

The Role of Faith in Fighting Corruption and Indiscipline in Society: A Study from Islamic Perspective

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Abstract: - Corruption is among the greatest constraints to economic and social progress; it harms economic growth and distort moral aspect of human being. Though many researches and recommendations have been made to curtail corruption in society but, it is still apparent in people's attitude. The paper in this respect attempts to discuss concept of corruption, its causes, types and impact. Then the researcher will proffer solutions from Islamic point of view of faith regarding corruption. In writing and discussing the segments of the paper the researcher will adopt critical and analytical method to achieve the goal of the research.

I. INTRODUCTION

This paper attempts to assess issues of corruption and indiscipline from Islamic perspective though scholars in different fields of research have discussed this topic abundantly but still there is no tangible solution. The author in this regard attempts to discuss it from Islamic point of view by underlining conceptual clarification, causes, and effects of indiscipline of corruption.

Conceptual Clarifications

For better understanding of the topic the Role of Faith in Fighting corruption and indiscipline in society: A study from Islamic perspective, there is need to provide clarifications on some important concepts used by the author in his discussion of the topic.

Faith

Faith is a strong religious creed. It is stronger than reason (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2000). it denotes Iman which is rendered in English as faith literally it means "to know" to believe and to be convinced beyond the least shadow of doubt". Faith, is therefore means firm belief arising out of knowledge and conviction. And the person who knows and response unshakable belief in the unity of Allah, in his attributes law, revealed guidance, divine code of reward and punishment issues of responsibility and accountability is called Mu'min (faithful) (Mawdudi, 1982). Indeed proper faith undoubted leads man to a life of obedience and submission to the will of Allah. (Anis Ibrahim, 1972). In this respect, how can corruption be defined?

Corruption

Corruption is one of people's actions which are immoral, dishonest or illegal behavior, especially when it leads people into giving and taking bribes. The corrupt persons are those who use their power to do dishonest or illegal things in return for money or to get an advantage either in trading or personal interest in society. It simply means to change the original form of something so that it is damaged or spoiled in some way. (Oxford, 2000:261). The term corruption according to Doig (1996) is to describe any use of official position, resources or facilities for personal benefit or possible conflict of interest between public position and private benefit. Which has to do with offences of misconduct in the public offices and is also covered by a variety of internal regulations. The word stands of conduct is used to encompass a mixture of law, regulations, culture, attitudes and traditions (Doig, 1996). Therefore, the word "Fasaad" mischief is similar to the meaning of corruption in Arabic terminology (Anis, 1972:372), hence corruption and fasaad are unlawful warfare or crime against law and order in society. (IbnKathir, 2000:132-133). When explaining the word fasaad, he considers it as a mischief or corruption on the earth, which means the act of disobedience to Allah and public interest. However, the meaning of indiscipline is closer to corruption because it denotes lack of control in the behavior of a group of people which leads them to violence and corruption. (Oxford, 2000:610).

Types of Corruption and Bribery Against the Law in Society

1. **Bribery:** Means that giving and taking a sum of money or something valuable that you give or offer to somebody to persuade them to help you, especially by doing something dishonest, for instance bribery some body to handing over secret information. Bribery here and corruption are almost the same (Oxford, 2000:135).
2. **Extortion:** This is an act to force somebody to give you money or something valuable by threatening him (Oxford 2000:410). This are the acts of gang in most of the cares arises in our country
3. **Fraud:** An act of a person who pretends to have qualities, abilities among others that he/she does not really have in order to deceive other people. It infact,

is an act of crime because the actor is a liar and fraudulent (Oxford 2000:472)

4. **Nepotism:** It is an act of giving unfair advantages to your own family if you are in a position of power especially by giving them jobs (Ibid: 786). These types of corruption and bribery are so practiced in our contemporary society but what are the causes of these practices and what are the solutions for them?

Causes of Corruption and Indiscipline in Society

What are some causes of corruption and indiscipline in our society?

The causes of corruption and indiscipline in our society are many they can be seen as follows:

- Inefficient and non self enforcing rule
- Lack of devotion to public interest
- Absence of commitment to public service
- Relatively low of public service compensative
- Economic woes and chronic poverty
- Indiscipline and inefficiency
- Weak of anti corruption of watch dog agency and other enforcement mechanism
- Failure in investigations and prosecution glaring cases of indiscipline and corruption (Muhammad Koko, N. 2014).

In addition to the above mentioned inadequate legal framework with the absence of freedom of information and whistle blowers legislation.

- The role of tribalism/ethnicity and religion in national politics. Ethnicity and religion breed divisible tendencies making it difficult to nurture true cohesion and build resistance to corruption.
- Elastic tolerance for corruption fostered by socio-cultural norms and attitudes towards public property that were nourished under colonialism
- Poverty and the death of basic public service, infrastructure and utilities, leading to the denial of a platform for self actualization due o the concept diversion of the nations resources
- Mismanagement of oil resources evidenced by the abstentious life styles and flaunting of wealth by political elite and their apologists (Isma'ila, 2004).

However, corruption is at an alarming stage to the extent that there are certain behavior which people are no longer considered as misnomer and vices. In pre-modern Nigeria society corruption was an abomination, a shameful act and embarrassment. Transparency, discipline, honesty, sincerity and faithfulness in the daily life of Nigerians were watch word irrespective of age, se or religion affiliation.

In contemporary Nigeria corruption seems to have become an acceptable norm and indeed has become an institution. It is a glaring cause and very evident in every sector of national life. Esthons observed that corruption as social vices has gradually

destroyed the norms and values of our traditional lifestyles and has affected the moral psyche of large majority of our people.

Effects of Corruption and Indiscipline on the Individuals in Society

The effects of corruption are evident on both individuals and society at large, there can be noticed in the following:

- 1) Loss of poor people's right for having no money to bribe
- 2) Loss of honest people's right for their refusal to offer bribe
- 3) Refusal of people to do official job for which they are paid simply because thy are not given bribes
- 4) Incessant rise in the cost of everything because bribes have to be paid out of production and distribution cost

Indeed, corruption in the world generally and in Nigeria particularly affects greatly our contemporary society and it covers a wide range of social misconduct. This ranges from massive fraud, extortion, embezzlement, bribery, nepotism, influence peddling, bestowing of favours to friends, rigging of elections, abuse of public property, the leaking of official government secret, sale of expire and defective goods like drugs, food, electronics and spare parts to the public, among others (El-Rufai, 2003).

On the Individuals

Corruption and indiscipline in society makes poor becoming poor and poorer while the rich gets richer. Due to the high level of poverty, poor person finds it difficult to get money to pay for his/her food and chatter. At the school level "some students find it difficult to pay their school and transportation fees, so have to trek long distances. Corruption affects students greatly economically, as observed by Ekpo et al that in Nigeria "corruption is endemic and systematically entrenched in the social fabric of national. It is the root cause of poverty in Nigeria, corruption is largely responsible or trodden members of our society (Ekpo et al 2000) which cause indiscipline among youth.

Society

Corruption affects members of society; moral decadence will be very high in society. Besides, we hear of rape, children molestation, women being abuse, high rate of drug trafficking and the rise and of recent the evil degradation and depravity of the human heart and those that are bent on causing havoc seenin terrorism and military. All these are effects of corruption and indiscipline in society.

II. FIGHTING CORRUPTION AND INDISCIPLINE FROM ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

Islam as a religion of faith, moral and value can be served as a tool to fight against corruption and indiscipline in our contemporary societies. Indeed, a religion such as Islam is a

supreme force in the development of mankind to its present condition. Religion sheds light on the path of man, enhances faith in God and promote sense of responsibility for the reformation of thought and belief, in addition to the promotion of high principles of morality, the establishment of good relations among members of the society and the elimination of every sort of undue practices and would be a good weapon to fight corruption and indiscipline if its values are appropriately applied (Adeniyi, 2001).

Therefore, it is necessary to discuss here about accountability in this paper.

Accountability

Human being is responsible for acts in order to fight issues are related to indiscipline and corruption in society why? Because human is Allah's vicegerent who is accountable to Allah in hereafter. He is answerable for all his activities on earth. In Islamic thought everybody is a leader and each leader shall be questioned over his leadership

So, the consciousness of eschatology as part of the articles of faith is to serve as checks and balance for the political class in particular and every body as a potential leader. Righteousness is rewarded with paradise while tyranny, oppression and dictatorship lead to hell fire (Abdul Rauf M. 1982:11) through ethical values Islam guides humans in their behaviors to be renounced from violence, stagnation injustice indiscipline and corruption. For instance, Allah permits business transactions that are based on corruption, uncertainty, usury or involvement of gambling matters. Allah says

woe to Al-Mutafifina (those who give less in measure and weight). Those who, when they have to receive by measure from men demand full measure. And when they have to give by measure or weight to (other) men, give less than due. Do they not think that they will be resurrected (for reckoning), on a great day, the Day when (all) mankind will stand before the Lord of the Alamin mankind jinn and all that exists (Qur'an 83:1-6).

Allah warns mankind not to go into corruption and indiscipline and not to use properties of another people illegally.

Another evidence from the Qur'an that rejects corruption and indiscipline can be in the following verse, Allah says:

“And eat up not one another's property unjustly (in any illegal way e.g. stealing, robbing, deceiving, among others) nor give bribery to the rulers of judges before presenting your cases) that you may knowingly eat up a part of the property of others sinfully” (Qur'an 2:188)

To fight against corruption and indiscipline in society, Allah encourages social welfare by the Zakat (the alms) to alleviate poverty and indiscipline in society. Initially Zakat fights against corruption begging and indiscipline according to author's experience, most of the time poverty pushes youth to steal and disobedience against social orders.

From Islamic perspective, corruption and indiscipline are moral and ethical problems while reflects the internal fortitude of an individual and the ability to foster self restraint rather than enforcing laws and systems (Lewis, 2006:13).

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF TAQWA IN FIGHTING AGAINST CORRUPTION AND INDISCIPLINE

Taqwa are tools for fighting corruption and indiscipline in our society, it means avoidance, protection or safeguarding from every kind of evil. It also being under the protection of Allah by seeking refuge in Him, avoiding what has been forbidden and abiding by what has been commanded. It means fearing the punishment and the torment of the Glorious one and taking refuge in the shadow of his compassion. Therefore destroying egoistical desires and developing the spiritual abilities that Allah has endowed man with. (Topbas, 2009:17). Beside, Islam laid ground for its adherents sense of penal dignity of vocation as Allah's vicegerents on the earth, as higher than the angels, endowed with the cosmic duty of realizing the divine pattern, and of global responsibility for man's history. Islam taught the Muslimtaqwa, or the fear of Allah and thereby made the voice of conscience efficacious in determining personal conduct. It teaches Muslims ethics of contentment, honest work and truthfulness and a respect for the elder and next of kin combined with legal responsibility for their welfare (Al-Faruqi, 1974:245).

The author sees, that taqwa as an important strategy for fighting against corruption and indiscipline in society.

IV. TAQWA AND FAITH AGAINST CORRUPTION AND INDISCIPLINE

Taqwa and faith are very vital in fighting corruption and indiscipline in society. Faith should be empowered with taqwa “If faith is not nourished with taqwa many of the defects inherent in a person's actions will remain, this will result in a weakening of faith and may even render it ultimately useless, a person after this will fall into ignorance and superstition. This is why taqwa is of such great importance. (Topbas, 2009:17) studying corruption and indiscipline in our society, it appears that they are the consequence of lack of taqwa and good faith in corruption and indiscipline persons. Therefore, “the purification of the soul and the perfection of the self are important because the heart is the seat of faith. The roots and essence of faith bloom when the heart is nourished. This is why according to (Topbas 2009:29) embedding faith into the soul is essential. Hence believing in Allah is the responsibility of the heart not that of the mind. Besides the mysteries and the secrets of the cosmos are untangled in accord with strength of

the heart and not the strength of a persons intelligence. So any person who trainhimself and pray to Allah to grant him both taqwa and faith he will not accept corruption and indiscipline practices in his life.

V. CONCLUSION

The paper has attempted to access issues of corruption and indiscipline, it discussed conceptual clarification, causes and effects of corruption and indiscipline. The provided Islamic point of view and measures that should be considered in fighting corruption and in indiscipline either in Nigeria or other parts of the world. Bearing in mind that alleviation of indiscipline and corruption in our society is not responsibility of government but all the individuals in society by using strategies of faith and taqwa.

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