Memon people

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total population</th>
<th>Memon People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,800,000</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions with significant populations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>India</strong> 900,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pakistan</strong> 700,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The term **Memon** refers to a Muslim commercial community from the western part of **South Asia**, including **Memons historically associated with Kathiawar**. It also can refer to **Kutchi Memons** and **Sindhi Memons**. Their descendants-speakers of the **Memon language**. Many Memons migrated to **Karachi** after the partition of India into India & Pakistan in 1947.

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### History

**Sindhi, Gujarati origins**
Gujrat, India
Circa early 20th Century

Memon lineage traces back to Lohanas of Multan and Sindh. The origin of the name comes from Maumin, which means “believer” and later evolved to present name Memon. The memon community was founded in the 15th century by 700 families comprising 6,178 persons total. According to Anthovan, those Lohanas of Thatta who converted to Islam became Memons and were invited by Rao Khengarji Jadeja, ruler of Bhu in the 16th century to settle in Bhu. It is from there that Kutchi Memons migrated to Kathiawar and Gujarat. Surat in Gujarat was an important trading center from 1580 to 1680 and Memons made their bounty there. Memons became significantly affluent as a result of trading in Surat.

Merchant tradesman years

Due to the mercantile nature of the community, Memons began a significant migration in 18th and 19th century to well beyond the borders of India. The continued migration would lead to communities developing in the Middle East, South Africa, Sri Lanka and East Asia. Memon traders setup up a network of joint stock companies acting in coordination with other members in an area ranging from Central Africa to China. Memon donors made significant financial contributions to construct mosques during this time, including Juma Masjid Mosque and Jamia Mosque. By late 19th century several thousand Memons had settled in Bombay due to trading. Memon representative leaders traded with British capitalists to develop their Indian monopolies. The area of Bombay which the Memon traders ended up congregating in later became known as the
Twentieth century

Early twentieth century led to consolidation of the Memon community in South Asia as well as South Africa. Memons community began to organize important societies including Memon Education and Welfare Society and Memon Chamber of Commerce. Memon community made significant financial contributions to preserve the Ottoman Empire but were unsuccessful in doing so. The partition of Pakistan and India would lead to significant migration towards both directions of the border for the Memon community. During middle of the twentieth century a handful of Memon financial dynasties were born. However, the dynastic wealth of the Memon families stagnated during the late twentieth century due to the partition of Pakistan as well as political turmoil of the country.

Branches

Subgroups of Memons from Kathiawar

Languages

Social structure

Cultural traditions

According to folklore, the blessings of the Islamic saint Sayad Kadiri upon the Memons are responsible for their success in business and trade. More pragmatic explanation for Memons success in business has been attributed to being viewed as honest brokers. Following commercial caste model, Memons also offer support community members in financial matters by giving loans.
and offering business assistance.

**Memons worldwide**

![Katchi Memon Masjid](image)

Katchi Memon Masjid

Today, Memons communities are scattered throughout the world including UAE, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, UK, USA and Canada[^1][^2][^3][^4]. However, major concentrations of Memon remain located in Karachi, Pakistan and Gujrat, India. In **Karachi** today there is a community of Memon people from **Bantva** and their descendants known as **Bantva Memons**. Also another prominent category is Halari Memon who works under the banner of Halari Memon General Jama'at. Halari Memon is a group of several subcategories and are also the follower of Hanfi Muslim.[^5] Memons were also one of three classes living in South Africa when Mahatma Gandhi went there in 1893, Memons were basically traders serving the Indian diaspora in South Africa. Memons are known for their involvement in **business** and **philanthropy**, with Memons having played a major part in the building of Pakistani industry.[^6][^7][^8]

**References**

10. ^WAI-YIP, Ho^ (2001). "Historical Analysis of Islamic Community Development in Hong Kong:

Categories:
Memon people
Lohana