Irfana: Journal of Religious Studies
Vol 1 No 2 Februari 2025
ISSN: XXXX-XXXX (Electronic)
Open Access: https://journals.ai-mrc.com/irfana

The Response of The Qur'an and Bible to Acts of Corruption: A Comparative Study and Its Societal Impact

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Article Info

Article history:
Received 28-01-2025
Revised 07-02-2025
Accepted 17-02-2025

Keyword:
Corruption; Newspaper; Bible; Morality; Social Impact.

ABSTRACT

Corruption is a global problem that has a significant impact on public morality, the economy, and society. This article aims to analyze the response of the holy books of the Qur'an and the Bible to acts of corruption and their impact on social life. This research uses a literature study method by examining relevant primary and secondary sources. The research results show that the two holy books firmly condemn corruption as an act that violates moral values and justice. In the Qur'an corruption is described through the concept of al-ghulul or betrayal of trust, with the threat of severe punishment in the afterlife. Meanwhile, the Bible discusses corruption through the practice of bribery and emphasizes the importance of repentance and restoring the victims' rights. The impacts of corruption include economic decline and social inequality.
This research makes a unique contribution by offering a comparative analysis of religious texts which has been underexplored in the literature on corruption. By examining the moral perspective of the Qur'an and the Bible, this study sheds light on how religious teachings can inform anti corruption strategies. The broader implications of this research for society and policy-making include the potential for religious and moral frameworks to guide the development of policies aimed at combating corruption and fostering ethical governance. Understanding the moral foundations against corruption could help shape public discourse and promote long-term societal change.

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INTRODUCTION

Corruption, particularly in Indonesia, is a critical issue that draws attention from various experts, including religious, legal, political, and interfaith scholars. It is widely acknowledged as a disgraceful act that must be eradicated. Corruption presents one of the most serious challenges to national development, as it endangers the stability and security of the country and hampers societal progress. It is both a moral and social deviation that disrupts the foundations of economic, political, and social justice. Over time, religious norms have often been overlooked, with individuals focusing on their own lifestyles without regard for public welfare or whether their means of income are halal or haram. Corruption manifests at all levels of society, from small matters like building permits and government procurement projects to legal processes. This behavior often starts as accepted or normalized practices, such as offering rewards or services for favors. As such, corruption cannot be ignored, as it has tangible impacts on the public.

This study aims to answer the following research question: How do the Qur'an and the Bible address acts of corruption, and what is their impact on societal values and behavior? The focus is on exploring how these religious texts present corruption, its moral implications, and the broader consequences for social order.

Etymologically, corruption derives from the Latin word 'corruptus', which spread to various European languages, including 'corruption' in English and French. In Indonesian, it became 'korupsi'.

Corruption contrasts with fairness, integrity, and honesty. According to Law No. 31 of 1999, which was amended by Law No. 20 of 2001, corruption involves unlawful acts that enrich an individual or others at the expense of public welfare. In the academic sphere, discussions on corruption include various perspectives, such as Natael Budiman's examination of corruption in the Old and New Testaments, which frames it as an act of greed that harms others and violates Christian moral codes. To combat corruption, he suggests fostering honesty, social justice, economic equity, and gratitude. Syed Hussein Alatas defines corruption as the subordination of public interest to personal gain, which undermines societal norms and welfare through secrecy, betrayal, and deception. While many studies have explored corruption and its effects, few have addressed the role of religious teachings in this context.

This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing how both the Qur'an and the Bible address corruption and its implications for societal ethics and governance.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research methods are scientific approaches to obtaining data for specific purposes and uses. In this study, the author employs a library research method, often referred to as literature review research. This method involves a systematic and thorough examination of library sources related to the Qur'an and the Bible, focusing on their responses to acts of corruption and the subsequent impact on society. The sources used in this study include both primary and secondary data, such as religious texts, scholarly journals, books, and articles.

The criteria for source selection include relevance to the research question, academic rigor, and reliability. Primary sources, including the Qur'an and the Bible, are analyzed alongside secondary sources that provide scholarly interpretations and commentaries on these texts. Secondary data sources were selected based on their contribution to understanding the moral and ethical teachings in both religious texts regarding corruption, as well as their broader societal implications.

The analytical framework used in this study is a comparative content analysis, which allows for an in-depth exploration of the teachings on corruption in both the Qur'an and the Bible. This framework facilitates the identification of common themes and distinctions in the religious responses to corruption and provides a basis for understanding their societal impact.

This method was chosen because it allows for a detailed and systematic comparison of religious texts, which is essential for answering the research question regarding how the Qur'an and the Bible address acts of corruption and their moral implications. By combining primary and secondary sources, the method ensures that the study provides a comprehensive and well-rounded perspective on the issue, maximizing the reliability and depth of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Corruption in the Qur'anic Perspective

In the Al-Munawwir Dictionary the term corruption can be interpreted in various ways, namely: risywah, khiyanat, facade, ghulul, suht, vanity. Meanwhile, in the Al-Bisri Dictionary, the word corruption itself can be translated into Arabic: risywah, ihtilas, and facade. Meanwhile, in the Big Indonesian Dictionary, corruption literally means: bad, damaged, likes to use goods or money entrusted to him, can be bribed.(Millah, 2016, p. 199) Corruption is not specifically mentioned in the Qur'an, but terms or metaphors related to corruption are often mentioned in the Qur'an. The Qur'an mentions several forms of misappropriation of property or consuming illicit property that is not rightfully theirs. QS example. At-Taubah 34, QS. Al-Baqarah 188, and QS. Ali Imran 161.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنَ الأَحْبَارِ وَالرُّهْبَانِ لَيَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلا يُنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

Meaning"O you who believe, indeed many of the scholars and monks devour the wealth of the people unjustly and hinder them from the path of Allah. And those who hoard gold and silver and do not spend it in the way of Allah—give them tidings of a painful punishment.", (QS.At-Taubah: 34)

Based on the Ministry of Religion's Summary Tafsir, this verse highlights the bad behavior of some Jewish and Christian religious leaders. Allah reminds believers that many of them use religion for personal gain. They devour other people's wealth through false means, such as asking for payment to atone for sins, accepting bribes, or taking advantage of people's trust for personal gain. Apart from that, they also hinder people from the path of Allah by spreading lies about Islam, doubting the Koran, and criticizing the Messenger of Allah. Behavior like this shows dangerous moral corruption, especially since they are religious figures who are supposed to guide society towards goodness.(Tafsir, n.d.) So we can understand that corruption is a disgraceful act because it destroys justice and harms society. The Qur'an's own response to the above verse strongly condemns perpetrators of corruption as actions that consume wealth in vain. Corruption itself is a form of betrayal of trust that damages individual morals and social order. This verse is a warning to everyone, especially religious leaders, not to abuse power and wealth. Instead, they must be role models in practicing their religion honestly and helping others.

وَلا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتُدْلُوا بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا مِنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالإِثْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

Meaning: And let no one of you consume another person's wealth in a wrong way and bring that wealth to the judge, so that you can consume part of another person's property in an immoral way, even though you know about it. (QS. Al-Baqarah: 188)

In Tafsir Al-Wajiz/ Syaikh Prof. Dr. Wahbah az-Zuhaili, an expert in Syrian jurisprudence and exegesis, said: Do not consume other people's wealth in the wrong way,namely something that is not permitted by the Shari'a to be taken, such as payment for adulterers, shamans and khamr. Don't complain about matters, namely property matters, to the judge, and don't distort existing laws with bribes and the like. And the judge's decision does not make lawful what is haram and forbid what is halal. And you know that you are wronging others by taking this property. This verse was revealed to Imriul Qays bin Abis and Abdan bin Asyra' Al-Hadramy who were arguing with each other about a plot of land, and the first person wanted to swear, then the verse came down (Wa laa ta'kuluu amwaalakum bainakum bil baathili)(Tafsir Web, n.d.) The verse above explained in Tafsir Al-Wajiz provides a strong basis regarding the prohibition of taking other people's property in the wrong way. The Qur'an's response to society is the principle of honesty and justice. The Qur'an strictly prohibits all forms of illegal takeover of property, including corruption, including bribery, manipulation of power, or other methods that are contrary to the Shari'a. Then corruption also worsens social relations, because corruption itself causes a loss of mutual trust in society and worsens poverty, giving rise to social inequality.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغُلَّ وَمَنْ يَغْلُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لا يُظْلَمُونَ

Meaning: It is impossible for a prophet to betray the spoils of war. Whoever betrays the spoils of war, then on the Day of Resurrection he will come with what he betrayed, then everyone will be rewarded with what he has done (retribution) proportionally, while they will not be wronged. (QS. Ali Imron, 161).

Ibn Katsir said that Allah SWT said: "Whoever betrays, surely on the Day of Resurrection he will come with what he betrayed. This is a strict prohibition and a firm threat against people who betray, namely committing corruption. According to Ibnu Katsir himself, in Ali Imran's letter verse 161 it is said that "it is impossible for a Prophet to betray". From Ibn Abbas he said: "The Muslims lost their velvet blanket in the battle of Badr." They said it was possible that Rasulullah SAW took it.

Therefore, Allah revealed this verse, namely: "It is impossible for a Prophet to betray", namely corruption. This is the purification of the Prophet SAW from all aspects of betrayal.(Rahmanto, Oki Dwi, 2021, p. 178) From this interpretation it can be understood that the Al-Qur'an's response to acts of corruption is: The Al-Qur'an strictly prohibits corrupt behavior. The verse above emphasizes that corruption is a form of betrayal which is strictly prohibited in Islam. This confirms that corruption is unacceptable behavior.

The term al-ghulul literally means betrayal or abuse of trust and trust. According to Hussein Alatas, corruption is basically the abuse of trust for personal gain, or an act of theft carried out through fraud that betrays trust. In the modern context, al-ghulul can be interpreted as an act of corruption, this is reinforced by the 2001 fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) which strictly prohibits Muslims from committing acts of corruption (al-ghulul) or bribery (al-ghulul). risywah).(Ashri, 2024, pp. 10–11). So we can understand that Al-Ghulul from a contemporary perspective is an act of corruption which is strictly prohibited in Islam because it violates trust and trust.

A Biblical Perspective on Corruption

The term corruption itself specifically does not exist or is not known in the Bible in the world of the Old Testament and New Testament, because the term corruption is not a unique term in either the Hebrew of the Old Testament or the Greek of the New Testament. In the life of Israeli society, the issue of corruption (bribery or kickbacks) occurs very often and has received attention and criticism from the Prophets. Just like other nations in the world, Israel as an association of people/nation cannot be free from corrupt practices. However, there is a term in the book of Exodus 23:8 about "do not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of those who see and perverts the things of the righteous." R.A. Knox as quoted by Alatas (1987:2) means that "Beware of bribery; bribery can blind a person's eyes, even if he is a wise and careful person, and interfere with his decisions, even if he is a just person.(Jusuf Nikolas Anamofa, 2016, pp. 200–201). It can be understood that this verse is to remind the Israelites of the bad impact of bribery itself. Meanwhile, in the New Testament, the issue of corruption receives less attention than in the Old Testament. This may be caused by several socio-political and governmental factors in the New Testament era which were certainly different from the Old Testament era. Due to the socio-political conditions of government during the Old Testament era where Israel at that time was still a government or had had its own government for some time, so there would be corrupt behavior at that time within the scope of Israel's leaders. immediately received attention and criticism from the prophets or other writings. Meanwhile, in the socio-political situation during the New Testament era, the Israelites no longer had their own government because they had become a conquered territory and colony of the Roman empire. Therefore, the corrupt policies of the Roman rulers were less of a focus for the New Testament writers, as they were more likely to criticize and develop New Testament society. However, there is definitely still some corrupt behavior in the New Testament that we can encounter and at the same time try to get a New Testament view of corrupt behavior. Examples of corruption among tax collectors and Roman soldiers in Luke. 3:1-20 and in the book of Matt. 3:1-12 as well as Mark. 1:1-8 contains a story about the work of John the Bastard. The thing that differentiates the story of John in the Gospel of Luke from the two Gospels is the dialogue in Luke. 3:10-14. Then in the previous verses (7-9), just like Matthew (3:7-9), both contain John's words which demand living repentance from his listeners at that time. However, the writer of Luke's Gospel not only demanded living repentance from them, they also had to provide concrete evidence of their repentance, as confirmed and explained in several additional dialogues between John and his listeners (vv. 10-14). The author of Luke himself specifically displays the dialogue between John and the tax collectors and soldiers. The tax collectors asked: “Master what have we done?” (verse 12), then John answered: "Do not charge more than what has been determined for you" (verse 13), then the soldiers asked the same question, John answered: "Do not plunder or extort, make sure you are satisfied with your salary" (verse 14). John here does not mean to give up his position, but must let go of all his sins from that position.(Jusuf Nikolas Anamofa, 2016, pp. 207–208). The author of Luke tells this to John so that his readers will abandon the habit of collecting more taxes than what has been determined among tax

collectors, and this habit and orders his readers to abandon the habit of abusing power among soldiers to extort and plunder the people.(Ashri, 2024, p. 14).

In particular, Luke here highlights the dialogue between John and tax collectors and Roman soldiers, as a form of criticism of the injustice and corrupt practices that were rife at that time. Corrupt practices in the Roman Empire spread in various fields, such as trade, the justice system, elections, and government. It can be understood that in this dialogue injustice is very visible, especially in the behavior of tax collectors and Roman soldiers. Then the taxation system implemented in the Roman Empire put great pressure on small communities, of course, who often became victims of injustice. These tax collectors and soldiers often asked to be paid more than they were supposed to and carried out extortion. The advantages of this bill are considered to be the result of corruption used to enrich oneself. An example of this practice is seen in the story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10), who gained wealth from his position as chief tax collector. However, after admitting his mistake and repenting, Zacchaeus promised to return the proceeds of his extortion, so Jesus said, "Today salvation has come to this house..." (verse 9). So we can understand together from the explanation above that the corruption carried out by tax collectors and Roman soldiers was caused by greed, dissatisfaction with predetermined salaries and weak supervision which allowed them to abuse their positions for personal gain.

The Impact of Corruption on Society

Many factors cause someone to commit acts of corruption, including: materialistic consumerist behavior and the greedy nature of humans themselves. So corruption has a destructive impact on various aspects of life. Among others are:

1. Economic Impact
   Corruption has a negative impact on economic progress, including reduced investment, slowed economic growth, and reduced income and government budget allocations for social programs and community welfare. This negative relationship is a motivation for the government and society to eradicate corruption through repressive and curative measures. Corruption itself also causes development inefficiencies, increased prices of goods and services, and increased state debt.
2. Social Impact
   Corruption itself creates economic conditions that are full of high costs (high cost economy). This happens because economic actors have to bear additional burdens due to corruption, which has an impact on the prices of basic necessities, services and public services. These prices had to be increased to cover the losses experienced by economic actors due to corrupt practices and other irregularities. Related to poverty, corruption increasingly worsens the conditions of poor people. Corruption makes it difficult for them to gain access to the economy, financial services, health, education, information and justice. Soaring prices of basic necessities such as sugar, oil and milk have resulted in many babies and children suffering from malnutrition and losing the opportunity to obtain a proper education. As a result, poor people are increasingly marginalized in social and economic life.(Amalia, 2022, pp. 61–63). So corruption not only causes huge losses to the economy, but also worsens poverty and social inequality. To minimize the impact, concrete action is needed to eradicate corruption in order to create a fairer and more inclusive economy for all levels of society.
3. Decreasing National Competitiveness
   Corruption is one of the main causes of the decline in Indonesia's competitiveness index ranking at the global level. In September 2016, the World Economic Forum (WEF) announced that Indonesia's competitiveness ranking had fallen from 37th to 41st position, lagging behind other Asian countries such as Japan (8), Malaysia (25), South Korea (26), China (26).), 28), and Thailand (34). This ranking reflects the level of productivity and prosperity of a country. Bambang Brodjonegoro, Minister of National Development Planning, said corruption was the main factor causing Indonesia's declining competitiveness. Minister of Finance Sri Mulyani Indrawati added that this was a big task that the government had to

complete. He identified a number of factors that influenced the decline in the competitiveness index, including corruption (11.8%), bureaucratic inefficiency (9.3%), limited infrastructure (9.0%), difficulty in accessing funding (8.6%), inflation (7.6%). , policy instability (6.5%), and poor work ethic (6.1%). The first step that needs to be taken to increase Indonesia's competitiveness is bureaucratic reform, especially in the government sector. This reform aims to build trust, improve service quality, and create business certainty, which can ultimately improve Indonesia's competitiveness index ranking.(Wilhelmus, 2018, p. 38) So it can be understood that the decline in Indonesia's competitiveness index is caused by various factors, especially corruption and bureaucratic inefficiency. Therefore, integrated and sustainable bureaucratic reform is a key step to increase competitiveness and improve Indonesia's reputation in the eyes of the world.

The social impact of corruption that I understand in the Al-Qur'an that we have explained is that it can damage people's morals. Because corruption forms a culture of manipulation and oppression, thereby eroding the values of honesty and trust. Apart from that, the impact of corrupt behavior is to invite Allah's punishment. Because the act of corruption itself damages or violates God's commands. Economic damage and injustice are also the impact of corrupt behavior. Wealth obtained from corruption will have an impact on impoverishing the common people and enriching the few in power. This is very contrary to Islamic teachings about economic justice. After analyzing how the Koran and the Bible address acts of corruption and their impact on society, similarities and differences were found between the two holy books.

Similarities and differences between the Koran and the Bible

What these two holy books have in common is that both Islam and Christianity condemn corruption as a disgraceful act that violates moral values and justice. Then there is no special term in the Koran or Bible that explains it specifically. However, something similar was mentioned with corruption. And both use the text of the book to prohibit abuse of trust or power. As in the Koran, QS. Ali Imran: 161, QS. Al-Baqarah: 188, and At-taubah 34. What differentiates these two holy books is their approach to punishment for perpetrators of corruption, in this case the Qur'an imposes the threat of severe punishment in the afterlife for perpetrators of corruption. corruption. Example: QS. Ali Imran: 161 states that the perpetrator will bring the results of his corruption to the Day of Judgment and receive appropriate recompense. This approach emphasizes moral and religious consequences as well as the application of worldly laws. Meanwhile, the Bible does not emphasize punishment specifically, but focuses more on the perpetrator's repentance and the restoration of other people's rights. Example: The story of Zacchaeus in Luke: 19:1-10. Where the perpetrators of corruption repent and return the assets resulting from their extortion. So this approach emphasizes forgiveness and moral change. Then on to aspects of the socio-political approach. The Qur'an provides moral and legal guidelines that apply universally. Corruption is seen as a violation of trust (ghulul), justice ('adl), which are fundamental values in Islam. Meanwhile, in the Bible the approach changes according to historical context. In the Old Testament (criticism of the Israeli government) and the New Testament (focus on individual morality as Israel was under Roman rule).

Table of similarities and differences between corruption in the Koran and the Bible.

Aspek Of Equatiuon	Aspects Of Difference	Al-Qur'an	Bible

1. Both religions both condemn corruption as a disgraceful act that violates moral values and justice 2. the holy book there are no special terms. However, something similar was mentioned with corruption. In 3. Both use biblical texts to prohibit abuse of trust or power.	1. Punishment approach for perpetrators of corruption	Enforcing the threat of severe punishment in the afterlife for perpetrators of corruption. Example: QS. Ali Imran: 161 states that the perpetrator will bring the results of his corruption to the Day of Judgment and receive appropriate recompense. This approach emphasizes moral and religious consequences as well as the application of worldly laws.	It does not emphasize specific punishment, but rather focuses on the perpetrator's repentance and the restoration of the rights of others. Example: The story of Zacchaeus in Luke: 19:1-10. Where the perpetrators of corruption repent and return the assets resulting from their extortion. So this approach emphasizes forgiveness and moral change.
	2.Socio-Political approach	The Qur'an provides moral and legal guidelines that apply universally. Corruption is seen as a violation of trust (ghulul), justice ('adl), which are fundamental values in Islam.	The approach changes according to historical context. In the Old Testament (criticism of the Israeli government) and the New Testament (focus on individual morality because Israel was under Roman rule).

CONCLUSION

We can all understand that the response to the Qur'an and the Bible strictly prohibits acts of corruption. In the Qur'an, corruption is described as al-ghulul (betrayal or abuse of trust) and is strictly prohibited because it violates honesty and justice. Meanwhile, the Bible highlights acts of corruption through the term bribery, which is considered to damage justice and morality.

The study's findings suggest several practical implications for contemporary anti-corruption strategies: First, the integration of religious values—such as honesty, justice, and accountability—into public policies and governance can enhance efforts to combat corruption. Both religious texts emphasize the importance of upholding these values in leadership and governance. Second, religious

institutions can play a crucial role in promoting ethical conduct within society by engaging in interfaith dialogue on common moral values, providing a platform for collective action against corruption.

The destructive impact of corruption is evident in several areas: First, the economy, where corruption inhibits investment, slows economic growth, and reduces public welfare budgets. Second, socially, it worsens poverty, increases social inequality, and raises the cost of living for ordinary people. Third, corruption undermines a nation's competitiveness, lowering its international competitiveness ranking due to weak supervision and ineffective enforcement of laws.

In light of these findings, it is essential to focus on reinforcing the values of justice, honesty, and law enforcement, not only in political and legal frameworks but also through religious and moral education. Both the Qur'an and the Bible advocate for moral integrity and accountability, which can guide contemporary anti-corruption strategies. Therefore, this research emphasizes the importance of implementing religious and moral values in social life, especially as a foundation for tackling corruption in both governance and community relations.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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