

The Roles of Muslim Scholars in Managing Radicalism in Nigeria

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DOI: [10.56201/rjhcs.v10.no2.2024.pg15.20](https://doi.org/10.56201/rjhcs.v10.no2.2024.pg15.20)

Abstract

Islam is a religion with rules and regulations that touched every part of human life from individual to society and nations. Radicalism which associated with harm to humanity, society or nations cannot apparently to be said to escape the Islamic teachings. Allah says: “The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal, repel (the evil) with one which is better, then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity (will become) as though he was a close friend”. (Q: 41:34) The Paper intends to treat the problem of being radical with the bad intention so as to show Muslim scholars are not good, since the initial tradition of the Prophet says this and that, but the intention is to divert people from the truth. The descriptive method would be apply in order to correct the perceptions of some individuals in our society. Radicalism appears in virtually almost every sector in every society throughout the world (Ahmad 2023). But rationalist are trying their best in order to tackle it at its beginning due to the danger of it, therefore Muslim scholars in Nigeria are in the upper hand to alarm government to stop any problem that may brought lack of peace and harmony within the Nigerian context, especially within the Muslim ummah. The main roles in which Muslim scholars should marry are: Purifying their minds when extending the message of Allah (S.W.T), good preaching and applying wisdom especially when there is misunderstanding on some cases and to link with Government so as to prevent radicalism within themselves as well as the entire society

Keywords: *Radicalism, Muslim scholars, Nigeria, Management.*

Introduction

Radicalism is a major problem in Muslim world due to the outcome of it, many people use to wear it in order to achieve their aims in deference circumstances. Islam is a religion with the effort to digest things before acting on it that is why Allah (s.w.t) says: you should ask those with knowledge if you do not know (Q: 16:43). If we look in to the matter very well we can easily understand the way out for managing radicalism in our society.

Islam is a religion that touches every aspect in life of the Muslims. Allah said: we did not left anything in the book (Qur'an)" It means Allah S.W.T gave Muslims way out in doing everything. Investigations on some matters that ambiguous are very important for the Muslims. Muslims scholars are in picture to look and investigate on Islamic religion problems and make a sound decision for having a better society for the Muslim. Allah says: "*fa'tabiruu yaa ulul absaar*" Then, you should reflect o you with eyes (to see). (Q: 59:2). Radicalism is an issue in our country Nigeria which needs to be address for the purpose of peace and harmony. Muslim scholars are in position to deal with radicalism, if not radicalism deal with them as well as Muslim in Nigeria. It is unfortunate that those who specialize in the field of Islamic studies and spend many years seeing the attitudes of Nigerian Muslims and Muslim students are not given proper recognition in making decision on such problems. In the light of this, the prophet said: "*Idhaa usnidal amru ilaa ghairi ahlihi fantazurus-sa`ah*". It means when things taking to those who are not specialist on it, then, wait for the last Day. Muslim scholars should continue in making research day and night due to the success of this generation. Radicalism it means looking for complete social and political changes. (Longman 1163) Islam encourages Muslim to bring positive changes and discourage them in bringing negative changes. Allah said: "Good deed and evil deed are not equal, repel the evil with one which is better" and He said in the same chapter: "Whosoever does righteous good deed it is for the benefit of his own self, and whosoever does evil it is against his own self" (Q: 41:46). Due to these verses, Islam en lights Muslims to bring changes in doing good and shun away from doing bad deeds. When we look back to the Islamic History we can trace that all the progresses and development were found as a result of good intention and good deeds of the companion of the prophet. (Muhammad 128) Muslim scholars should know that changing or modifying things in our communities is not a one day job, but from simple to complex. Always we are looking for good changes in order to have peace in our society.

Muslim Scholars Today in Nigeria

Muslims in Nigeria have different perception about the Muslims Scholars in Nigeria, due to the problems of who is the Muslim Scholar? This was brought as a result of the channel of getting or imparting Islamic knowledge in Nigeria. Some Muslim think if you can read

a Qur'an you are a Muslim Scholar while some think if you can read the Qur'an and give interpretation you are a Muslim Scholar, in another hand some are recognizing higher qualifications while some politicians are recognizing the number of people that are listening to a particular preacher, this perception attribute a serious problems within the Islamic Scholars and open the door to radicalism in Nigeria especially in Muslim communities. If we regard them as Muslims Scholars we should call their attention to modify some characters in order to lift up our communities in managing radicalism based on the practice of the following duties.

Purification of Mind

The main objective of Muslim scholar is to purify the mind of Muslims from all kind of corruption, in order to have sense in all of his day to day activities in this world and to achieve in the hereafter in getting paradise. Allah says: "By the soul (mind) and him who perfected it in proportion". Then He showed him what is wrong for him and what is right for him. Indeed He succeeds who purifies his mind. And indeed he fails who corrupts his mind. (Q91:7-10).

In this verse we realize that Muslim Scholars if they purified their mind in their duties they are going to achieve their aims in guiding Muslims in different communities. And these roles of Muslim Scholars, here is to fear Allah (S.W.T) to deliver the knowledge of Islam as it is, not for the purpose of getting something else, this would help and reduce radicalism for the youth as well as for some followers. The Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) stated in His hadith saying "in the human body there is lump of flesh, if it is become good the whole body will be good and if it is decay the whole body will become destroyed, listen, it is mind". (Abdallati , 161)

It means the first people to be good in characters are Muslim Scholars, this, because their students or followers to copy good attitude from them.

- We mentioned the lack of uniformity in understanding who is a Muslim Scholar. Then Muslim Scholars should level themselves in their activities, in which any Scholar knows his level in terms of knowledge, qualification, and even contribution to a particular society, no one should exceed his limit in order to guide people accordingly, because many among the Muslims Scholars are starting something that is not in line and they are trying to enforce Muslims in some communities to followed them without justification, such behaviors open radicalisms in Muslim communities. The Prophet Muhammad said: "May Allah brightest a man who hears a tradition from us gets it by heart and passes it to others, many a bearers of knowledge conveys it to one who is more versed than he is, and many a bearer of knowledge is not versed in it (Ahamad:187).

- Muslims Scholars should link their activities of guiding and teaching Muslim Islamic education with government in order to become open in their day to day activities and if there is misunderstanding between a Muslim Scholars and his student which break up the unity or it would lead to shedding of blood in a particular society, then, they should let government knows what is going on, in order to manage the problem before its escalation. The Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) says: “Any one of you that see *Munkar* (Abominated act) should change it by his hand, if he cannot do so, then, by his tong, if he cannot do so, he should hate it by his heart”.
- They should shun away from saying something without investigation. In some cases Muslim Scholars might here the story in a community said by local or common people, without investigation about the story a Muslim scholar may said so in public and if he was asked, from where you have that statement he cannot show any one among the people feed him with a story, at the end, he will be a guilty. Allah says: “O you who believe if an outsider came with a story you should verify it, lest you should harm people in ignorance, and afterwards you become regretful for what you have done”. (Q:49:6)
- Muslim Scholars should know which kind of people they are dealing with, when teaching and preaching, as well as in which society or community they are living in, just to know how to influence them in doing good as well as stopping them doing evil deeds. Arabs are saying: “*Likulli Makanin Maqal Wali Kulli Zamanin Rijal*” it means each place has a meaningful statement to stated and any generation has its people.
- Muslim Scholars should feel that whatever they are doing is for the success of their communities not for the benefit of themselves only, it would help in change people attitudes.

Working in Peace and Harmony to the Nation:

It is time for the Muslim Scholars to bear fully in managing social conditions in Nigeria. The reason why Muslim Scholars must actively engage in a battle to save our communities from crisis and serious conflicts are:

- a. Peace and harmony are the bedrock of each development; we cannot achieve our own goals without it, in line of this Allah said: “And hold fast, all of you together, to the rope of Allah and be not divided among yourselves... (Q: 3:103)”. Why Allah instructed the believers not to be divided? Because there is no peace when there is serious conflicts and no achievements in that society.
- b. Islam welcome any progress or initiative that can simplify things, that is why the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) said: “*Yassiruu Walaa Tu`assiruu*” it means “Make things easy do not make it difficult” (Muhammad 144), this show that we should

made ourselves available when government in need for associating with Muslim Scholars for enlighten our people for the achievements of the nation.

- c. The dignity of human being in our community should be promoted to the extent that any human being will be respected by other people in Nigeria, in Qur'an:(17:70) Allah (S.W.T) said: "And indeed have honored children of Adam the (human being)"...This is respect given by Allah to the human being, but today in Nigeria people are down grad the level of human being, just because one is better than another in one or two aspect of life, in that process the humiliated one can focus in tarnishing the image of the honorable one, which is the beginning of radicalism and is not in line with the teaching of Islam. Allah (S.W.T) said: "O you who believe! Let not a group scoffs at another group; it may be that the latter are better than the former. (Q:49:11)

Such attitudes would help Muslims, if Muslim Scholars are working toward such morality.

- d. Taking care in condemning people culture, it is generally recognized among the ethicists that morality is universal.(chentu 111) This means that every society has its rules relating to what is ought and ought not to be done a moral code. This is an ideal standard of conduct sometimes adhered to, sometimes deviated from, and members of the society pass judgment accordingly. (Cyril, 15) but due to social transformation, societies or communities have come to witness plurality of moral system. In light of this Allah said: "*Ud`u Ilaa Sabiili rabbika bil hikmati wal mau`izatil-hasanah*" this means "Invite (Mankind) to the way of your lord with wisdom and fair preaching"...(Q:16:125), if Muslim Scholars can apply this method a lot of achievements could be achieved in managing radicalism in Nigeria as well as promotion of peace and harmony in our mix.

Conclusion

The paper titled Roles of Muslim scholars in managing radicalism in Nigeria explain some technical ways in which the Islamic Shariah looked the case of radicalism in Nigeria and solve it to the vitamin of our needs especially today that we are in looking for the solution to such problems. Allah (S.W.A) created us in order to worship him, as he said: I (Allah) created no jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (alone)" (Q: 51:56). This opens the door for the Muslims to know how to worship Allah in accordance with the teaching of the messenger of Allah, the servant of Allah need to have the one that can guide them properly about his religion, then, Muslim scholars are in upper hand to teach them well, due to the problem of who is a Muslim scholar in our country Nigeria, some with selfishness and some with a little knowledge gave birth to the radicalism, but in the paper we have treated the issue in order to have a good society full with peace and harmony.

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