



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v8-i11/4996>

DOI: 10.6007/IJARBSS/v8-i11/4996

Received: 17 Oct 2018, **Revised:** 11 Nov 2018, **Accepted:** 15 Nov 2018

Published Online: 16 Nov 2018

In-Text Citation: (Serour, Abdelgelil, Musolin, & Abdullah, 2018)

To Cite this Article: Serour, R. O. H., Abdelgelil, M. F. M., Musolin, M. H., & Abdullah, M. S. (2018). Muslim Character in Dealing with Rumors in Light of Surat Al-Nur. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 8(11), 1116–1121.

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Vol. 8, No. 11, 2018, Pg. 1116 - 1121

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Muslim Character in Dealing with Rumors in Light of *Surat Al-Nur*

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ABSTRACT

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, for the End is for those who are righteous, peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and companions. Rumor is a social phenomenon that exists in all societies in both ancient and modern times. It is a syndrome that threatens individuals, groups, institutions, communities and nations. At the beginning of the Islamic era, the incident of invented falsehood was carried out by the hypocrites. It almost had a significant impact on the morale of some Muslims until when the Almighty Allah revealed the Noble Quran showing the innocence of Aisha (mother of believers). The research problem lies in the lack of knowledge on the moral approach to confront and restrict the spread of rumors. This study aims to determine the moral approach established by the Noble Quran in dealing with rumors through the incident of invented falsehood that appeared in Surat al-Nur. Inductive and analytical approach was used to address this issue. The study concluded that in order to protect the society from this deadly syndrome, Islam has established a strong moral approach to confront rumors and restrict its spread and influence in society. As stated in Surah Al-Nour, the following steps are taken; First, good thought amongst the

believer. Second, non-circulation of false stories, Third, Establishing evidence and proof, Fourth, tracing the source of the rumor. Fifth, strict warning of punishment in this world and the Hereafter.

Keywords: Muslim Character, Rumors, Invented Falsehood.

DEFINITION OF RUMOR

Literal meaning: It is mentioned in *Lisan al-Arab: Sha'a al-shayb* (the grey hair circulated), *intashar* (it circulated), *sha'a al-khbar* (the news circulated), *dha'a dhikr al-shai* (something is known), *ash'ata al-maal* (the money circulated). Therefore, *Isha'* (rumor) refers to circulated stories, and *Mishya'* means a person who does not keep secrets (IbnManzur, 1414). *Intishar and dhuyou'* means spread and circulation of rumor.

Technical meaning: There are many definitions of rumor, including:

It refers to stories, words, or news conveyed and repeated in the society without verifying their accuracy (Noufal, 1987:16).

It is not an exaggeration to say that what the Prophet (peace be upon him) faced in the Hadeeth of invented falsehood is one of the most difficult incidents in his biography. Muslims have been seriously deceived during the incident, and it is merely an obvious fabrication. If not because of Allah's will, there could be a great calamity and atrocity.

The Muslim community spent a month in Medina in a terrible situation and ruthless rumor, until when the revelation came to end this tragedy. It is a wonderful informative lesson for that society and Muslim society in general (Noufal, 1987:128).

Objectives of rumors:

They spread fear, trouble, desire, and hatred, manipulate facts, and distort the opponent's image.

Rumors are used:

As a means of disrupting morale, concealing facts, questioning the sources of accurate stories, and distorting the reality

Rumors also have a negative impact on individuals and society, which is evident in the incident of invented falsehood:

The central issue in the story of the incident of invented falsehood is the accusation of Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her). It is an occurrence that might be reflected in every generation and its major objective is leadership possession. If the leadership is not earned by force, the enemy has is left with no option other than destroying the leadership through psychological warfare by using the method of trick, deception, and fabrication of lies. It is a war of propaganda circulated by the enemy against the legitimate leadership (Ismail, 2001).

The incident aimed at

Challenging to the integrity of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) by spreading infidelity and falsehood among the believers, creating doubt and suspicion in the Islamic sect, fueling

disparity within the Muslim community, employing the weak believers and hypocrites in a battle in which all methods of psychological influence are used

Therefore, due of the seriousness of this matter, and to protect society from this deadly syndrome, Islam has established a strong moral approach represented in the following steps:

1. Good thought amongst the believers

This is evident in the Qur'an:

Why, when you heard it, did not the believing men and believing women think good of one another and say, "This is an obvious falsehood"? (Al-Nur: 12)

This is what al-Saheed Sayyid Qutb (may Allah have mercy on him) called the "sub-emotional guide" (Qutb, 1412H: 2), and it is the first step in prevention and protection.

It was applied by some of the Prophet's companions in the incident of the infidels invented falsehood, such as Abu Ayyub al-Ansari and his wife (may Allah be pleased with them). Abu Ayyub's wife, Ummu Ayyub, told him: O Abu Ayoub! Do you hear what people say about Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her)? He said yes, and that is a falsehood, are you doing it Ummu Ayyub? She said: No, I swear by Allah I am not going to do that. He said: Aisha is better than you (if you do that).

In another narration: She said to him: If you were in the position of Safwan, do you think something bad about the integrity of the Messenger of Allah? He said: No, she said: If I were in the position of Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) I am not going to betray the Messenger of Allah, then Aisha is better than me, and Safwan is better than you (Al-Sabouni, 1981:591 & 592).

2. Non-circulation of false stories

Circulation of false stories, even if not trusted, is the cause of widespread violence in the society. It is used as means of using the weak believers to cause trouble to the entire people.

Therefore, Allah has forbidden the Muslim community to spread this falsehood in the society as stated in the Qur'an: "When you received it with your tongues and said with your mouths that of which you had no knowledge and thought it was insignificant while it was, in the sight of Allah, tremendous" (Al-Nur: 15).

Allah has revealed the circulation of falsehood as one of the greatest sins and crimes, and the Almighty warned about them on three things:

First: to accept it with tongues, ie, to ask about it. Second: to talk about it, and third: to denigrate it, as they thought it was insignificant while it was tremendous (in the sight of Allah).

The rationale behind the mention of "with your tongue" and "with your mouth" is that the story was conveyed by tongue other than hearts (IbnJauzi, 2013:1031).

Therefore, the Almighty Allah said: you "thought it was insignificant while it was, in the sight of Allah tremendous"

Therefore, the Muslim community, which carries the message of *Surah al-Nur* to all mankind, must be of virtuous tongue. They must know when to speak and what to speak about, and when to keep silent and why. This is because they know the danger of the statement and its implication. The Almighty Allah said: Man does not utter any word except that with him is an observer prepared [to record].

Therefore, the Almighty Allah specified the solutions in these cases precisely, and who amongst the Muslim community should be responsible for such incidents and how to deal with those malicious rumors. Allah says: “And why, when you heard it, did you not say, “It is not for us to speak of this. Exalted are You, [O Allah]; this is a great slander”? (Al-Nur: 16).

This is another chastisement for encouragement of positive thinking among people, i.e., if someone mentions what is not appropriate to say about righteous people, people should think something good. Also, if the person makes a comment after that, people should not speak of it (Hawi, 1424H: 3715).

A meaningful management of rumor is to hide it, because rumor continues as a result of its spread and circulation. Therefore, the Almighty Allah cleared the doubt with detailed explanation and severe warning, saying: “Allah warns you against returning to the likes of this [conduct], ever, if you should be believers” (An-Nur: 17). Allah reminds and admonishes you not to return to such transgression forever if you should be believers, because your faith could be weakened by such deeds (Al-Sabouni, 1979:329). Al-Nasafi said: It is encouraging them to be observant, and reminding them to avoid any bad thing (Al-Nasafi, 1998: 57).

3. Establishing evidence and proof

This is what Al-Shaheed Sayyid Qutb (May Allah forgive him) called “request for external evidence and proof of reality”. Allah says: “Why did they [who slandered] not produce for it four witnesses? And when they do not produce the witnesses, then it is they, in the sight of Allah, who are the liars” (Al-Nur: 13). This means that those fabricators must come with four witnesses to what they said? If they failed to do so, then they are the transgressors and liars according to the law of Allah. Also, there is a warning to those who heard the falsehood and did not deny from the beginning (Al-Sabouni, 1979, vol. 2, p. 329). Hence, the rule in this hadith is that Muslims should investigate evidence of reality, especially in the course of events.

Evidence is the first thing, and then the honesty of the person who conveyed the story. If the evidence is not clear, it is the responsibility of the Muslim community to stop it and adopt the approach of the Almighty Allah who ordered us to investigate. Allah says: “O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become, over what you have done, regretful” (Al-Hujurat: 6).

4. Tracing the source of the rumor

This is done by tracking the source of the rumor, punishing its inventors and holding them accountable, because dealing with the source of rumors and exposing it could serve as the first to stop the responses to rumors. Therefore, it is necessary to expose the hypocrites who invented the falsehood. The Almighty Allah said: "Indeed, those who came with falsehood are a group among you. Do not think it bad for you; rather it is good for you. For every person among them is what [punishment] he has earned from the sin, and he who took upon himself the greater portion thereof - for him is a great punishment" (Al-Nur: 11).

5. Strict warning of punishment in this world and the Hereafter

The Almighty Allah has warned those who repeat false rumors and showed that they are not an insignificant issue; it is tremendous in the sight of Allah. On the other hand, the Almighty Allah has warned those who seek to spread atrocity in the Muslim community. He promised them punishment in this world and the Hereafter. The Almighty Allah said: "Indeed, those who like that immorality should be spread [or publicized] among those who have believed will have a painful punishment in this world and the Hereafter. And Allah knows and you do not know" (Al-Nur: 19).

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