

# AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CAUSES OF POVERTY AND ITS SOLUTION FROM ISLAMIC POINT OF VIEW A CASE STUDY OF KANO METROPOLIS

BY

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## ABSTRACT

*This paper investigate the causes of poverty and its solution from Islamic point of view, the scope of the paper is Kano Metropolis. The aim and objectives of the research is to find out causes and solution from Islamic Point of view. The research proffers to the Kano community members the Islamic values, teaching and instruction to gain knowledge and skills, to acquire constructive behavioral tendencies and to enable them to play helpful role in rebuilding the society under Islamic guidelines, the methodology employed in conducting the research was field work both primary and secondary sources were used. The main causes of all these causes were discovered while the solutions and recommendations were suggested.*

Keywords: kano Metropolis, Islamic Values, Causes of Poverty, Kano Community

## Introduction

Poverty is one of the most crucial and biggest social problems of the modern age. The number of people living below poverty line is increasing day by day at an alarming rate. Poverty in Islam is concerned with insufficiency of income and the inability in fulfilling basic human needs. In general, poverty is the bad condition that the person lives in. It is not praised by Islam, that the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

*“O Allah I seek refuge with you from disbelief, poverty and the torment of the grave...”<sup>1</sup>*

Kano State being one of the urbanized states in Nigeria is something of its community with abject poverty, which resulted from low level of employment, illiteracy, food insecurity, inadequate infrastructural facilities. It has been reported by the Kano State Ministry of Social Welfare that 3.2million out of 9 million people (postulated by census 2006) in Kano State are living without basic necessities of life, which shows the extent to which the poverty level is rising in the state.

Therefore, the focus of this paper is to investigate the Causes of Poverty and its Solution From Islamic Point of view the paper will be limited to Kano State.

## **CAUSES OF POVERTY**

Scholars has examine various causes of poverty, but this paper will only explain five (5) causes with the consideration of the area of which the study will be carried out.

### **1) Unemployment**

There is high rate of joblessness in the society and it is on the increase on daily basis. One can easily find youths of mostly between the ages of twenty and thirty five sitting under shades of trees from early morning till late evening; what categorically indicates that they are jobless<sup>2</sup>.

So also there are no go areas in the town notably congested places where criminals are using pathways to seize handsets from passersby<sup>3</sup>. And in some instances, the post-election violence which characterizes Nigeria’s democracy is ignited by some unpatriotic politicians who sponsor a group of youths (i.e. political boys) with a meagre amount of N 10,000 or N 20,000 to attack

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Nasa’i, *Kitab As-sahawi, Babu Attaawuz duburi salat*, No. 1347 classed as Saheeh by Albany

<sup>2</sup> Garba S. *The Management of Small-Scale Irrigation in Kano*, a paper presentation in Sa’adatu Rimi College of Education, Kumbotso, June, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Mal. Tijjani Muhammad Ustaz (27years), Teacher/Businessman, Interviewed in Kwari market on 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2017

their opponents in the name of revenge or reprisal which brings chaos in the society. There is no doubt that all these evils which may not be unconnected with the high rate of unemployment are contributing negatively to our economic and social well-being.

In a nutshell, people suffer from all types of unemployment. For example, visible and invisible unemployment as well as visible and invisible underemployment are widespread. Many people are roaming about looking for jobs, which do not exist. Some are under employed because they cannot get a job where they can fully use their ability.

## **2) Poor Education**

This is an important heading when it comes to what can be a cause to poverty among the human race. Many people are living in poverty in various parts of Kano because they were not given the privilege to attend good schools that can fetch them good jobs and boost their earnings<sup>4</sup>.

Also, there are those who went to school and still became poor because of the standard of school they passed through which do not impart much into them. This has become a big problem as many who entered into education system rushed out with little or even no practical skill<sup>5</sup>. This makes them stay with their parents for years without anything to do so that they earn money as the reward for their efforts. It is good to upgrade institutions of higher learning to close the gap of poverty among those that attended schools. <sup>6</sup>

## **3) Corruption**

Transparency International defines corruption as “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain.”<sup>7</sup> This has become a common act in Nigeria and it has destabilized the political system drastically. Government funds are being misappropriated on a daily basis by the leaders, who

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<sup>4</sup> Bala Sani Rafindadi 45, Civil Servant, Fagge 4/2/2018

<sup>5</sup> *Effects and Causes of Poverty* by Wikipedia

<sup>6</sup> Mike U. *Causes and Effect of Poverty*, Hubpage NP 2017

<sup>7</sup> See [http://www.transparency.org/news\\_room/faq/corruption\\_faq](http://www.transparency.org/news_room/faq/corruption_faq).

only put the interest of their family and friends at heart while ignoring the masses. Corruption has eaten so deeply into the government and economy that everyone seems to be blinded by it. Corruption has almost become an accepted way of life in Nigeria.

In Nigeria, the government's income is generated mostly from natural resource revenues. This income, instead of being used for developmental purposes, is then circulated among the political office holders and their families, leaving the rest of the people to wallow in poverty. Political leaders practically ignore the affairs and wellbeing of their people who elected them into office. They mismanage and embezzle funds. There are several issues involved with bad governance in Nigeria, use of wrong policies, adaptation to wrong policies and implementation of those wrong policies. In any case, it is clear that Nigeria's corruption has increased poverty and inequality as well as contributed to high crime rates<sup>8</sup>.

Another form of corruption is the issue of closing industries as one of the causes of poverty in Kano. When someone buys a company which thousands of people are working under it, then he closes the company without any reason. Their mission is only to use the license in order to get dollar from CBN<sup>9</sup>.

#### **4) Laziness**

Laziness is a common disease which is virtually suffered by many of the people Kano metropolis today, especially those from wealthy households. Everyone wants to be comfortable but they are not ready to work towards it. This often leads to greed where people will do whatever they can to keep the family wealth for themselves<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Nnachi, E.D, *The impact of globalization in the Nigerian economy*, Minneapolis Minnesota: Walden University Dissertation Pg. 48

<sup>9</sup> Zahraddeen Sulaiman, (40) WAPA Market, Kano, 22-09-2018.

<sup>10</sup> Ahmad, A. 34, federal University, Dutse, Department Accounting. 15/12/2017



Literally the Arabic word “zakat” means both „purification“ and „growth“. The word is an infinite verb which means „to grow“, „to increase“ or „to purify“<sup>12</sup>. In Islamic jurisprudence (*Fiqh*), zakat is an obligatory duty (*Fard*) on every Muslim (male) and *Muslimah* (female) possessing wealth equal to or exceeding the prescribed amount called *Nisab*. It is also prescribed as welfare-contribution from one’s stored wealth. It is the right of Allah on Muslim's wealth.<sup>13</sup>

### **The Islamic View of Poverty and the Role of Zakat as its Alleviation Strategy**

Poverty alleviation has been one of the foremost objectives of the development programs in many developing countries of the world for the last several decades. Considerable researches have been carried out on the issue of poverty alleviation and its long run socioeconomic effects in developed as well as in developing countries. Poverty as a global disease can take economic, social, political and environmental dimensions. Each dimension is mutually linked to the other. Lack of enough income to feed, shelter and educate oneself may translate into such social ailments as deprivation, frustration, discrimination, illness and illiteracy. The implication of all these is political powerlessness and invisibility<sup>14</sup>.

From the foregoing, it is clear that, if the government will stand firmly in collection of Zakat from wealth, Muslims and giving it to the deserving recipients, there would never be somebody in Kano Metropolis that will complain of hunger, nakedness, a beggar, and there would not have be someone that will cry for abject poverty.

### **Waqf**

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<sup>12</sup>Qardawi, *Mushkilatil-al-faqr wa kaifa aalaju hal-Islam*, 1969, Pg. 37

<sup>13</sup> Kantudu, S.M et al, *Effectiveness of Zakat as an Instrumental of Fiscal Policy in the Redistribution of wealth in Kebbi State*, Kiyawa et-al (eds) Jomams, Vol. 2 BUK 2007.

<sup>14</sup> AbdulQadir, O. *Wakf, Islamic Law of Charitable Trust Global Vision Publishing House*, Delhi, India 2004, Pg. 7 <sup>84</sup> - qardawy op. cit



## **The Importance of Waqf in alleviating poverty**

As one of Islamic civilization aims at taking care of need of the society that are otherwise ignored in the process of economic growth and development, *Waqf* is one of the ways by which poverty can be alleviated in our society if it is properly managed. It allows redistribution of wealth in a society. The *waqf* can be used to construct roads, build toilets, schools and hospitals, then to create standard living of people. Where *al-waqf* is used judiciously it creates jobs for people. *Waqf* that is used to give scholarship for indigent students being prepared as the leaders of tomorrow for that society. Through *waqf*, basic needs can be provided for people in a society<sup>17</sup>. Through *waqf*, the poor are given their rights when Allah praises such givers

چڳ گڳ چالمعارج: ۲۵

*“And those within whose wealth is a known right For the petitioner and the deprived”.*

Scholars should explain to the wealthy individuals in the society that "*Sadaqatun Jariyya*" (the flowing 'charity) does not begin and end with building Mosques and Islamiyya Schools but also include among other things: Funding the education of a Muslim female medical student, an engineer, a natural scientist or any other students in a field that lacks personnel. It also includes building and/or equipping a laboratory, hospital ward, library, classrooms, solar or motorized boreholes, skills acquisition centers and so on.

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<sup>17</sup> Saddiq A.S *Awqaf Perpetual charity and Poverty Alleviation*, a paper presented at a conference in Dhakar, 2015 P. 143



On the other hand, individual Muslims supposed to single-handedly make a capital project endowment, just like it is found in Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and Malaysia whereby their endowment institutions are very powerful<sup>18</sup>.

### **The role of waqf in poverty alleviation in Kano.**

Islamic economics have long recognized the value of *waqf* in Islamic economics, *waqfis* one of the most important instrument that can play a significant role in uplifting the socio-economic status of the status of the Muslim *Ummah*. Among elements which will eradicate the poverty in Kano are,

- a. Job Opportunity: Job opportunity is among the biggest problem which affect the socio-economic activities. Islamic *awqaf* contributed a lot in solving the problem of joblessness in the community. However, this *awqaf* played a vital role in providing job opportunities for Kano people especially mosque *waqf* (*Waqaful Masjid*) can provide job to some people like *Imams*, *Mu'azzim*, *Gateman*, security guards and cleaners and the schools *waqf* needs the below stated staff which include Head Teachers, Teachers, Cleaners and *Gateman* among others<sup>19</sup>.

According to research analysis, the current *waqf* of schools and mosques (*masajid*) provide 10% of job to Kano state people<sup>20</sup>.

- b. Business Activities: Islamic *Waqf* played an important role in developing business activities. In order to develop business activities, Shiekh Ahmad Tijjani mosque Kofar Mata has a several shops which belongs to the mosque for daily maintenance. And there

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<sup>18</sup> Muhammad, T.K. *Contribution of Islamic Waqf in Poverty Eradication*, a paper presentation in the department of Psychology of Haripur, Pakistan (2011).

<sup>19</sup>Indabawa, UI, *The role of Islamic Endowment in Economic Development*, PhD. Thesis Islamic Studies and Shari'ah Department, BUK, 2017 Page 148

<sup>20</sup>Ibid. Pg. 149



*bring the capital onto the sea; and not to bring with him the capital crossing a valley; and not to buy livestock with the capital; and if his partner violates the conditions, he should guarantee the loss occurred.*<sup>23</sup>

These conditions have been brought to the attention of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and he approved them". On the bases of the above Verse and Hadith, Mudarabah becomes permissible and legitimate in Islamic law, which played and plays an important role in the economic and social welfare in the Islamic history.

Mudarabah comes ahead in the entrepreneur activities that connect between rich and poor.

Mudarabah reduces poverty and promotes economic and social stability through the following points:

1. Reduces the unemployment rate
2. Promotes resource allocation and productivity
3. Increases skills
4. Promotes circulation
5. Creates social integration of wealth
6. Encourages people to work for economic independence

Mudarabah reduces unemployment rate, because by engaging in it, people without money- who were otherwise unemployed- will come into work by using their talents and skills to get in contract with the people having capital. More amounts of capital in terms of money or material would have to be idle for the sake of that more people with a lot of property are not able or willing to invest it by themselves; so unless there some people who are able and willing to invest, then, this property will surely be idle and un-useful resource; thus, Mudarabah is an

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<sup>23</sup> Bayhaqi Sunan al-Kubra Vo. VI Pg. 111

effective tool that promotes resource allocation and productivity. Mudarabah increases skills of the Mudarib by performing the daily activities, that will increase the general level of knowledge and skills in the society. Mudarabah promotes the economic circulation by investing huge amount of money on Mudarabah, which will be an income for the mudarib and other workers and suppliers in the community that will inject back in the economic circulation<sup>24</sup>.

### **Mudarabah Opportunities in Kano**

The country's recovering situation and rational stability in the recent years have attracted the eyes of many national and foreign investors to take the first-mover advantage in the country's virgin economic infrastructures.

The main vacant fields in which Mudarabah is more applicable in Kano include:

1. Agricultural Sector
2. Animal and livestock production
3. Fish farming
4. Business and Entrepreneurship advancement

*Mudarabah* can play a significant role in fighting against poverty in Kano Metropolis, because people who are financially poor have still opportunities to work in the production of different kinds of agricultural products in *Mudarabah* based financing programs. There are higher opportunities in *Mudarabah* financing in Kano Metropolis due to the vast *mudarabah* applicable in different fields; in livestock, fishing, and entrepreneurship in one side.

From the foregoing, it is clear that *mudarabah* is a highly effective and practical system of business dealings, which can rapidly promote economic wellbeing by generating enormous

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<sup>24</sup> Omar, B.H., *Mudarabah and Poverty Alleviation in Somalia*, Paper Submitted INCEIF, The Global University of Islamic Finance, 2015 Pg. 16

wealth and eradicating abject poverty, owing to job opportunities and economic activities that are likely to evolve as a result of such investment of wealth.

However, the major challenge here is the issue of *Amanah* (trustworthiness) among the parties. This is because, the party conducting the business may conceal the actual profit gained in a particular period; but in the contrary when there is loss, the party will anxiously reveal it because, will not bear the burden of the consequence.

Therefore, in order to find a lasting solution to this problem; there must be *taqwa* highly rooted in the minds of particularly the parties conducting the business. This is because lack of the fear of Allah result in the total destruction of the business, as Allah (SWT) will not bless it; thus it remains dormant.

### **Entrepreneur/Skills Acquisition**

skill acquisition is the process of enlarging people's choice for a long and healthy life, knowledge acquisition, for a decent standard of living so as to expatiate that it is freedom from economic, social and education and access and opportunities for being creative and productive; and enjoying personal self-respect and guaranteed human rights<sup>25</sup>. there are things people can do to impact their generation, they can acquire skill.

### **The Purpose of Entrepreneur/Skills Acquisition**

Entrepreneurship education as posited by Paul (2005) and Nwalado (2012) structured the following as the main purpose of Entrepreneurship education:

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<sup>25</sup> Anoru, O.E Corruption and Economic Growth, The African Experience: *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa, 2005*. P43.

- i. To reduce the high rate of poverty, insecurity and violence.
- ii. To create job and employment opportunities for its citizenry.
- iii. To reduce the rural-urban migration
- iv. Provide the young graduates adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying great business opportunities. V. To serve as catalyst for economic growth and development.
- v. To provide the young graduates with enough training skills and support that will enable them to establish a career in small and medium size business.
- vi. To create a smooth transition from tradition to modern industrial economy<sup>26</sup>.

Mustapha, (2013), suggested that entrepreneurship plays a very vital role in the development of the economy in the following areas:

- a- Reduction of unemployment
- b- Reduction in rural urban migration
- c- Raising the standard of living
- d- Encourages capital formation
- e- Skills acquisition and increase in the level of productivity<sup>27</sup>.

### **Islamic Injunctions towards Skills acquisition**

Islam encourage people to acquire skills because the Prophet and Messengers of Allah embrace the skills in many instances. Thus, they left behind the great legacy to the yet unborn generation. Allah says:

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<sup>26</sup> Tamaraye, D.S., *Skill Acquisition as a tool for poverty reduction in Bayelsa State*, Nigeria, M.Sc. Thesis Submitted to Department of Public Administration, University of Nigeria NSUKA., 2011, Pg. 39

<sup>27</sup> Mukhtar, M. (2013), *The Role of Entrepreneurship Towards Employment Generation and Poverty Reduction: a Theoretical Discussed, Maiden edition of Annual Entrepreneurship, 1 (1).*

چ د ت ث ڈ ڙ ژ ڙ ڙ ڪ ڪ گ چسبأ: ۱۰

*And we certainly gave Dawood from Us bounty. (We said). “O mountains, repeat (Our) praises with him, and the birds (as well)” And we made pliable for hm iron.*

And the Prophet Musa (AS) who engaged in the rearing animals for eight years.

چ د ت ث ڈ ڙ ژ ڙ ڙ ڪ ڪ گ چسبأ: ۲۷

*“Indeed, I wish to wed you one of these, my two daughters, on (the condition) that you serve me for eight years, but if you complete ten, it will be (as a favor) from you.*

A Hadith of Prophet (SAW) said:

*“Allah did not sent any prophet but shepherded sheep. His companion asked him, did you do the same? The prophet replied “Yes, I used shepherd the sheep of the people of mecca for same Qirats.*

## **Conclusion**

Poverty is a bad economic condition that a person lives in. It is the root of every economic, social and political evil that people should to live out and far from it. The Prophet (SAW) has sought refuge with Allah from the evil of poverty. Islam stand for complete eradication of absolute poverty and organization of economic life in manner that the basic needs of all human beings are met. Zakat, Waqf, Mudhrabah, Skills acquisition can contribute towards the eradication of poverty as a result of unemployment coupled with lack of appropriate skills. In the light of the above, it is to be understood that whatever is put on ground of means of economic opportunities could be valueless in the absence of hard work and endurance.

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