



## **Understanding the concept of Self Contentment in Islam a Solution to Corrupt Practice as a Panacea to Insecurity in Nigeria**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The paper discusses the definition and concept of self-contentment in Islam. Likewise, it discusses the rationale behind and the deviation and agreed of people by including into corruption for purpose of livelihood which they attribute to not meeting of their needs by the government. Finally, the paper highlighted how one can be self-contented and proffer solution to some of the bedeviled problem in our society which caused the security challenges in the society.

**Keywords:** Islam; corruption; security in the society

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

It is the duty of a poor and rich to be contented to serve all greed of the creation; not to turn his attention to what they have, and not to be covetous of acquiring wealth irrespective of how it may be. This is not possible to do without his being content with the basic necessities as regard food, clothing and shelter. He should confined himself to the smallest amount and the lowers quality. He should defer his hopes for the next day or the next month. The desire for more or his length hopes will force him to lose the honour of contentment and will certainly adulterate him with covetousness and the humiliation of greed. Covetousness and greed will draw him towards evil trait and towards committing that tear down his dignity.

Perhaps this is the problem we are facing today in Nigeria, thereby causing unrest and insecurity.

## **2. THE CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION OF SELF-CONTENTMENT IN ISLAM**

Contentment can be seen as pleased with ones situation and not hoping for change or improvement. It can also be defined as the neuro physiological experience of satisfaction and being at ease in one's situation. Contentment can be seen as not the fulfillment of what you want, but the realization of how much you already have. Contentment is one of the most important prerequisites for happiness in life, unfortunately many muslim today don't have it.

Allah said in the glorious Qur'an chapter 10-24;

*“verily the likeness of (this) worldly life is as the rain which we send down from the sky, so by it arises the intermingled produce of the earth of which men and cattle eat until when the earth is clad with its adornments and is beautified and its people think they have all the power of disposal over it, our command reaches it by night or day and we make it like a flourished yesterday” (10-24)*

Man, by nature is greedy, covetous and discontented. The messenger of Allah Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: “if a man were to have two valleys of gold, he would seek a third one. Nothing will fill the belly of a man except soil. Allah accepts the repentance of he who turns to Him in repentance”.

There are many dangers and difficulties in the world and the greatest danger is that of wealth. One of the dangers of wealth is that it cannot satisfy anybody and nobody is safe even if he possess enormous wealth and riches. As it was in the hadith of the Prophet of Allah (SAW) its narrated that Allah (SWT) said:

*“O man! If the entire world belonged to you, you would have only had your most basic food thereof since I am giving you your basic food from the world and made the account thereof to other besides you, I am being extremely King to you”.*

In order to achieve this easily life is for one to understand contentment you should realize that the thing which people earn for in this world, are in fact worthless when compared with what we hope to achieve in the next life. If we know what Allah has will remain and that the life to come is better and more lasting, then what we realize is that the life of this world is really like a piece of ice left out in the sun, it soon melts and vanishes.

We must learn to withdraw from the life of this world even though we may still have a great desire for it in our hearts.

World itself as a result of its striving to achieve worldly gains and he is competing with people over it. he also if care not taking to suffer in the grave because he missed out in this lead and regrets his lost opportunities for now he is on his way to meet Allah (SWT) His creator, such a state that he wishes he will never meet Him.

### **3. THE CONCEPT OF CORRUPTION IN ISLAM**

Corruption literally means to deviate from known norms or to be dishonest or contaminate or change something from its original form. But technically, in Islam it covers a wider range of area which can all be grouped under the concept of *Zulm*. *Zulm* means wrong doing, injustice, unfairness, inequity, oppression, repression, suppression, tyranny, Al Sa'adi opines that corruption or *Zulm* in Islam includes embezzlement of people wealth for personal purpose or taking wealth from people illegally or wrongly, beating people unjustifiably or abusing them. Thus, corruption can be seen as a concept that touches many aspects of human life. Corruption can also be seen as a misappropriation and embezzlement of public funds under one's custody.

The word corruption is also defined as using your power in a dishonest or illegal way in order to get an advantage for yourself. Thus corruption involves employing procedures that are contrary to the accepted moral, legal and ethnical standard to satisfy one's needs or wants and in its elastic sense is embraces all forms of social impropriety like bribery, perversion of justice, squander mania and embezzlement of public funds etc. (Akinbi, 2003).

Certainly corruption is not a new thing in human societies. It is an age old menace which can cause tremendous harm to society. Generally corruption exits when a person in power has the right to make decision that concerns others whose interests are at stakes. The interested part will try to find ways and means of getting what they want. One of the common ways is to offer the person in power certain favours so that the decision is made in his favour. This could happen only if the decision maker is willing to accept the favour offered to him.

On the other hand, if the person in power is not willing to accept such favours then the process stops there. Unfortunately, it is not a simple thing nowadays that many are looking for the favours whether favour or not favoured. The interested party will not stop there either. It is already known fact that the disease of corruption start from the person in power. By making thing difficult the interested party will start to entertain the idea that there is way of doing things. They will try to search for the best way of getting what they want. It can also be started by those with vested interest.

Those individuals who have something they really want from those in authority will try their best to reach those in power and suggest some form of kickbacks of course, it will not be so easy at first, but eventually with a lot of persuasion and perseverance they get their way. At the early stage, most of the corrupt practices are carried out very discretely that the integrity of the person is never questioned. The person in power would appear to be super clean in public, but in actual fact, those involved are the only people who know what goes on behind those innocent faces. The problem now becomes gigantic when corruption is practiced openly, those in power starts demanding what they wants and those who give are very open about it too. Both parties have regarded it as a norm because everybody else is doing it anyway. Those who do not do it are considered as either stupid or a thorn in the group.

The prophet is reported to have said:

If you get from the people because of your position is corruption. Would you get it if you are not holding position, or if you stay in your father's house? Any time he appointed people to oversee certain affairs of the Ummah, he addressed them with a warning that, they should not ride the best horses, nor wear the best cloths' that denote arrogance and show off, nor eat the best foods and should not closed the doors of their houses from those who they were serving.

This piece of advice was also employed by Sultan Muhammad Bello during his reign as Sultan of Sokoto which is very relevant to us in Northern Nigeria and Nigeria today, though it tend to be ignored. We find that Muslim leaders are among those who ride the best cars and own expensive mansions the source of which is from public funds. Its also the case in terms of the best clothes, houses, foods and these leaders and politicians not only closed their houses from the led but also flee from them especially during period of festivities like fasting, Eids and the like Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (R.A) as the caliph was very worry of corruption and its ills among leaders and their representatives. That is why he always tried to check it and warn his aides also to ahun it. He one time wrote to Abu Musa Al-Ashari, he then Head of Services as follows:

*“verily the best and happiest leader is the one whose subject re pleased and prosperous due to his (action) and the worst and most wretched of leaders in the one whose subject suffer, I warn you of the injustice and corruption of your aides for they will emulate you..... ”*

Islam considers leaders and leadership as very important in human society and therefore, it takes measures that will enhance the institution of leadership and condemned vehemently all measures that will lead to its corruption. Due to this reason, Islam considers leadership as a trust and leaders as trustee. Anyone who has been entrusted with leadership of any kind is given a trust and therefore he/she is expected to hold it with diligence. In fact, even if it is a secret talk, one is expected to keep it as confidential for it at trust. Thus, Islam urges leaders and their representatives to be wary of what they take in their offices besides their salaries. This is because some may be bribes intended to corrupt them. Its because of this reason, as pointed out by Sultan Muhammad Bello in his Book titled Usul Al-Siyasa, that Umar Ibn Al-khattab (R.A) took serious measures against himself and his appointees to guard them against corruption.

Welfare and wellbeing of the people starting from their personal security, there are various factors that are responsible for insecurity which cause violent conflict in Nigeria, poverty, unemployment, religious intolerance, ethnic rivalry, which were all cause as the result of corruption, the abundance resources in this country if not because of corruption is will be sufficient for all the youth to be provided with job either public or private.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Corruption is a common phenomenon in human practice, though,rampant globally corruption varies from region to region and country to country in its intensity it could also be seen as deviating from known norms or to be dishonest or contaminate or change something from its original form.

Likewise, Islam vehemently condemned corruption in all its ramifications and call it Zulm. Many wanton practices are considered as corruption, and this paper observed that presenting corruption is possible through the application of self-contentment which offers the contented heart which is healthy and free from deceit, corruption and rancor and all various tricks of the devil.

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