and the results or findings are therefore statistically and practically significant. Also, it is now confident (established) that Muslim (religious identity) is the (indirect or unseen) salient identity for "Malay-Muslim" even though they usually choose Malay-Muslim as their first identity. Muslims are said to be more likely but may not always identify themselves religiously, they can sometimes do so politically or by ethnicity where it is normally situational (Berggren, 2007, p. 72). Other forms of identity exist alongside Islamic identity, and other factors may even influence which identity or identities come to the fore. Possibly, the self-declared identities are numerous and remarkably fluid, and the *ummah* (religious identity) is far from ideal (Berggren, 2007, p. 88). The participants' representation of the Malay and Muslim categories demonstrated a seemingly high level of complexity and reflexivity, which allowed them to examine critically the validity of the perceived low complexity of the Malay-Muslim identity and evaluate potential implications for their in-group. (Fernandez and Coyle, 2019, p. 49).

On the one hand, this study agreed with the findings of Satoru Mikami (2015) and Patricia Martinez (2006) that Islam is the salient social identity category of Malay-Muslims. However, neither survey included the option of Malay-Muslim besides Malaysia, Malay, or Muslim. On the other hand, both studies offer no implications of such religious identity for non-Muslims, especially on the aspect of public roles. Another study by Fernandez and Coyle (2019, p. 49) on interfaith engagement in Malaysia among the Malaysian Malay-Muslim students who study in the United Kingdom also noticed that Muslim is their salient social identity.

The following sections discuss the four main themes or elements concerning the Malay-Muslim identity in relation to the non-Muslim public roles in Malaysia. Once again, it should be noted here that these four elements of Malay-Muslim identity caused the differentiation between them and non-Muslims.

6.3   Four Elements/Themes of Malay-Muslim Identity with Relation to non-Muslim Public Roles

The main categories and concepts explored from questionnaires and semi-structured interviews are summarised in Diagram 1. In Malaysia, Malay-Muslim identity is tied closely to politics (Malay Muslim hegemony) and the Federal Constitution (Article 160), as discussed in Chapter Four. However, the data analysis reveals that Malay-Muslim identity is manifested through these individualities: (land) owner, *ummah* and nationality. The three main individualities can be sub-divided into six elements (themes): land, public office, principles, public life, plural society, and public roles of the Malay-Muslims in relation to non-Muslim public roles in Malaysia. It is worth noting at this stage, on the one hand that the first four elements help the self-identification or self-categorisation of Malay-Muslim identity. These elements cause the differentiation or set boundaries between Malay-Muslims and non-Muslims – "us" and "not us" or "us" and "them".   On the other hand, the last two elements will draw Malay-Muslims and non-Muslims closer, and minimise the differentiation between Malay-Muslims and non-Muslims – "us" and "we".

Diagram 1: Malay-Muslim Identity and non-Muslim Public Roles

Malay-Muslim

Ethnic   Religion

us-not us

Malay History
Malay Ethnocracy   Land

owner

Constitution 153
(Special Position)

Public Office
(Rights)

Politics

Federal
Constitution
Article 160

Malay - Muslim
Identity

Principles

Ideas of Teachers, Lecturers, and Imans
Self-Understanding
Political Endeavour and Bureaucracy
Quran 3:28,110; 4:138-9,44; 5:51; 60:1

ummah

us-them

Public Life
(Communal Living)

Quran 5:8
Quran 49:13
Quran 65:2

fair
just
equality

Islamic Values

skill
eligible
contribution

Non-Muslim

Public Roles

nationality

us-we

Plural Society

harmony
stable
unity

bias
unfair
oppression

Racialism

6.3.1 Malay Land (*Tanah Melayu*)

The Federation of Malaysia gained its independence in 1963. Before, it was named the Federation of Malaysia, it was formerly called the Federation of Malaya which comprised of Peninsula Malaya, including Singapore, but not including Sabah and Sarawak. The Federation was in the current State in 1965 with the expulsion of Singapore. Nevertheless, the creation of the Federation of Malaysia has never dismissed the issue of "who belongs to the nation" (Mauzy, 2006, p. 45). This is an unsolved problem in the minds of Malaysians, especially the Malays. At least 35 per cent of the participants do not agree that Malaysia is owned by Malaysians (Students, Question 16). To the Malays, the land or the country is the Malays' (Abdul Ghani and Awang, 2017, p. 73): "This is the land of Malay" (R02, R03). According to them, this fact is undeniable and should not be questioned historically:

> History proves that Malaysia is the land that belonged to Malay (R14; translated).

From the historical point of view, they are the owners and landlords of the Federation of Malaysia. The Malay intellectuals and academicians based on the similar history argue for the special position (see Muslim et al., 2012, pp. 449-450). In this regard, the Malays are not ready to share the ownership (public office) with immigrants (Chinese and Indians):

> The special rights of the Malays have been agreed upon by the previous leaders, which have been given to the Malays as collateral and substitute to the willingness of the Malay people in the Malay land to accept the Indian and Chinese ethnic groups to share life in the Malay land together. It was made in the 1948 Malay Federation Constitution when the independence negotiations were to be carried out (R21; translated).

This means that they *only share life in the Malay land, but not the ownership of the land*. With the ownership boundaries firmly established, the emphasis turned to differentiating "us" versus "not us". The public services or the special positions, as laid in Article 153 of the Federal Constitution, are the rights and sole properties of the landlord. The landlord or owner has all the rights to decide, share, or alter any provisions made prior to the independence. It is very reasonable for the Malays to demand that the top positions in the government services and senior ministers be

reserved for Malay (-Muslim) only (R14). Mauzy (2016) calls this the Malay nationalism. Mauzy (2016, p. 50) points out that "a key feature of Malay nationalism was its highly developed sense of *'us' versus 'them'* and its keen sense of purpose in defending everything considered Malay." To the Malays, the "them" or "not us" were the non-Malays, primarily the Chinese.

In another respect, the Malays were continuously reminded by their elites that, unlike the Chinese or Indians, they had no other homeland and that the Malays were the legal "sons of the soil" of the Malaysian Federation. No matter how long the Chinese and Indians had been there, the "others" or "not us" were always immigrants because they could always "go home", whereas the Malays had nowhere else to go. This argument added to the sense of ownership of the land. Ownership of the land was firmly instilled with the thought that if the Malays lost control of their "homeland", they would become racially extinct and "homeless" (Mauzy, 2016, p. 52).

Arguably:

> It was understood among the elites that the Malays would be the senior partner politically and that the non-Malays would not be hindered in their economic pursuits. But other questions, such as who in ethnic terms was eligible for the top federal and State governmental positions, lacked clearly spelt out answers (Mauzy, 2016, p. 54).

Hence, Zakaria (1989, p. 354) contends that the new generations of Malaysia have never really realised the tacitly agreed provisions by the forefathers of independence (Ishak, 1999, p. 72) which is to recognise Malay dominance (supremacy). On the same issue, Ishak claims that this is the foundation of Malaysia's plural society and the basis of the Malaysian consociationalism (a stable democratic system built on power sharing between various social groups that exists in societies that are deeply divided) polity (1999, p. 72). In addition, Ishak further claims that Malaysia's plural society pre- and post-independence are still subjected to Malay nationalism (2002, p. 107), and the Malay political hegemony clearly notices it.

Due to the improvement in living standard by various preferential treatments, Malay unity or solidarity increasingly faded. In order to unite the Malays, *dakwah* comes into picture in 1980s. Therefore, *dakwah* also plays a prominent role in achieving Malay and Muslim identity – ethno-religious identity. The preoccupation of *dakwah* promotes intra-Malay solidarity. It not only sets boundaries between Muslims and non-Muslims but also reduces interaction between Malays and non-

Malays (Nagata, 1980, p. 436). According to Roolvink (1986, p. 367), the *dakwah* movement primarily manifests a struggle for power within the Malay community and a means of retaining and emphasising Malay identity and rights as opposed to other ethnic groups in this multiracial society. In the same way, Crouch (1986, p. 180) asserts that *dakwah* is "largely a response to a need to reassert Malay identity. It is Islam which increasingly distinguishes the Malay from the non-Malay when both speak Malay." Thus, as far as *dakwah* is concerned, Islam is used to maintain and stress Malayness, which brings benefits.

Therefore, it is comprehensible that only 45 per cent of the participants are willing to promote (Malaysian) national identity rather than ethnic or religious identity (see Question 23, Students) even after 66 years of independence. In contrast, government, political parties, and Islamic institutions dynamically promote Muslim identity above other identities (Students, Question 9). Achieving a Malaysian identity will be challenging, and even if it is accomplished, there is no guarantee of equality because of the dozens of preferential policies focusing on Malay supremacy. Preferential policies could be understood as Malays enjoying special entitlements and superiority over other ethnicities (Wan Mohd Ghazali, 2016, pp. 279-280). This reading and experience of preferential policies will only intensify the differentiation or categorisation of "us" – "not us". Still, there are significant challenges in dismantling a state that is centrally organised around ethnic institutions and is politically founded on Malay hegemony and Malay ethnocracy. Furthermore, and most importantly, there is no agreement among Malays on key reforms. However, promoting and realising national identity is possible, at least 45 per cent would like to see it happen. With skilful leadership, pursuing an inclusive national identity may be possible over time (Mauzy, 2016, p. 66).

6.3.2 Special Position (Rights) and non-Muslim Public Roles

The respondents refer to Article 153 of the Federal Constitution of Malaysia in supporting the demands that only Malay-Muslims should fill the prominent positions within the government, and only Malay-Muslims should be appointed to the top positions within the government. According to them, Article 153 grants special rights and privileges to Malays for such demands:

The Malaysian Constitution states Islam as the official religion, Malay as the national language, and the special rights of the Malays. So, in my view, this demand was made to guarantee the position of the Malays and Islam (R17, translated)

Another view is that the rally is not to demand public office only. After reading several articles, he believes that the assembly aims to maintain the rights of Malays at the federal government level (R01). Compatibly, the demands were made to defend and protect Malay-Muslims' rights in this nation (R16, R20). Though this is not entirely true, but still, one argues that:

The demand is one of the agreements that prioritise the rights of the Malay people. But now we can see that the top people are only from other races. This is because, in Malaysia, the main religion is Islam and the Malays. It happened because of protecting the rights of *bumiputera* (R12, translated).

Not only from worrying about the current political development in the country, such demands were made to safeguard their position and future in this country (R20). Also, they make such demands to ensure that the privileges given to the Malays are not lost (R23). If Malay-Muslims do not make the demands, they will lose their heritage. Elementally, Muslims must oversee the nation (R20).

Undoubtedly, the exclusion of non-Muslims in prominent and top public offices has little to do with religion. Although Islam is repeatedly mentioned above, Article 153 does not spell a single word on Islam. Clauses 1 and 2 read:

It shall be the responsibility of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong to safeguard the special position of the Malays and natives of any of the States of Sabah and Sarawak and the legitimate interests of other communities in accordance with the provisions of this Article. (Clause 1)

Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution, but subject to the provisions of Article 40 and of this Article, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong shall exercise his functions under this Constitution and federal law in such manner as may be necessary to safeguard the special provision of the Malays and natives of any of the States of Sabah and Sarawak and to ensure the reservation for Malays and natives of any of the States of Sabah and Sarawak of such proportion as he may deem reasonable of positions in the public service (other than the public service of a State) and of scholarships, exhibitions and other similar educational or training privileges or special facilities given or accorded by the Federal Government and, when any permit or licence for the operation of any

trade or business is required by federal law, then, subject to the provisions of that law and this Article, of such permits and licences. (Clause 2)

On the other hand, as one reads closely, Article 153 never mentions granting special rights or privileges to the Malays and natives (Kim, 2010, pp. 271-276). It states only a "special position" and ensures a reasonable proportion of public service reserved for Malays and natives. The Article also never states that the prominent and top positions shall belong to Malay-Muslims. However, it has now turned to guaranteeing and protecting Islam and Malays' special rights and privileges. Article 153 of the Constitution defines that the Malays' special position is limited to reserving acceptable quotas in three sectors: public services, educational institutions, and commercial licenses.

Consequently, the current ubiquitous racial discrimination in practically every aspect of our national life essentially violates the Constitution. Racial discrimination, for example, happens in the recruitment and promotion of personnel in publicly-funded organisations, resulting in the latter becoming practically mono-racial (particularly in their upper strata). The civil service, the police, the army, and various semi- and quasi-government organisations are among these bodies (Kim, 2010, p. 275).

Nevertheless, the majority of the public does not know and does not want to know that there are two conditions for including Article 153: (1) special position of the Malays is a temporary measure that needs to be reconsidered or revisited 15 years after independence (Fernando, 2015, p. 543; Holst, 2012, p. 41; Raja Aziz Addruse and Ting, 2008; Ting, 2009b, p. 41; Wade, 2009, p. 21), and (2) public service and administration should include a quota of 25 per cent of non-Malays (Raina, 2015a, p. 34; Wade, 2009, p. 23). Continuation of the special position of Malays as a privileged group and the increment in percentage in administration will develop negative views against non-Malays as discriminated groups. Correspondently, the discriminated groups in relation to the privileged group might be taken as an "us" and "not-us" dichotomy. Hall (1997, p. 230) suggests that "otherness" or "not us" is defined by "difference" due to its strong attraction (in this case, special rights/privileges). The "difference" is created by depicting people who are racially and ethnically distinct from the majority population, which eventually leads to symbolic boundaries, that is, "us" and "not us" or "us" and "other". In this

assessment, "difference" is essentially for the successful construction of the "not us" (Wan Mohd Ghazali, 2016, pp. 281-284). As a result of generalising or projecting typical ethnic group characteristics to the superior national category, the more group members perceive their ingroup as comparatively archetypal, the more negative attitudes toward out-groups become (Verkuyten and Khan, 2012, p. 133). Likewise, as Al Ramiah, Hewstone, and Wolfer (2017, p. 10) prove, "When ethnicity is socially defining and politically relevant, as is the case in Malaysia, the result can be negative generalised perceptions of out-groups ('not us') compared with positive views of ingroup ('us')." Malay in Malaysia is undoubtedly recognised as the prototypical or distinctive identity for them (ingroup identity or "us"). Therefore, the attitudes towards non-Malay (out-group or "not us") become negative (discriminatory).

6.3.3 Possible Principles (Reasons why Non-Muslims Should Not Hold Important Public Offices)

59 per cent of participants claim that the teaching of Islam (Question 24, student) suggests only Muslims should hold important government positions. On the other hand, the same percentage also suggests that they are unaware of any policy prohibiting non-Muslims from co-administrating a country with Muslims. Those who agree that non-Muslims should not hold important government positions learned it from the ideas of teachers, lecturers and Imams (45%). But there are also a good number of Muslims who, due to self-understanding (self-learning) (26%), concur that non-Muslims should not hold important government positions. Political endeavour (41%), the bureaucracy of government (30%), and ethnocracy also played a significant influence on non-Muslims not embracing essential positions in government services.

Responding to whether Islam or the Quran provide sufficient evidence to exclude non-Muslims from holding public offices, the answers given by the 7 (out of 66) participants and 4 (out of 24) respondents are Quranic verses, such as 3:28, 110; 4:138-139, 144; 5:51; 60:1 and are encompassed as below:

> Let not the believers take for friends or helpers Unbelievers rather than believers: if any do that, in nothing will there be help from Allah: except by way of precaution, that ye may Guard yourselves from them. But Allah cautions you

(To remember) Himself; for the final goal is to Allah. (Quran 3:28 – version of Yusuf Ali)

Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah. If only the People of the Book had faith, it were best for them: among them are some who have faith, but most of them are perverted transgressors. (Quran 3: 110 – version of Yusuf Ali)

To the Hypocrites give the glad tidings that there is for them (but) a grievous penalty: - Yea, to those who take for friends unbelievers rather than believers: is it honour they seek among them? Nay, all honour is with Allah. (Quran 4:138-139 – version of Yusuf Ali)

O ye who believe! Take not for friends unbelievers rather than believers: Do ye wish to offer Allah an open proof against yourselves? (Quran 4:144 – version of Yusuf Ali)

O ye who believe! take not the Jews and the Christians for your friends and protectors: They are but friends and protectors to each other. And he amongst you that turns to them (for friendship) is of them. Verily Allah guideth not a people unjust. (Quran 5:51 – version of Yusuf Ali)

The Quranic message, as shown from the verses above, seems to suggest that Muslims should not associate or cooperate with non-Muslims. The message also seems to suggest that Muslims are not encouraged to make friends with non-Muslims. As noted, it does imply that Muslims and non-Muslims should not work together for any government. Strictly, this phenomenon is not happening in any age in Islamic history and is practically impossible. Muslims do make friends and take helpers who are non-Muslims, for example, in schools, workplaces, markets, *et cetera*. This happens every way and every time in a plural society, typically in Malaysia. Therefore, it cannot present a strong case from the Quran to not include non-Muslims from playing any essential public roles.

Therefore, the study indicates that the exclusion of non-Muslims in public roles is very minimally related to sacred texts *per se*. The reasons why non-Muslims should not hold important government positions are the ideas of teachers, lecturers and Imams, self-understanding, political endeavour, and bureaucracy of government. Ethnocracy also played a significant influence on non-Muslims not embracing important positions in government services.

6.3.4 Public Life (Communal Living)

Admitting that Malaysia is not a mono-cultural society and Muslims and non-Muslims live in one community (R17, R20, R23), most informants stress that all humanity is equal before Allah. Living in a plural society, the informants emphasise Islamic values of justice and fairness, and regardless of one's faith, all people must be treated impartially (R10, R17, R18, R19, R20, R23).

There are three Quranic verses which the respondents unceasingly mention: 5:8, 49:13, and 65:2. Below are the verses from Yusuf Ali's translation:

> O ye who believe! stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah. For Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do. (Quran 5:8)

> O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things). (Quran 49:13)

> Thus when they fulfil their term appointed, either take them back on equitable terms or part with them on equitable terms; and take for witness two persons from among you, endued with justice, and establish the evidence (as) before Allah. Such is the admonition given to him who believes in Allah and the Last Day. And for those who fear Allah, He (ever) prepares a way out. (Quran 65:2)

As noted, the verses talk about two things: (1) Muslims must be just. It is Allah's command, and (2) Muslims are not limited to acting fairly to Muslims only. It is also to everyone. The very reason for the command is that Allah created humankind from a single (pair) of a male and a female (49:13) without partiality. On this, Respondent 10 precisely and concisely summarises the essence of equality in Islam. As a legal assistant, she writes:

> Islam asserts that no nation is created to be above other nations or to rise above them. Man's worth in the eyes of men and the eyes of Allah is determined by the good he does and by his obedience to Allah. The differences in race, colour or social status are only incidental. They do not affect man's true stature in the sight of Allah. Again, the value of equality is not simply a matter of constitutional rights or the agreement of noblemen or condescending charity. It is an article of faith that Muslims take seriously and must adhere sincerely to. The foundations of this Islamic value of equality are

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deeply rooted in the structure of Islam. It stems from basic principles such as the following: All men are created by One and the Same Eternal God, the Supreme Lord of all. All mankind belongs to humans and shares equally in the common parentage of Adam; may Allah exalt his mention and Eve. Allah is Just and Kind to all His creatures. He is not partial to any race, age, or religion. The whole Universe is His Dominion, and all people are His creatures. All people are born equal in the sense that no one brings any possessions with him, and they die equal in the sense that they take back nothing of their worldly belongings. Allah judges every person on the basis of his own merits and according to his own deeds. Allah has conferred on man a title of honour and dignity. Such are some of the principles behind the value of equality in Islam. When this concept is fully utilised, it will leave no place for prejudice or persecution. Furthermore, when this Divine ordinance (*laws*) is fully implemented, there will be no room for oppression or suppression. Concepts of chosen and gentile peoples, words such as 'privileged' and 'condemned' races, and expressions such as "social castes" and "citizens" will all become meaningless and obsolete.

In addition, Respondent 19 feels uncomfortable if non-Muslims were to be excluded from playing any part of public roles:

> I will feel uncomfortable. This is because the self-importance of our country's leaders is still high. If the leaders understand the concept of Islamic leadership, which is very fair and just as the Prophet Muhammad led all Medina people of multiple races and religions. (translated)

Consequently, non-Muslims holding important public services will not be an issue even if it is a Muslim-majority country. No one should be discriminated against or excluded because of his race and faith.

Above and beyond, many of them sincerely appreciate non-Muslims' skills, expertise, and significant contribution to the nation. According to them, we are granted our skills and expertise, which should be used for our country's advances. Malaysia is a multiracial country, and it should be governed by whoever is suitable, including non-Muslims (R24, translated). Not only skill and expertise are appreciated, but the opinions and voices of non-Muslims must also be heard closely and taken (R17). Meanwhile, Respondent 22, an *ustazah* unaffectedly pens:

> In governing this multiracial and multireligious country, there is no denying that non-Muslims also have better expertise in certain fields. Therefore, administrative positions should also be given to non-Muslims so that they can give their thoughts and opinions as long as they do not touch any sensitivities in the Islamic religion, especially for matters related to faith and *sharia*. This is

intended to work together towards the peace and progress of the country. (translated)

Another respondent stresses the racial unity. As an *ustaz*, he sees:

> Racial unity plays an important role in strengthening the national economy with the involvement of all races in activities. Suppose we are divided or quarrel with each other. In that case, this peaceful and harmonious country will be backward, and disputes will cause economic instability that affects the country (R18, translated).

He continues:

> The unity among people of multiple races in this country is very unique and has its special features. In order to maintain harmony in this country, the duties and responsibilities of governing the country must be given according to the expertise and needs of certain parts (R18, translated).

Regarding the unity and prosperity of the country, Respondent 20 adds that since Malaysia is a multiracial nation, she thought that only Malay-Muslims occupying prominent and top positions in government is unrealistic (impractical). However, if this demand were to become a reality, it would have a negative impact because non-Muslims also play a significant role in the growth of the public sector, especially in the economy. It also demonstrates how difficult it is to foster neighbourhood cohesion, which will impact the entire country. Respondent 15 makes it very clear that she prefers our country to be governed by various races with an open heart without any racism (R15, translated). Respondent 23 enhances the view that the country will not develop strongly without including all races in official roles because not everyone has expertise. They need each other to share expertise, share knowledge and views. A country governed by various races will form unity among races, respect each other despite different religions and be open to exchanging opinions (R23, translated)

Hence, living in Malaysia, a plural society, Muslims also lean towards unity, stability, harmony, and the economy of the country rather than who should not be included in government employment. They also perceive non-Muslims' skills, expertise, and contributions as treasures of this country.

In sum, although some Muslims would see racialism and religious superiority as natural and acceptable in Islam, others will advocate Islamic values such as justice, fairness and equality as a counter-response. This group of Muslims living in a plural society do not set boundary between Muslims and non-Muslims (i.e., "us" and "not us" or "us" and "them"), but drawing "us" (Muslims) and "them" (non-Muslims) closer and nearer, most probably can be called as "us" and "we". The awareness resonates well with the view by Mohaghegh Damad (2020) that everyone is equal and should be appreciated (p. S50). There should not be a distinction between believers and non-believers, where it is the root of conflicts (p. S49). They uphold the Islamic values of justice, fairness, and equality. They also acknowledge the role that non-Muslims play in public services of Malaysia, especially non-Muslims' skill and expertise. They set no boundaries between Muslims and non-Muslims, Malays or non-Malays in this community and nation. The issue is whether they are the leading voice heard and followed. However, concerning the intergroup bias:

> Minor variants on the expression of prejudice as a function of religious orientation are not a concern for an intergroup perspective because what makes a perspective on prejudice *intergroup* is not a suggestion that all members of a group reveal the *identical form* of prejudice, but rather the view that prejudice against out-groups has its *origin in intergroup relations*, not in personality structure (Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 519).

Section 6.2 shows that the salient identity of the Malays is that of Malay-Muslims with religious substance. The significance of this religious substance in relation to non-Muslim public roles will be explored in Section 6.4. However, Section 6.3 reveals that Malays who emphasised ownership, special position, and *ummah* caused the differentiation or set boundaries between Malay-Muslims and non-Muslims – "us" and "not us" or "us" and "them".   The implication of setting boundaries is that it generates negative attitudes (discrimination) towards non-Muslims. On the other hand, the element of public life pulled Malay-Muslims and non-Muslims closer, minimising the differentiation between Malay-Muslims and non-Muslims – "us" and "we". It has favourable implications where prejudice (bias) against non-Muslims is thus reduced. The following section will show that religious identity is significant in excluding non-Muslims from public services, applying social identity and self-categorisation theories. It explains why different individuals in the

same country have different levels of religiosity but share the same level of intolerance and prejudice towards out-groups. Thus, this study fills a possible knowledge gap by finding the implications of the Muslim religious identity towards the non-Muslims' public roles in Malaysia, which have not previously been studied.

6.4   Malay Religious Identity and Its Implications on non-Muslim Public Roles

This section turns to the core of the study. Table 6.5 and Graphs 6.3 - 6.7 show the implications of Malay-Muslim identity in relation to non-Muslims in Malaysia. Five areas are examined and compared within three identities: Malaysian, Malay-Muslim and Muslim. These five areas are (1) Malaysia is not owned by Malaysians, (2) non-Muslims should not hold any position in government without reservation, (3) do not encourage a multiracial and multireligious government, (4) non-Muslims holding important public offices is a threat to Muslims, and (5) do not promote national (Malaysian) identity. Though the first area seems not directly related to non-Muslim public roles, it is worth paying attention to because this is linked with the notion of Malay Land. Malays perceive that the land is their heritage and that their identity ("owner" of the land) is strongly linked to it. As the land "owner", there is a difference between Malay and not Malay or "us" and "not-us". The owner has the description of who should be in civil services. Malay identity is not included because there was no student who identified with it. The comparison is made intra-identity, not inter-identity, i.e., among each identity itself; for example, 75 per cent of Muslims agree that Malaysia does not belong to Malaysians, and only 25 per cent would concur that Malaysia belongs to her citizens.

On the other hand, only 37 per cent of Muslims would promote national identity compared to 63 per cent who would instead promote ethnic and religious identities. Similarly, 60 per cent of "Malay-Muslim" see that ethnic and religious identities are worth pursuing. It is noted that among the three identities, the religious identity (Muslim) always shows higher levels of negative responses to non-Muslims. It is also noted that there is a consistency of negative responses (63%) among Muslims towards non-Muslims in areas of (2), (3) and (5) (see Table 6.5). This indicates that their negative responses are substantial and practically significant (see

Chi-square test and effect sizes). In other words, it means 63 per cent of Malaysian Muslims will have a similar negative response towards non-Muslims in these areas of 2, 3, and 5. There is another area that must not be overlooked. The refusal of non-Muslims to be government officials by all three identities is generally high. All three identities display rejection, and all are more than the majority, with Muslim identity being the highest, nearly two-thirds.

Table 6.5   Identity and non-Muslims (Figures Are in Percentage)

Description	Malaysian	Malay-Muslim	Muslim
1. Malaysia is not owned by Malaysians.	38	42	75
2. non-Muslims should not hold any position in government without reservation.	53	59	63
3. Do not encourage a multiracial and multireligious government.	47	51	63
4. non-Muslims holding important public offices is a threat to Muslims.	47	70	37
5. Do not promote national (Malaysian) identity.	27	60	63

Graph 6.3   Malaysia is Not Owned by Malaysians (%)
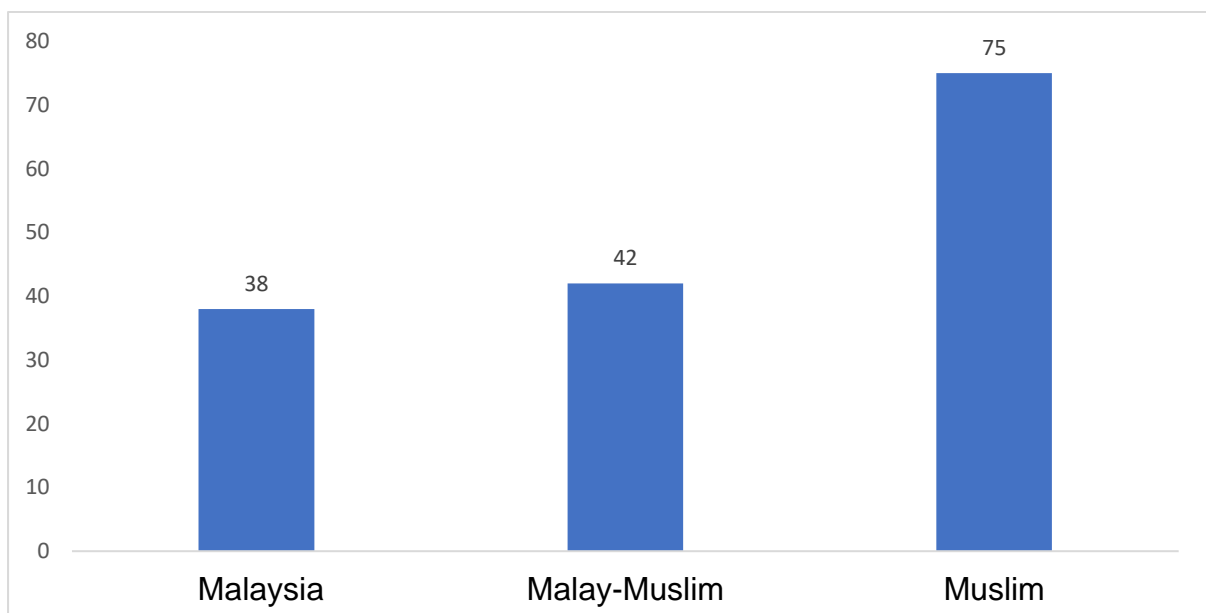
Graph 6.4   Non-Muslims Should Not Hold Any Position in Government without Reservation (%)
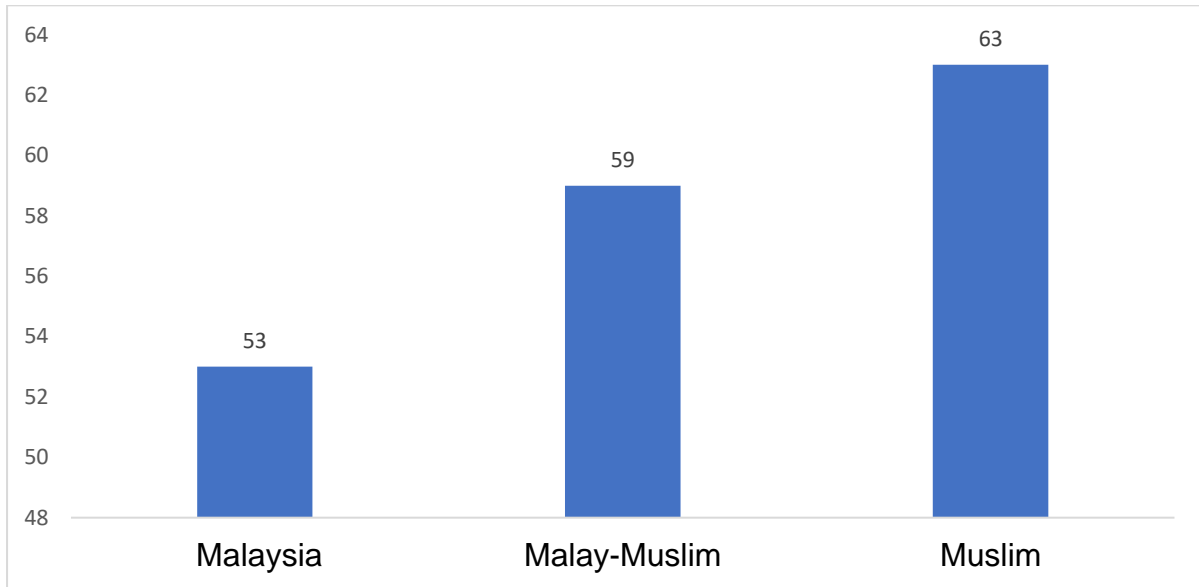
Graph 6.5   Do Not Encourage a Multiracial and Multireligious Government (%)

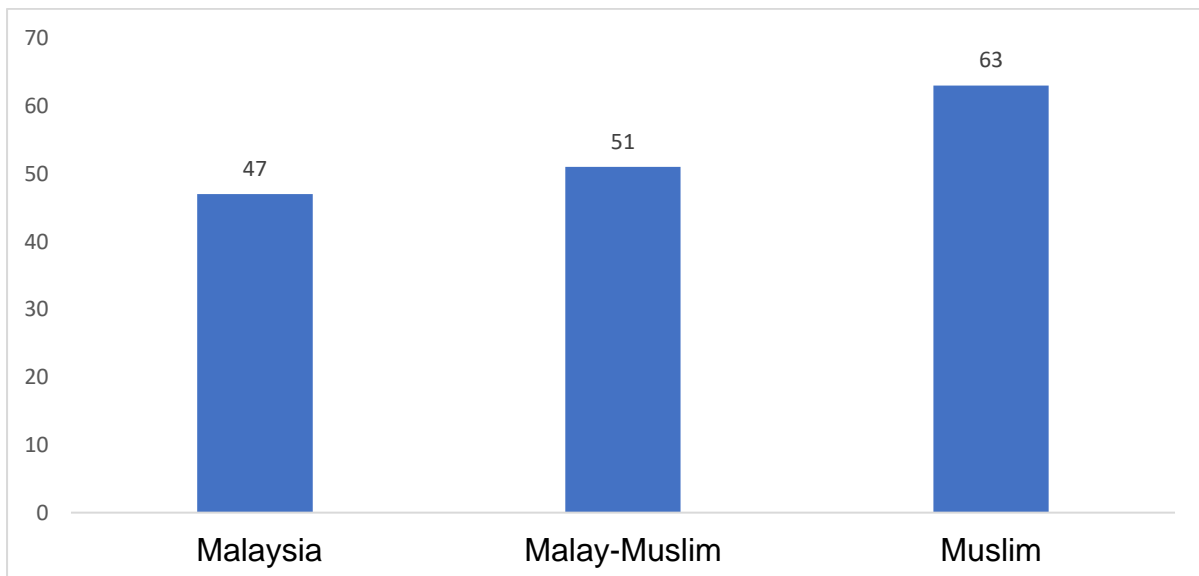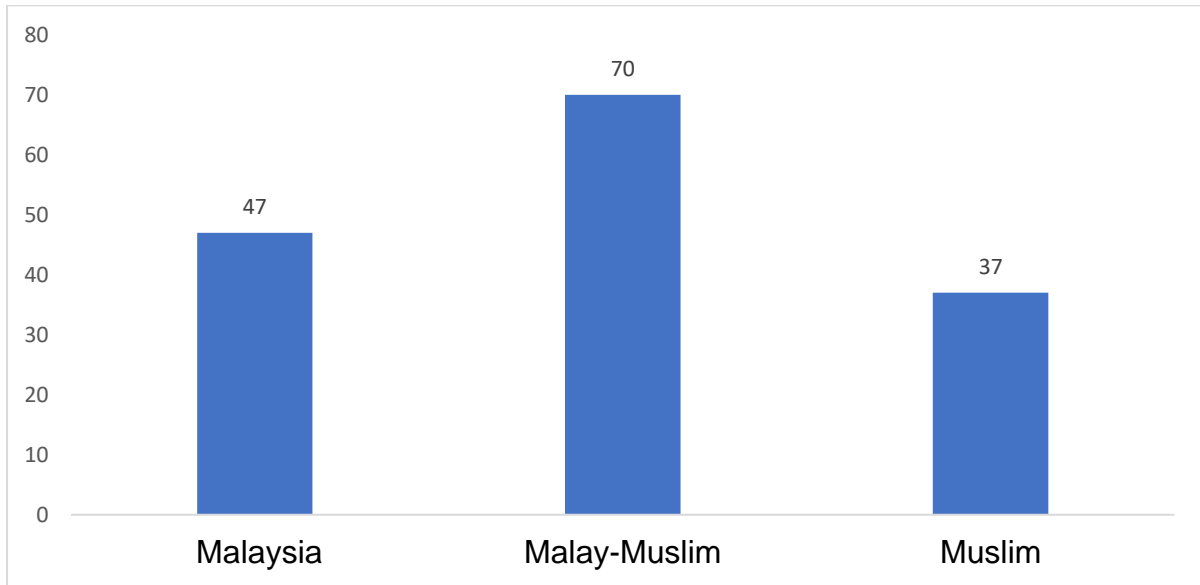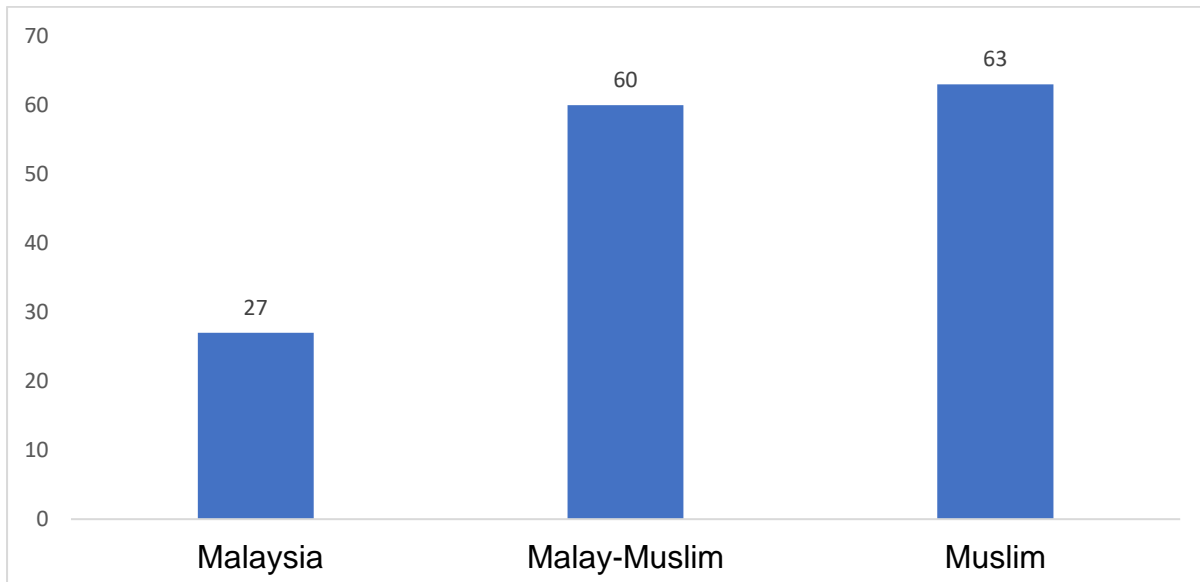**Graph 6.6   Non-Muslims Holding Important Public Offices is a Threat to Muslims (%)**

Graph 6.7   Should not Promote National Identity (%)

Unexpectedly, non-Muslims holding important public offices pose a lesser threat to Muslims but a significant threat to Malay-Muslims (70%). All three identities feel apprehensive if non-Muslims were to be employed as public servants, but the Malay-Muslim identity demonstrates the highest. It could be because the competition for the position is based on expertise, knowledge, and experience. Respondents 5 and 7 believe that stereotypes of race and faith played a significant role. In other words, the competition is amongst races with faiths, not merely on faith alone. This could be seen from the responses of participants – 37 out of 43 "Malay-Muslim" view that "Malay-Muslim" identity is inseparable (Students, Question 7a). In this regard, 24 out of 43 (56%) chose not to respond to Question 7a. At the same time, 49 out of 66 (74.2%) see it as inseparable. Obviously, "Malay-Muslim" takes race as equal or as significant as religion. Perhaps Azlan Yahaya (2012, p. 256) is correct in concluding that Malay identity is constantly wavering between ethnicity and religion depending on circumstances, i.e., political interests. He suggests that the Malays are a contradiction of race and religion, conflicting for dominance (Yahaya, 2012, p. 265). Another indicator is that the survey shows that the "Malay-Muslim" 100 per cent will compare themselves with non-Muslims regarding education, occupation, and income, but only 38 per cent "Muslim" will make the comparison. This explains why non-Muslims holding important public offices threatens "Malay-Muslims" rather than "Muslims". Therefore, it shows that the "Malay-Muslim" identity manifested more than religious identity on encountering comparison, competition, and threat. In other words, in the comparison, competition, and threats posed by other ethnic groups (out-groups), the ethno-religious identity becomes more substantial than national or religious identity. In this sense, the ethnicity of "Malay-Muslim" appears more extensive than religiosity. It also appears more substantial than ethnic identity alone (though no informants identified with only ethnic identity).

Again, one can turn to social identity theory to understand better the above implications/meanings. Prejudice (negative responses) can arise from comparison and competition in which the out-group is regarded as a threat not only to the individual but also to the in-group's integrity, interests, or identity as a whole. Threats may be shown as competition for a position, representation in power and limited resources, promotion of one's values, and protection of one's standing (Brewer, 2007, p. 697; Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 510). In this case, there is always comparison and competition between Muslims and non-Muslims (non-

Malays), particularly in government employment. Furthermore, individuals always differentiate their group from others throughout the comparison process and place their group in the more positively assessed status (Deaux, 1996, p. 790). Religious groups are more inclined to make intergroup comparisons and place their group in a higher or better position due to religious belief and content (Ysseldyk, Matheson and Anisman, 2010, p. 60; Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 511). This esteem-enhancing role could be served by stereotyping in-group members as superior and out-group members as inferior, such as infidels, immoral, and/or adversaries (Jackson and Hunsberger. 1999, pp. 511, 521). These valuations (theories) are valid and applicable to this section of study. As explained in Chapter Three and Chapter Four, there is some evidence that Muslims see themselves as superior to non-Muslims, especially when calling non-Muslims infidels (*kāfir*).

In sum, as Table 6.5 and Graphs 6.3-6.7 show, Malay religious identity displayed higher levels of undesirable responses towards non-Muslims, especially when perceiving that non-Muslims should not participate in the government sector and typically hold prominent positions. It also shows that Islam is not a leading source of exclusion. Islam (Quran) does not directly and obviously call to exclude non-Muslims from playing public roles. Although Quran may not be the primarily source or basis of exclusion, as far as this study is concerned, it seems that the social identity's psychological reaction is more than religious teachings, and the dimensions involved are strong self-identification as *ummah*, differentiation between Muslims and non-Muslims ("us" – "not us" or "us" – "them"), and comparison between Muslims and non-Muslims. This resonates Mutalib's (2007, p. 40) claim when he characterises Malaysia society as "bi-modal" rather than "plural" society. The society is consistently drawn between "Muslims" and "non-Muslims" in intergroup boundaries, relations, and settings (Fernadez and Coyle, 2019, pp. 38, 49). Notably, Mutalib previously delineated that the Malaysian society's "bi-modal" is between ethnic landscape, not religion (1990b, p. 890).

6.5 Possible Consequences of Excluding non-Muslim from Public Roles

Most respondents would prefer Muslims to govern the country, or at least the highest positions to be held by Muslims only. However, due to the fact that Malaysia is a multiracial, multicultural and multireligious nation and upholds the Islamic values of justice, fairness and equality, they agree that non-Muslims should also play important public roles in Malaysia. First, Muslims recognised that non-Muslims have contributed significantly to the country's development, particularly in the economy. Respondent 10 argues that if the non-Muslims do not play a part in public roles, this will affect the economy. Non-Muslims also have contributed to this country. For economic growth, all sectors and all Malaysians should play their parts. Still others contend that if non-Muslims should be excluded from playing their roles in the government sector, Malaysia will be confused and destroyed (R24). It will also not make Malaysia flourish (R02), and the country will not move (R05).

From the point of development, respondent 23 presents it well:

> If this exception occurs, the country cannot develop properly. This is because not all Muslims master various skills that are many for everyone. There are other skills that Muslims do not master, but non-Muslims master well. So, to form a developed country, cooperation between non-Muslims and Muslims is very necessary (translated).

Second, considering the racialism and ethical perspective, respondents are concerned about non-Muslims' circumstances if they were to be excluded from public offices. Respondent 24, a retiree, claims that it is an unjust act. Respondent 13 says it would be unfair and cause the government system to be imbalanced. Respondent 15 expresses that it would be nice if only Muslims governed this country, but she does not want non-Muslims to be sidelined. Respondent 10 resists that if such a thing were to happen, there would be oppression and bias against non-Muslims.

Third, excluding non-Muslims from participating in the public sector will affect the national economy and lead to an unjust society. It will also affect the national security and intergroup relationships. First and foremost, Respondent 12 worries that the country will be divided. Respondent 9 views that the result is that conflicts between residents will occur. It will cause the friendly relationship between the

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Muslim and non-Muslim populations to become strained, and there will no longer be a spirit of unity within the population (R09, translated).

Last, the effect on non-Muslims if the supremacy of Muslims continues in the form of excluding non-Muslims from playing a role in public employment will form a negative perspective on Islam (R23).

Therefore, there are four consequences of the exclusion of non-Muslims from playing public roles, as shared by respondents:

1. The country will be confused, destroyed, and undeveloped in terms of economic and imbalanced government administrative system;
2. The denial of justice that brings bias, unfairness, and oppression to non-Muslims;
3. Causing tension and conflict in intergroup relations (racialism and religious supremacy);
4. Causing a bad impression of Islam.

6.6   Major Findings

The results found that the informants statistically categorised themselves as "Malay-Muslim". The tests have shown that the self-categorisation was practically substantial. They also strongly identified themselves with *ummah*, that one can also define as "imagined community" (Anderson, 1983. See also Buttny, Hashim and Kaur, 2013, pp. 7, 32). This group categorised all Muslims as brothers and sisters in religious bonding. They are connected by religious identity (social identity) and acted collectively. Due to the strong identification of *ummah*, they subsequently act prejudicially against non-Muslims. These are the effects of social identity and group categorisation on the "prejudice-religion relationships" (Batson and Stocks, 2005, p. 423).

The results suggest that religion is more substantial than ethnicity as an identity marker for "Malay-Muslim". The results, at the same time, also suggest that Islam as the key identity marker is not absolute and unwavering. The inclination towards religious or ethnic identity depends on circumstances that eventually induce interests or benefits for them. Hence, Malay-Muslim identity is a kind of fluidity. In

this case, Nagata's study in 1974 is still very valid. Political interests played a key influential factor (Yahaya, 2012). However, on encountering comparison, competition and the threat posed by non-Muslims (out-groups) in the area of holding important public roles, the "Malay-Muslim" identity manifested more than other identities. In other words, the comparison, competition, and threats posed by other ethnic groups (out-groups) make the ethno-religious identity more substantial than national, ethnic, or religious identity.

The results also find that there is strong differentiation between Muslims and non-Muslims in three themes, namely land, special position, and laws (the "us" – "not us" and "us" – "them" distinctions). It could be said that Muslims used land, special positions, and Quranic verses (those applicable) to set boundaries between them and non-Muslims. The Malay-Muslims enjoy privileges and special positions as land owners via the provisions of the Federal Constitution and ethnic nationalism. The Malay-Muslims withholding from non-Muslims favours and benefits that are extended only to them are the reasons for discrimination against non-Muslims (*see* Brewer 2007: 696, "us" – "not us" distinction).

The results further find that the Malay religious identity played a significant role in displaying undesirable responses towards non-Muslims, especially when perceiving that non-Muslims should not participate in the government sector, typically holding prominent positions in civil services. It happens because Muslims compare, compete, and perceive non-Muslims as a threat to their interests. Prejudice against non-Muslims is due to Muslims protecting themselves (rather than enhancement) as well as antagonism toward non-Muslims (see Brewer, 2007, p. 697, "us" – "them" distinction).

Islam or, more specifically, a few Quranic verses provided by the informants seem to advocate a division between believer and non-believer or "us" and "them". Despite calling for justice and acting equally (Quran 5:8, 49:13 and 65:2), more verses are likely to set boundaries between believers and non-believers (Quran 3:28, 3110; 4:138-139, 144; 5:51 and 60:1). The negative perceptions of non-Muslims are embellished by the calling that Muslims should not make friends and take helpers who are non-believers. Simply put, this is the manifestation of exciting "us" – "them" distinction, where prejudice and discrimination of non-Muslims are inescapable.

Notwithstanding all the adverse responses, respondents called to give opportunities to non-Muslims to manage the country together with Muslims. The calling is raised on the plural society's unity, stability, and harmony. Muslims and non-Muslims who live communally should progress and prosper together. However, one must recognise that on intergroup bias, minor variations in the expression of prejudice as a function of religious orientation are not of concern to the intergroup perspective because the view on intergroup bias does not imply that all members of a group exhibit the same views and same levels, but instead prejudice against out-groups arises from intergroup relations rather than personal choice (Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 519). People with strong self-esteem will generally act in a personal capacity when they have and can succeed without support from the group. However, no matter what one does, their fate is tied to group membership, and they will act collectively (Reicher, 2004, p. 931).

6.7   Conclusion

The informants (students and working adults) identified themselves as Malaysian, Malay-Muslim, and Muslim. Surprisingly, none of the informants identified solely with ethnic identity. Students and adults identified mainly with Malay-Muslim identity, 65.2 per cent among students and 37.5 per cent among adults compared to other identities, namely, Malaysian, Malay or Muslim. The conflation of the identity of race and religion became the dominant or salient identity among informants. It was noted that those who identified with religious identity (i.e., Muslim only) showed the strongest sense of "us" – "them". In other words, they showed the strongest exclusion of non-Muslims in public roles supporting their view from Quranic verses.

The study clearly showed that there were distinctions between "us" – "not us" and "us" – "them" among Muslims and non-Muslims. These distinctions were due to Malay-Muslim identity as they strongly identified themselves with *ummah* in one aspect. In other aspects, the attachment of land ownership, ethnic nationalism, and special position (rights) also set boundaries between Muslims and non-Muslims within one community. Conversely, some Muslims advocated Islamic values for living in a plural society. They valued non-Muslims' skills, expertise, and

contribution. They set no boundaries between Muslims and non-Muslims that bring "us" – "we" nearer.

The study also showed that Malay religious identity displayed undesirable responses towards non-Muslims, especially when perceiving that non-Muslims should not participate in the government sector and typically hold prominent positions.   The study suggested that Islam is always the critical marker for Malay-Muslim identity. However, it is not static. It may oscillate between ethnic and religious identity, depending on situations and contexts.   The comparison, competition, and threats posed by non-Muslims made the ethno-religious identity more substantial than national, ethnic, or religious identities.

The study indicated that the exclusion of non-Muslims in public roles is very minimal related to sacred texts per se. The reasons why non-Muslims should not hold important government positions are the ideas of teachers, lecturers and Imams, self-understanding (self-learning), political endeavour, and bureaucracy of government. Ethnocracy also played a significant influence on non-Muslims not holding important positions in government services. However, when society is divided into "us" and "not us" and "us" and "them", discrimination against out-groups ("not us", "them" or "other") becomes unavoidable.

Malay religious identity (or Muslim) towards this stage could be understood as per doctrinal teachings, differentiating society into in-groups (believer – *ummah*) and various out-groups (non-believer). It should also be comprehended as a social formation and identification of identity attracted by special positions, privileges, and rights (land, racial nationalism, and civil servants) that unintentionally created an imagined community. The imagined and unseen community (*ummah* – believer) is distinct from other imagined communities (non-believer). Both *ummah* (religious identity) and imagined community (social identity) inevitably formed in-group – out-group prejudice (discrimination), not necessarily hate, but of self-protection and/or against threat (Brewer 2007: 697).

Some Muslims are also aware that non-Muslims should not be marginalised from public roles. They are concerned that if non-Muslims are not involved in public roles, the country will be "confused", "destroyed", and "undeveloped" in terms of economic and imbalanced government administrative system. They take that as denying justice, which brings bias, unfairness, and oppression to non-Muslims. They worry that the exclusion of non-Muslims from civil roles would eventually cause

tension and conflict in intergroup relations (racialism and religious supremacy). As Muslims, they also cited that it will cause a bad impression of Islam.

The next chapter will conclude the study after filling a possible knowledge gap by demonstrating that Malay religious identity is indeed significant in the exclusion of non-Muslims from public roles, proposing a possible explanation using social identity theory, and providing a framework for comprehending Malay-Muslim identity within a socioreligious framework.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

7.1   Introduction

The motivation for this study is that the non-Malays and non-Muslim members of Malaysian society are left out of public spheres. This study has attempted to discover the consequences of religious identity, approached from a socio-religious perspective. Identity is crucial in how one comes to know oneself and others and, thus, how one interacts with others. It was noted that social identities exhibit a pattern of in-group favouritism, which becomes more pronounced the more personally significant or situationally salient the identity is (Van Camp, 2010, p. 141; Crisp, 2006). Considering the Muslim identity as a religious identity and as one of the social identities, this study examined how the Muslim identity excludes non-Muslims from public roles in Malaysia.

This chapter will summarise the chapters and conclude with the findings across the chapters. It will also lay out the study's key findings and contribution to the body of knowledge. The chapter will then be completed with the study's implications and future research direction.

7.2   Findings and Summaries Across Chapters

This section summarises the chapters of this study. At the same time, it summarises the findings of each chapter.

In Chapter 1, the general situation in Malaysia is discussed in relation to the background of Islamisation. Malaysia is a Muslim-majority country where Muslims comprise about 65 per cent of the total population. Muslims also comprise more than 90 per cent of the state employees (Wade, 2009, p. 23). A space for public participation and government employment of non-Malays and non-Muslims in

Malaysia has been eroded tremendously since 1980. Along with it, Malaysia's recent political development has intensified the discrimination and marginalisation of non-Muslims in the country. The practice that non-Muslims should not hold critical public roles is no longer kept among Malay-Muslims but has become a public resolution, for example, at the Malay Dignity Congress, held on 6 October 2019. This study answered, "How does the Malay-Muslim identity in Malaysia exclude non-Muslims from participating in public roles?" by using a self-identification and social identity framework. The crucial element to the question is the salient identity which this study found via a questionnaire and interviews.

More often than not, people rate their religious identity as more salient or essential to their self-concepts than other (social) identities such as class, gender, and race (Freeman 2003). Another way that religious identity differs is that it is a social grouping based on an infallible set of internal, guiding beliefs (Ysseldyk, Matheson, and Anisman, 2010). It is a unifying meaning system (Silberman, 2005) that also serves to bond individuals into moral communities (Graham and Haidt, 2010). In Malaysia, Muslim religious identity encompasses almost every aspect of Malay's life. This invited the social dimension of religious identity, providing them with a sense of belonging and social support. Identifying with pluralistic and democratic communities, guided by moral precepts, may reduce prejudice of out-groups. Even though religiosity's moral component seems to be uniquely able to prevent prejudice in some situations, there are undoubtedly other aspects of religious identification that are specifically able to increase prejudice between groups. Although it is theoretically possible to argue that religion and religious affiliation are or are not associated with common intergroup processes such as bias, there has not been much research done in this field. Some research on the relationship between religion and racial prejudice has already been identified. As claimed by Van Camp (2010, p. 32), no systematic study directly examines evaluations of religious out-group members. In Malaysia's context, there is no systematic study on the implications of Malay-Muslim identity for non-Muslims, particularly on non-Muslim public roles.

Chapter 1 also examined the inter-group, inter-ethnic, and inter-religious relations that exist in Malaysia between Malay-Muslims and non-Muslims from several perspectives, including social psychology, socio-historical analysis, federal constitutional law, ethnoreligious theory, and religious theory. When hyphenated

identity is taken into account, none of the previous can be strictly regarded as an in-depth analysis of the relationship between Malay identity and its effects on non-Malays, particularly religious dimensions. Research on religious identity and its consequences for other communities seems to have been eclipsed by studies on Malay ethnic identity. In terms of religious identity, intergroup relations between Malay-Muslims and non-Malay Muslims have not been fully examined.

In Malaysia, religious identity is an important identity for Malay-Muslims, and it has a significant impact on their behaviour toward others. The Malay identity has gradually shifted away from ethnic to religious over the past years. The Malays' most prominent identity is now their religious one. Religious identity does not appear to be the only determining factor in Malays' actions; ethnicity and nationalism may also have an impact. This study seeks to fill the knowledge gaps of how non-Muslim discrimination in public appointments is caused by religious identity, how the sacred text is involved, and how it is socially motivated.

Furthermore, the effects of social identity and group categorisation on the "prejudice-religion relationships" were overlooked (Batson and Stocks, 2005, p. 423). *Ummah* is arguably more conducive to religious bonding (group category) connected by religious identity (social identity), which subsequently acts prejudicially toward people outside their own. The previous studies were limited in answering why different individuals in the same country have different levels of religiosity but show the similarity of intolerance towards out-groups. The social identity and self-categorisation theories can help better understand and answer why in-group bias is uniform via social (religious) identity (see Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999). To know the impacts/consequences of religious identities, one needs to determine the causes that lead to the salient difference in group identities and the conditions that lead people to behave in group-relevant terms (Gibson, 2006, p. 697). The required information is missing in the literature in Malaysia.

Chapter 2 explained the theoretical framework and research methodology. Many theories can be used to understand intergroup (i.e. inter-ethnic or inter-religious) relations, the study utilised a social identity theory (social psychological framework) for this purpose.   Meanwhile, social identity framing within the social movement framework was adopted to explain the framing of Malay religious identity in Malaysia. This study adopted a mixed-methods approach (qualitative and quantitative) of the descriptive method. 66 students and 24 adults have taken part.

The intention of this study is not to test any hypotheses. The study sought to gain a deeper understanding of the exclusion of non-Muslims from public roles (phenomenon) with a focus on understanding socially situated meaning, behaviour, and practices from the experiences of Muslims. The study was also about Malay-Muslim practices due to their social or religious identity, considering their context/environment (Bengtsson, 2016, p. 9) and social psychological states (Krippendorff, 2004, pp. 11, 46). In addition, the study intended to explore the relationships between their beliefs and identity; a phenomenological study is interested in participants with similar characteristics who could offer descriptions of their lived (faith) experiences and consequently develop meanings out of these experiences (Flynn and Korcuska, 2018, p. 35; Kirsberg, 2019, p. 143; Pham, 2021, p. 265; Starks and Trinidad, 2007, p. 1372). In other words, phenomenological interpreters attempt to capture and describe the meaning and common traits, or essences, of an experience or event. As an abstract thing, the truth of the event is subjective and only known through embodied awareness – meanings emerge from the experience of movement through place and across time (Starks and Trinidad, 2007, p. 1374). Discernibly, this study is a phenomenology study as explained.

In Chapter 3, the study showed that Muslim and non-Muslim relations were not hostile in the early Islamic society (period). Non-Muslims were appointed as prominent state officials, in preference to Muslims. The study also showed that the forbiddance and dismissal of non-Muslim state officials became apparent during the medieval period when non-Muslims still occupied many important state positions. The study further showed that the forbiddance and dismissal of non-Muslim state functionaries were due to religious criteria (even though not solely) and also due to the competition for limited sacred resources. In addition, it was also potentially due to in-group favouritism and out-group bias when the concept of *ummah* was studied from the perspective of social and collective identities, where social identity theory could provide a reasonable explanation for these phenomena. In this aspect, Muslim identity as social identity became a factor among many factors to exclude non-Muslims from the state bureaucracy.

Furthermore, the study showed that the formation of Islamic law in terms of the role and status of *dhimmīs* takes place gradually and informally in tandem with the context in which the law is formulated. The Quran does not provide specific and detailed guidelines for *dhimmīs*' treatment or political rights. The *hadith* frequently

addressed specific situations rather than provided overarching rules and regulations for the treatment of *dhimmīs*. Nonetheless, the idea that *dhimmīs* are less than Muslims was influenced by Islamic doctrine, which asserted that it was superior to and could rectify the mistakes of Judaism and Christianity. Within the framework of the victorious Islamic empire, this theological position acquired political and social significance as well as a political and social form. Concurrently, Islamic law evolved a general framework of beliefs and regulations regarding the status and treatment of *dhimmīs*, which are subject to different interpretations as well as the discretion and policies of various rulers. Thus, the Islamic legal position on *dhimmīs* results from a complex interaction between Islamic ideas/principles and political/social circumstances (Scott, 2010, p. 32).

In Chapter 4, it was shown that the origin of the Malays in Malaysia was highly uncertain and contested. However, the origin and indigeneity of the Malays were employed to validate their domination in politics and public services. For the Malays, it was used to strengthen their identity, legitimising political domination (Malay supremacy) and control of resources and public service and administration. The origin (indigeneity) of the Malays also became an instrument to subordinate the interests of the other ethnic groups, that is, the non-Malays, and promote religious autocracy. Consequently, inter-ethnic and inter-religious relationships are greatly jeopardised.

This chapter also demonstrated how political framing and construction, the Constitution, and ascription all contributed to the formation of the religious identity of the Malays. It is indisputable that Muslims adhere to religious teachings to the best of their ability on a personal basis. Nevertheless, at the social level, Muslims identify with special positions and thus act unfairly toward non-Muslims, coupled with the threat created because of competition and demonising others due to political interests. Furthermore, Malay identity is primarily religious but also shaped by social position and religious principles for political ends. However, changing one's ethnicity or religious identity is a choice, and neither is it permanent. In terms of Malay or Muslim identity, social identity theory suggests a possible explanation that categorising and identifying as Malay or Muslim is a natural result of in-group bias and out-group favouritism. The chapter also demonstrated how the positive sentiment of *ummah* recorded in the Quran contributed to out-group bias.

The study also found that the Quran contains no explicit teachings or rhetoric of prejudice against non-Muslims. Nonetheless, the Quranic verse (3:110), which declares that the *ummah* is the best community, fosters in-group superiority and inevitably leads to prejudice against religious out-groups. Because of the Muslim religious identity, teaching sacred texts indirectly or unintentionally encourages in-group favouritism and bias against out-groups. Therefore, Muslim religious identity and sense of superiority inexorably generate in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination, which inescapably exclude the employment of non-Muslim public functionaries.

In Chapter 5, it was revealed that the identity of the Malays is indefinite. In Malaysia, Article 160 of the Constitution states that a Malay is a person who embraces Islam, speaks the Malay language, and practises Malay customs. It is not referring to a particular genealogical ethnic group. Despite that, the substance of Malay identity has undergone various transformations and changes over time in response to its social change and environment. In the pre-colonial period, Malay identity was based on kinship and personal loyalty connections. The colonial phase by the British began the process of ethnicisation because the British implemented the policy of category and rule. The ethnic identity of the Malays during this period starts to emerge with the concept of territory. The Japanese occupation led to the awareness of Malay nationalism. At this point, ethnic expressions are relatively strong, but religious idioms have not been mobilised to defend these interests. However, in the years following independence, Malay identities became entrenched in exclusive terms in response to the deep insecurities they experienced in the face of Chinese economic and potential political superiority. The New Economic Policy (NEP) and the provision of the special position of Malays grounded in the Constitution manufactured the Malay supremacy identity. Although that sense of insecurity appeared to be receding in the 1990s, Islam revivalism and Malay-centric ideology advocated by the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) and Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS) led to the Muslim supremacy identity. At best, it can be described as an intertwining of race (Malays) with faith identity (Islam), which confers advantages and attracts privilege.

In terms of state officials' employment in Malaysia, most public officials are occupied by Malays. Malays also dominate the political arena. They have become the dominant group whereas non-Malays have a minor role to play. Non-Malays are

unlikely to play any imperative public roles in their own country. In addition, power-sharing has shifted from Alliance to Malay hegemony after the May Riot in 1969. Only Malays can hold the highest positions in the cabinet. The accommodation and acceptance of non-Malays (non-Muslims) dwindled because Islamic values gradually faded, especially when the resolutions of the Malay Dignity Congress were aired. The status of non-Malays usually depended on the political movement and situation, even though the Federal Constitution of Malaysia guarantees the equality of all citizens before the law. Nevertheless, certain politicians have manipulated Article 153 of the Federal Constitution for their self-interest, undermining each citizen's equality. The chapter also showed that Malaysia is an identitarian regime where citizen rights are allocated differentially according to their ethno-religious identity. The valid source of claims on the state is not accessible, equal, and autonomous for non-Malay citizens. In other words, non-Malays are unequal compared to Malays even though the Constitution states all citizens of the state are equal – equal in concern, respect, and opportunity. Non-Malays become the "other" and "not one of us" in Malaysia.

In Chapter 6, informants identified mainly with Malay-Muslim identity. The conflation of the identity of race and religion became the dominant or salient identity among informants. It was noted that those who identified with religious identity (i.e., Muslim only) showed the strongest sense of "us" – "them". In other words, they showed the strongest exclusion of non-Muslims in public roles. The study clearly showed that there were distinctions between "us" – "not us" and "us" – "them" among Muslims and non-Muslims. These distinctions were due to Malay-Muslim identity as they strongly identified themselves with *ummah* in one aspect. In other aspects, the attachment of land ownership, ethnic ethnocracy, and special position (rights) also set boundaries between Muslims and non-Muslims within one community. Conversely, some Muslims advocated Islamic values for living in a plural society. They valued non-Muslims' skills, expertise, and contribution. They set no boundaries between Muslims and non-Muslims and so bring "us" – "them" nearer.

The study also showed that Malay religious identity displayed undesirable responses towards non-Muslims, especially when perceiving that non-Muslims should not participate in the government sector and typically hold prominent positions. The study suggested that Islam is always the critical marker for Malay-Muslim identity. However, it is not static. In other words, the identity of Malay-

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Muslim is fluid. It may oscillate between ethnic and religious, depending on situations and contexts. It is true to note here that religious discrimination is always greater than ethnic discrimination. The comparison, competition, and threats posed by non-Muslims made the ethno-religious identity more substantial than national, ethnic, or religious identity.

The study demonstrated that Islam (Quran) seemed to provide little evidence as being one of the factors to exclude non-Muslims from holding public offices. Nevertheless, the Quranic verses from informants explicitly set boundaries between believers and non-believers, positively or negatively. The discrimination against non-Muslims in playing public roles can be explained in social-psychological dimensions. When society is differentiated into "us" and "not us" and "us" and "them" (i.e., "us" is Muslims and "not us" or "them" is non-Muslims), discrimination against out-groups becomes unavoidable.

Muslim identity towards this stage could be understood as per doctrinal teachings, that is, differentiating society into in-groups (believers – *ummah*) and various out-groups (non-believers). It should also be comprehended as a social formation and identification of identity attracted by special positions, privileges, and rights (land and civil servants) that unintentionally created an "imagined community". The imagined and unseen community (Muslim community) is distinct from other imagined communities (non-Muslim communities). Both *ummah* (religious identity) and imagined community (social identity) inevitably formed in-group – out-group prejudice (discrimination), not necessarily hate, but of self-protection and against threat (Brewer, 2007, p. 697).

Muslim informants were also aware that non-Muslims should not be excluded from public positions. They are afraid that if non-Muslims are not active in public life, the country will become confused, damaged, and underdeveloped due to an uneven government administrative structure. They interpreted that as rejecting justice, which results in bigotry, injustice, and persecution of non-Muslims. They were concerned that the exclusion of non-Muslims from civic responsibilities would lead to friction and conflict in intergroup interactions (racialism and religious superiority). As Muslims, they also stated that it would negatively impact Islam.

Apart from the summaries above, the following summarises the four events or interactions that gave rise to the development of social and psychological aspects of Malay-Muslim identity in Malaysia. In other words, as far as the study is concerned, the following is how Malay Muslims defined themselves social-psychologically (understanding of their social/religious identity in psychology) due to events or interactions that reinforced their identity, set boundaries between themselves and others, and make comparisons between them and others, including threats perceived.   It is noted that a group's social (religious) identity is obtained or developed by self-identification, social differentiation, and comparison (Reicher, Spears and Haslam, 2010, pp. 45-62. See also Cinnirella, 1998; Crocetti, Albarello, Meeus, and Rubini, 2023).

First, the majority of Malay-Muslims in Malaysia identify themselves as Muslims. This study agreed with Satoru Mikami's (2015) and Patricia Martinez's (2006) findings that Islam is the salient social identity category of Malay-Muslims. The study also confirmed the view of Mauzy (2006) and Lee (2010) that religion is more substantial than ethnicity as an identity marker. Al Ramiah, Hewstone and Wolfer (2017, pp. 45-46) further found out that Muslims in Malaysia have the most potent identification with religion compared to Buddhists and Hindus. The study also found that Muslims are strongly and very strongly identified with and attached to one another (*ummah*).

However, on the social level (as a people), the Malay-Muslim identity was shaped with a religious mould but politically driven. The central purpose was utilising a religious identity for a political cause (Fatima, 2011, p. 342; Kausar, 2011). It should be noted that unlike elsewhere in the Muslim world, those in Malaysia are not merely addressing Muslim listeners, but specifically Malay-Muslim listeners (emphasis was made to differentiate between Malay-Muslim and Chinese-Muslim or Indian-Muslim). This precipitated a widespread, government-sanctioned Islamisation push that cut across governments and parties. The drive has prioritised Malay-Muslim rights over other religious and ethnic groups while also radicalising larger Islamist discourse (Wain, 2021, p. 41). It has also promoted Malay-Muslim (religious) identity above other identities. As a result, local studies showed that Malay Muslims prioritise their religious identity over other identities (Abdul Hamid, 2018, p. 63).

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Second, Malay-Muslim identity was mainly framed and constructed to make a distinction between Muslim and non-Muslim or in-group ("us") and out-groups ("others"), especially by UMNO and PAS, the two "identity entrepreneurs". As early as 1980, Nagata notices Islam's power in shaping the Malays' identity and its consequences. She wrote, "Not only has religion [Islam] become a source of identity for various elements in Malaysian society, distinguishing Malays and non-Malays, but it also lies at the centre of a crisis of legitimacy now emerging among the various elites of Malay society" (1980, p. 405). Henceforth, Islam is central to Malay politics, government, ethnicity, and dominance (Nagata, 1997, p. 130).

Equally, overemphasising Islam in public appearances further accentuated the distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims. Thus, the repetition and visibility of Islam throughout the country induced the interpretation that Islam and Muslims are superior to others. Muslims claim that Islam is superior to others and should not be taken as an interpretation only because Islam is the state religion and should occupy a special position (Ling, 2006, pp. 115-116). Anyhow, it was the result of decades of being brainwashed that most Malays and Malay polities were subjected to this ideology – the supremacy of Islam.

In addition, the NEP gave special treatment to Malays, resulting in a clear distinction between Malays and non-Malays in all government policies, thus serving as a tool of "state-imposed racial categorisation" (Stark, 2006, p. 387; Wan Mohd Ghazali, 2016, p. 281) that magnified the social and psychological aspects of the Malay religious identity by differentiation between Malays and non-Malays. This categorisation and differentiation were institutionalised by the independence constitution, which created two forms of citizenship: *bangsa Melayu* (Malay race) with special rights and *kaum pendatang* (immigrant community, or literally means 'outsider'). The NEP exaggerated and intensified the distinction and division between Malays and non-Malays for more than 20 years because similar policies were extended for another 20 years after 1990 by the National Development Policy and National Vision Policy. The continuous Malay-centric policies only contribute to the deepening of the difference between "us" (Malays) and "others" (non-Malays) that can hardly be reconciled (Wan Mohd Ghazali, 2016, p. 309).

Moreover, Malays who emphasised ownership of Malaysia caused the differentiation or set boundaries between Malay-Muslims and non-Muslims – "us" and "not us" or "us" and "them". Malays perceive that the land is their heritage and

that their identity ("owner" of the land) is strongly linked to it. As the land "owner", there is a difference between Malay and not Malay or "us" and "not-us". It was employed to strengthen their identity, justifying their hegemony in politics, resource control, and public administration and service. Additionally, Malay indigeneity was used as a tool to advance religious autocracy and subjugate non-Malay interests (Wade, 2009, pp. 24-25).

Last, the study showed that there was always comparison and competition between Muslims and non-Muslims (non-Malays), particularly in government employment. Individuals always differentiate their group from others throughout the comparison process and psychologically place their group in the more positively assessed status (Deaux, 1996, p. 790). Religious groups are more inclined to make intergroup comparisons and place their group in a higher or better position due to religious belief and content (Ysseldyk, Matheson and Anisman, 2010, p. 60; Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999, p. 511). This psychologically esteem-enhancing role could be served by stereotyping in-group members as superior and out-group members as inferior, such as infidels, immoral, and/or adversaries (Jackson and Hunsberger. 1999, pp. 511, 521). These valuations (theories) are valid and applicable to this study. Some Muslims in Malaysia see themselves as superior to non-Muslims, especially when calling non-Muslims infidels (*kāfir*).

In Malaysia, non-Muslims are always portrayed as a threat to Muslims and Islam, even though non-Muslims are not. Political leaders also admitted that another tactic they employed was demonising non-Muslims. Political leaders purposely framed opposition as such to remain in power. This discourse was successful in social movements because it psychologically damaged the opposition's reputation with the Malays to a certain extent. In other words, "by ordering the other structurally and psychologically, a discourse of exclusion is constructed" (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 754). Kilp (2011, p. 204) clearly stated that "the narrative about a devil is as necessary for any social organisation as is the perception of the boundaries of exclusion."

7.3   Key Findings

There are four key findings of this study which answered the research questions:

First, prominent state positions were filled by non-Muslims rather than Muslims during the early Islamic empire and in the medieval era. The banning and dismissal of non-Muslim state officials was because of competition for limited sacred resources as well as religious criteria. Furthermore, from the standpoint of social and collective identities, social identity theory provided a possible explanation for these phenomena. The possible explanation was the result of in-group favouritism and out-group bias when the concept of *ummah* is examined. As a social or collective identity, *ummah* is expected to favour the in-group and show prejudice against the out-group. In this respect, the reasons for excluding non-Muslims from state bureaucracy are multiple: competition for limited sacred resources, religious factors, and Muslim identity.

Second, the study discovered that the salient identity of Malay is Malay-Muslim, but religion is more substantial than ethnicity as an identity marker. However, the identity of Malay-Muslims is fluid. It may oscillate between the identity of ethnicity and the identity of religion, depending on situations and contexts. Whether it is Malay or Muslim, it created a differentiation (set boundaries) between Malay/Muslim and non-Malay/non-Muslim. At the social level, Malays or Muslims identify with special positions and advantage of politics, coupled with the threat created and demonised others, thus acting unfairly to "others". Additionally, as far as categorisation or identification of Malay or Muslim identity is concerned, according to social identity theory, it is an inevitable phenomenon of in-group favouritism and out-group bias.

Third, Muslim identity displayed substantial undesirable responses towards non-Muslims, especially when perceiving that non-Muslims should not participate in the government sector nor typically hold prominent positions. The comparison, competition, and threats posed by non-Muslims made the ethno-religious identity more substantial than national and religious identity. The undesirable responses (exclusion of non-Muslims from state employment) are due to strong self-identification as *ummah* and land owner, which created differentiation between Muslims and non-Muslims ("us" – "not us" or "us" – "them") and comparison between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Last, the Quran, in general, does not directly advocate the exclusion of non-Muslims from positions of public authority. Nonetheless, Quranic verses provided by the informants seemed to advocate a separation between believers and non-

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believers or established boundaries between "us" and "them" advocated as positive for themselves and negative for others. The Quranic verses that state Muslims should not befriend or assist non-believers exaggerate the negative perceptions of non-Muslims to an extreme. In other words, this is an example of an extreme "us" versus "them" mentality, where prejudice and discrimination against non-Muslims are unavoidable.

In sum, the Malay religious identity (socially or collectively) is one of the significant influences to exclude non-Muslims from playing and holding public roles in Malaysia. Although it may not be the primary source of exclusion, as far as this study is concerned, it seems that the social identity's psychological reaction is more than religious teachings, and the dimensions involved are strong self-identification as *ummah*, differentiation between Muslims and non-Muslims ("us" – "not us" or "us" – "them"), and comparison between Muslims and non-Muslims.

7.4   Contribution to the Body of Knowledge

The findings of this study contribute to the body of knowledge in four significant ways:

First, religious studies on (social) identity contribute to the particularisation of knowledge regarding the discrimination against non-Muslims in Malaysia regarding public roles rather than imparting general knowledge. The local situation would be implicated in the study findings. This indicates that the meanings that are expressed have historical, social, and religious contexts. Thus, as demonstrated by the framework illustrated in Diagram 1 (see page 153), this study contributes to the interpretation of Malay-Muslim identity as historically, socially, and religiously unique to the Malaysian context.

Second, this study offers a framework (method) for comprehending Malay-Muslim identity within a socio-religious framework. A theory is defined as an interpretive framework through which realities can be viewed. The socio-religious framework in this thesis, which focuses on Malaysia, has expanded our understanding of religious identity's implications from a religious and social-psychological perspective. Despite being unique to the Malaysian context, the intention is that this framework will function as a foundation for further investigation.

Third, the data gathered from questionnaires and individual interviews and the data analysis contribute to the study's originality. Strong validation came from the documented accounts of Muslim experiences in Islamic environments. A systematic approach to collecting and analysing informant opinions from Malay-Muslims helps to represent accurately the variety and depth of real-life experiences. This study's original findings would help inform decision-makers to consider society's diversity. Previous studies measure identity in terms of Malay, Muslim and Malaysian. However, this study also includes Malay-Muslims, which the study found is the salient identity of the Malay in Malaysia. The Malay-Muslim identity is practically substantial for the study and Malaysian society.

Last but not least, (Malay) religious identity displays an in-group favouritism pattern similar to other social identities (see Van Camp, 2010, p. 141; Crisp, 2006). This pattern intensifies with the significance or salience of the identity in a given situation. In general, the Quran does not apparently advocate for the exclusion of non-Muslims from holding positions of public authority. According to social identity theory, the possible discriminatory act against non-Muslims that led to their exclusion from public roles was caused by Muslims' self-identification as a result of their sense of belonging to the *ummah* and with special positions endorsed by the Federal Constitution. Therefore, this study utilised the social-psychological theoretical framework, thus contributing to a broader body of knowledge concerning Islam (religion).

7.5 Implications of the Research

The findings from this thesis have implications for minimising out-group discrimination and bias. Many interventions to reduce discrimination and bias focus on interreligious contact, dialogue, learning about other religions, and racially or religiously mixed "neighbourhoods" (for example, offices and schools) (Abdul Ghani and Awang, 2017; Al Ramiah, Hewstone and Wolfer, 2017; Brown and Hewstone, 2005; Christ et al., 2014). Nevertheless, the findings suggested that it is intergroup and interreligious discrimination instead of inter-individual (between individual) prejudice. It was also shown that almost all Islamist groups in Malaysia argue that non-Muslims should not be allowed to participate in any discussion of Islamic issues

because they do not practise the faith. In Malaysia, no mainstream Islamic organisation supports any formal dialogue with non-Muslim groups. They also argue that interfaith dialogue promotes religious pluralism, which they see as anti-Islamic (Chin and Tanasaldy, 2019, p. 975). The situation is worsened when Malaysia is categorised into two major groupings – Muslims and non-Muslims, and social comparison is noticed, which leads to negative views and prejudice toward out-groups.

Fortunately, the findings suggested that Malaysian identity demonstrated prejudice and bias in the slightest. Therefore, Malaysian identity is what policymakers or communities should emphasise and promote. The holding of the open house may signal a shift in focus from religious (social) identity to "Malaysian tradition" and, at least at this time and in this context, to the higher identity category of "Malaysian", which may indicate a permeability of boundaries between religious groups that is endemic in the context of religious celebrations (see also Bekerman, 2003). Increasing the salience of a superordinate identity category can lead to groups becoming more inclusive by drawing attention to their similarities with that identity, as Hornsey and Hogg (2000) suggested. However, the persistence of this effect depends on certain intergroup contexts (Dovidio et al., 2007; Azzi and Klein, 2019, p. 50), not to emphasise only one identity but to encourage the development of multiple identities. It will reduce bias and foster intergroup relations – less intergroup bias, less anxiety towards out-groups and less in-group partiality (Hall and Crisp, 2005; Schmid et al., 2009; Sharp, Shariff and LaBouff, 2020). Also, multiple identities will reduce in-group favouritism and out-group bias and increase tolerance (Brewer and Pierce, 2005; Crisp, Hewstone and Rubin, 2001; Prinyapol, Chaiwutikornwanich and Huansuriya, 2023; Roccas and Brewer, 2002, p. 102; Roccas, Klar and Liviatan, 2006; Sabanathan et al., 2016).

Many forms of prejudice and bias may arise not because out-groups are disgusting but because positive emotions such as appreciation, empathy, and trust are reserved for the in-group and denied to out-groups (Brewer 1999: 438). This is particularly true for Malaysia. Abdul Hamid's (2018: 64) view should be appreciated:

> Religious identities in Malaysia are highly valued and cultivated but in a way that hardly appreciates the religious 'other'. Failure in nation-building is given a hint by the finding that Malays and non-Malays do not share the conception, let alone aspiration, of what it means to be Malaysian.

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Therefore, the decision-makers, especially the religious leaders, ought to promote the virtue of appreciation among groups in Malaysia but make no superior claims for themselves, as the implications of this study advocate. They also ought to value the contributions and inputs of non-Muslims in their society in various ways, as a few respondents urged. Last, Muslim leaders should appreciate the diversity or plurality of Malaysian society lest they forget Malaysians are all equal, as provided by the Federation Constitution Article 8(2).

7.6   Future Research

This study is the first of its kind. It considered only the religious identity as the critical factor. Therefore, the study has not taken into consideration the informants' context, i.e., living environment (place of origin). The living environment (context) is significant in forming intergroup relations with others. The study has also not taken informants' sex, age, and occupation into account. There are also influential factors determining intergroup relationships with others. Social status does not seem to show deviance from social identity theory in that people value in-group more positively than out-group (Brauer, 2001, pp. 27, 30). However, the perceiver's social status (doctor/lawyer/professor) may influence the intergroup perception – out-group biases (see Brauer, 2001). The level of education and place of education, such as abroad, and in which country or local institution may also impact the perceivers. Future research should take into account place of origin, sex, age and occupation as variables.

Malay-Muslim in Malaysia is mono identity, one ethnic, one religion, dominant in public offices. This mono identity is mutually exclusive, and in-group bias and out-group discrimination are predictable. Future research must seriously focus on Malay-Muslim multiple social identities or cross-cutting social identities (see Brewer, 1999, p. 440). An individual may belong to one in-group through their ethnic heritage, another through religion, a third through occupation, a fourth through region of residence, and so on in a complex social structure that is marked by cross-cutting category distinctions. Some people will belong to the same in-group on one category distinction but be considered out-groupers on another because there are so

many different social identities. The degree to which an individual depends on any specific in-group to satisfy their psychological needs for inclusion is lessened by such cross-cutting ingroup-outgroup distinctions, which may increase tolerance for out-groups in general and lessen the possibility of polarising loyalties along a single cleavage or group distinction (Brewer, 1999, p. 439).

This research has found out the salient identity of Malay-Muslim, but it was aware that the identity is constantly wavering between ethnicity and religion. In other words, their identities are elusive, continually corresponding to situations and ideologies (Yahaya, 2012, pp. 256-257). In addition, ethnic or religious preference is influenced by societal change. Therefore, a more accurate understanding of prevalent ethnic or religious identity and group boundary formation, as well as the factors of ethnic or religious alignment, is thus required (see Noor, 1999, p. 78). Discourse study of media in Malaysia is an urgent need. "Media messages help construct and express intergroup perceptions, define boundaries between in-groups and out-groups, and shape a sense of belonging to social groups" (Neumann, 2021, abstract).

It is worth noting that in Malaysia, a study of Malay ethnic and religious identity is a sensitive issue if it is done explicitly by non-Muslims (out-groups). Research on any subject related to Malay-Muslim identity and religion is best studied by Malay-Muslims. More responses and detailed information may be gathered if compared with those of a non-Malay or a non-Muslim researcher.

7.7   Conclusion

This study has made some important initial progress toward comprehending the characteristics and purposes of Malay religious identity through the use of a social identity and self-identification framework (a social psychological approach). When considered collectively, the findings imply that Malay religious identity has three dimensions. First, firm societal boundaries or differentiation set between Muslims and non-Muslims are constructed historically, politically, and constitutionally for the privileges of Muslims, which caused in-group favouritism. It is a manifestation of identitarianism or ethnocracy and religious autocracy. Second, Muslim identity showed the highest level of exclusion of non-Muslims in involvement in public roles.

Third, there is no direct Quranic teaching on the forbiddance of non-Muslim state employment. The exclusion of non-Muslims from state employment is due to out-group bias, in-group favouritism (superiority), and competition for sacred resources. Therefore, religious identity as one of the social identities exhibiting a pattern of in-group favouritism becomes more pronounced the more personally significant or situationally salient the identity is.

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Appendix A

Notes on Ethnic and Religious Groups in Malaysia

The Malaysian population consists of people of different ethnicities and religions. Malaysia consists of three main ethnicities: the Malays (the largest group), Chinese and Indians. The term *Orang Asli* (*bumiputera* or "the son of the soil") refers to a group of about 18 ethnic groups that are generally accepted to be the original inhabitants or first peoples of peninsular Malaysia, having existed before the arrival of Malays (Minority Rights Group, 2018). They are generally divided into three major groups, namely the Negrito, Senoi and Proto-Malay. Sabah's population consists of 32 ethnic groups (*bumiputera*), and the main ethnic is Kadazan-Dusun, while Sarawak population consists of 27 ethnic groups (*bumiputera*), and Iban is the largest ethnic group (Department of Information, Malaysia, 2016).

Malay is one of the ethnic groups in the plural society of Malaysia. However, Article 160 of the Federal Constitution of Malaysia defines a Malay as a Muslim ("a Malay is a person who professes the religion of Islam"). One peculiar aspect of the Malay community and its complex relationship with Islam is "*masuk* Islam", which literally means "to enter Islam" or "to become Muslim". The popular meaning of the phrase is synonymous with "*masuk Melayu*" or "to become Malay" (Siddique, 1981, p. 78. See also Awang, 2000, p. 130; Martinez, 2001, pp. 487-488). Thus, in Malaysia, it is nearly impossible to come across a term called Chinese-Muslim or Indian-Muslim. In other words, Chinese and Indians or other ethnic converts have been fully accepted and assimilated into the Malay community (Siddique, 1981, p. 78). Those *bumiputera* who are not of Malay ethnicity do not enjoy special positions and privileges as much as enjoyed by Malay-Muslims as stated in the Federal Constitution (Article 153).

As far as this study is concerned, the Malays are always referred to as the Malay ethnicity, and their religion is always Islam. The Malay-Muslims denoted in the questionnaire and interview are of this nature. The Malay is *bumiputera*. Only

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Chinese and Indians are not *bumiputera*. However, Chinese, Indian and *Orang Asli* (*bumiputera*) are non-Malays, and most of them are non-Muslims. Chinese, Indian and *Orang Asli* (*bumiputera*) who are non-Muslims are referred to as non-Muslims in this study.

In Malaysia, 'the Malays' can be known as (1) ethnically, they are called Malays; (2) constitutionally, the hyphenated Malay-Muslims are the term or word used to refer to them; (3) religiously, Malays and Muslims are synonyms (as explained above); and (4) citizenry, the Malays are Malaysians. The Malays can use either of these depending on the circumstances.

Appendix B

The US House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission (2011: 1) commented on inter-ethnic relations in Malaysia with strong negative remarks:

> In this paper we postulate that Malaysia has all the hallmarks of a racist and religious extreme state on the following foundation;

a) The Federal Constitution basically establishes 2 classes of citizens, vide Article 153, the root of the racist system.

b) The State sanctions racist and religious extreme laws and policies.

c) The State controls the Government Administration through one racial and religious group.

d) The State channels most funds for economic/education/social development programs and licenses, permits etc., to one race.

e) The State controls Religious Freedom to the disadvantage of non-Muslims, imposes Muslim religious laws on non-Muslims and extends the jurisdiction of the Shariah Courts onto non-Muslims.

f) The State sponsors violence and threats of violence both directly and indirectly (outsourced) on the citizens to create fear among the non-Malay non-Muslims.

g) The State sanctions draconian, punitive laws and gives blank cheques to the Police to make arbitrary arrests of dissenters.

h) The State explicitly and implicitly declares that the Malays are the masters (Malay Supremacy) and the sons of soil.

Appendix C

Questionnaire

Please fill in all the personal information.

Personal Information (Student)

Name:	(Optional, but please write a name that you feel comfortable with)
University:	National University of Malaysia
Faculty:	(Please type your Faculty)
Course:	(Please type your Course)
Year of Study:	First, Second, Third, Fourth (Year)
State of Origin:	Sarawak, Sabah, Johor, Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Selangor, Perak,
	Perlis, Terengganu, Kelantan, Pahang, Pulau Pinang, Labuan, Wilayah Persekutuan, Putrajaya.
Sex:	Female or Male
Age:	(Please type your age)

OR

Personal Information (Adult)

Name:	(Optional, but please write a name that you feel comfortable with)
Sex:	Female or Male
Age:	21-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61 & Above
State of Origin:	Sarawak, Sabah, Johor, Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Selangor, Perak,
	Perlis, Terengganu, Kelantan, Pahang, Pulau Pinang, Labuan, Wilayah Persekutuan, Putrajaya.
Occupation:	(Please type your occupation)
Sector:	(Public or Private)

Please answer all the 25 questions:

1. Do Malaysians live peacefully and harmoniously together with all other races?

   Yes.
   No.
   Other: _____
   (Please explain in your own words)

2. Are you satisfied living in a multicultural and multi-religious nation?

   Yes.
   No.
   Other: _____
   (Please explain in your own words)

3. Do you have friends who are Chinese, Indians, Ibans, Kadazans, etc.?

   Yes.
   No.
   Other: _____
   (Please explain in your own words)

4. Do all Malaysians contribute towards the stability and prosperity of Malaysia?

   Yes.
   No.
   Other: _____
   (Please explain in your own words)

5. Can Muslims and non-Muslims work hand in hand for a better future of Malaysia?

   Yes.
   No.
   Other: _____
   (Please explain in your own words)

6. Which of the following best describes your identity? (you value the most)

   a. Malaysian.
   b. Malay.
   c. Muslim.
   d. Malay-Muslim.

7. The Federal Constitution of Malaysia, Article 160, clearly states that a Malay must also be a Muslim; that is to say, the identity is a Malay-Muslim. Do you think a Malay-Muslim identity can be separated in Malaysia as a Malay or Muslim identity alone?

   Yes, then which identity will take precedence?
   Malay.
   Muslim.

   No.
   Other: _____
   (Please explain in your own words)

8. Malay is well defined by the Federation Constitution of Malaysia (*professes the religion of Islam, habitually speaks the Malay language, conforms to Malay custom*). However, Muslim is not defined (it is not for the case of a Muslim). So, how does your identity as a Muslim come about?

   _____
   (Please write according to your understanding)

9. Does our community (e.g., government, political parties, Islamic institutions, etc.) promote the Muslim identity than other identities?

   Yes.
   No.
   Other: _____
   (Please explain in your own words)

10. How would you define your relationship with other Muslims?

    Very strong
    Strong
    Moderate
    Weak
    Very weak

11. As its original intention, Islam as a religion of the Federation refers only to rituals and ceremonies of government official functions. Do you think it is necessary to keep its original purpose?

Yes.
No.
Other: _____
(Please explain in your own words)

12. Does Islam teach to exclude non-Muslims in the administrative/governing roles of a country?

Yes, please give references/examples for support (if possible).
No.

13. Does the Quran teach to exclude non-Muslims in the administrative/governing roles of a country?

Yes, please give verses in the Quran for support (if possible).
No

14. "Justice is the most important feature rather than who is administrating Islamic government." Is this quotation valid?

Yes.
No.
Other: _____
(Please explain in your own words)

15. If you so believed the quotation in Question 14, would you put it into practice?

Yes.
No.
Other: _____
(Please explain in your own words)

16. Is Malaysia a land owned by Malaysians?

Yes.
No.
Other: _____
(Please explain in your own words)

17. If you think Malaysia is a land owned by Malaysians, should non-Muslims hold any position in government without any reservation?

Yes.
No.
Other: _____
(Please explain in your own words)

18. Should government posts be given to qualified candidates according to the percentage distribution of the population?

Yes.
No.
Other: _____
(Please explain in your own words)

19. Would you support and encourage a multiracial and multi-religious government, such as non-Muslims, to be Senior Ministers (Finance Minister, Home Affairs Minister, Defence Minister, Attorney General, etc.)?

Yes.
No.
Other: _____
(Please explain in your own words)

20. Early Islamic history shows that non-Muslims played significant public roles, such as *Viziers* (Prime Ministers) and Treasurers. Can Malaysia imitate such a practice?

Yes.
No.
Other: _____
(Please explain in your own words)

21. Do you think non-Muslims holding important public offices is a threat (or a challenge or an issue) to Muslims?

Yes.
No.
Other: _____
(Please explain in your own words)

22. In Malaysia, Muslims and non-Muslims live different lifestyles. They are also different in terms of education, occupation, income, etc. As such, will you compare Muslims and non-Muslims regarding education, occupation, income, etc.?

Yes.
No.
Other: _____
(Please explain in your own words)

23. Do you think it is better to promote national identity (Malaysian) than ethnic identity (Malay) and religious identity (Muslim)?

Yes.
No.
Other: _____
(Please explain in your own words)

[You may choose as many answers as you think are correct for Questions 24-25]

24. Malay Dignity Congress on 6 October 2019 suggested that only Muslims should hold important government positions (e.g., senior ministers in cabinet). What do you think is the reason for such a suggestion?

Political endeavour.
The bureaucracy of government.
The teaching of Islam.
Ethnicity/Nationalism.
Personal interests.

Others:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
(Please write in your own words)

25. Is there a policy that you are aware of that non-Muslims should not co-admin/co-govern a country with Muslims?

Yes, where did you learn it from?
Ideas of teachers/lecturers (schools/universities)
Ideas of columnists (newspapers).
Speeches of politicians.
The teaching of Imams/Ulama.
Family members/Relatives.
Friends.
Self-understanding.

Others:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
(Please write in your own words)

No.

Appendix D

Semi-Structured Interview

Personal Information (Adult)
Name: (Optional, but please write a name that you feel comfortable with)
Sex: Female or Male
Age: 21-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61 & Above
State of Origin: Sarawak, Sabah, Johor, Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Selangor, Perak, Perlis, Terengganu, Kelantan, Pahang, Pulau Pinang, Labuan, Wilayah Persekutuan, Putrajaya.
Occupation: (Please type your occupation)
Sector: (Public or Private)

Date:
Venue:
Duration: 45-60 minutes

The Topic of the Interview:

The Identity of Malay-Muslim and the Public Roles of Non-Muslims in Malaysia: A Religious Perspective

Ice Breaking:

Introduce myself and tell a little about my research.
Ask the participant to share a little about himself/herself.

Please share your experiences/stories when working with non-Muslims.
       a. As colleagues; or
       b. As superior; or
       c. As subordinate.

Keywords: working well, happy, friendly, grateful.

Theme 1   Religious Identity

1.   Which identity you like the most: Malaysian, Malays, Muslims or Malay-Muslims? Please elaborate.
2.   Which identity best describes you: Malaysian, Malays, Muslims or Malay-Muslims? Please explain.
3.   What does Muslim identity mean to you?
4.   Your religious identity is a product of both faith and community; how will you think?

Theme 2   Exclusion of non-Muslims in Government Employment

Background:
Malay Dignity Congress on 6 October 2019 demanded that:
i. Prominent positions within the government should only be filled by Malay-Muslims,
ii. Only Malay-Muslims were appointed to the top positions within the government.

1.   What do you think are the reasons for such demands?
2.   Why do you think they made such demands?
3.   How do you feel about such demands?
4.   Can you share your thoughts on such demands from religious perspectives? Any justification from the Quran or Islamic teachings? Please provide evidence.
5.   Why non-Muslims holding important roles in government is an issue in Malaysia but not in Indonesia?

Theme 3   Consequences of Excluding non-Muslims in Government Employment

1.   What would be the consequences if the demands are so happened?
        To non-Muslims,
        To the nation as a whole.
2.   What are your comments if only Muslims manage the country?

Participant's signature

Appendix E

Lists of Malaysian Government Chiefs

Lists of Attorney General, Inspector-General of Police, Governors of the Central Bank and Chief Secretary of the Government of Malaysia

E.1:   List of Attorneys General of Malaysia:

1.   Abdul Kadir Yusuf (1963–1977)
2.   Hamzah Abu Samah (1977–1980)
3.   Abu Talib Othman (1980–1993)
4.   Mohtar Abdullah (1994–2000)
5.   Ainum Mohd Saaid (2001)
6.   Abdul Gani Patail (2002–2015)
7.   Mohamed Apandi Ali (2015–2018)
8.   Engku Nor Faizah Engku Atek (2018) (acting)
9.   Tommy Thomas (2018–2020)
10.   Engku Nor Faizah Engku Atek (2020) (acting)
11.   Idrus Harun (2020–present)

Source: The Attorney General of Malaysia (2024)

E.2:   List of Inspector-General of Police Malaysia:

1.   Claude Fenner (1958-1966)
2.   Mohamed Salleh Ismael (1966-1973)
3.   Abdul Rahman Hashim (1973-1974)
4.   Mohammed Hanif Omar (1974-1994)
5.   Abdul Rahim Mohd Noor (1994-1999)
6.   Norian Mai (1999-2003)
7.   Mohd Bakri Omar (2003-2006)
8.   Musa Hassan (2006-2010)
9.   Ismail Omar (2010-2013)
10.   Khalid Abu Bakar (2013-2017)
11.   Mohamad Fuzi Harun (2017-2019)
12.   Abdul Hamid Bador (2019-2021)
13.   Acryl Sani Abdullah Sani (2021-2023)

Source: Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia (2024a)

E.3:   List of Governors of the Central Bank of Malaysia:

1.   W. H. Wilcock (1959-1962)
2.   Ismail Mohd Ali (1962-1980)
3.   Abdul Aziz Taha (1980-1985)
4.   Jaffar Hussein (1985-1994)
5.   Ahmad Mohd Don (1994-1998)
6.   Ali Abul Hassan Sulaiman (1998-2000)
7.   Zeti Akhtar Aziz (2000-2016)
8.   Muhammad Ibrahim (2016-2018)
9.   Nor Shamsiah Mohd Yunus (2018-2023)

Source: Central Bank of Malaysia (2024)

E.4:   List of Chief Secretary to the Government of Malaysia:

1.   Abdul Aziz Majid (1957-1964)
2.   Abdul Jamil Abdul Rais (1964-1967)
3.   Tunku Mohamad Tunku Besar Burhanuddin (1967-1969)
4.   Abdul Kadir Shamsuddin (1970-1976)
5.   Abdullah Mohd Salleh (1976-1978)
6.   Abdullah Ayub (1979-1980)
7.   Hashim Aman (1980-1984)
8.   Salehuddin Mohamed (1984-1990)
9.   Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid (1990-1996)
10.   Abdul Halim Ali (1996-2001)
11.   Samsudin Osman (2001-2006)
12.   Mohd Sidek Hassan (2006-2012)
13.   Ali Hamsa (2012-2018)
14.   Ismail Bakar (2018-2019)
15   Mohd Zuki Ali (2019-present)

Source: Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia (2024b)

Appendix F

Chi-Square Distribution Table

d.f.	.995	.99	.975	.95	.9	.1	.05	.025	.01
1	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	2.71	3.84	5.02	6.63
2	0.01	0.02	0.05	0.10	0.21	4.61	5.99	7.38	9.21
3	0.07	0.11	0.22	0.35	0.58	6.25	7.81	9.35	11.34
4	0.21	0.30	0.48	0.71	1.06	7.78	9.49	11.14	13.28
5	0.41	0.55	0.83	1.15	1.61	9.24	11.07	12.83	15.09
6	0.68	0.87	1.24	1.64	2.20	10.64	12.59	14.45	16.81
7	0.99	1.24	1.69	2.17	2.83	12.02	14.07	16.01	18.48
8	1.34	1.65	2.18	2.73	3.49	13.36	15.51	17.53	20.09
9	1.73	2.09	2.70	3.33	4.17	14.68	16.92	19.02	21.67
10	2.16	2.56	3.25	3.94	4.87	15.99	18.31	20.48	23.21
11	2.60	3.05	3.82	4.57	5.58	17.28	19.68	21.92	24.72
12	3.07	3.57	4.40	5.23	6.30	18.55	21.03	23.34	26.22
13	3.57	4.11	5.01	5.89	7.04	19.81	22.36	24.74	27.69
14	4.07	4.66	5.63	6.57	7.79	21.06	23.68	26.12	29.14
15	4.60	5.23	6.26	7.26	8.55	22.31	25.00	27.49	30.58
16	5.14	5.81	6.91	7.96	9.31	23.54	26.30	28.85	32.00
17	5.70	6.41	7.56	8.67	10.09	24.77	27.59	30.19	33.41
18	6.26	7.01	8.23	9.39	10.86	25.99	28.87	31.53	34.81
19	6.84	7.63	8.91	10.12	11.65	27.20	30.14	32.85	36.19
20	7.43	8.26	9.59	10.85	12.44	28.1	31.41	34.17	37.57
22	8.64	9.54	10.98	12.34	14.04	30.81	33.92	36.78	40.29
24	9.89	10.86	12.40	13.85	15.66	33.20	36.42	39.36	42.98
26	11.16	12.20	13.84	15.38	17.29	35.56	38.89	41.92	45.64
28	12.46	13.56	15.31	16.93	18.94	37.92	41.34	44.46	48.28
30	13.79	14.95	16.79	18.49	20.60	40.26	43.77	46.98	50.89
32	15.13	16.36	18.29	20.07	22.27	42.58	46.19	49.48	53.49
34	16.50	17.79	19.81	21.66	23.95	44.90	48.60	51.97	56.06
38	19.29	20.69	22.88	24.88	27.34	49.51	53.38	56.90	61.16
42	22.14	23.65	26.00	28.14	30.77	54.09	58.12	61.78	66.21
46	25.04	26.66	29.16	31.44	34.22	58.64	62.83	66.62	71.20
50	27.99	29.71	32.36	34.76	37.69	63.17	67.50	71.42	76.15
55	31.73	33.57	36.40	38.96	42.06	68.80	73.31	77.38	82.29
60	35.53	37.48	40.48	43.19	46.46	74.40	79.08	83.30	88.38
65	39.38	41.44	44.60	47.45	50.88	79.97	84.82	89.18	94.42
70	43.28	45.44	48.76	51.74	55.33	85.53	90.53	95.02	100.43
75	47.21	49.48	52.94	56.05	59.79	91.06	96.22	100.84	106.39
80	51.17	53.54	57.15	60.39	64.28	96.58	101.88	106.63	112.33
85	55.17	57.63	61.39	64.75	67.78	102.08	107.52	112.39	118.24
90	29.20	61.75	65.65	69.13	73.29	107.57	113.15	118.14	124.12
95	63.25	65.90	69.92	73.52	77.82	113.04	118.75	123.86	129.97
100	67.33	70.06	74.22	77.93	82.36	118.50	124.34	129.56	135.81

State of Origin of Students

State or Federal Territory	Total Number of Participants	%	Female	Male
Johor	7	10.61	5	2
Kedah	2	3.03	2	
Kelantan	11	16.67	8	3
Labuan	-	-		
Melaka	4	6.06	3	1
Negeri Sembilan	3	4.55	0	3
Pahang	-	-		
Perak	9	13.64	8	1
Perlis	-	-	0	
Pulau Pinang	1	1.52	1	
Putrajaya	1	1.52	1	
Sabah	5	7.58	4	1
Sarawak	3	4.55	3	
Selangor	12	18.18	8	4
Terengganu	6	9.09	4	2
Kuala Lumpur	2	3.03	2	
Total	**66**	**100**	**49**	**17**

Appendix H

Semi-Structured Interview – Particulars of Participant

No.	Place of Origin	Age	Sex	Occupation	Sector	Identity Identified
R01	Sabah	51-60	M	Headmaster (P)	Public	Malaysian
R02	Johore	> 61	M	Professor, UTS	Private	Muslim
R03	Selangor	31-40	F	Lecturer, UTS	Private	Malaysian
R04	Sarawak	21-30	M	Pharmacist	Public	Malay-Muslim
R05	Selangor	31-40	M	Lecturer, UTS	Private	Malaysian
R06	Kuala Lumpur	21-30	M	Teacher (P)	Public	Malay-Muslim
R07	Selangor	51-60	M	Associate Professor, UTS	Private	Malaysian
R08	Pahang	> 61	M	Registrar, UTS	Private	Muslim
R09	Sarawak	21-30	F	Account Clerk	Private	Muslim
R10	Sarawak	21-30	F	Legal Assistant	Private	Malaysian
R11	Kedah	21-30	F	Teacher (S)	Public	Malaysian
R12	Johore	31-40	F	Teacher/Ustazah (P)	Public	Malaysian
R13	Negeri Sembilan	31-40	F	Lecturer/Student, UTS	Private	Muslim
R14	Kelantan	31-40	F	Ustazah (P)	Public	Malay-Muslim
R15	Sarawak	41-50	F	Cashier	Private	Malay-Muslim
R16	Terengganu	31-40	M	Teacher (S)	Public	Muslim
R17	Kedah	30	M	Ustaz (P)	Public	Muslim
R18	Perak	21-30	M	Ustaz (P)	Public	Malaysian
R19	Negeri Sembilan	26	M	Ustaz (P)	Public	Malay-Muslim
R20	Selangor	21-30	F	Teacher (S)	Public	Muslim
R21	Kelantan	31-40	F	Teacher (P)	Public	Malay-Muslim
R22	Perak	21-30	F	Ustazah (S)	Public	Malay-Muslim
R23	Terengganu	28	F	Teacher (P)	Public	Muslim
R24	Sarawak	> 61	M	Retiree	-	Malay-Muslim

Notes:

(P)	Primary School
(S)	Secondary School
UTS	University of Technology Sarawak
F	Female
M	Male