

Corruption in Islamic Perspective and the Roles of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to Control It

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Abstract

Corruption is a hurdle for development and good governance in the least developed countries (LDC), and emerging and development economies (EDE). In Islamic Shariah it is a great sin. It has a bad impact upon the socio-economic development of any nation. Since the last couple of decade Academics have given strong attention on controlling corruption. In this modern information age Information and Communication Technology (ICT) becomes almost compulsory in daily life. Effort of this study is to see ICT as an anti corruption tool to prevent corruption to comply Shariah rules.

Key Words: ICT, Corruption, Islamic Ethics, Social Development

Literature review

M. Sohel Iqbal, Jin-Wan Seo opined that the introduction of ICT can reduce corruption by better enforcing rules, reducing the discretion of officials, and increasing transparency. (2008). Amitabh Ojha, Shailendra Palvia and M. P. Gupta showed in their study that E-government involves using information technology, and especially the Internet, to improve the delivery of government services to citizens, businesses, and other government agencies; and it enables citizens to interact and receive services from the federal, state or local governments twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. (2008). M. Sohel Iqbal opined that E-Governance can be an effective anti-corruption tool, is a new style of reform for Bangladesh as well as developing countries to restrict the corrupt actions of stakeholders (2010). Res. J. Management Sci. August concluded that ICTs can reduce corruption by promoting good governance, strengthening reform-oriented initiatives, reducing potential for corrupt behaviors, enhancing relationships between government employees and citizens, allowing for citizen tracking of activities, and by monitoring and controlling behaviors of government employees. (2012). Thomas Barnebeck showed in his study that E-government reduces contact between corrupt officials and citizens and increases transparency and accountability. (2007). Paul Sturges told that various mechanisms including the use of ICTs to introduce greater transparency are being explored. ICTs are democratic media with ease of access, comparative ease of use, great data capacity and the immediacy of swift updating (2004). Justice is a central value in Islamic teaching and is considered to be the foundation for all God's creation (Surtly, 2007: 170). The ethical and moral code of religions present a framework for development and social justice, which relies on values and ethics rather than purely economic factors (Lunn, 2009: 945). Values of fairness, honesty, ethics and mercy should be evident in the application of justice regardless of race, color or creed (Khan, *et al.*, 2009). From an Islamic perspective, corruption is a moral and ethical problem, which reflects the internal fortitude of an individual and the ability to foster self-restraint rather than enforcing laws and systems (Lewis, 2006: 13).

1. Introduction:

Corruption has created national, moral and economic catastrophes to the poor nations. Unfortunately, for many of us the idea is that "it's solely the Government's responsibility to fight and prevent corruptions" but I strongly believe that this conclusion is not absolute. Governments can't draw a line between public conducts/behaviors those are required in public life and conducts those are good although not required. Ultimately all parts of our society must share responsibility for containing corruption, because all of us are willing or unwilling participants in it, one way or other

Corruption is a complex term, and it has various connotations. For a consensual definition of corruption and its classification, we refer Jain (2001)'s review wherein corruption has been defined as 'acts in which the power of public officials is used for personal gains in a manner that contravenes the rules of the game'; and it has been

classified as grand, bureaucratic, and legislative. Grand corruption refers to acts of political elite, wherein they change either the national policies or the implementation of national policies to serve their own interest. Bureaucratic corruption refers to corrupt acts of the appointed bureaucrats in their dealings with either their superiors (the political elite) or with the public. And finally, legislative corruption refers to the manner and degree to which the voting behavior of legislators can be influenced. Emphasis of the paper will mainly be on bureaucratic corruption, but the scope of a bureaucrat's corrupt dealings with his superiors need not remain limited to the political elite, and could also include civil servants above him in the hierarchy

In Islam Haqqul Ibad has been given more importance. Corruption destroys this Haqqul Ibad. Through the practices of corruption general people are deceived. Those who have channels to offer bribes are getting the benefit which is hampering equal competition. Men have been created as the representative or Khalifa of the Almighty on the earth. So it is a great responsibility for them to remove corruption from society and establish justice and peace.

2. Objectives of the study:

1. To study the Shriah guidelines regarding corruptions.
2. To identify the impact of corruption on socio-economic development of any country.
3. To identify the capabilities of ICT to check corruptions.

3. Theoretical Discussion

Corruption is a threat to ethical values and justice and hampering sustainable development and the rule of law. Corruption reduces the investment resulting the reduced growth rate. It is a great obstacle against economic and social development. Developments are hampered by distorting the rule of law and weakening institutional foundation which is the base of economic growth. The poor are the victim of corruption. They are more reliant on public services and are not capable to pay extra cost associated with bribery, fraud etc. Justice is also undermined in many parts of the world by denying victims and the accused the basic human right to fair and impartial trial. Corruption impedes collective decision making and people's power to influence collective decision making through speaking and voting. Corruption brings injustice, inefficiency, mistrust of the Government by the citizen, waste of public resources, discouragement of enterprises, political institutions, and restriction on Government policies.

E-Governance can make the scope of competition equal for all. It can stop the arrangement of corruption. If someone wants to get a licence, workorder, even drawing a pension s/he has to pay some speed money. This has become one kind of common culture in the developing countries. Establishing E-Governance will create a new culture where transparency is available. Everyone gets equal treatment from bureaucrats by E-Governance. The personal position of a citizen differs in ability to get services from bureaucrat which can be controlled by implementing E-Governance. There are various benefits of E-Gov as follows: 1. Increase productivity, Easier access to information, Preservation of document and information, easier sharing of document, Improved external communication- all of these are somehow related to accountability, transparency and participation that can assist to control corruption.

4. Justice and Corruption in Islam

Justice is considered to be the foundation of all God's creation (Surty, 2007:170). Quran teaches that any deed and action that violate justice is treated as corruption. Quran focuses on promoting and enforcing a code of ethics and morality for human behavior. The goals of all prophet and Gods revelation are to establish justice (Yahya: 2003). Verses 25 states---Religious share the common message "Do to others what is due to you". Ethics and morality are paramount in Islamic teaching, which focuses on the individual wellbeing and the development of the world to establish peace and harmony for all (Dugbazah, 2009:25). Social justice is central to the concept of Islam (Dugbazah, 2009:34). Soc Jus means fair and equitable distribution of wealth and protection of weak against economic exploitation by the strong (Badabi, 1982). Values of fairness, honesty, ethics, mercy should be evident in the application of justice regardless of race, color and creed (Khan, et, al, 2009) Therefore all behavior that undermine those values and distort Islamic moral framework are called 'Fassad' which is an Arabic word that can be translated as corruption. However, the concept of corruption in the Quran is broader than the mainstream concept of corruption, which is the misuse of entrusted power. Therefore, the term "fasaad", encompasses all human behaviors that disrupt individuals' lives and social harmony, harm the environment and eventually undermine sustainable development. This is illustrated in Chapter 30, Verse 41, which states that fasaad affects the land and sea as a result of human behavior

and deeds: “There has arisen a tumult (fasaad) in land and in sea because of what people do” (30:41). Islamic teachings refer to corruption as human behavior; therefore, the Quran differentiates between people on the basis of their behavior and ethics in relation to corruption; those who do good deeds and those who create disturbance (fasaad) in the land. Chapter 38, Verse 28 states: “Shall we make those who believe and do good deeds like those who create disturbance in the land (earth)” (38:28). Quranic teachings promote a holistic ethical framework for human behavior. For example, Chapter 11, Verse 85 highlights the importance of applying justice, equity, honesty and decency, and at the same time denounces corruption and the instigation of disorder on earth. ...give full measure and full weight with equity, and defraud not people of their things and commit not iniquity in the earth, causing disorder (11:85) Therefore, one can conclude that Islam has promoted morality and justice for the betterment of humankind, which in turn promotes environmental balance, social harmony, peace and security.

5. Accountability in Islam

In Islamic teachings, the concept of accountability is linked to the fulfillment of humankind’s duty on earth and therefore, should reflect the values and moral framework set out by Islam. In Islam, humankind is a steward (khalifa) of God on earth. According to the teachings of the Quran, as a creator of everything, God is the ultimate owner of all that exists on earth (Hathout, 1995: 95). God offered the Trust- responsibility and guidance-to the heavens, earth and mountains before humankind; and humankind has accepted it, voluntarily, with all the responsibilities that it entails. This responsibility means that earth and its resources is a trust from God and therefore, humankind is accountable to God for all actions and deeds (Lewis, 2006). Therefore, Quranic teachings indicate that while humankind exercised its freedom of accountable for how they manage a trust; God’s command is to hand over the trust to whom it belongs. The Prophet

Mohammed (pbuh) elaborated on this verse in a hadith and said: ‘Whoever employs a man to a task while knowing the existence of a more qualified person for the same task, truly betrays God and his Messenger and the believers’ (Kamali, 2002:59-60, 113)

According to Islamic teachings, in order to fulfill their role as stewards on earth, it is important for human beings to follow the moral framework laid down by Islam, which includes all the guidance and teachings that promote morality. Humankind would ideally conform to such a moral framework, without the need for a legal system or external supervision because of their love and fear of God (Kamali, 2002: 113, and Zayd, 2006). This conformity reflects the concept of taqwa, which is a central concept in the teaching of the Quran. Taqwa can be translated into the state of being pious or God-fearing. Like justice, conveying the importance of taqwa was the goal of all of the messengers sent by God (Quran 4:131); the message was to “obtain the taqwa of God” (Baianonie, 1998). The centrality of taqwa in relation to ethics and human behavior is a guiding principle in the teachings of the Quran and has been linked to God’s guidance on human behavior in 151 verses (Karolia, 2003). Therefore, one can conclude that compliance to Islam’s moral framework is a measure of accountability to God. Consequently, from an Islamic perspective there is a significant moral and ethical dimension that should influence human behavior in the fight against corruption (Lewis, 2006:13). Furthermore in the Quran, the concept of taqwa is instrumental in framing human behavior and ethics. Therefore, from an Islamic perspective, the concept provides the foundation for ethical transparency and accountability in all humankind’s deeds and sayings beyond the power of legal systems and the enforcement of laws and procedures.

6. Quranic verses and Hadith against bribery and corruption:

These are some verses of Quran which forbids us to indulge in bribery and corruption and inspires us to give the orphans and poor. By giving bribery we are unjust to the person who is harmed by it and also to the community and nation.

“And 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 partition of wealth of people in sin, while you know [it is unlawful]” (chapter 2, verse 188, Quran) “Verily! Allah commands that you should render back the trusts to those, to whom they are due; and that when you judge between men, you judge with justice. Verily, how excellent is the teaching which he (Allah) gives you! Truly Allah is Ever All-Hearer, All –Heaver, All-Seer.”

(Chapter 4, Verse 58, Quran)

“O you who believed, be persistently standing firm of Allah, witness in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is acquitted with

what you do” (Chapter 5, verse 8, Quran)

Indeed, those who devour the property of orphans and unjustly are only consuming into their bellies fire. And they will be burned in a blaze” (Chapter 4, Verse 10, Quran)

And the heaven He raised and imposed the balance, That you not transgress within the balance, And establish weight in justice and do not make deficient the (due) balance.

(Chapter 55, verse 7 to 10, Quran)

“We made them (Abrahams and his son)imams who guided in accordance with our commandments, and we thought them how to work righteousness, And how to observe the Contact Prayers(Salat)And the obligatory charity(Zakat).To us they were devoted worship.(21:73,Quran)

The one who takes bribe and the one who gives it will both be in hell.

Lying and hiding information based Quranic verses

Lying can also be defined as to hide the information from anybody who is eligible to get the information. Due to the information crisis somebody may be deceived to ensure his right which creates the scope of corruption in a broader sense. It hampers Haqqul Ibad.This is the reason why it has been treated as one of greatest sin in ISLAM.

Prohibition of lying in the Holly Quran and Hadith

In general, Islam prohibits lying and related acts such as deception, fraud, hypocrisy and providing false testimony. Some verses from the Qur'an which prohibit lying are:

“It is only those who believe not in the Ayah (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of Allah, who fabricate falsehood, and it is they who are liars.” (16:105)

“O you who believe! Fear Allah, and be with those who are true (in words and deeds)” (9:119)

“And cover not Truth with falsehood, nor conceal the Truth when ye know (what it is).” (2:42)

“Woe to each sinful dealer in Falsehood.” (45:7)

Accordingly, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him*) also advised Muslims to be honest and truthful. Some examples of hadith which address lying include:

"Four traits, whoever possesses them is a hypocrite and whoever possesses some of them has an element of hypocrisy until he leaves it: the one who when he speaks he lies, when he promises he breaks his promise, when he disputes he transgresses and when he makes an agreement he violates it." (Muslim and Bukhari)

“Maintain truthfulness, for truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Heaven. A man continues to maintain truthfulness until he is recorded in Allah’s book as truthful. Refrain from lying, because lying leads to blatant evil, and evil leads to the fire. A man continues to lie until he is recorded in Allah’s book as a liar.” (Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawood and Al-Tirmithi).

7. ICT to stop Corruption:

Introducing information technology traps to locate and apprehend violators as well as giving out options those could provide multiple alternatives to citizens during their interactions with public officials.ICT is a powerful tools to control corruption in every sector.ICT controls corruption by checking the institutional process.ICT enhanced transparency particularly at the transactional level, by ensuring easier access to public record and integrating geographically separated system for better accountability.

Developed countries use Information Technology in all of the sectors like as Keeping records, Maintaining stocks, Conducting elections,Selling,Perchasing,E-tendering.Reservation,Transpotaion,Education,Health,Banking,Collectng tax and revenue, Maintaining land registration, Detecting the position of criminals, Checking of fingerprint for controlling unauthorized access, Ensuring authenticity of copyright of any intellectual properties, ,Selecting and recruiting employees, Measuring employee performance, Providing training to the Human Resources, Tracing any parcel etc

Here are some sectors mentioned where ICT can be used to control corruption in the developing countries:

7.1. Environment:

Illegal logging is a common problem in forestry sector. By installing remote sensing and video monitoring system it can be checked.

Personal digital Assistant(PDAs) have been used successful.ly to track wildlife in program designed to minimize and control poaching and to record fisheries catches at docksides to monitor more precisely.

7.2 Procurement

E-Procurement system can be used helping purchasing goods and services most reasonably-procurement is the online purchase of goods and services through e-channel-procurement system can inhibit the ability of government officials to solicit bribes from bidders.

7.3 Legal system

The court scenarios are isolated now a day. This session can be recorded for public review. Community information center with internet access can be set up in public libraries, schools and universities.

The public officials are required to publicize their asset. This Disclosure may be made more accessible to the public via the internet through computer information center, enhancing transparency.

7.4 Agriculture

Land registries are a frequent locus of corruption. A geographic information system can link public records on parcel ownership rights to the payment of taxes or of fees for construction and other permits. Cash transactions can be handled in one location, neutral to the agency receiving the cash, while the permit or registration documents themselves can be filed online at community information centers. Maps can be generated via the Internet that quickly highlight where fees have (and have not) been paid, enabling the landholder to identify when a payment has not been properly registered.

Rules and regulations, for example about public commodity auctions or export requirements, are often difficult to discern and subject to arbitrary interpretations by corrupt government officials or by brokers who exploit their favored access to information to extract fees that would otherwise be unnecessary. Online publishing of such rules and regulations, with access through community information centers, would alleviate this problem. Placing these access points at major ports, border posts, or transit points would substantially enhance effectiveness.

Many agriculture programs endeavor to make price information more readily available to farmers and marketing agents. In Bolivia, USAID's market access program broadcasts market prices daily on both broadcast radio and the Internet, resulting in higher revenues for producers.

7.5 Education

Almost anyone who has worked in a low-income community overseas is familiar with the story of the corrupt schoolmaster who stole the exam fees of an unwitting student, or who requires payments for after-school tutorials before a passing mark can be awarded. Innovators like Cisco have introduced worldwide tutorial and testing systems, with carefully constructed exam systems to assure the integrity of high-level testing.

In some countries, donated textbooks and other teaching materials rarely make their way intact to remote schools in rural areas. Online systems accessible through community information centers can list what was shipped so that parent associations can compare to what was actually delivered to their children.

In the Gambia, the Education Management Information System tracks and ranks teachers by their seniority, language abilities, and subject specialization for use in making teacher assignments to particular schools. Such ICT systems shine a bright light, permitting greater public scrutiny and challenges to questionable decisions, helping parents assure that their school districts assign their children the teachers they rightly deserve.

7.6 Energy

Consumers of public utilities frequently pay their usage fees, yet have their service disconnected anyway. At the utility office in many countries, there is inevitably no record of payment, and the receipt presented as proof of payment is discounted as fraudulent. Geographic information systems that incorporate third-party payment locations and mapping to confirm proper recording and account status are relatively easy to implement and can alleviate this kind of corruption.

Consumers can visit kiosks or other types of public Internet access points, pulling up maps tied to geographic information system (GIS) databases showing their particular residence or place of business, color-coded to indicate whether payment has been received. Online payments using smart cards tied to payroll accounts can appropriately be implemented in some countries where appropriate banking networks have been established.

In the mining industry, excise taxes on mined ores and other commodities are frequently based on inspections at the mines. Frequently what is officially loaded on trucks at the mines does not match what gets transferred to ocean-

going vessels at the port. Integrated computer systems linked by satellite can compare receipts and bills of lading, reducing corruption.

7.7 Electronic Voting System:

Election is a way to change the power of ruling the country. In manual system there is scope to occupy the power by manipulating the result. When a government takes power illegally they always try to maintain their ruling by various types of corruption. To stop the way to come to power illegal can be stopped through the implementation of Electronic Voting System.

7.8 Checking unauthorized access

Any unexpected access can create any sort of harm or stealing in any restricted area. These sorts of access can be checked through fingerprint, face, eye, speech, speaker recognitions which are the innovation of modern technology in ICT.

By introducing National Id Cards the countrymen can be recognized uniquely. It helps in ensuring proper distribution of public services and tackling any sort of deceiving by applying for dual passport or any other legal documents. Database need to be computerised. . By using computerised search options rather than shifting the database manually, the police can help to bring the corrupt to book more effectively and speedily.

7.9 Tracking anybody by National ID Cards to control deception:

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7.10 Protecting Copyright:

It is a common issue now-a-days that some people try to copy from others writings and also submit the same as their own writings which is called plagiarism. Software is their now-a-ways to check this sort of plagiarism to comply IPR.

7.12 Identifying the location of any thief: Thieves can be detected by applying ICT.

7.13 Identifying the files status:

Files status like where it is or in which office the file is right now can be traced out like TNT or DHL international currier to check bureaucratic red tappism. Information technology also ensures that the files are never lost, thus rendering the paper trial inerasable. This can be done by scanning and storing of confidential files. Of course, this will also means that cyber laws have to come into effect.

7.14 Preparing Automatic Bill:

All sort of electricity and other billing may be prepared by computer so that no man hand can manipulate the reading causing minimizing the corruption.

7.15 In Banks to control fraudulence:

Computerisation can check bank fraud too. If specimen signatures are feed in the computer, it will facilitate easy verification and provide security against forgery. Stop payment instructions received by bankers can alert the teller whenever a lost cheque is presented.

Fraud relating to local clearing operation may be minimised through the prompt reconciliation of the number and amount of cheques through a computerised banking system.

7.16 Access to information: The second cause of corruption is lack of transparency—a customer does not get to know what his rights are and how his case is being handled. It is a healthy sign that the Central government is thinking of coming up with a Freedom of Information Act. Various State governments are also talking about setting up information kiosks.

7.17 E-Ticketing system can reduce the chance of selling ticket of transportation like Train in black market.

Conclusion

'Takwah' means the fear of the Almighty. The teachings of Islam are to maintain ethics and morality in all aspects of Muamala. This is 'Fard', in Islam. Due to the weakness of 'IMAN' or even intentionally by the 'Oswasa' of Evil (Nafs) people engage themselves in corruption. Allah has created Human being with all supreme intelligence by which they have innovated so many surprising things. ICT is one of those innovation which can do miraculous things which cannot be even thought by mass people. ICT in broader sense E-Governance can be used in an effective way to control corruption and refine the society to comply the laws and rules of almighty to protect 'Haqul Ibad' which is one of the major problems in the developing and also developed country to some extent. There may be further study on how to incorporate many other sectors to be brought under the control of ICT to check corruptions.

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Figure 1: Models of use of Information Technology to check corruption

