

Re-Engineering the Nigerian Nation with the “Madinan” Model: The Principles and Applications

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Abstract

The paper addresses the present precarious condition of the Nigerian state that necessitates urgent need to reform and salvage the country from imminent collapse. For emphasis, the paper identifies and addresses four challenges, which are: corruption, human trafficking, drug abuse, and banditry. Historical and speculative analytical approaches were adopted to analyse the available relevant literature. Particular reference was placed on the exploration of five Islamic moral principles of ‘adālah (justice), sidq (truthfulness), amānah, (trustworthiness), rahmah (compassion) and Istiqāmah (steadfastness) which are embedded in almost all religions of the world as exemplified in the Madinah city by prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and early Muslims. The paper established that moral decadence ravaging virtually all sectors of the country comparable to the pre-Muhammad’s mission in Madinah is a major factor responsible for most of the problems of the Nigerian nation. Therefore, the paper concludes that reinvigorating the Nigerian state could be attained through the application of the Madinan model, and recommends among others that parents must be alive to their responsibilities by giving time and priority to the moral training of their children since “charity begins at home”.

Keywords: re-engineering, Madinan model, principles, applications

Introduction

Despite efforts of the Nigerian government at all levels and all concerned groups and individuals to curb the menace of corruption and challenges of insecurity of lives and properties in the country by establishing various agencies, such as, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices and other related Offences Commission (ICPC), the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), the Nigerian Armed Forces, the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), and so on, the fact still remains that the Nigerian state is characterised by various anti-social behaviours, such as, corruption, kidnapping, banditry, rape, human trafficking, drug abuse, examination malpractices, bombing, killing and so on. The resultant effects of these are evident in the rate of unemployment, displacement of people, poverty, and above all insecurity that threaten the corporate existence and create a bad image for the country among the comity of nations. Ezeani (2019) aptly captures this thus:

Incidents of kidnapping, rape, armed robbery, examination malpractice, sex for marks, drug abuse, marginalization in different forms, ethnicity, tribalism, cheating, lying, fund embezzlement appear to be in upward swing (in Nigeria)... and unless serious action is taken in order to reduce the incident of immoral behaviour occasioned by poor moral development among many stakeholders in Nigeria, the situation is bound to worsen in the future (p.33).

This present situation in the country could be linked to that of the city of Madinah in pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula (a multi ethnic and religious group’s society like the contemporary Nigeria) before its total reformation by the best reformer, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his successors through the instrumentality of Islamic ethical principles practically demonstrated. The city of Madinah became a model community, of sanity and civility (Bidmos, 2004). It is in the light of this that this paper explores the Madinan model with particular reference to Islamic moral principles of ‘adālah (justice), sidq (truthfulness), amānah, (trustworthiness), and rahmah (compassion) and Istiqāmah (steadfastness) as mechanism with a view to reengineering and salvaging the Nigerian state from imminent collapse.

An Overviewed Social Problems in Nigeria

The Nigerian state is undoubtedly faced with a number of challenges that are threatening her corporate existence. Four of these challenges; namely: corruption, banditry, human trafficking, and drug abuse are singled out for examination in this paper for emphasis purposes.

To start with, the word corruption is deduced from the Latin word “*corruptus*” meaning moral decline, wicked behaviour, putridity, or rottenness (Atoi, Sadiku & Kum, 2020). Corruption, has been defined as dishonest or illegal behaviour especially, by the people of authorities, is one of the challenges facing the country (Akhakpe, 2004). The Meriam-Webster Dictionary (2017) further holds that corruption is any act considered by government and society at large as immoral and unethical. According to Adesewo (2004), corruption is the diversion of resources from the betterment of the country to the use of the individual at the expense of the community. It robs the society of the scarce resources and weakens the efficiency and effectiveness of organisations within and outside the public realm (Akhakpe, 2004). Though, there is no corrupt free society in the world. However, the preponderance of corrupt practices in nearly every stratum of the Nigerian state and the insincerity on the part of the governing authorities in tackling the problem makes it an issue that calls for serious social concern (Atoi, Sadiku & Kum, 2020).

Affirming the extent of corruption in the country, the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics [NBS] (2017), reported the level of corruption in the Nigerian Police to be 45.5%, Judges and Magistrates 37.5% while Immigration Officers in Nigeria had 37.7%. Also, Car Registration Officers’ rate of corruption was put at 28.5% and the contract rate of Nigerians with bribery and corruption was 52.2% with prevalence being 32.3%. However, an accusing finger is always pointed at the leaders especially the politicians as the biggest corrupt personalities in the country (Makinde, 2019). While some of the corrupt leaders have been prosecuted and jailed in Nigeria, many are still awaiting trial. Yet, many are still walking freely in the society. Joshua, Dariye, a former Governor, and Senator of Plateau State, Nigeria, for example was prosecuted and jailed 14 years for corrupt practices (Tobi, 2019). Equally, Jolly Nyame, a former Governor of Taraba State in Nigeria, is currently serving jail term in one of the Nigerian prisons (Evelyn, 2018).

Sambo Dasuki, the former Security Adviser, to the former President, Goodluck Jonathan is being prosecuted by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) since 2015 for corrupt practices (Taiwo-Hassan, 2019). The removal of a former Chief Justice of Nigeria, Walter Onnoghen from office, was not unconnected with corrupt practices (Adesumaju, 2019). These are public figures that were entrusted with public funds to manage the affairs of the country but mismanaged them. In 2018, no fewer than 50 Nigerian politicians were listed as corrupt personalities by President Muhammad Buhari led administration (Alagbe, 2018). The words of Falola as cited in Makinde (2019) attest to this assertion:

While the politicians and their followers continue to loot the treasury of the nation (Nigeria), the common citizens are also cashing out on the weak of management system of the government, and both reckless dispositions continue to propel the nation towards destruction (p.13).

In fact, the 2018 report on the corrupt countries by Transparency International (TI) ranked Nigeria as 144 out of 175 countries studied. It is said that out of 100 Nigerians, one of them is highly corrupt (Transparency International [TI], 2019). Perhaps, the reason for the 100 people to be counted as clean is due to inability of many of them to hold public position or have access to public treasury (Akhakpe, 2004).

However, some of the principal factors responsible for accelerating the case of corruption in the Nigerian state are hypocrisy of many adherents of religions in the country, greed on the part of some religious leaders and their unwillingness to apply the core moral virtues ingrained in Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion in their daily activities (Atoi, Sadiku & Kum, 2020). The same authorities hold that the attendant results of contemporary corruption in Nigeria’s public life are increase in social evils such as kidnapping, prostitution, unemployment, drug trafficking, hostage taking, human trafficking, internet fraud, and other socio-economic ills that have continued to bedevil the country.

This is so because the financial resources that could have been used to provide social amenities and job opportunities which would guarantee better life for the teeming population in Nigeria are diverted to private use by the corrupt individuals in the public service (Akhahpe, 2004). Amassing of unlawful wealth by stealing from the people's commonwealth discourages hard and patriotic labour by others and puts resources needed for community or national development into private hands where it is often just stashed away in foreign banks or lavished senselessly and unproductively (Oluwasanmi, 2007 as cited in Atoi, Sadiku & Kum, 2020). Wolfensohn as cited in Akhakpe (2004) also vividly described the effects of corruption and the need to seriously deal with it thus:

In country after country, people are demanding action on the issue. They know that corruption diverts resources from the poor to the rich, increases the loss of running businesses, distorts public expenditures, and deters foreign investors. They also know that corruption erodes the consistency for aid programmes and humanitarian relief. It is a fact that corruption is a major impediment to sound and equitable development (pp.116-117).

The implication of the foregoing discussion is that hypocrisy on the part of many religious adherents in the country, greed of some religious leaders and their inability to apply the core moral virtues embedded in religions are major forces for the increase in the case of corruption. The great hinderance against meaningful development in any given society is corruption which is the attendant result of moral deficit.

Another social issue which is banditry has become more rampant lately in Nigeria. It is an activity that revolves around attacking, raping, kidnapping, and killing of innocent people and looting of their properties by criminals. Many people have been killed across the country by bandits. A lot of cattle have been rustled and many survivors of banditry- attacks become Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in camps, particularly, across the North-eastern region of Nigeria for safety and survival. Over two million people including herdsmen were displaced due to banditry as reported by the National Emergency Management Agency (Ahmadu, 2019). Furthermore, in Borno State for instance, those whose trades and businesses are linked to cattle had to temporarily abandon their businesses because of the closure of cattle markets by the State government in response to the increasing illegal trades in rustled cattle from rural areas (Ahmadu, 2019).

Governor Abdulazeez Yari of Zamfara State publicly relinquished his constitutional right as the chief security officer of the State because of the menace of cattle rustling and rural banditry that have engulfed the State in the last three years (PM News Paper, 2018). The impetus for the launching of Operation *Amotekun* (security outfit) by the South -West Nigerian Governors in Ibadan on Thursday, January 9, 2020, was mainly to secure the zone from criminal elements like kidnappers and bandits (Punch News Paper 2020).

Aside corruption and banditry that threaten the peace of the country, human trafficking is also a big challenge that threatens the peace of the country. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2006), human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. The prevalence of human trafficking in Africa, especially, in the West-African region cannot be overemphasised. The phenomenon is widespread in the region, with Nigeria playing an important role as a country of origin, transit, and destination for victims of trafficking (International Movement Against all Forms of Discrimination and Racism [IMADR] (2015). Between 2010 and 2014, Nigeria convicted more traffickers than any other country in West Africa (UNODC, 2016).

Human trafficking in Nigeria is in two forms; internal and cross-border trafficking. People are trafficked from rural communities to large cities such as Lagos, Abeokuta, Ibadan, Calabar, Port Harcourt, etc. where they are being exploitatively used for different hard domestic works, farm labour and prostitution (Ofuoku, 2010). In the same vein, human traffickers in Nigeria recruit their victims from different parts of the country under the guise of offering them a lifetime opportunity for fortune abroad (Ezeh, 2017). The second form

is that some of these victims are taken to other West-African countries that are not even as economically buoyant as Nigeria such as Benin, Togo, Guinea, Cameroon among others, while some are trafficked to European and Asian countries such as Italy, France, Spain, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, etc. (Olujuwon, 2008). Women and young girls among the trafficked persons are mainly used for domestic servitude and sex objects while boys are generally forced to work on plantations, in commercial farming, construction, quarries, and mines, or engage in petty crimes and drug trade (UNESCO, 2006).

Adepelumi (2015) observes that the root causes of human trafficking in Nigeria are high poverty rate, desire to migrate to study or work in the urban city and abroad, conflicts/war, weak legal system, porous borders, and corruption among immigration officers. Also, the practice of entrusting poor children to more affluent friends or relatives by some parents is a catalyst to the continuous growth of human trafficking. In fact, some parents deliberately sell their children, not just for money, but also in the hope that their children will escape a situation of chronic poverty and move to a place where they will have a better life and more opportunities (Adepelumi, 2015). This anti-social behaviour has eaten deep into the fabric of the Nigerian system to the extent that it has assumed the form of a structured organisation (Ofuoku, 2010). In fact, the leaders of the various human trafficking cartels have strong links with several other criminal groups around the world and this has facilitated the business (Ezeh, 2017). In this regard, Ofuoku (2010) submits thus:

Trafficking in human beings, especially women and girls, is a complex, multifaceted problem, involving multiple stakeholders at both the institutional and commercial levels. It is a demand-driven, global business with a large market for commercial sex and cheap labour. Because of insufficient and unexercised policy frameworks or trained personnel to curb or prevent it, this illicit business continues to flourish (p.1).

The activities of the human traffickers portray Nigeria's image badly in the eyes of outsiders and this reduces international respect for the country. Also, most of the victims upon their arrival after they have been deported by the authorities of the countries where they operated become destitute and even in some cases also decide to delve into the same illicit business.

Another challenge facing the country is drug abuse, which has destroyed the lives of many youth. Drug addiction is one of the vexing and pervasive problems that almost all the countries in the world including Nigeria have faced. It is the misuse of any psychotropic substances resulting in changes in bodily functions, thus affecting the individual socially, cognitively and physically. In Nigeria, one in seven persons aged 15-64 years is said to have used a drug (other than tobacco and alcohol) in the past year. The past year prevalence of any drug use is estimated at 14.4 per cent (range 14.0 per cent - 14.8 per cent), corresponding to 14.3 million people aged 15-64 years who had used a psychoactive substance in the past year for non-medical purposes (NBS, 2019).

Geographically, the highest past-year prevalence of drug use was found in the southern geopolitical zones (past year prevalence ranging between 13.8 per cent and 22.4 per cent) compared to the northern geopolitical zones (past year prevalence ranging between 10 per cent and 13.6 per cent (NBS, 2017). Drug abuse is becoming increasingly problematic in Nigeria as suggested by a number of recent studies that many Nigerian youth experiment with drugs at some point, particularly alcohol. However, Obiechina and Isiguzo (2017) assert that the use of illicit drugs is not a new trend in Nigeria, rather it is growing at an alarming rate with more "leaders of tomorrow" embracing drug abuse for varying reasons.

The number of youths that form an addiction to serious substances, jeopardizing their own health and safety and creating difficulties for their families and the public at large is becoming a great concern to the Nation. Supporting this, Fareo (2012) also observes that the abuse of illicit drugs is forming a student sub-culture in Nigeria. The most common types of drugs abused by Nigerian youth according to National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) include stimulants (e.g. cocaine, caffeine, nicotine and amphetamine), hallucinogens (e.g. marijuana, Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD), mescaline and narcotics (e.g. heroine, codeine, opium, morphine, tramadol). Others include depressants/sedatives (e.g. valium, alcohol, promotazine, chloroform, barbiturate, tranquilizers, rohypnol) and aphrodisiacs (Fareo,

2012). Research statistics also suggest that one in every three secondary school students consumes alcohol, 8.3% smoke cigarettes while almost one in every 10 (9.1%) chew miraa. Also, about 3% smoke bhang and use hard drugs like heroin, cocaine, mandrax and tranquilizers (Ekpenyong, 2012).

The initiation to drug abuse early in life has exposed many Nigerian youths to indulgent drug consumption, smoking, drinking, and substance abuse. The consequence of such addiction, abuse, trafficking or even cultivation is devastating both on the abusers themselves and the society at large. Some adverse physiological consequences of drug abuse include insomnia, prolonged loss of appetite, increased body temperature, greater risk of hepatitis and HIV/AIDS infection, death, various forms of cancer, ulcers, and brain damage (Perkison, 2002). Cannabis is also found to be affecting the hormonal and the reproductive systems and the regular use of cannabis can reduce male testosterone and sperm cells (Ekpenyong, 2012). Drug abuse also contributes to the formation of uric acid which accelerates conditions like arthritis, gout, osteoporosis, and heart attacks, particularly those with pre-existing coronary hypertensive problems (Perkison, 2002).

The acute indulgence of the Nigerian youth in hard drug consumption is likely the reason for the low socioeconomic status that characterises most Nigerian citizens (Obiechina & Isiguzo, 2016). This is connected with the fact that the youths who constitute the majority of Nigerian population also double as the major drug traffickers and abusers. And, as a result of the latter, they would not be able to do any meaningful or constructive work. Drug abuse leads to low productivity, poor quality education, and poor social services which further result in problems of insecurity such as social violence among the youths, crime such as armed robbery, rape, '419' syndrome, fraud, kidnapping, mental disorder, teen pregnancy and social miscreants among others. The main factors responsible for all the above are corruption, poverty and deplorable governance problems (Mohammed, 2020).

From the foregoing, it is evident that corruption, banditry, human trafficking, and drug abuse are some of the challenges facing the Nigerian state. Corruption has been identified as the major cause of these problems.

The Madinah City of Pre-Muhammad's Prophetic Mission: A Description

The Madinah city of Pre-Muhammad's Prophetic Mission was known as Yathrib and also said to have been then one of the biggest cities in Hijaz, Arabian Peninsula (Hitti, 1982). The city then, was a heterogeneous environment marked by various anti-social behaviour such as tribalism, nepotism, oppression, unlawful killing, human trafficking, raiding for slavery, armed robbery, lying and injustice. In fact, all forms of corruption, insecurity, and anarchy were the social realities (Naqvi, Aziz, Zaidi & Rehman, 2011). The two principal tribes of Madinah, the 'Aws' and 'Khazraj' were said to have carried on warfare for some generations on trivial issues such as beating of camel (Rahim, 2001). These precarious conditions were evident in the speech of Ja'far bin Abu Talib when he was queried by the king, Negus of Abyssinia to defend Islam and the Muslims from the allegation levelled against Muslims by the Quraysh of Makkah. According to Najeebabadi, (2000), Ja'far bin Abu Talib was reported to have responded thus:

O King, we were people plunged in ignorance. We worshipped idols, we ate dead animals, and we committed abominations. We broke natural ties, we ill-treated our neighbours, and our strong devoured the weak. We lived like this until Allah the Almighty raised among us a prophet of whose noble birth and lineage, truthfulness, honesty and purity we all were aware. (pp. 15-16).

These unbearable conditions accounted for the people of Madinah to be in dire need of good arbiter and leader who could bring law and order, security, peace and unity to the society. Fortunately for them, information about the good personality of Muhammad was received and he was invited to the city by the masses of Madinah to govern them (Naqvi, Aziz, Zaidi & Rehman, 2011) and with the permission of Almighty Allah (SWT), the invitation was honoured by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and this is known in Islam as *Hijrah* (migration of the Prophet from Makkah to Madinah).

Indubitably, from this brief description of the Madinah city in pre-Muhammad's mission, comparing the precarious social, political, economic and security conditions of the contemporary Nigerian state with it cannot be out of place.

The Madinah Model

A critical look at various verses of the Glorious Qur'an, Hadiths of Prophet Muhammad, and historical events reveal various principles explored by the Prophet and early Muslims to reform the city of Madinah to become an enviable model. These include inculcation of ethical values embedded in almost all spheres of Islamic teachings. In the Glorious Qur'an, the word '*salihan*' i.e. righteousness occurs 36 times. Sixteen instances out of this number, having faith and doing good deeds (morality) are mentioned together (Qur'an, 2:62, and 28:67) etc.

Apart from this, the word '*salihan*' assumes other etymological garb in the Glorious Qur'an occurring in such manner 140 times thereby making the total occurring in such manner 166 times if we consider 36 times in which '*salihan*' itself occurs along with the rest (Akintola, 2004). To be precise, the word '*salihah*' (to do good) can be found in the following verses of the –Glorious Qur'an (Qur'an 13:23, 40:8), '*aslaha*' (to ensure goodness), seven times (Qur'an 2:182, 5:39, 6:48, 6:54, 7:35, 42:40 and 47:2), '*aslahaa*' (dual from the verb '*aslaha*') once (Qur'an, 4:16), '*aslahna*' (plural of '*aslaha*') once (Qur'an 21:90) and '*aslahu*' (plural of '*aslaha*' in the third person) five times (Qur'an 2:160, 3:89, 4:147, 16:119, and 24:5), to mention just few (Akintola, 2004).

The verses of the Glorious Qur'an that attest to the commandment of moral are numerous. These include obedience to parents (Qur'an 17:23), obedience to the constituted authority (Qur'an 4:59), to suppress anger (Qur'an 3:134), to be just (Qur'an 4:58, 4:135, 16:90, 7:29, 38:26, 10:47, 57:25, 6:152, 7:29, 5:42), to fulfil pledges (Qur'an 16:91, 48:10), to be hard-working (Qur'an 62:10, 67:15, 40:13) and to avoid corruption (Qur'an 8:27). The forbidden morals include: murder (Qur'an 2:178-179), stealing (Qur'an 5:93), adultery (Qur'an 17:32) and mockery and suspicion (Qur'an 49:11-12) etc.

Akintola (2004) submits that moral principles in Islam are of two types. These are the positive and negative. To him, the positive is the commandment of Allah which must be fulfilled by the Muslims, while the negative is what they are commanded to avoid. Allah says:

Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded (Qur'an, 16:90).

In the same vein, a lot of Prophet Muhammad's *sunnah* (sayings and actions) teach and enjoin Muslims to be morally upright. One *hadith* reads thus:

Truthfulness leads to Al-Birr (piety, righteousness, and every act of obedience to Allah) and Al-Birr leads to Paradise. And a man keeps on telling the truth until he becomes a Siddiq (truthful person). Falsehood leads to Al-Fujür (i.e., wickedness, evil-doing, etc.), and Al-Fujür leads to the (Hell) Fire, and a man keeps on telling lies till he is written as a liar before Allah (Khan, 1997, p. 43).

In another *hadith* narrated by Masruq: 'Abdullāh bin 'Amr mentioned Allah's Messenger saying that he was neither a Fāhish nor a Mutafahhish. 'Abdullāh bin 'Amr added, "Allah's Messenger said, 'The best among you are those who have the best manners and the best character (Khan, 1997, p. 74).

More so, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was also reported to have said:

Whoever has wronged his brother, should ask for his pardon (before his death), as (in the Hereafter) there will be neither a Dinar nor a Dirham. (He should secure pardon in this life) before some of his good deeds are taken and paid to his brother, or, if he has done no good deeds, some of the bad deeds of his brother are taken to be loaded on him (in the Hereafter) (Khan, 1997, p. 290).

All the quoted verses of the Glorious Qur'an and *Ahadith* of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) were not mere theories in the minds of early Muslims but rather translated into concrete reality which culminated into positive societal reformation as exemplified in the city of Madinah. According to Naqvi, Aziz, Zaidi and Rehman (2011), the Prophet (SAW) transformed the city of Madinah into a model state by ensuring impartial justice, quality education, social security for all through an effective defence system, delegation of authority among subordinates and good system of taxation. Other transformational activities brought to the city of Madinah included poverty alleviation, good international relations, freedom of expression and good economic system (Naqvi, Aziz, Zaidi & Rehman, 2011). This enviable nature of the Madinan city was attained through the translation of the ethical teachings of Islam into reality by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his successors who ruled the city (Rahim, 2001).

For instance, as regards '*adālah* (justice), there was a noble woman who was arrested for stealing and some people recommended that she be freed because of her status. The case was brought to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and he was reported to have said:

The people before you (past nations) were destroyed because they used to inflict the legal punishments on the poor and forgive the rich. By Him in Whose Hand my soul is! If Fatima (the daughter of the Prophet did that (i.e., stole), I would cut off her hand (Khan, 1997, p. 409).

Thus, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as the leader of Madinah did not only imbibe the concept of '*adālah* (justice) but also translated it into reality by insisting that the noble woman should be made to face the law like any other citizens.

The second *Khalif* of the Prophet (SAW), 'Umar Ibn Khattab also demonstrated the value of justice in Islam on many occasions. For instance, despite that Khalid Ibn Walid being a high ranked general in the Muslim Army, during his reign, when he was alleged of financial mismanagement, he was prosecuted and having been found guilty, he was not spared from 'Umar's justice (Rahim, 2001). Also, when the son of the *khalif* Umar was found guilty of drinking alcohol, he was severely punished for the offence according to the law of the land (Rahim, 2001). The *Khalif* was also reported to have asked for forgiveness from a chief and requested him to slap him (*Khalif*) in return for having slapped him in a moment of anger (Rahim, 2001).

Another example is *Khalif* 'Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz, popularly known as 'Umar II who was also reported to have jailed Yazid bin Muhallab, one of his governors for appropriating the spoils of war (Rahim, 2001). These are evidences of demonstration of '*adālah* (justice) by the ruler of the Muslim empire that transformed the city of Madinah into an enviable one in history.

Another ethical value demonstrated by the Prophet and the early Muslims is *amānah*' (trustworthiness). The Prophet was given the nickname *Al-Amīn* (the trustworthy) by the pagans of Makkah before his prophethood and this quality among others informed why Khadijah (his first wife) engaged him as a business manager and eventually got married to him (Raheemson, 2002). Trustworthiness and contentment were also shown on several occasions by the first *Khalif*, Abubakar. He was said to have never spent any money from public treasury for his own personal interest. In fact, he refused to collect salaries or allowances from the public treasury and lived on his own trade despite having the public treasury at his disposal. However, on the insistence of 'Umar, the second *Khalif* of the Prophet, Abubakar afterwards agreed to take a token allowance from the state purse (Rahim, 2001).

'Umar Ibn Abdul 'Aziz's life also epitomises the values of trustworthiness and truthfulness. According to Rahim (2001), these qualities had so much impressed the society and made him become the chief of discourse of the people wherever and whenever they assembled. The same author further opines that 'Umar Ibn Abdul 'Aziz devoted himself to peace, harmony, and happiness of his subjects as there was no trouble in his great empire. Even the *Kharijites* that were then known to be troublemakers refrained from creating trouble for the *Khalif* who lived to the best of Islamic culture and devoted himself to the highest good of

his people. In fact, ‘Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz was as a relief amidst blood-shed, intrigue, and treachery to find a *Khalif* devoted to what he believed as the best both to himself and his people (Rahim, 2001).

The virtue of *rahmah* (compassion) was also demonstrated by Prophet Muhammad (SAW). He did this through sharing from trouble and hunger that befell his people and also by establishing for himself and his folk the principle of being the first to feel hunger if people were hungry, and the last to satisfy his hunger when people were starving. This noble character of his and many others such as piety, magnanimity, sincerity and so on played a great impetus for many people of his days to embrace Islam (Khaalid, 1998). Compassion was also manifested in the life of the first *Khalif* of Islam, Abubakar, as he used his wealth to purchase many Muslim slaves at high prices and set them free from the persecution of their pagan masters (Rahim, 2001). Equally, ‘Umar, the second *Khalif* of the Prophet was a dutiful, simple, compassionate, sincere, truthful and honest person. It is often said that a leader like ‘Umar is rare in history because he considered his position as trust and was always vigilant to the needs of his subjects. He used to travel at night in disguise to find out the conditions of his people so as to be able alleviate their sufferings and distresses (Rahim, 2001).

As-sidq (truthfulness) was also manifested in the lives of the early Muslims. Before anyone could be appointed into any office, such a person had to be truthful. Abubakar, the first *Khalif* of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was well known for his truthfulness. By virtue of his quality and many others, he won the respect of his fellow citizens and was honoured with the position of magistracy of Makkah (Rahim, 2001).

Another great value in Islam that could help reposition the deteriorating Nigerian nation is *Istiqāmah* (steadfastness or uncompromising good policies) which was well exemplified by the early Muslims. During the reign of *Khalif* Abubakar, there were rebels who claimed to be prophets after Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and they threatened the peace and harmony of the infant Islam (Khalid, 1998). The rebels included, *Museilimah*, (a man from *Yamamah*,) *Sajah*, (a woman who claimed to be prophetess), *Toleiha* (a man of Asad tribe) and Awad Ansi (a chief of the Ansi tribe of *Yeman*) (Rahim, 2001). There were also others who refused to pay *Zakat* (compulsory alms).

All these rebels were persuaded to obey and comply with the directive and injunction of Allah. While some of them surrendered and abided by law and order without fighting, others were adamant and waged war against the society like *Boko Haram* and bandits that are indiscriminately killing people on daily basis in Nigeria. As a sagacious and sober leader, Abubakar firstly employed dialogue to call them to order but the approach did not avail the desired result. Then, Khalid Ibn Al Walid, the chief army general of Islam was commanded by the *Khalif* to deal with them decisively and they were forcefully made to follow the law (Rahim, 2001). Perhaps, the success and the victory of the then Muslim soldiers over the rebels may not be unconnected with good training received in addition to sophisticated weapons and motivation from the government. In fact, one of the greatest achievements of the first *khalif* was suppression of the rebels and aversion of the crisis that could have divided Muslims shortly after the death of Prophet Muhammad (Raim, 2001).

The Madinah Principle model is diagrammatically presented in figure 1.

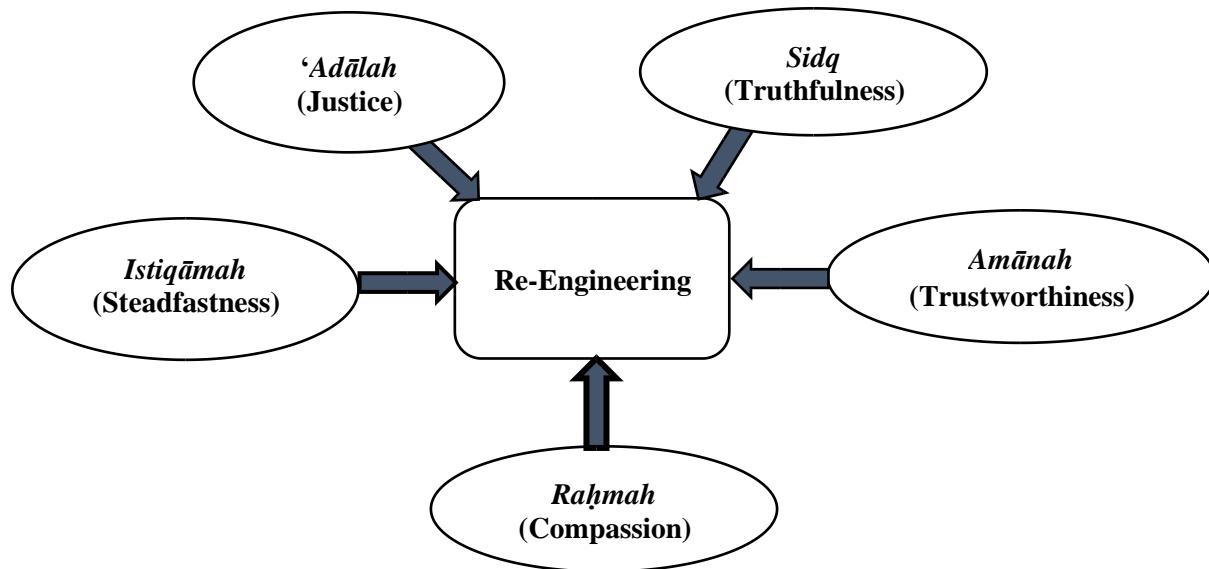


Figure 1: The moral principles of Madinan Model for reforming a nation source: Self-Developed

The question that arises now is how do we apply the Madinan model in re-engineering the Nigerian nation? The answer to this question is considered in the next segment of this paper.

Application of the Madinah Model in Nigeria

The life of Prophet Muhammad and the early Muslims as discussed in the previous segment of this paper attest to the capability of Islamic ethical values in bringing desired changes and reformation in any given society in which the values are imbibed. Administration of social justice was not then compromised as everyone was equal before the law. The ruler and the ruled, the rich and the poor, the weak and the strong were equally treated. There was no immunity clause in Islamic law as enshrined in the Nigerian constitution. If Prophet Muhammad would have wished his daughter's hand be amputated if she had committed theft, if the second *Khalif* of the Prophet, 'Umar Ibn Khattab could have severely punished his son for drinking alcohol, if Khalid Ibn Walid, the then high ranked general of Islamic army could be punished for mismanagement of funds and Yazid Ibn Muhallab, a governor could be brought to justice, then, the implications of this for the Nigerian government is to ensure justice among all categories of people in the society as against the use of immunity clause to prevent justice by some government functionaries.

Another practical step to be taken by Nigerian leaders is to emulate the administrative style of the second *Khalif* of the Prophet Muhammad who used to go round the city at night to find out personally the conditions of his subjects. For example, all projects awarded should always be monitored especially by the state Governors and the President. This is because not all reports from officers saddled with responsibilities are always correct. Unannounced visits to public institutions such as schools, hospitals, motor parks, market places, banks and so on are also paramount to discern the feelings of the people. More so, if Abubakr, the first *Khalif* of the Prophet (SAW) could demonstrate contentment by willingly refusing to collect salary and as well taking small allowances from the public treasury for his services, then, it behoves the political office holders who collect huge salaries and allowances at the expense of the poor masses to cut such to reasonable amounts for the benefits of the society.

Compassion should also be shown to the masses by the leaders as demonstrated by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) who used to keep his hunger till after people around him had eaten. Also, the lesson learnt from the actions of Abubakr, the second *Khalif* who was reported to have purchased many slaves from their masters' persecution and set them free should serve as a drive for the well-to-do Nigerians to also help the masses in establishing poverty alleviation schemes. Many children in the country are illiterates which is often said to be a strong contributing factor to insecurity of the nation. Aggressive sponsors of indigent but brilliant

young children to school by wealthy people in the country is tantamount to setting slaves free. If *Khalif* ‘Umar Ibn Abdul ‘Aziz, could be a chief good discourse of people whenever they were converged and the then known rebels/trouble makers could willingly lay down their arms and ammunitions and embrace peace due to his (the *Khalif*’s) dutifulness, trustworthiness, truthfulness, compassion justice, diligent, dutifulness, piety and austerity, then, it is also not impossible for bandits and all other forces that constitute threats to Nigerian society to change for better if such values are exemplified by the Nigerian leaders.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, this paper has been able to x-ray some of the challenges and troubles threatening the corporate existence of Nigeria that call for urgent repositioning to guide against total collapse. This paper established that moral decadence is present in virtually all sectors of the country and is responsible for the high rate of corruption, banditry, human trafficking, and drug abuse ravaging the country just like during the pre-Muhammad’s mission in Madinah. The paper therefore concludes that reengineering of the Nigerian state can be attained through the application of Islamic moral principles exemplified by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and early Muslims in reforming the Madinah city. This is because, a society that is morally developed will not be susceptible to anti-social behaviours.

Recommendations

In order to address the Nigerian social problems, it is hereby recommended that:

1. Parents must be alive to their responsibilities by giving time and priority to the moral training of their children as a proverb says “charity begins at home”. This could be done by always saying and doing the right things at the right time in the presence of their children.
2. Imams/ Islamic scholars should always use the pulpit to preach and teach moral values to their congregations. They should not only preach but also lead by example as demonstrated by the Prophet and the early Muslims.
3. There should be constitutional review on immunity clause for some top government officials. Fair punishment should be given to any law breaker irrespective of his or her status in the society as this would serve as deterrent to others to shun anti-social behaviours.
4. Government at all levels should adopt the policy of giving awards to any family and religious centre or organisation whose members demonstrate high standards of morality. To achieve this, a Ministry of Religious Affairs should be established and be saddled with the responsibility of regulating religious activities in the country.
5. The Federal government of Nigeria should intensify efforts in applying force to curb the notorious activities of bandits and all other criminal elements that threaten the peace and unity of the country. All the security agents, the, Police, the Custom, the Civil Defence Corps, the Air Force, the Navy, and the Army, need to be continuously trained and be provided with sophisticated equipment, and highly be motivated, so as to enhance their commitment to the defence of the nation.

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