

## Impact of Islamophobia on Christian-Muslim Relations in Mumias West Sub-County, Kenya

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### Abstract

This article investigates the effects of Islamophobia on Christian-Muslim relations in Mumias West Sub-County. The study explores how Islamophobia has influenced interactions between these communities, affecting societal cohesion (in other words, interconnectedness) and peaceful coexistence. By examining the broader impact of Islamophobia on the Mumias community, the research identifies obstacles to positive Christian-Muslim relations and proposes strategies to improve interfaith interactions. Utilizing Social cohesion theory to guide the Study, a qualitative research approach, and a phenomenological design, the study collected data through open-ended questionnaires, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions. A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants, including Christians, Muslims, and religious leaders, with 18 interviewees, 57 questionnaire respondents, and 22 focus group participants. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, with findings presented in figures and tables. The results reveal that Islamophobia adversely affects Christian-Muslim relations in Mumias West Sub-County, driven by attitudes, intolerance, historical legacies, religious differences, and socio-political factors. The study concludes that addressing Islamophobia requires comprehensive measures such as education, open dialogue, community support, interfaith initiatives, and robust government strategies to foster inclusivity and strengthen community cohesion.

**Key terms:** Christian-Muslim relations, coexistence, cohesion, interfaith, Islamophobia.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The study sought to establish the impact of Islamophobia on Christian-Muslim Relationships in Mumias West Sub-County. Islamophobia refers to the irrational fear, prejudice, or hostility directed towards Islam and Muslims. This phenomenon significantly undermines interfaith relationships, fostering mistrust, social division, discrimination, and violence. Such negative attitudes negatively impact Christian-Muslim relations (which is the interaction between Christians and Muslims), disrupting harmonious coexistence across cultures (Uenal et al., 2021). Previous studies have predominantly focused on the dynamics between Islam and Christianity, highlighting the complex interactions of cooperation and conflict (Trimingham, 1964; Quinn & Quinn, 2003; Uenal et al., 2021).

Historically, Islam has been perceived as both a source of terror and injustice, as well as a force for empathy and morality (Esposito, 2010). Early conflicts between Islam and Christianity, such as those during medieval times and the 19th-century Industrial Revolution in Europe, have shaped a legacy of hostility and strained relations. These historical tensions have often overshadowed shared beliefs and values, focusing instead on religious differences and the perception of the 'other' as a threat (Michel & Omar, 2010). Additionally, violent acts carried out by a minority of extremists have exacerbated misunderstandings and fears, contributing to a broader sense of Islamophobia.

In the context of global politics, local grievances among Muslims have sometimes fuelled international movements against non-Muslim influence, impacting Christian-Muslim relations worldwide. For instance, the actions of militant groups such as Boko Haram in Nigeria and al-Shabaab in East Africa have heightened fears and contributed to Islamophobic attitudes (Sookhdeo, 2014; Wariboko, 2015). In Kenya, incidents of terrorism and radicalisation, such as the 1998 American Embassy bombing and the 2013 Westgate Mall attack, have further fuelled Islamophobic sentiments (Adam, 2020). These events have led to increased suspicion and discrimination against Muslims, affecting their ability to express their religious identity and contributing to strained relations with Christian communities (Abbas, 2021; Kimemia, 2021).

Islamophobia has also influenced debates in Kenya around the inclusion of the Kadhis Court in the constitution, reflecting broader tensions between Muslims and Christians (Kahumbi, 2011). The association of Islam with terrorism and extremism has led to heightened scrutiny and suspicion of Muslims, impacting their social and religious freedoms (The Conversation Newsletter, 2024). This historical marginalisation and the complex dynamics of Islamophobia have resulted in intricate and often strained Christian-Muslim relations in Kenya.

In Mumias West Sub-County, located in Kakamega County, instances of Islamophobia are evident, with Christian communities expressing fear and suspicion towards Muslims. Tensions arise from mosque construction and Islamic missionary activities, sometimes perceived as threats (Wandera, 2015). These misconceptions contribute to a negative view of Islam and hamper community cohesion. This study assessed the impact of Islamophobia on Christian-Muslim relations in Mumias West Sub-County, Kenya, examining its effects on societal cohesion and peaceful coexistence. By investigating the prevalence and impact of Islamophobia, the research sought to illuminate the challenges faced by both communities and identify opportunities for improving interfaith relations and enhancing societal harmony.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

### Impact of Islamophobia

Islamophobia, defined as irrational fear, aversion, or discrimination against Islam and Muslims, has increasingly permeated various sectors, including workplaces, communities, healthcare, educational institutions, and government policies (Beydoun, 2019; Merriam-Webster, 2019; Ogan et al., 2014). This phenomenon manifests in numerous ways, such as street harassment, workplace discrimination, and government surveillance of Muslim communities. Coined in the 1980s and popularized in the 1990s, the term "Islamophobia" was initially used by political activists and NGOs to highlight and combat harmful rhetoric and actions against Islam in Western democracies (Conway & Runnymede, 1997; Bleich, 2011).

The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks catalysed global discussions on Islamophobia, particularly in Europe and North America, linking it to fears of terrorism and the perceived threat from growing Muslim populations (Michel & Omar, 2010; Bahçecik, 2013). Esposito (2010) notes that these fears intensified tensions between Christians and Muslims, including in Western Africa and Kenya. In Kenya, particularly in Mumias, Islamophobia has influenced Christian-Muslim relations, sometimes leading to conflict and violence (Wandera, 2015). Historical and contemporary interactions between these two major Abrahamic religions have often been marked by focusing on differences rather than shared values, contributing to periods of tension and conflict (Esposito, 2010).

### Impact of Islamophobic Perceptions on "Religious Others"

The media plays a significant role in shaping public perceptions of Muslims, frequently associating them with terrorism, violence, and extremism. This negative portrayal perpetuates stereotypes and fosters Islamophobia by presenting Muslims as threats to societal values and security (Saleem, 2017; Bleich & Veen, 2022; Hafez, 2018). Studies have shown that media coverage often highlights violent incidents involving Muslims while neglecting their positive contributions, reinforcing a distorted and negative image of Islam (Saleem, 2017).

Negative media framing and stereotype reinforcement contribute to hostile societal attitudes towards Muslims, influencing public opinion and policy decisions. Balanced and accurate media representation is crucial to countering prejudice and fostering understanding (Tama & Sulistyaningrum, 2023; Michel & Omar, 2010). The media's portrayal of Muslims, mainly through the lens of terrorism, continues to impact perceptions and intergroup relations, including historical grievances related to Christian missionary activities (Oded, 2000; Hafez, 2018). This distortion exacerbates divisions and tensions between religious communities.

### Impact on Christian-Muslim Relations and Coexistence

Despite generally positive day-to-day interactions between Christians and Muslims in Kenya, underlying tensions have surfaced, exacerbated by factors such as terrorist activities and radical groups like al-Shabaab. The 2013 Westgate Mall attack in Nairobi, Kenya, perpetrated by the Islamist group al-Shabaab, resulted in 67 fatalities, 175 injuries, and significant property damage, profoundly affecting the community (Chitwood, 2017; Muindi, 2020). This tragic event highlighted security vulnerabilities, sparking national conversations about safety and security measures. In response, the Kenyan government escalated military operations against al-Shabab in Somalia and bolstered domestic security measures.

According to Chitwood (2017), the attack exacerbated religious tensions, instilling fear and giving rise to discrimination, abuse, and violence targeting religious minorities. The Kenyan populace grappled with widespread fear and insecurity due to the heightened threat from al-Shabab, amplifying concerns about potential future attacks and fostering Islamophobia. Notably, this was the first major attack in Kenya since the 1998 US embassy bombing and the most severe terrorist attack since 2011 (Muindi, 2020).

According to Kahumbi (2011) and Oded (2000), long-lasting competition over religious conversions, control of educational institutions, and political power has fuelled a protracted conflict in the region. This competition has precipitated the emergence of more radical and militant forms of Islam in response to perceived Islamophobia and threats to the Islamic sphere of influence. Moreover, historical and contemporary Islamophobic attitudes in Mumias have contributed to mistrust and conflict between Christians and Muslims. The region's longstanding religious dynamics have been marked by both cooperation and tension, with Islamophobia exacerbating existing challenges and leading to episodes of violence and discrimination (Murunga, 1998; Wandera, 2015).

## **Social Impact**

The social order has been significantly influenced by Islamophobia, which has led to segregation, prejudice, and hostility. Events such as the September 11 attacks have shifted perceptions, increasing caution and fear towards Islam (Momanyi, 2015). In Kenya, the association of Muslims with terrorism resulted in anxiety and cultural intolerance, impacting societal cohesion and leading to increased prejudice (Jaji, 2014). Studies indicate that such negative perceptions contribute to societal disintegration and heightened intolerance (Durham et al., 2012).

## **Economic Impact**

Islamophobia has also had economic repercussions, with Muslim communities experiencing exclusion from economic development and opportunities. Historical grievances, such as those highlighted by Oded (2000) regarding riots and perceived discrimination, reflect long-standing economic and political challenges faced by Muslims in Kenya. Financial hardship and unemployment among Muslim youths, exacerbated by discrimination, have negatively impacted regional economic activities (Oded, 2000).

## **Political Impact**

Islamophobia has been utilised as a political tool to marginalise Muslim communities and achieve specific political objectives. The Council on American-Islamic Relations (2021) reports that anti-Muslim biases are often exploited to undermine Muslim rights and democratic values. This marginalisation influences political participation, pushing Muslims into societal peripheries and fostering resistance (Finlay & Hopkins, 2018). In Kenya, political exclusion and discrimination against Muslims have led to frustration and reduced political influence, further exacerbated by events such as the 1998 US embassy bombings (Oded, 2000; Quinn & Quinn, 2003).

## **Religious Impact**

The longstanding religious tensions between Muslims and Christians in Kenya have often been characterised by hostility and mistrust. Hostile interactions and prejudice have shaped religious identity and national involvement, reinforcing stigma and increasing intolerance (Quinn & Quinn, 2003; Kunst et al., 2012). For improved Christian-Muslim relations, both communities must address their differences with a focus on peace and understanding. The media and religious institutions promote intercultural relations

and reduce intolerance (The Second Vatican Council, 1965; Esposito, 2010). This study aims to foster communal harmony and respect among religious groups, emphasising the importance of positive engagement and solidarity (Duffner, 2021).

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study utilised a phenomenological research design, adopting a qualitative approach to explore participants' perceptions, experiences, beliefs, behaviours, opinions, and attitudes to uncover the underlying motives. The research incorporated various data collection methods, including open-ended questionnaires, in-depth key informant interviews, and focus group discussions, to thoroughly examine participants' experiences, attitudes, and perspectives. The research was conducted in Mumias West Sub-County, Kenya.

A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants. The sample comprised 22 Muslims, 23 Christians, and 12 leaders from religious organisations who completed open-ended questionnaires. Eighteen (18) respondents were interviewed for crucial informant interviews until saturation was reached. Additionally, two focus group discussions were conducted with 10 and 12 participants. Data analysis involved thematic analysis of the organised data and interview transcriptions. Themes were identified by grouping related codes under broader categories. The analysed data were then synthesised into narratives and presented in tables and figures using descriptive statistics.

### 4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### Respondents Profile

The study findings revealed that 80.4 per cent of the gender was male, and 19.6 per cent was female. Most participants, accounting for 73.3 per cent, were aged 40 years and above, with 7.1 per cent each for the 18-24 years and 25-29 years age categories, and 12.5 per cent were in the 30-39 age bracket. Most participants, accounting for 42.8 per cent, had secondary education, with 33.9 per cent having a diploma and 23.3 per cent having a degree. Married couples were more common, with 80.4 per cent of respondents married, followed by singles at 10.7 per cent, while only 8.9 per cent were widowed. Christian respondents were 55.4 per cent, while 44.6 per cent were Muslim respondents.

#### Impact of Islamophobia on Christian-Muslim Relations

The research sought to establish the influence of Islamophobia on Christian-Muslim associations in Mumias West Sub-County, where respondents stated the attitudes of Christians towards Muslims in their relationships, highlighting the adverse outcomes of islamophobia and how it has impacted social relationships, religious and economic life of the Mumias community.

**Table 1. The Attitude of Christians towards Muslims**

<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Not good (Negative attitude)	12	21.4
Changing (Fair attitude)	11	19.6
Good (Positive attitude)	10	17.9
Mutual respect/cordial	10	17.9
Hostile and antagonistic/confrontation and segregation (negative attitude)	6	10.7
Pretentious/mistrust (negative attitude)	5	8.9
No fear	2	3.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Data 2023

The study findings in Table 1 above revealed a range of attitudes among Christians towards Muslims. About 21.4 per cent of respondents indicated a not-good, negative attitude, whereas 10.7 per cent expressed hostility, confrontation, and segregation with an antagonistic, unfriendly attitude, and 8.9 per cent expressed a pretentious and false attitude in relations. Additionally, 19.6 per cent reported a change in attitude from educational activities and interfaith programs, with slight fairness in intermarriages and accommodating each other. In contrast, 17.9 per cent showed a positive attitude towards Muslims, expressing mutual respect and cordial relations, whereas 3.6 per cent showed no fear when interacting with them.

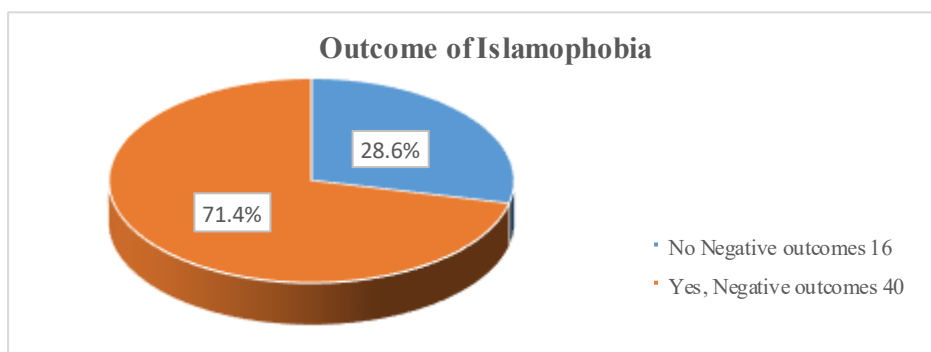
The study findings revealed that 41.1 per cent of respondents reported a negative attitude towards Muslims, 35.7 per cent a positive attitude, 19.1 per cent a changing attitude, and 3.6 per cent showed no fear. FGDs shed additional light on a combination of friendly exchanges and underlying tensions, wherein certain persons possessed internal animosity towards Muslims as a result of ignorance and brainwashing. From these findings, it can be observed that Christians in Mumias hold diverse perspectives about Muslims, with the Majority having unfavourable attitudes. However, the available studies indicate a complex interaction of attitudes influenced by historical, social, and religious elements, demonstrating the existence of Islamophobia (Bazian, 2018).

**Table 2. Effect of Islamophobia on the Christian-Muslim Relationship**

<b>N=56</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Mutual respect and cooperation,	16	28.4
Negative relationships/conflicts and a lack of trust	13	23.2
The historical context of tension	3	5.4
Economic disparities	3	5.4
Negative perception of Islam	3	5.4
Fear and suspicion	3	5.4
Segregation and division	3	5.4
Assimilation and integration	2	3.6
Education and healthcare emphasis	2	3.6
Intermarriage and dialogue	2	3.6
Religious respect and tolerance	2	3.6
Leadership disunity	2	3.6
Interfaith platforms	1	1.7
Language barriers /misinterpretation of religious teachings	1	1.7

Source: Field Data 2023

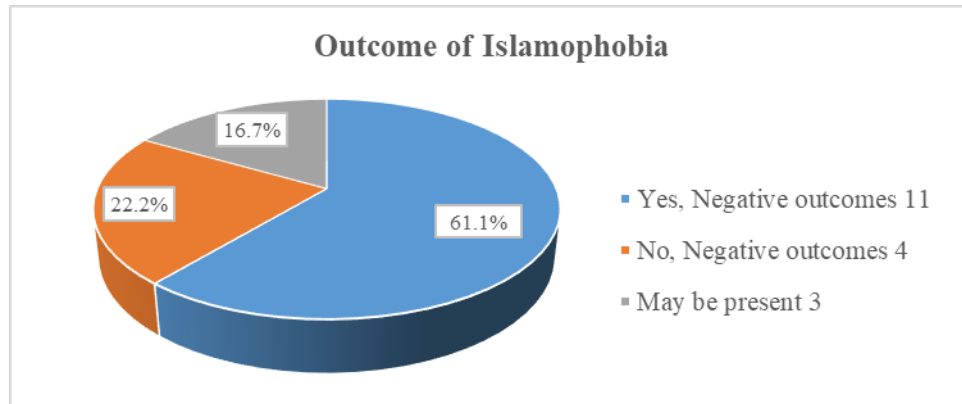
In Table 2 above, 23.2 per cent of participants expressed negative relationships, attributing them to conflicts and a lack of trust. Furthermore, 5.4 per cent of each category, accounting for 27per cent, cited the historical context of tension /economic disparities /segregation and division /negative perception of Islam /suspicious preconceptions and fear as effects of Islamophobia. Additionally, 3.6 per cent expressed concerns regarding leadership disagreements, while 1.7 per cent cited language barriers and misinterpreting religious teachings. However, 28.4 per cent of participants indicated mutual respect and cooperation, with positive perception, whereas 3.6 per cent of each category, accounting for 14.4 per cent, acknowledged positive outcomes, feeling that there was no impact of Islamophobia, and 1.7 per cent cited interfaith platforms in facilitating communication and relations.



**Figure 1. Negative Consequences of Islamophobia**

Source: Field Data 2023

The study findings in Figure 1 above demonstrated that Islamophobia resulted in adverse outcomes in Mumias, cited by 71.4 per cent of participants, whereas 28.6 per cent mentioned no adverse consequences of Islamophobia.



**Figure 2. Negative Consequences of Islamophobia (KIIs)**

Source: Field Data 2023

The findings in Figure 2 above from 18 Key informants interviewed showed 61.1 per cent reported negative outcomes from Islamophobia, while 16.7 per cent expressed uncertainty, warning of potential animosity if tensions persisted. They cited discrimination, financial burden, educational inequalities, and instances of violence exemplified by the killing of a Priest at Shibale ACK, attacks during the Crusades, and familial conflicts arising from intermarriages. The study findings revealed that Islamophobia negatively impacted interfaith interactions in the Mumias community, leading to negative outcomes, as indicated by 71.4 per cent of respondents and 61.1 per cent from KIIs. Participants recognised both positive and negative impacts, like prejudice, aggression, and educational inequalities, as consistent with previous research (Chitwood, 2017; Oded, 2000; Quinn & Quinn, 2003).

**Table 3. The Negative Impacts of Islamophobia**

N=56	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Adverse Economic and Social Impact	15	26.8
Interreligious conflict and tension	12	21.4
Lack of trust and collaboration	9	16.1
Political and administrative differences	4	7.1
No response	16	28.6

Source: Field Data 2023

The findings in Table 3 above revealed the negative effects of Islamophobia. About 26.8 per cent of participants attributed Islamophobia to adverse economic and social consequences, such as economic declines and occupational segregation. Furthermore, 21.4 per cent of respondents indicated interreligious conflicts and tensions, resulting in confrontations about intermarriage and instances of physical hostility during religious gatherings. Lack of trust and collaboration was identified by 16.1 per cent of respondents,

hindering social relationships and cooperation. In addition, 7.1 per cent of respondents emphasised political inequalities resulting from religious differences and fear, intensifying tensions, while 28.6 per cent of participants had no response. The FGD participants cited how Islamophobia has heightened prejudices and sensitive religious consciousness in Mumias, indicating how Christians view Islam as an obstacle to Mumias' development, and Muslims feel excluded. The study findings highlighted the negative effects of Islamophobia on economic, religious, social, political, and administrative levels, emphasising the need for collaboration and trust-building to address political disparities and religious conflicts in Mumias. Interreligious conflicts significantly impact communal life, necessitating collaborative efforts to foster trust, facilitate communication, and establish cooperative relationships between Christians and Muslims in Mumias West Sub-County (Hafez, 2018; Michel & Omar, 2010).

**Table 4. Impact of Islamophobia on Social, Religious, and Economic Life**

<b>N=56</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Difficulties in trust and social engagements	5	8.9
Social segregation and strained relations	5	8.9
Discrimination and favouritism in economic opportunities/ unequal allocation of resources	4	7.1
Disagreements and conflicting religious teachings	3	5.4
Fear is hindering social and economic progress	3	5.4
Impact on religious practices and moral deterioration	2	3.5
Termination of marriages due to religious differences	2	3.5
Slow economic growth and stagnation	2	3.5
Limitations on religious freedom and expression	1	1.8
Inability to establish shared religious spaces	1	1.8
Historical and ancestral differences between religions	1	1.8
Economic struggles and tensions	1	1.8
Occupational segregation and lack of support	1	1.8
Business failures and a lack of market diversity	1	1.8
Interfaith interactions and peaceful coexistence	1	1.8
Efforts to foster mutual understanding and respect	1	1.8
Construction of religious and social infrastructure	1	1.8
Promotion of positive social relations and economic cooperation	1	1.8
Need for interreligious dialogue and awareness programs	1	1.8
Importance of education on good neighbourliness and religious tolerance	1	1.8
Encouragement of positive interfaith forums and business partnerships	1	1.8
No response	1	1.8
Not applicable	16	28.6

Source: Field Data 2023

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The analysis of the impact of Islamophobia on the social, religious, political, and economic aspects of life in Mumias, as presented in Table 4, reveals a complex situation. According to the data, 8.9 per cent of respondents reported difficulties with trust and social engagement, with the same percentage citing social segregation and strained relations. Additionally, 7.1 per cent of participants noted discrimination and favouritism in economic opportunities, as well as unequal resource distribution. Another 5.4 per cent identified disagreements and conflicting religious doctrines as exacerbating tensions. At the same time, the same percentage saw fear as a barrier to social and economic progress, contributing to prejudice and unusual treatment.

Other notable issues included 3.5 per cent of respondents linking religious practices to moral deterioration, 3.5 per cent experiencing marriage termination due to religious differences, and 3.5 per cent pointing to slow economic growth and stagnation. Six factors, each cited by 1.8 per cent of respondents, accounted for 10.8 per cent of the feedback and included limitations on religious freedom, difficulties in establishing shared religious spaces, historical and ancestral religious differences, economic struggles, occupational segregation, and business failures. Seven additional factors, also cited by 1.8 per cent each, accounted for 12.6 per cent of the responses and were related to the positive impact on Christian-Muslim interactions. Additionally, 28.6 per cent of respondents indicated that some aspects were not applicable, while 1.8 per cent did not respond.

The study indicates significant mistrust in social engagements, leading to segregation and strained relations. Prevalent issues of discrimination and favouritism in economic opportunities and resource distribution were also identified. Fear was identified as a major barrier to social and economic progress. This aligns with the observations made by Michel and Omar (2010) and Hafez (2018), who noted the extensive influence of religious concerns.

The findings also suggest that Christian-Muslim relations in Mumias West Sub-county reflect a range of perspectives, with a majority reporting a negative attitude and underlying tensions, while a minority reported positive experiences. The historical context and a general lack of trust have impeded interfaith interactions, underscoring the need for greater social inclusivity. Islamophobia's impact on interfaith relations is shaped by various historical, social, economic, and political factors, as discussed by Bazian (2018).

According to the study, 53.6 per cent of respondents described the Christian-Muslim relationship as "not good and unfavourable," compared to 46.4 per cent who viewed it as "good and favourable." Media portrayals of Islam and historical events were identified as significant contributors to Islamophobia, affecting relational dynamics, as noted by Michel and Omar (2010) and Hafez (2018). While some respondents viewed the relationship positively, they also expressed concerns about unresolved barriers and doctrinal differences, highlighting the need for continued dialogue and interventions, consistent with previous studies (Quinn & Quinn, 2003; CAIR's Report, 2021; Jaji, 2014; Momanyi, 2015; Chitwood, 2017; Oded, 2000).

Moreover, 71.4 per cent of respondents indicated that Islamophobia has led to significant negative consequences, including discrimination, financial burdens, educational inequalities, and instances of violence. Notably, 61.1 per cent of respondents recognised the fear-related implications, such as prejudice and confrontations, illustrated by events like the killing of a priest at Shibale Anglican Church and attacks

during the crusades of the 1980s and 1990s. These issues have impacted the economy, society, politics, and administration in Mumias, with notable difficulties in trust, social engagement, and resource distribution. Nevertheless, 22.2 per cent of respondents maintained a positive outlook on reducing tensions through unity and collaboration (Oded, 2000; Chitwood, 2017).

In summary, interfaith interactions in Mumias exhibit a blend of positive and negative aspects. While some respondents report harmonious relations, others express concerns about insincerity and unresolved religious gaps. The study emphasises the need for ongoing collaboration and trust-building to address political discrepancies and religious conflicts, fostering mutual understanding and inclusive relationships between Christians and Muslims in Mumias West Sub-County (Hafez, 2018; Michel & Omar, 2010; Chitwood, 2017).

## 5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Conclusion:** The study revealed that Islamophobia significantly impacted religious relations in Mumias West Sub-county, affecting social cohesion and the overall community life. These negative consequences indicated a significant mistrust in social engagements, leading to segregation with strained and suspicious relationships, discrimination and favouritism in economic opportunities, and resource distribution, leading to other areas being marginalised and underdeveloped. Fear was identified as a significant barrier to social and economic progress, slowing down the development of Mumias. Educational inequalities led to most Muslims not having formal education, thus missing out on opportunities, and instances of violence led to the killing of a priest at Shibale ACK Church and confrontations during crusades or religious gatherings, leading to a hostile and tense environment and strained relations, and disagreements and conflicting religious doctrines, which exacerbated tensions in the community.

Islamophobia remains a significant barrier, hindering interfaith interactions due to historical contexts and mistrust. The study revealed a complex Christian-Muslim relationship; despite some indications of harmony, the presence of Islamophobia is manifested in various forms. The study underscores the importance of understanding the complexities of Islamophobia, including the historical grievances, prejudice, mistrust, and deep-seated apprehensions that can escalate into violence and tension between Christians and Muslims. Addressing fundamental conflicts is essential for fostering a more inclusive and cohesive society. Efforts must focus on combating Islamophobia, promoting mutual understanding, and enhancing tolerance and respect among the diverse religious communities in Mumias West Sub-county.

### **Recommendations:**

**Government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):** Both governmental and non-governmental entities should actively work to address the root causes of conflict between Christians and Muslims in Mumias. Efforts should include promoting social cohesion and inclusivity through targeted programs and initiatives.

**Community Leaders and Religious Authorities:** Leaders and religious figures should support initiatives that enhance social cohesion. They should advocate for constructive religious engagement that bridges gaps, builds trust, and fosters solidarity while tackling shared societal challenges.

**Government Actions:** The Kenyan government should address the socioeconomic and political inequities that fuel conflicts. It should promote equal representation of religious groups in leadership roles and decision-making processes. Additionally, efforts should be made to cultivate a climate of inclusivity, impartiality, and unity within the community.

To address the negative impact of interreligious anxiety, continuous dialogue and positive measures are crucial to resolve conflicts and create a more inclusive social structure, mitigating adverse economic and societal outcomes of Islamophobia and building a harmonious society in Mumias West Sub-County.

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