

THE MENACE OF POVERTY AND HUNGER IN NIGERIA: SOME SOLUTIONS FROM AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE**¹Dr. Bello Batari, ²Auwalu Bappah, & ³Umar Ahmad Muhammad**^{1,2,3}Department of Islamic Studies,

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Correspondence: Bellobatare@Gmail.Com, 08032818767**Abstract**

Poverty has long been identified as a failure to achieve certain minimum capabilities characterized by a feeling of discomfort or weakness caused by lack of food coupled with desire to eat, with hunger viewed as a critical dimension of extreme poverty. In Nigeria, millions live in extreme poverty and hunger as they cannot afford to buy enough food or lack the farming supplies needed to grow it, despite the nation being naturally endowed with enormous resources adequate to change its fortunes. This paradox is evidenced by the 2022 World Bank Poverty Rate Record, which indicates that about 40.10% of Nigerians are living in poverty. Successive governments have introduced numerous interventions aimed at curbing this severity, but these efforts have achieved limited success, partly due to systemic corruption. Against this backdrop, this paper employs historical analysis to examine the poverty alleviation strategies of the early Islamic caliphs specifically Caliph Abubaka ,Umar, and Uthman (R.A) to extract practical lessons for Nigeria. The analysis reveals that while corruption has consistently undermined Nigeria's welfare programs, the early caliphates demonstrated that transparent, accountable, and ethically driven systems can successfully mitigate extreme poverty through specific mechanisms ensuring food security and equitable wealth distribution. The paper concludes that adopting these ethical and administrative principles could provide Nigeria with a viable pathway to address its poverty crisis, ultimately helping to reduce social vices including theft, banditry, and suicide that are often driven by economic desperation.

Keywords: Poverty Alleviation, Hunger, Islamic Governance, Nigeria, Corruption, Historical Analysis

Introduction

Poverty and hunger have been identified as endemic and chronic diseases that affect the progress and economic development of many nations. This is because aggregate poverty and hunger of individuals in the societies is regarded as the aggregate poverty in the nation (Usman, Emmanuel and Yusufu,2022). Islam as a religion leave

no stone unturned, that is why it talks in every aspect of human endeavors, be it politics, economic or social life of human beings on Earth, and of course Poverty and hunger are not in exception. Poverty and hunger are two brothers of the same mother. None can survive without the other. Poverty is one of the most important problems in the world (Kuzudisli, 2022). Poverty in Nigeria

just like many other sub-Saharan African nations has been a worrisome and exasperate phenomenon. (Tunde and Hameed, 2022). Nigeria is a country blessed with abundant human and natural resources (Shola and Iyase). In Nigeria, widespread and severe poverty is a reality. It is a reality that depicts a lack of food, clothes, education and other basic amenities. Severely poor people lack the most basic necessities of life to a degree that it can be wondered how they manage to survive (Chimobi Ucha). There are several effects and deficiencies associated with poverty in Nigeria. Sluggish growth, low human capital, labor market weaknesses, and exposure to shocks are holding Nigeria's poverty reduction back says a new World Bank report "A Better Future for All Nigerians: Nigeria Poverty Assessment 2022".

Nigeria as a Nation has been witnessing a problem of poverty and hunger in almost all parts of the country. The problem is said to be due to the types of leaders the country is having and the system of their governance.

However, the menace of poverty and hunger in Nigeria, had reached to the extent that the country is rated among the poorest Nations, a country that affirmed its statistics of poverty had reached a total number of one hundred and thirty-three million (133,000,000) as at 2022. A country that is predominantly dominated by the Muslims, while most of its youths and some teenage were directly or indirectly influenced by the affluent to commit many vices examples; political thuggery, homicide, illicit sex,

killing of one another, corruption prevailing anywhere due to the types of leaders that the country is having.

Definitions of Poverty and Hunger

Poverty is the condition of lacking in essential needs required for standard living. Hunger is the state of being malnourished and in need of food (tope and Ambrose 2). According to Elochukwu, he defines Poverty as a state of want where human beings are unable to meet their basic needs of household such as social amenities, nutrition and economic infrastructural development needed for survival. However, He described hunger as "a condition resulting from chronic under consumption of food and/or nutritious food products (1). In addition, the definition given by Nuruddeen and Ameh they described poverty as a social problem. It is often defined, as a situation of low income and or low consumption. People are considered poor when their means or standard of living is below a minimum acceptable level known as poverty line (1).

"Hunger" is a popular word that resonates strongly with all people, even those who have experienced it only briefly. In its common usage it describes the subjective feeling of discomfort that follows a period without eating. (Halving Hunger)

Causes of Poverty in Nigeria

1. Un employment:-

The level of unemployment in Nigeria is alarming and is estimated by the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (2019) to be 23.1%, 55.4% of which is unemployment among the

youth. This has been further worsened by the coronavirus pandemic which led to the loss of jobs of many Nigerians. Akinyetun et al. (2020) note that during Covid-19, there was an increase in the rate of youth unemployment in Nigeria due to the shocks of labor demand and labor supply. A lot of people were further driven into poverty as they became subjected to exceptional lack which was deepened by the absence of social welfare packages needed to mitigate the effect of the lockdown and disruption of economic activities occasioned by the pandemic. To be sure, the relationship between unemployment and poverty in Nigeria is causal as one leads to and strengthens the other.²

1. Non-Diversification of the Economy – Oil Over-Dependency

In Nigeria, those in power have practically ignored other sources of income, and today, Nigeria depends heavily on exporting oil. This dependency on natural resources is often referred to as “Dutch disease”, whereby natural resources make a country less competitive. Excluding the few working in the oil sector, the majority of the people have been impoverished as their products have become irrelevant. The agricultural sector, which was their major means of income before the discovery of oil, is considered almost useless.³

The introduction of the structural adjustment program (SAP) was one of the government reforms advocated by the international financial institutions to reduce Nigeria’s oil

dependency. Despite increased national output in non-oil sectors, poverty and social indicators worsened as most of the revenues generated were used for servicing Nigeria’s external debt.

2. Inequality

The income inequality between the people in rural and urban areas in Nigeria is remarkably high, as those who live in the rural areas base all their income on agriculture which is today not a thriving sector in Nigeria as oil has taken over the economy. They do not invest their money to acquire skills as people in the urban areas would and this makes them more vulnerable to poverty and leads to some social and economic problems such as violence, corruption and so on (Oluwatayo, 2008, p. 2).⁵

3. Laziness

Laziness is a common disease which is virtually suffered by many Nigerians 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. In most families, everyone depends on the bread winner, who works so much to keep the family going and when he dies the family is likely to become poor because of mismanagement of funds.

4. Poor Education System

Education can play a major role in reducing poverty. According to the World Bank, education is central to development. It promotes economic growth, national

productivity and innovation, and values of democracy and social cohesion. In Nigeria, the population with no education account for most of the poor. The education system in Nigeria can be regarded as a failure compared to other countries in the world. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights⁸ states that “everyone has the right to an education.” This right to education has been denied to many Nigerians, of which many of them can be considered invisible to the society now.⁷

According to Tope and Osariyekemwen (2021), while mentioning the remote causes of poverty in Nigeria affirmed that Poverty in Nigeria is attributable to several factors which include:

- i. Poor economic growth performance and external shocks:** Being a mono-product and petrodollar economy, the Nigerian economy is volatile and highly susceptible to external shocks. Since the sales of crude oil accounts for the larger percentage of her foreign exchange earnings, a decline in oil demand will lead to a decline in earnings and, of course, a stunted or recessive economy.
- ii. Policy failure:** Some of the policies initiated by the Federal Government of Nigeria are inimical to growth and entrench poverty because the majority of these policies are bedeviled by inconsistency, lack of funding,

inadequate coordination, unprofessional monitoring, politicization, and high levels of bribery and corruption. Rather than being pro-poor, these policies have ended up engraining poverty.⁹

- iii. Lack of human capital development:** The individuals who are the units representing their economy have been ignored for far too long in Nigeria. Investments in humans have been dismal, thereby reducing their capabilities and functioning. The lack of investment in human capital in Nigeria has intensified the incidence of poverty as young people have been left to fend for themselves.
- i. Corruption:** The implications of corruption on poverty are extensive. Due to corruption, the funds meant for welfare development, poverty alleviation, service delivery, wealth creation, infrastructural development, employment creation, and quality public service have been diverted by public officials (sometimes in connivance with the private sector) for personal use. There is wanton bribery, kickback, laundering, under-declaration of profit, and nonperformance in government parastatals. The anti-corruption agencies have also been complicit in this web of

deceit, thereby reducing public confidence in them.¹¹

- ii. **Insecurity:** Crime, violence, violent extremism, terrorism, and insurgency are other factors that have increased the incidence of poverty in Nigeria. The Northern part of Nigeria has the highest population density compared to the South. Meanwhile, the majority of Nigeria's poor people are found in these Northern parts where an insurgent group, Boko Haram, has claimed the lives of thousands of people and displaced over two million people. The insurgency has also made economic activities in some parts of the region impossible, while a lot of children are out of school. This has further increased the chances and manifestation of poverty in the country.¹²

Problem of Fighting Poverty and Hunger in Nigeria,

According to Emmanuel, Ibrahim et al 2015. In their approach to highlight the problems of fighting poverty and hunger contended that there is no reason(s) to state that various governments in this country have not made any effort to fight hunger and extreme poverty. However, all their efforts have not yielded fruitful result due to the following militating factors:¹³

1. **Political instability:** Nigeria for the past two decades has witnessed

series of political changes leading to instabilities in governance. These changes often lead to a discontinuity in the planned policies and programmes and sometimes, total re-arrangement of priorities. Usually, no progress can take place in a country that is beset with political instability.¹⁴

2. **Faulty design/implementation government strategies:** poor implementation strategies of most government policies and programmes are formulated using bureaucratic principle. In other words, the largest beneficiaries are usually not involved from initiation to completion stage. The non-involvement of the beneficiaries is also an issue.¹⁵
3. **Misplacement of priority:** In Nigeria, most programmes and policies fail to address the felt needs of the people since in most cases; the choice and sitting of projects meant to eradicate poverty are done using political consideration, rather than the needs of the poor. For instance, the micro finance banks, the Agric development banks and host of others established to encourage the poor in agricultural sector are mostly sited in urban and semi-urban centers instead of rural area of the country. This according to National Bureau of Statistics (2005) is a misplacement of priority since most people who

benefits from the project in the areas they are sited may not be the real benefactors of the project.¹⁶

4. **Lack of social security:** The Nigerian government does not operate a welfare scheme for the poor and less privilege in the society. This apparent state of insecurity among the poor and the less privileged in the society according to Agbaje (2010) contributes to the myriads of social vices in the country. Thus, the high spates of kidnap, thuggery, robbery, prostitution, etc. are results of government instability to address the issue of social welfare in the country.¹⁷
5. **Cultural and religious factors:** The dichotomy and difference in culture and religion of Nigerians have tended to inhibit the introduction of certain policies for poverty and hunger eradication in the country. Sometimes, government intentions are viewed with suspicion and negativism because of people's religious belief and culture.

Effects of the, Menace of Poverty and Hunger on Individuals and Economy

Extreme poverty according to Ajegi (2002), affects individuals and nations economy negatively. This is because, extreme poverty can thwart a nation's economic planning and lead to bad economic and social policies which can render the majority of the people neglected, dejected and hopeless. Extreme

poverty and hunger on individuals and nations at large according to Balogun (1999) include the followings:

1. **Distortion on individuals and economy as a whole:** Since extreme poverty and hunger result to low nutritional values, it distorts the growth pattern of individuals and groups in the society. Food as an essential ingredient for body growth according to Sule (2006) is required regularly in homes and in a nation at large. Any individuals or groups or nations that lack such essential items are likely to be exposed to diseases attack and other vices that can lead to death.
2. **Deviant behaviour:** When people are poor, they look for means of livelihood. This means may result to deviant behaviour such as violence, corruption, prostitution, armed robbery, stealing, hawking and host of others.¹⁸
3. **Lack of peaceful co-existence:** Extreme poverty possess serious threat to peaceful co-existence between individuals and groups in the society. This means that if one is extremely poor, his/her co-existence with other people becomes very slim. Usually, the poor feels dejected, humiliated and rejected in the society.¹⁹
4. **Limited capacities:** Extreme poverty may result to limited chance of capabilities such as meeting ones social and economic obligations,

assets and social esteem. No individuals or groups can surely be flourished and happy when he or she is poor and miserable.

Causes of Hunger in Nigeria

According to Tope A. and Osariyekemwen I., (2021), while mentioning the remote causes of hunger in Nigeria affirmed the major causes of hunger in Nigeria as follows:

- i. **Insurgency:** Despite the potentials for food production in the North, the region is the worst hit by the number of hungry children in the country. This is attributable in part to the insurgency that has ravaged the region. Since the outset of insurgency in Northeastern Nigeria, food insecurity has increased, while displacement has been pervasive. Boko Haram has been responsible for the death of thousands of people including farmers. Due to this, many people have abandoned their homes to neighboring communities, thus straining the available resources in the host community.
- ii. **Poverty:** Behind the problem of hunger lies poverty. Poor people generally find it difficult to maintain a standard way of life or experience favorable well-being. Coronavirus pandemic: Covid-19 also increased the spate of

hunger in Nigeria due to restricted movements, restricted economic activities, and unemployment. During the lockdown, farmers could not go to the farm leading to a decrease in farm produce. The little goods available were hoarded, while in some cases the prices skyrocketed. This meant that the poor were systematically denied access to food and therefore subjected to hunger.

- iii. **Food insecurity:** The ability to access enough food and resources required to acquire and produce food leads to inadequate diet and poor health. This impairs the ability to live a productive healthy life.²¹

Islamic Solution to Poverty and Hunger

Islam as a divine religion contained a lasting solution to poverty and hunger. This is practically observed through the teachings of Qur'an, Sunnah and the practiced of some predecessors. Therefore, a sample of Qur'anic injunction and Prophetic traditions toward curbing the menace of poverty and hunger are as follows:

The Wordings of Qur'an towards Alleviation of Poverty and Hunger

Allah in His Glorious Book i.e the Qur'an gave about 52 different commands on feedings or assisting one another, aiming at alleviating poverty and hunger. The verses read as follows:

Who spend (in the cause of Allah) during ease and hardship and who restrain anger and who pardon the people and Allah loves the doers of good; ²² **Al-Imran: Q3:134**

In another chapter Allah SWT encourages feeding for His course as contained in this verse.

They ask you 'O Prophet' regarding the spoils of war Say,

"Their distribution is decided by Allah and His Messenger. So be mindful of Allah, settle your affairs, and obey Allah and His Messenger if you are 'true' believers." The 'true' believers are only those whose hearts tremble at the remembrance of Allah, whose faith increases when His revelations are recited to them, and who put their trust in their Lord.

Anfal V: 1-4 ²³

The parable of those who spend their property in the way of Allah is as the parable of a grains growing seven ears with a hundred grains in every ear; and Allah multiplies for whom he pleases; and Allah is Ample-giving, knowing and for those who spend their property in the way of Allah, then do not follow up what they have spent with reproach or injury, they shall have their reward from their Lord and they shall have

no fear nor shall they grieve (Q: 2:262)

However.in another verse Allah SWT praised some of His poor servants that wanted to feed in His course, while they have nothing to offer as contained in the following verses;

Nor [is there blame] upon those who, when they came to you that you might give them mounts, you said, "I can find nothing for you to ride upon." They turned back while their eyes overflowed with tears out of grief that they could not find something to spend [for the cause of Allah]. **Taubah: 92** ²⁴

... and give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the way farer and the beggars and for the (emancipation of captives) Q;2:177 ²⁵

And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive,- (Saying), "We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks. "We only fear a Day of distressful Wrath from the side of our Lord."

Insan 5-10

However, Allah SWT highlighted the virtue of feeding in his course in these verses. ²⁶

It is to free a slave, or to give food in times of famine to an orphaned relative or to a poor person in distress, Balad V: 13-16 ²⁷

Prophetic Traditions on the Commands towards Feeding

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as a messenger of Allah who was known with the most exalted character, as contained in the Qur'an, Sunnah, the sayings of predecessors and even the from the words of intellectuals from orientalist. Therefore, the samples of these traditions that contains prophetic commands to feed aimed at alleviating poverty and hunger are as follows:-

It was reported from the Prophet SAW to have said:

If anyone gives as Sadaqa the equivalent of a date from that (earning) earned honestly, for Allah accepts that which is lawful, the Lord would accept it with His Right Hand, and even if it is a date, it would foster in the Hand of the lord, as one of you fosters his colt, till it becomes bigger than a mountain. Muslim Hadith 1014. ²⁸

In another tradition by Muslim, the Prophet SAW was reported to have said:

There is never a day wherein servants (of God) get up at morn, but are not visited by two angels. One of them says: O Allah, give him more who spends (for the sake of Allah), and the other says: O Allah, bring destruction to one who withholds. - Muslim Hadith 1010. ²⁹

Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (SAW) as saying that Allah said to him:

"Spend, I will bestow upon you." And the Messenger of Allah said: The right hand of Allah is full and spending (the riches) liberally during day and night will not diminish (the resources of Allah). Don't you see what (an enormous amount of resources) He has spent since He created the heaven and the earth, and what is in his right hand has not decreased? His Throne is upon the water. And in His other hand is death, and He elevates and degrades (whom He likes).- Muslim Hadith 993. ³⁰

Narrated `Aisha:

The Prophet (SAW) said, "When a woman gives in charity from her house meals in Allah's Cause without spoiling her

husband's property, she will get a reward for it, and her husband will also get the reward for his earnings and the storekeeper will get a reward likewise."

Bukhatri Hadith 1441 ³¹

However, the Prophet encourages endowment and charity as a major source of curving or alleviating poverty through his wordings as contained in the following Hadith

Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger as saying:

When a man dies, his acts come to an end, but three, recurring charity, or knowledge (by which people) benefit, or a pious son, who prays for him (for the deceased). Muslim Hadith 1631

The Approach of some Predecessors toward Curving Poverty and Hunger.

Abubakar (RA) as the first Khalifa during his time as a leader demonstrated leadership by example. This is practically observed from what is contained in historical record. Example, his fighting or waging Jihad against the believers that felt to give Zakkat after the demise of the Prophet (SAW) which were aimed at alleviating poverty and hunger.

Umar Bin Khattab (RA) as the second Khalifa who reigned for consecutive ten years discharging justice in his leadership, many efforts were done during his era,

toward ensuring good governance aimed at achieving sanity among the citizens. Also, Umar Ibn Abdulaziz one of the predecessors and follower to the companions copied some of his style as affirmed by Tahir N.I (2020) who contended that, Umar Ibn Abdulaziz follows most of the principles of Umar Ibn Khaddah. He therefore, affirmed that:

Umar Ibn 'Abd Al 'Azīz focused on removing all forms of injustice in order to gain support from Allāh (azza wa jalla) as ibn Taymiyah used to say: "Allāh supports a just Government even though they are not Muslims, and withdraws His support from a Government that is based on injustice even though they are Muslims." As part of his effort to exercise justice among his following Umar Ibn Abdulaziz

'Umar Ibn 'Abd Al 'Azīz released the prisoners and granted them forgiveness. Waḍḍahibn Khaithamah said: "When 'Umar Ibn 'Abd Al 'Azīz was appointed as the Caliph of the Muslims, he instructed me to release

all of the prisoners from those who were jailed by his predecessor. I released all of them except Yazīd ibn Abī Muslim.”

However, regarding what was confiscated the author affirmed that, returning usurped money to its owners was a strategy adopted by ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd Al ‘Azīz when he became governor. He returned wealth and properties which had been usurped by previous rulers to their rightful owners. He also ordered them to take the zakat from that money only for one year instead of paying for all the years the money was held by the government. This is because it is like money which they had lost and now they had found it.

Umar Ibn ‘Abd Al ‘Azīz tried to ensure that he surrounded himself with righteous people who would advise him with the truth and guide him to the truth. ‘Amr ibn Muhājir narrated that ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd Al ‘Azīz told him that if he saw him following other than the truth then he should grab him by his clothes, shake him and ask him, “What are you doing?” (Al-Shāfi‘ī, 1995) It is also narrated that ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd Al

‘Azīz gave a ruling on an issue and Maymūn ibn Mihrān was present in the court.

However, Umar Ibn Abdulaziz played a great role during his administration to fight corruption which had immensely help his government especially in fighting against injustice and alleviating poverty and hunger. He therefore contended that:

One of the areas that ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd Al ‘Azīz focused on in his fight against corruption was to stop bribe taking and giving. A government cannot succeed in fighting corruption without blocking all the means to bribes. A system based on bribes misallocates resources placing them in undeserving hands which widens the gap between the rich and the poor. The Prophet (ṣal-Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said: “The curse of Allāh is upon the one who offers a bribe and the one who takes it.” (Ibn Mājah, n.d) This is why ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd Al ‘Azīz blocked all things that lead to bribes.³⁶

Therefore, Tahir N.I highlighted the significance of continuity of government and its policies, and in the other hand discouraging over dependence on others explained how Umar Ibn Abdulaziz dealt with some of his followers. Meanwhile Tahir N.I affirmed that:

Umar Ibn Abdulaziz was said to have belief that hardworking can lead to achievement of any leader as affirmed by Tahir N.I. A government cannot succeed if it delays decisions, actions, policies or projects that should be completed in the present to the future.

However, as part of his attempt to control some of the problems that involves counterfeit money which is still existing in Nigeria, Tahir N.I affirmed that:

Umar realized that it was important to prevent the circulation of counterfeit money because of the negative effect it has on the economy. It causes prices to rise and creates an imbalance between the amount of money and goods available in the market.

Self-Reliance

Self-reliance/putting trust in Allah is one of the major issues that was discussed in both

Qur'an and Sunnah (Prophetic teaching) for instance in Q:5:23 Allah (SAW) Says:

But on Allah have your Trust if you have faith.

Also in Q:3:122: The Almighty says:

“And in Allah should all the faithful (ever) put their trust”.

According to Al-Jaza'iry while explaining these terms i.e Self-reliance/having trust in Allah, he made mentioned that the Muslim should take the philosophy of the Prophet .The prophet (PBUH) never went into a war of the many and long wars that he has gone through, unless He prepares the requirement needed for it. And the reason for victory in it. He uses even to choose the place and time of the battle. It was narrated that he never launched a raid in the hot weather, as he uses to wait till the weather becomes cooler and air becomes better at the end of the day after setting his plan and lining up the soldiers. And after he had finished with all the materialistic reasons that are required for victory in the battle. He used to lift his hands up to the sky (PBUH) and invoke Allah the Almighty.

Al-Jaza'ery further sited another example by saying the prophet did not migrate to medina until he was permitted. And after he was permitted he made arrangements or plans that involves a good partner (i.e) Abubakar, provided some provisions that are needed for the journey, provided an excellent riding camels .And the good geographer that is aware of the road and its rugged path to be the guide.

Ibn Taymiyyah emphasized that it is the duty of the government to eliminate poverty. However, he did not regard poverty as a virtue. In his perspective, every individual should strive for prosperity and self-reliance in life. He considered it a moral obligation for people to work, engage in trade, and avoid idleness, which he strongly condemned. This pursuit of productivity, he argued, is also aligned with religious responsibilities. Ibn Taymiyyah said that it is the best of deeds for the authorities to differentiate between the deserving and the undeserving and to do justice in the distribution of means of livelihood and of public offices (Adetio 17)

Repentance from Vices or Sins

As part of the measures to curb the menace, the Qur'an and Sunnah contain some wordings/commands of which, if followed the Almighty will definitely change condition from hardship to ease. Therefore, Allah says:

“See them not that they are put in trial once or twice every year yet, they turn not in repentance, nor do they learn a lesson from it.” (Attauba:V:126)

In another verse the Almighty said:

“And let those beware who oppose the messenger's commandment, lest some Fitnah should befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them”. (Nur:V:63)

Thus, the ungratefulness on divine bounties by transgression, mischief, corruption and committing other vices can draw the wrath of God on a Nation resulting in the infliction of hunger and fear

Conclusion and Recommendation

Poverty and hunger in Nigeria remain major developmental challenges, especially in the Northern region, where insecurity, corruption, and poor governance have greatly affected economic activities and food production. As observed earlier, insurgency has displaced millions of people and destroyed livelihoods, making it difficult for many families to meet their basic needs. These factors have contributed significantly to the rising level of poverty and hunger in the country.

From both historical and Islamic perspectives, good governance and justice are essential in reducing poverty. The example of 'Umar Ibn 'Abd Al 'Aziz shows that fairness, accountability, and anti-corruption policies can restore public trust and improve economic stability. His actions, such as returning unlawfully acquired wealth and prohibiting bribery, demonstrate how leadership based on justice can reduce inequality and promote welfare in society (Al-Shāfi'ī, 1995). Therefore, Nigerian leaders should adopt similar principles in governance.

In addition, scholars like Ibn Taymiyyah emphasize the importance of self-reliance, hard work, and proper distribution of wealth by the state. He encouraged individuals to engage in productive activities while urging

governments to ensure fairness in resource allocation and reduce poverty levels (Adetio, 17). This implies that both citizens and government have shared responsibilities in fighting poverty and hunger.

Therefore, it is recommended that the Nigerian government should prioritize security, especially in conflict-affected areas, to allow agriculture and economic activities to thrive. Anti-corruption laws should also be strengthened to ensure transparency and proper use of public funds, as demonstrated by ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd Al ‘Azīz’s leadership model (Al-Shāfi‘ī, 1995). Furthermore, youth empowerment, job creation, and skill acquisition programs should be expanded to promote self-reliance, in line with Ibn Taymiyyah’s teachings on productivity (Adetio, 17).

Finally, moral and religious education should be encouraged to promote integrity, accountability, and repentance from social vices, which are key to building a just and prosperous society.

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