

Islamic Perspectives *on* Corruption

*In the name of
Allah, the most
Beneficent, the
Most Merciful*

Introduction

Corruption can be defined as an act of destruction of data, due process, agreement or dynamics of any agreed term and dynamics by manipulation of parts of it, either by deliberate or accidental human action or by imperfection in storage or transmission. Corruption is ruining many countries like Nigeria. Poverty, poor and deteriorating health services, poor quality of education are all linked to corruption in our society

Corruption can be described as diversion of public fund for personal benefit or gain, or a form of dishonesty often exhibited to acquire wealth. By and large, a gross abuse of power or delegated authority. In Q11:85 Almighty Allah describes corruption as “... *consuming one another’s wealth unjustly... while you (know) it is unlawful*”.

Today, many do not know that failing to talk against corruption is corruption. It is corruption because it will not allow corrupt people know what chaos they are injecting into the society.

Islamic View on Corruption

Islam calls upon every Muslim to behave in a just and ethical manner that is conducive to sustainable development. From the Islamic perspective, corruption covers all forms of dishonesty, attitudes displaced, unscrupulous amassing of wealth and self-centered approach to public fund. All these are frowned against by the Quran and the teaching of Prophet Mohammed (S.A.W). Common forms of corruption are listed below:

Abuse of power/authority

Islam does not approve of abuse of power as seen below:

In Q11:85 Almighty Allah says “...*give full measure and weight in justice and do not deprive the people of their due and do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption.*”

Bribery and extortion

This involves Taking advantage of an issue or somebody to collect undue materials or money. Prophet Mohammed (S.A.W) was quoted to have said that *“the giver and receiver of bribe are dwellers of hellfire.”* Prophet Mohammed (S.A.W) also explains that *“...do not consume one another’s wealth unjustly or send it (in bribery) to rulers in order that (they might aid) you (to) consume a portion of the wealth of the people in sin, while you (know) it is unlawful”*. These portions of Hadith mentioned above are what Allah uses to detest bribery and extortion of money.

Embezzlement

Allah warns against embezzlement which means an act of rechanneling public funds allotted for specific purposes without any approval. On this, Prophet Mohammed (S.A.W)

says *“whoever betrays us is not one of us.”* Allah also says *“...woe to those who give less than due, who when they take a measure from people they take it in full. But if they give by measure or by weight to them, they cause loss. Do they not thrive that they will be resurrected”* (Q 83:1-4)

Taking gratification by public officers

A man was nominated by Prophet Mohammed (S.A.W) one day to monitor the collection and disbursement of zakat. The man came back and delivered part of the Zakat and withheld the smaller part. He told Prophet Mohammed (S.A.W) that it was given to him as gratification. The prophet rose to the pulpit and said *“those who were sent to hold public service and come to say they were given something as gratification, why can’t they stay in their father and mothers’ house and see if they will be given such* (Ibn Daud).



Reduction of measures and weight

Allah says “...*O my people, worship Allah, you have no deity other than Him. And do not decrease from the measure and the scale....*”(Q11:84).

In Q11:85 Almighty Allah says “... *give full measure and weight in justice and do not deprive the people of their due and do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption.*”

Betrayal of trust

Betrayal of trust is one of those things stated in a hadith. The prophet (S.A.W) said "a leader is a guardian of his people and shall be accountable to them." (Q5:1, Q35:7

How Muslims can Stand Upright for Nigeria

The mosque brings the community together as it acts as many things- a social center, a community center and an educational center with many events that welcome both old and new members of the faith. It serves as the center of Islamic life in inculcating Islamic values onto Muslims seeking to imbibe Islamic cultural and religious ethos in order to seek the pleasure of Allah.

The Mosque

As a body, the mosque has a role in providing and encouraging the provision of spiritual and moral education at various levels - the family, community and the state which frowns against any and every corrupt behavior. It can encourage Islamic clerics/ leaders to lead by example and preach correct Islamic values from the holy Qur'an and hadith. It needs to drive instituting justice and reforming Islamic values because preserving people's lives and their

possessions are among the main purposes of Shari'a.

Prophet Mohammed (S.A.W) says: the son of Adam will not pass away from Allah until he is asked about five things: *how he lived his life, how he utilized his youth, how he earned his wealth, how he spent his wealth and what he did with his knowledge (Tirmidhi).*

Therefore Muslims can stand upright for Nigeria by:

- Abstaining from participating in any act of corruption
- Staying away from taking bribe and gratification
- Rising up for the campaign against the act of corruption (Q3:104) “...*And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin what is right*

and forbid the wrong, and these it is that shall be successful”.

- Be a role model
- Begin practicing and inculcating these values from your home (Q66:6) “...*O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel is men and stones; over it are angels stern and strong, they do not disobey Allah in what he commands them, and do as they are commanded”.*
- Support campaigners against the act of corruption with all your effort

The Imams

In addition to the responsibilities listed above, Imams need to lead by example. Their actions must not be perceived to condone corruption among their followers. This means living in accordance to the provision of the Quran and Hadith. They also have

a duty of speaking up by reminding Muslims that corruption is contrary to morality, and religious values forbid it. Imams need to engage in continuous educational methods which promote the individual’s and groups religious faith in order to prevent the Muslim from falling into taboos.

Sermons

These need to be related to current social and political occurrences to aid better understanding of how current practices that are perceived as normal and beyond us are part of corruption. All Muslims will be held accountable for all their intentions, actions and inactions in the hereafter.

Conclusion

In conclusion, public service is a great responsibility: Narrated Abdullahi Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) I heard Allah's messenger saying "Everyone of you is a guardian and responsible for what is in his custody"

The duty of fighting corruption is collective: whoever amongst you sees an evil let him change it with his hands and if he is not able then with his tongue, and if he is not able then let him hate it in his heart and that is the weakest form of campaigning against evil.

*All Muslims should
be role models and
lead by example.*

*Muslims should
Stand Upright
for Nigeria and
Stand Against
Corruption.*

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