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IMPLICATIONS OF MUSLIM POPULATION ESTIMATES

Introduction

The Muslim World of today need to know itself better as a Ummah. Probably Demography has a role to play, especially when we say that the Muslims form approximately one-fifth of the world population.

It is the United Nations which through the activities of the Population Division and publication of the Demographic Yearbook has sponsored the philosophy that the concerns of Demography are of worldwide importance and significance. Although certain national institutes for social research and population studies are located in places like Abadan, Ankara, Cairo, Djakarta, Karachi, Lahore and Tehran yet no international institute for this purpose is to be found in the Muslim World. Kindly note that the International Population Union for the Scientific Study of Population Problems in one of the finest International Social Science Organizations. Also an International Catholic Institute for Social-Cultural Ecclesiastical Research exist at the Hague, Netherlands.

Since on one hand the Muslim Ummah has been ever expanding, and with set-backs in the communist countries and also in Greece, Malta, Mexico and Spain, and on the other it has to meet the modern challenges from within and without, the Ummah still need to know its true strength, in particular, in terms of its manpower for the development of the Ummah as a whole. It is beyond the scope of this paper to deal with every aspect of the population research, population growth, demographic transition, components of population growth, composition of population and the future Muslim World population. However, an attempt has been made to interpret the Muslim population estimates. For our purpose the present study has been divided into three sections namely (i) Independent Muslim Countries (ii) Muslim Countries/Areas under non-Muslim control and (iii) World Muslim Minorities.

Independent Muslim Countries

There are those countries where fifty per cent or more of the population are of the Muslims. Today they number forty-nine, including Kibris and Spanish Sahara (Table 1). Over a dozen more would add to this list with the liberation of the occupied areas, including South Thailand (Patani) and Southern Philippines (see Table 2). Therefore, the Muslims may have sixty-two countries if all areas/countries under non-Muslim control are liberated.

The largest Muslim country is Indonesia followed by Bangla Desh, Nigeria and Pakistan. All Muslim countries exhibit very rapid to explosive growth rate (1.5% to 2.0% and above). The only exception is Kibris which has a very slow growth rate.

With the possible exception of Albania, Lebanon, Malaysia, and Turkey all Muslim countries have very high birth rates (over 37 per 1,000 population). The highest death rate per 1,000 population have been recorded for Afghanistan, Chad, Dahomey, Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Upper Volta and North and South Yemen (that is over 27 per 1,000 population). It has been reported that Africa still has the highest mortality rate.

The population in labour force is highest in Albania, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Dahomey, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Kibris, Mali, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, Turkey and Upper Volta (that is 40% and above). However, there is much variation in the population in the labour force because of the difference in the use of the term "labour force".

Independent Muslim countries but with significant non-Muslim population are Albania, Bangla Desh, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Dahomey, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Lebanon, Malaysia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Syria, Tanzania, Togo and Upper Volta (that is 15% and above of the total population). In most of these countries the non-Muslims are in power because the Muslims are educationally backward.

Under Non-Muslim Control

Muslim areas and countries under non-Muslim control have been given in Table 2. The other demographic data are not available. In all these areas deliberate and planned efforts have been made to change the demographic status. In this regard two methods have been resorted to namely, (i) forced out-migration of the Muslims (ii) the influx of non-Muslims as in-migrants. The ultimate aim is to subdue the

Muslims morally, economically, politically, culturally, religiously and even physically ; Palestine and areas under communist control are very good examples of these.

World Muslim Minorities

Of the 900 million Muslims that exist today it has been said that 600 million Muslims are in the Muslim World and the remaining 300 million from the World Muslim Minorities. The minority-majority include Muslims in Russia, China and India.

It was the Muslim Overseas Student Association (Pakistan) which has publicised the idea of the World Muslim Minorities since May 1974 (Newsletter MOSA/NL/5) and by September 1975 (Newsletter MOSA/NL/15) proposed the establishment of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs. Today this institute has been established under the King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah. It has been said that there are over sixty countries which have Muslim minorities but even in this 20th century and when we are celebrating the 14th century of Hijra, there are countries where is no Muslim at all. This is true of the many islands of the South Pacific where they have not even heard the word 'Islam'.

The questionnaire survey as conducted by the Motamar Alami Islam, Karachi, and the personal tour made by Dr. Al-Ketani to the minority areas and consequently publishing the information gathered, could be called as pilot study of the project. Although many Islamic organisations and institutions which exist in the minority areas, have published necessary data about themselves and even presented as reports to the international Islamic organisations and conferences, yet it could be safely said that no reliable demographic data is available on the World Muslim Minorities.

Conclusion

As it has been seen in this brief write-up that the data on the Muslim World has been made available from the non-Muslim sources, to the extent no international Islamic organization can claim to have direct access to the vital statistics and demographic data on the Muslims of the World. Also there is every reason to believe that Muslim population as published in non-Muslim sources may even be under-estimates. It is only natural that the Muslim World should have a separate institute devoted to this purpose. The co-operation of the existing national institutes on social science in the Muslim World cannot be over-emphasized.

Demographic data are vital for the planning of the Muslim Ummah, especially in terms of Muslim Manpower and for the future development. The flow of Muslim information through such Islamic Organisations as the Motamar Alami Islami, Rabeta Alami Islamia, World Assembly Muslim Youth, International Islamic Federation of Student Organisations and the Organisation of Islamic Conference and its specialized agencies are important but all such information must be properly verified before publication. In view of the need for correct information and statistics on the Muslim World at least, the Organization of Islamic Conference, Jeddah, should finance and sponsor regular census (every ten years) in the Muslim countries where the required data on the Muslims are not available. A Population Division within the OIC may be very useful way of collecting and analysing the data for demographic purposes and for development of the Muslim Ummah as a whole.

So the pertinent questions are : Can the Muslim Organizations plan without democratic data? Do the Muslim World know all about the Ummah? Would they have a separate international institute for studying the demographic problems of the Ummah?

We leave these questions to the people concerned to decide. However, it must be emphasized that the institute for demographic studies would be different from the Statistical Economic and Social Research Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRTCIC) as established by the OIC at Ankara. No doubt both these institutes may function as sister institutions.

TABLE 1—*Muslim World Population Estimates 1979*
Independent Muslim Countries

Country	Mid. 1979 Popula- tion (Millions)	Growth rate (Per- centage)	Birth rate (per 1,000 Popu- lation)	Death rate (per 1,000 Popu- lation)	Popu- lation in the labour force	Percen- tage Muslim
1	2	3	4	5	* 6	7
1. Afghanistan	14.7	2.2	52	30	34	99.0
2. Albania	2.6	2.2	30	8	43	75.0
3. Algeria	18.2	3.4	50	16	22	98.0
4. Bahrain	0.37	4.5	45	9	—	99.00

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Bangla Desh	88.1	2.7	47	19	34	85.0	
6. Cameroon	8.2	2.0	42	22	48	55.0	
7. Central African Republic	2.4	2.4	46	24	55	55.0	
8. Chad	4.5	2.3	49	28	39	85.0	
9. Comoros	0.32	2.1	44	20	37	95.0	
10. Dahomey	3.4	2.7	52	27	47	60.0	
11. Egypt	41.0	2.7	39	13	28	93.0	
12. Ethiopia	01.7	2.6	48	23	42	65.0	
13. Gambia	0.58	2.7	49	29	50	85.0	
14. Guinea	5.3	2.8	50	26	46	95.0	
15. Guinea-Bissau	0.63	1.9	40	24	32	70.0	
16. Indonesia	148.1	2.1	38	17	35	95.0	
17. Iran	37.6	3.0	42	12	23	98.0	
18. Iraq	12.9	3.4	48	14	25	95.0	
19. Ivory Coast	7.5	2.7	49	23	52	55.0	
20. Jordon	3.1	3.2	47	11	24	95.0	
21. Kibris*	0.15	0.1	20	10	43	100.0	
22. Kuwait	1.3	5.9	43	7	29	100.0	
23. Lebanon	2.9	2.6	26	11	26	57.0	
24. Libya	2.9	4.1	48	14	26	100.0	
25. Malaysia	13.3	2.8	31	6	34	51.7	
26. Maldives	0.13	—	—	—	—	100.0	
27. Mali	6.4	2.0	52	30	55	90.0	
28. Mauritania	1.6	2.0	45	27	31	100.0	
29. Morocco	19.8	3.0	47	17	26	99.0	
30. Niger	5.4	2.8	56	29	32	91.3	
31. Nigeria	84.4	3.3	49	22	39	75.0	
32. Oman	0.57	3.0	49	18	—	100.0	
33. Pakistan	80.2	3.0	45	14	28	97.0	
34. Qatar	0.17	—	—	—	—	100.0	
35. Saudia Arabia	8.1	3.1	49	19	27	100.0	
36. Senegal	5.5	2.6	47	24	43	95.0	
37. Sierra Leone	3.4	2.4	42	19	39	65.0	
38. Somalia	3.5	2.4	48	22	39	100.0	
39. Spanish Sahara*	0.76	—	—	—	—	95.0	
40. Sudan	20.9	3.2	49	17	32	85.0	

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41. Syria		8.4	3.3	47	15	26	87.0
42. Tanzania		17.4	3.0	47	17	42	65.0
43. Togo		2.5	2.8	52	25	42	55.0
44. Tunisia		6.4	2.7	37	10	24	95.0
45. Turkey		44.2	2.5	34	12	43	99.0
46. United Arab Emirates		0.98	8.9	45	15	—	100.0
47. Upper Volta		6.7	2.2	50	28	54	55.9
48. Yemen:							
(i) North		1.8	1.9	47	27	28	99.0
(ii) South		5.1	1.9	47	27	27	95.0

TABLE 2—Muslim Countries/Areas under Non-Muslim Control

Country	Mid. 1979 Population (Millions)	Growth rate (percentage)	Birth rate (per 1,000 Population)	Death rate (per 1,000 Population)	Population in the labour force	Percentage Muslim
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Azerbaijan	9.0	—	—	—	—	78.0
2. Burney	0.15	—	—	—	—	76.0
3. Eritrea	3.0	—	—	—	—	75.0
4. Kashmir	6.6	—	—	—	—	78.0
5. Kazakhstan	12.85	—	—	—	—	68.0
6. Kirghizia	2.93	—	—	—	—	92.0
7. Palestine	1.35**	—	—	—	—	90.0
8. Sinkiang	9.3	—	—	—	—	82.0
9. Tajikistan	2.9	—	—	—	—	98.0
10. Turkmenia	2.15	—	—	—	—	90.0
11. Uzbekistan	41.7	—	—	—	—	88.0

*Disputed as a country.

**Before partition.

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