Review Article

Combating Corruption in Bangladesh: An Unexplored Framework in Anti-Corruption Strategies

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ABSTRACT

From the colonial past to the post-independence period, corruption has been a revolving problem in Bangladesh, endangering governance, economic growth, and social justice. Despite substantial institutional and legislative reforms, the country continues to experience high levels of bribery, embezzlement, and political graft, as reflected by its low rankings on global corruption indices. While punitive measures and bureaucratic changes are the major focus of current anti-corruption strategies, the potential of Islamic ethical teachings as a supplementary paradigm is still largely unexplored in both academic and policy debates. This review paper argues that incorporating Islamic principles, which are rooted in the *Qur'anic* teachings, the *Hadiths* (sayings) of the Prophet, and historical Islamic governance models, could provide a morally and culturally effective strategy for reducing corruption in Bangladesh's socio-political environment. This study shows how Islamic concepts of accountability (*hisbah*), justice (*a'dl*), and public trust (*amanah*) might support anti-corruption initiatives in Bangladesh by combining theological sources, empirical research, and policy analysis. It also examines practical implementation strategies such as faith-based accountability frameworks, mosque-based awareness programs, and Islamic social financing (*zakat* and *waqf*) for transparency. The review identifies shortcomings in existing approaches, such as their excessive dependence on secular frameworks and negligence of Bangladesh's religious and cultural context, and offers practical suggestions for decision-makers. Furthermore, this study adds to the broader discourse about faith-based anti-corruption strategies and presents Islamic ethics as a potential but underutilized pillar in achieving SDG 16.5 (*Reducing Corruption and Bribery*) in nations with a majority of Muslims, such as Bangladesh.

1. INTRODUCTION

Corruption is one of the biggest barriers to sustainable development in the world (Transparency International, 2024; UNDP, 2021), while developing nations like Bangladesh bear particularly severe consequences in almost every sector (Palash, 2018; Rahman, 2021). According to Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (2024), Bangladesh ranks 151st out of 180 countries, scoring just 23 points out of 100, while the country ranks 163rd out of 193 countries by the estimation of the World Bank's (2024) Control of Corruption Index (CCI), scoring -1.12 on a scale of -2.5 to +2.5. According to Transparency International Bangladesh's (TIB) National Household Survey, over the past 15 years, people in Bangladesh have paid nearly BDT 10,902 crore which is equivalent to about $908 million (USD) in bribes or unauthorized payments to access services from 18 different sectors, which is about 1.4% of the total budget of Bangladesh for the fiscal year of 2023-2024 and about and 0.22% of GDP (TIB, 2023). Corruption in the nation not only impedes foreign investment and economic growth (Kulmie et al., 2023), but it also erodes public trust in institutions, resulting in a vicious cycle that impedes Bangladesh's progress toward its development goals (Akhter, 2015; Rahman, 2021). Furthermore, the objectives of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16.5, which calls for significant decreases in bribery and corruption in all sectors, are directly at stake with these difficulties.

Globally, the drawbacks of traditional anti-corruption strategies are becoming more visible and apparent. The Western-derived initiatives, which emphasize institutional and legislative reforms based on the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), have resulted in differing outcomes in developing countries (Kulmie et al., 2023). Despite strong legal systems, corruption endures in Latin America because of weak enforcement. Anti-corruption commissions are often politicized throughout Africa. Countries in Southeast Asia struggle with deeply rooted patronage traditions. This worldwide trend points to a serious problem with depending just on institutional, secular solutions while ignoring regional cultural and value systems (Sambo & Sule, 2021).

The existing anti-corruption strategies to reduce corruption in Bangladesh primarily focus on secular, or Western-derived frameworks that emphasize institutional controls and punishments. Although these approaches have theoretical value, political interference, bureaucratic complexities, and most importantly, a lack of connection to the nation's sociocultural structure have hindered their implementation (Hossan et al., 2024). This oversight represents a critical strategic gap in a country where religious values greatly influence social norms and 91% of the population identifies as Muslim. Islamic teachings provide an underutilized but potentially revolutionary resource in Bangladesh's anti-corruption efforts because of their comprehensive ethical system, which addresses both individual morality and collective governance. Incorporating Islamic ethical frameworks could give sustainable change the cultural significance it needs as Bangladesh seeks to meet Sustainable Development Goal 16.5 (*reducing corruption and bribery*). This strategy aims to supplement current legal frameworks with a value-based system that appeals to the moral sensibilities of Bangladesh's predominantly Muslim populace rather than to

replace them. By doing this, it provides a template for other countries with a majority of Muslims that are facing similar governance issues.

Therefore, this review contributes three substantial efforts to the discourse. It first offers a methodical analysis of the shortcomings of Bangladesh's present anti-corruption initiatives. Second, it explains how fundamental Islamic ideas such as social fairness (*adl*), trusteeship (*amanah*), and divine responsibility (*akhirah*) can address corruption's structural and moral aspects. Third, it suggests workable ways to incorporate these ideas into current governance structures, such as sharia-compliant financial transparency policies and awareness campaigns centered around mosques.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Although Bangladesh has implemented several ostensibly strong anti-corruption measures with the establishment of the 2004 Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) and the 2018 Digital Security Act (DSA), their effects are only surface-level (Ahmed, 2006; Rahman & Rahman, 2023). According to the Anti-Corruption Commission's annual report (2023), out of the 2,164 investigation cases that were filed, only 21% (459 cases) were investigated, and only 4% (96 cases) were resolved. This indicates a systematic failure in the nation's efforts to combat corruption. Corruption is still deeply ingrained in Bangladesh's political and economic structures, even after decades of anti-corruption efforts, such as the creation of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) in 2004 and digitization changes under "Digital Bangladesh" (Chakravorty, 2023; Chowdory, 2024; Hossan et al., 2024). Moreover, while massive corruption in the banking and infrastructure industries exhausts public resources, petty bribery still plagues service delivery across the country. (Kotikalapudi, 2016). The National Household Survey (NHS) revealed that about 71% of households in Bangladesh reported facing corruption when getting services from government or private institutions (TIB, 2023).

While some studies (Alim, 2018; Ankamah & Khoda, 2018; Das, 2013; Mahmud & Rezvi, 2022; Mottaleb & Sonobe, 2012; Parnini, 2011) overwhelmingly prioritize punitive legal measures in the existing literature, some (Ankamah & Khoda, 2018; Islam & Ananya, 2015; Rashid & Johara, 2020) have emphasized ethics-based preventive approaches to combat corruption in the country. In a nation where 92.3% of the population is expected to identify as Muslim by 2030 (Pew Research Center, 2011), a few previous studies have proposed community participation as a means of combating corruption in the nation while ignoring faith-based Islamic approaches (Knox, 2009; Sakib & Ahmed, 2022). Islamic teachings explicitly condemn corruption (*fasad*) as both a crime against society and a sin warning with divine punishment (e.g. "...*Do not seek to spread corruption in the land; indeed, Allah does not like the corrupters*" Holy Qur'an, 28:77). Despite these explicit theological directives, there is a significant scarcity of in-depth empirical studies in the literature that emphasize Islamic ethical teachings as a powerful weapon against corruption in a country where over 90% of the population identifies as Muslim.

Historically, it is evident that Islamic governance models effectively contributed to curbing corruption through

institutions like the *Hisbah* (public accountability office) during the Medieval times in the Muslim world (Chêne, 2007). *Hisbah* also played a significant role in promoting ethical standards in business and financial transactions without strict intervention by the state or the political administration (Çakmak, 2024). Contemporary research reveals that Indonesia's anti-corruption curriculum applied in *Pesantren* (Islamic school) reduced bribery susceptibility by 22% among students (Najih & Wiryani, 2021), while in Malaysia, a predominantly Muslim country, it is found that losing faith in Islamic teachings opens the door to corruption and installing Islamic values to children from a young age helps build stronger morals and reduces corruption in society (Alazzabi *et al.*, 2020). The contribution of religion or Islamic teachings to the reduction of corruption in Bangladesh, however, has not been thoroughly examined in the literature to date. Since Islamic doctrines provide both individual moral deterrents and institutional mechanisms like zakat's redistributive justice and shūrā (consultative governance), this gap is a key scholarly and practical blind spot. This review argues that incorporating Islamic ethical concepts as a supplementary framework to current legal-institutional techniques is necessary for Bangladesh's anti-corruption initiatives to undergo a paradigm shift. The study shows how an Islamic approach can fill three enduring gaps in current strategies, based on the *Qur'anic* injunctions, Prophetic traditions, and historical applications of sharia-compliant governance: (a) secular laws and principles cannot replicate the spiritual consequences of *ākhirah* (hereafter); (b) weak community engagement (mosques serve as trusted grassroots networks); and (c) systemic inequities (*zakat* and *waqf* as tools for redistributive justice). This study also advances SDG 16.5's calls for culturally sensitive anti-corruption solutions while offering a practical roadmap for operationalizing Islamic ethics, from sharia-audited public procurement to mosque-based sermon guidelines, by combining theological texts, Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) policy reports, and case studies of faith-based initiatives in similar contexts.

This study makes a dual contribution to academic debate and policy discourse simultaneously. Theoretically, by organizing Islamic teachings into a governance framework that may operationalize SDG 16.5, it improves the less-focused area of faith-based anti-corruption tactics. It provides culturally appropriate solutions for policymakers, such as (a) incorporating corruption's spiritual reflections (e.g., *akhirah*/ hereafter punishment) into the curricula of madrasas (Islamic schools), (b) using Bangladesh's more than 300,000 mosques for public awareness *khutbahs* (sermons), and (c) incorporating Islamic finance tools (*waqf* endowments, *zakat* audits) to improve fiscal transparency. The article bridges a crucial gap created by traditional secular approaches by placing these proposals within the framework of Bangladesh's governance issues and offering a workable roadmap for coordinating religious teachings with national anti-corruption objectives.

3. METHODOLOGY

This narrative review analyzes the existing scholarship of research on corruption in Bangladesh and the possible application of Islamic ethical teachings to anti-corruption initiatives using a qualitative and critical synthesis methodology. As the study follows an exploratory approach, a rigorous but non-systematic technique is used to capture a range of viewpoints from policy studies, the social sciences, and theology. The literature search was carried out using keywords like "corruption in Bangladesh", "Islamic ethics and governance", "SDG 16.5", "corruption and Islam", "faith-based anti-corruption strategy", and "Islamic finance and transparency" across several databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, PubMed, Semantic Scholar, and EBSCOhost. Based on the theoretical contributions, empirical findings, or policy relevance to Bangladesh's socio-political perspective, 105 peer-reviewed books, journals, and policy reports (published between 2011 and 2024) were primarily collected and briefly read. After the initial screening, 63 high-relevance scholarly publications were chosen for in-depth study. In addition, in order to ensure a comprehensive coverage, the snowball technique was utilized to include more relevant sources from the existing literature.

The selected sources of the literature were analyzed through thematic content analysis, focusing on three interconnected dimensions: (a) Theological Foundations: analysis of *Hadiths*, *Qur'anic* verses, and traditional Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) on accountability, justice, and corruption; (b) Empirical Evidence: an analysis of research evaluating corruption patterns in Bangladesh and the efficacy of current anti-corruption programs in comparison to those implemented in similar Muslim-majority settings; (c) Policy Frameworks: assessment of governance models, including examples of mosque-based projects in nations with a majority of Muslims and Islamic money (zakat/*waqf*). By combining these sources, the study takes a normative-prescriptive stance, offering practical solutions based on Bangladesh's socio-religious environment in addition to theorizing an Islamic ethical framework.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In Bangladesh, corruption is a widespread and wicked problem that is intricately woven into the country's socio-political structure. It takes many different forms, is influenced by several factors, and has major socio-economic effects. Using information from numerous studies and research papers, this study examines the various types of corruption, the causes of it, its socio-economic effects, and countermeasures in the context of Bangladesh.

4.1. Forms of Corruption

According to Islam and Ananya (2015), corruption in Bangladesh can take many different forms and impact different societal levels and sectors. In this nation, bribery, extortion, money laundering, embezzlement, nepotism, and many other practices are the most prevalent types of corruption. One of the most common types of corruption in Bangladesh is bribery. In order to obtain favors, avoid fines, or speed up services, people or organizations pay bribes in both the public and private sectors. According to Transparency International Bangladesh's National Household Survey (NHS), over half of the households (about 51 percent) reported having to pay bribes or unlawful fees to receive various types of services from government and private agencies. With an estimated 86 percent, passport

services were found to be the most corrupt service sector in the country. Bangladesh Road Transport Authority's (BRTA) transport management services came in second with 85 percent, and law enforcement agencies with 75 percent, respectively (TIB, 2023; Uddin, 2022). In law enforcement and public service delivery, extortion, which is frequently a type of bribery, occurs frequently across the country (Mahmud & Rezvi, 2022).

Public servants frequently misuse their position of authority to embezzle money intended for social services or development initiatives. Numerous government agencies and state-owned businesses have been found to exhibit this systemic corruption (Hossan *et al.*, 2024; Zafarullah & Huque, 2021). Most notoriously, favoritism and nepotism are pervasive in Bangladesh, especially when it comes to hiring and promoting people in the public sector. Meritocracy and civil service efficiency are weakened by this type of corruption (Chakravorty, 2023; Islam & Ananya, 2015). Furthermore, the land administration sector is extremely corrupt in the country. Common methods include bribery to obtain land titles, false land registration, and illegal property grabs (Chowdory, 2024; Sakib *et al.*, 2022).

Political corruption is a significant issue, with politicians and party leaders often involved in corrupt practices such as vote-buying, vote-rigging, patronage, and misuse of power. According to Akhter (2015) and Hasan (2006), this type of corruption is ingrained in the political system and helps to keep corruption at all levels alive. Most alarmingly, the rule of law and public confidence in the legal system are threatened by judicial corruption. Bribes are frequently given to get favorable verdicts, delay proceedings, or influence court decisions across the country (Rashid & Johara, 2020; Uddin, 2022).

4.2. Factors Contributing to Corruption

In Bangladesh, corruption has deep roots in the country's political and historical context. The colonial background of the nation and the resource exploitation by colonial powers created a system in which corruption became deeply embedded (Akhter, 2015; Chakravorty, 2023). Patronage politics became more prevalent after independence, when political figures exploited public funds to stay in power, which resulted in pervasive corruption. Crony capitalism was established as a result of the participation of untrained and unskilled people in the state apparatus, including liberation fighters and members of the ruling party (Chakravorty, 2023; Zafarullah & Huque, 2021). One of the main causes of corruption in Bangladesh is the inadequate institutional framework. The court and law enforcement, two institutions in charge of the government, frequently lack the independence and ability to properly implement the law. Corruption has increased in the nation due to weak legal frameworks and the politicization of important institutions (Rashid & Johara, 2020; 2022; Zafarullah & Huque, 2021). Furthermore, corrupt practices have been sustained by the absence of accountability and transparency in the delivery of public services (Islam & Ananya, 2015; Sakib *et al.*, 2022).

Inequality and poverty are the most common examples of socioeconomic issues that have fueled corruption across the country. When resources are limited, people frequently turn to unethical means to obtain essential services or gain personal advantages (Mahmud & Rezvi, 2022; Siddique, 2015). These

practices have been further intensified by the general public's lack of knowledge and understanding regarding their rights and the negative effects of corruption (Islam & Ananya, 2015; Sakib & Ahmed, 2022). In Bangladesh, social and cultural standards have somewhat accepted corruption. A wider social acceptance of corrupt activities is seen in the prevalence of bribery, nepotism, and favoritism in both the public and private sectors (Chakravorty, 2023; Islam & Ananya, 2015). Limited public awareness and participation in governance contribute to the persistence of corruption. Many citizens are unaware of their rights and the mechanisms available to them to report and combat corruption (Hossan *et al.*, 2024; Rahman *et al.*, 2024).

4.3. Socio-Economic Impacts of Corruption

Corruption has far-reaching socio-economic impacts in Bangladesh, affecting various aspects of society and the economy. Corruption hinders economic growth by misallocating resources, discouraging foreign investment, and increasing the cost of doing business. It also undermines the effectiveness of development projects and has resulted in inefficient public service delivery and a lack of foreign investment in critical sectors such as education and healthcare (Akhter, 2015; Kulmie *et al.*, 2023; Siddique, 2015; Yu *et al.*, 2023). The social impacts of corruption in Bangladesh have been equally devastating. Corruption has exacerbated inequality, with the poorest people of society bearing the brunt of corrupt practices (Kulmie *et al.*, 2023). Corruption is closely linked to human rights abuses, particularly in the context of law enforcement and judicial corruption. It perpetuates a culture of impunity and undermines the rule of law (Uddin, 2022). It erodes public trust in government and public institutions, undermining their legitimacy and effectiveness. This loss of trust can have long-term consequences for governance and development (Toyon, 2022). Corruption in environmental governance contributes to environmental degradation, as bribes are often paid to bypass environmental regulations and secure permits for harmful activities (Chowdory, 2024; Sakib *et al.*, 2022).

4.4. Strategies to Combat Corruption

In order to combat the curse of corruption, Bangladesh requires a multi-faceted approach that addresses the root causes and involves various stakeholders. The nation's policies and plans have so far included several strategies that have been put into practice. One of the most important steps in fighting corruption is strengthening institutions. To guarantee their independence and efficacy, this entails overhauling the legal system, law enforcement, and other crucial institutions. Restoring public trust also requires addressing the politicization of institutions. This includes reforming the judiciary, law enforcement, and other key institutions to ensure their independence and effectiveness (Rashid & Johara, 2020; Sakib *et al.*, 2022; Uddin, 2022). Increasing public access to information, enhancing governance, and making sure public servants are held responsible for their actions are all part of promoting transparency and accountability. The Right to Information Act (RIC) and other transparency initiatives can be used to accomplish this (Hossan *et al.*, 2024; Rahman *et al.*, 2024). Fighting corruption can also be greatly aided by the use of technology. Corruption in financial

transactions can be decreased by putting digital payment systems into place and using artificial intelligence to identify unusual financial activities (Monir, 2012; Rahman *et al.*, 2024). In the battle against corruption, it is also essential to strengthen the media and civil society organizations. By bringing attention to unethical behavior and pushing for legislative changes, civil society organizations can significantly contribute to the advancement of accountability and transparency. By revealing corrupt practices and holding people in authority responsible, the media can also serve as a watchdog in the country (Knox, 2009; Sakib & Ahmed, 2022). In addition, giving people the ability to keep an eye out for and expose corrupt activities is one way to increase public participation. This can be accomplished through awareness campaigns, community-based projects, and technology that makes it easier to report and track corruption (Rahman *et al.*, 2024; Sakib & Ahmed, 2022). Furthermore, reducing corruption also requires addressing socio-economic issues like inequality and poverty. This can be accomplished by promoting inclusive economic growth and implementing focused measures to reduce poverty (Kulmie *et al.*, 2023).

Table 1. Summary of Strategies to Combat Corruption in Bangladesh.

Strategies	Recommended By
Strengthening Institutional Framework	(Rashid & Johara, 2020; Sakib *et al.*, 2022)
Promoting Transparency and Accountability	(Hossan *et al.*, 2024; Rahman *et al.*, 2024)
Enhancing Public Participation	(Knox, 2009; Sakib & Ahmed, 2022)
Addressing Economic Inequality	(Kulmie *et al.*, 2023; Mahmud & Rezvi, 2022)
Reforming the Judicial System	(Rashid & Johara, 2020; Uddin, 2022)
Utilizing Technology	(Monir, 2012; Rahman *et al.*, 2024)
Empowering Civil Society	(Rahman *et al.*, 2024; Sakib *et al.*, 2022)
Improving Ethical Standards	(Islam & Ananya, 2015; Rashid & Johara, 2020)

4.5. Discussion

In Bangladesh, corruption is a complicated and pervasive problem that has an enormous socio-economic impact. The current literature provides a variety of strategies to fight corruption in Bangladesh, including reforming institutional frameworks, encouraging accountability and transparency, increasing public involvement, tackling economic inequality, judicial system reform, utilizing technology, empowering civil society, and raising ethical standards. However, despite their theoretical soundness, these strategies have not been very successful in real-life situations. Corruption is nevertheless pervasive in many industries despite decades of reform efforts, suggesting that these approaches frequently fall short

in addressing the problem's underlying cultural, moral, and ideological components. The internal moral compass of people and the cultural beliefs that accept or even normalize dishonest behavior are ignored by many of these recommendations, which mostly rely on systemic and structural improvements. This ongoing failure urges a paradigm shift, one that goes beyond procedural and technocratic solutions and instead concentrates on a comprehensive change based on value-based governance and ethical consciousness. Existing approaches will remain superficial and inadequate in bringing about long-lasting change until the moral deterioration and lack of spiritual accountability within society are addressed.

Given the shortcomings of traditional anti-corruption tactics, it is critical to take into account a different paradigm that takes into account the moral and ethical underpinnings of both individual and group conduct. An Islamic framework provides a value-based worldview centered on social fairness, moral integrity, and accountability to a higher authority. Islamic teachings place a strong emphasis on taqwa (God-consciousness), *amanah* (trust), and *hisbah* (moral accountability), which foster internal restraint and personal responsibility, in contrast to secular systems that frequently rely only on institutional control and external enforcement. In addition to encouraging openness, justice, and the defense of the public interest, the Qur'an and the *Hadiths* explicitly denounce bribery, dishonesty, and the misuse of authority. Bangladesh may cultivate a culture that resists corruption and is consistent with its religious and cultural identity by incorporating these ideas into public policy, education, and governance frameworks. A more viable and culturally relevant route to significant reform is provided by this paradigm shift from procedural compliance to ethical transformation.

Fighting corruption in nations with a majority of Muslims necessitates a comprehensive strategy that combines theological obligations with workable execution techniques. With an emphasis on historical instances, prophetic traditions, *Qur'anic* injunctions, and practical actions through mosques, madrasahs, and ethical teachings, this study examines the Islamic foundation for fighting corruption.

4.5.1. Theological Foundation

The Qur'an emphasizes the moral, social, and economic consequences of corruption and expressly condemns it in all of its manifestations. Islamic legal principles, derived from the Qur'an and *Hadiths*, strongly discourage corruption among its adherents by warning of harsh punishments in this life as well as in the hereafter (Maimori *et al.*, 2022). For instance,

"Do not consume one another's wealth unjustly, nor deliberately bribe authorities in order to devour a portion of others' property, knowing that it is a sin" (Holy Qur'an, 2:188). "...Do not seek to spread corruption in the land; indeed, Allah does not like the corrupters" (Holy Qur'an, 28:77).

The Qur'an condemns corrupt behaviors using words like sirqah (stealing) and ghulul (embezzlement) in several verses. For instance, whereas the Holy Qur'an (3:161) warns against embezzlement, the Holy Qur'an (5:38) warns severe punishments for theft. According to Parwanto & Riyani (2023), the lack of supervision and greed are the two main causes of

corruption. Therefore, the aforementioned *Qur'anic* injunctions can be used to reduce corruption by fostering taqwa (God-consciousness).

Besides the *Qur'anic* injunctions, the *Hadiths* or the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) provide practical guidance on combating corruption (Parwanto & Riyani, 2023). The Prophet warned, "The one who gives a bribe and the one who takes it are both cursed" (Jami` at-Tirmidhi, 1336). It is also reported that he upheld justice even when it came to his closest companions and family, famously declaring, "...By Allah, if Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad, were to steal, I would cut off her hand" (Sunan Ibn Majah, 2547). Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) set an example of moral responsibility, justice, and honesty in both public and private life in addition to explicitly denouncing corruption. He made it clear that holding public office is a duty (*amanah*), not a means for personal gain. According to the Prophet, a king has ultimate accountability to God in addition to the citizens. He says, "Beware, every one of you is a shepherd, and every one of you is responsible for his flock" (Sahih Muslim, 1829a).

Furthermore, past incidents from Islamic civilization show how, throughout the caliphates, corruption was combatted by moral leadership and effective governance. The first four caliphs—Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali—are referred to as the Rashidun, or "Rightly Guided Caliphs," and their rule is regarded in Islam as an example of just and equitable government. Ali-ibn-Abi-Talib and Umar-ibn-Al-Khattab were two of the caliphs of Islam who put strong restrictions in place to stop corruption in the country. They held authorities responsible for their acts and created transparent financial structures (Siri *et al.*, 2020).

In order to guarantee that money received from donations and *Zakat* was utilized for the betterment of the community, Umar (peace be upon him) established a strong emphasis on accountability and openness in financial management. To do that, he created the Bayt-al-Mal (state treasury) to facilitate the transparent management of public funds (Wahab & Dikuraisyin, 2024). As seen in the administration, Ali (peace be upon him) is renowned for his dedication to justice and equity. He gave his officials instructions to favor the underprivileged when allocating finances and to collect taxes freely and without harassment (Jassim, 2024).

4.5.2. Practical Implementation

Moral guidance is provided by a theological foundation, but in order to implement these ideals into workable anti-corruption methods, practical mechanisms are necessary. By fostering both institutional reform and individual moral accountability, an Islamic approach to implementation can strengthen current efforts in Bangladesh, where religiosity is still high and Islamic organizations are significant. We have developed an Islamic framework that can be applied in Bangladesh to lessen corruption there by drawing on knowledge that are currently available in the literature from around the world.

First, in a nation with over 300,000 mosques, this vital Islamic institution may be an important catalyst in promoting anti-corruption ideologies in Muslim communities. Mosques should host events like tahajjud (night prayers), istighosah (forgiveness prayers), and dhikr (remembering Allah) to strengthen people's

moral character and deter corrupt conduct (Alazzabi *et al.*, 2020; Wattimena & Ferricha, 2023). Using *Qur'anic* verses and Prophetic traditions that emphasize integrity, justice, and accountability, imams (mosque leaders) can be trained and encouraged to regularly address corruption issues from an Islamic ethical perspective in their weekly Friday (khutbas) sermons (Sambo & Sule, 2021). In addition, forums, seminars, or study groups (halaqahs) that focus on the moral consequences of corruption and offer spiritual direction on avoiding immoral corporate, political, and everyday actions can be held in mosques (Karimullah, 2023).

Second, Islamic educational institutions need to incorporate anti-corruption lessons into their curricula in addition to mosque-based programs. To highlight the ethical and legal implications of corruption, this involves studying the Qur'an, *Hadiths*, and Islamic jurisprudence or fiqh along with the conventional syllabus (Smeer *et al.*, 2023). Islamic schools, or madrasahs, should emphasize helping students develop their moral character by implementing rituals like tahajjud (night prayers) and tarbiyah (spiritual nurturing). Honesty, integrity, and self-control are developed by these activities. As a result, Islamic educational grooming is crucial in producing leaders who uphold anti-corruption principles (Karim *et al.*, 2023). Islamic ethics, leadership, and public accountability should be taught in both Islamic and secular universities. Additionally, these organizations must support studies on Islamic perspectives on justice, economics, and governance (Jalil *et al.*, 2019).

Third, Islamic social finance tools like sadaqah (voluntary charity), *waqf* (charitable endowment), and *zakat* (obligatory almsgiving) can help in addressing the socio-economic causes of corruption, such as poverty, inequality, and lack of adequate resources. Financial aid can be distributed more equitably by enforcing *zakat* under responsible governmental or communal authorities, which will lessen the need for the underprivileged to rely on dishonest middlemen or engage in bribery (Er, 2008). Furthermore, *waqf* has always delivered necessary public services independently despite the state's corrupt bureaucracy. By restoring *waqf* institutions can help underprivileged populations with employment, healthcare, and education (Ardiyansyah & Kasdi, 2021). In addition, faith-based microfinance models that integrate ethical protections can empower small business owners, lessen economic dependency, and promote legal and sound incomes free from political favoritism or exploitation (Aslam, 2014).

Fourth, a faith-based government has the potential to be an unparalleled tool in the fight against corruption in the nation. Faith-based governance does not necessarily impose theocracy but rather the incorporation of ethical and spiritual values into public administration and policy-making. A code of ethics based on the Islamic values of *amanah* (trust), ikhlas (sincerity), and *a'dl* (justice) might be mandatory for all public servants. In addition, Islamic spiritual-based integrity training may be required regularly to further enhance honesty among the officers (Attahiru, 2021). Bangladesh government could establish a faith-based integrity commission, following the caliphate traditional institution of *hisbah*, to monitor public office conduct, examine public spending, and provide advisory recommendations on moral issues in governance (Salim *et al.*,

2015). Furthermore, qualified Islamic scholars (u'lama) who are familiar with modern administration can help in formulating laws related to social welfare, justice, and the economy while making sure they uphold moral principles and the general well-being as a whole (Ashraf-Khan & Hossain, 2021).

To conclude, the Islamic framework for fighting corruption offers an extensive blueprint for ethical change that is based on theology, backed by historical precedent, and flexible enough to be applied to modern governance. Bangladesh can adapt to a new paradigm where combating corruption becomes a civic and spiritual duty through mosque-based mobilization, Islamic social finance, faith-integrated government, and comprehensive education reform. This faith-based strategy seeks to address the moral cause of corruption rather than just procedural fixes, with the goal of creating a society that is just and accountable from the bottom to the top.

4.6. Future Directions

Future research should focus on the following areas to enhance the academic debate or policy reforms about Islamic moral strategies for fighting corruption in Bangladesh:

• *Empirical Assessments of Islamic Anti-Corruption Strategies:* Future studies can assess the effects of madrasa curriculum and sermons (*khutbahs*) provided in mosques on attitudes and actions related to corruption by surveys or experimental investigations. In addition, comparative studies can be conducted on communities that are exposed to faith-based anti-corruption teachings and who are solely reliant on secular programs.

• *Systematic Integration of Islamic Finance Tools:* There is a significant gap in empirical research evaluating the potential of Islamic social finance instruments, such as *zakat* and *waqf*, to combat corruption at the local level in the country. To identify the effectiveness of these instruments in reducing corruption in Bangladesh, researchers could examine current institutions or test new models in specific areas of the nation.

• *Faith-based governance or Policy-Responsive Studies:* Future studies could examine how the citizens of the country view the role of Islamic beliefs in public administration through faith-based governance or policy-responsive studies. The possibility of changing the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to include Islamic scholars in advisory positions could be assessed in future research. Furthermore, it can also examine the effectiveness of faith-based anti-corruption models from other nations with a majority of Muslims, such as Indonesia's Pesantren movement.

• *Curriculum Analysis for Moral and Ethical Education:* To evaluate how well Bangladesh's current madrasa and Islamic school curriculum instills anti-corruption ideals, researchers can perform both qualitative and quantitative analyses. In addition, new curricular models that comply with current ethical issues could also be suggested based on the contemporary findings of research.

• *Islamic Ethics and Public Service Motivation:* Future research can examine how Islamic ethical principles, such as taqwa, *amanah*, and *a'dl*, affect public officials' integrity and their actions in daily life. Organizational case studies at government offices, ethnographic research, and interviews can all be used for this investigation.

• *Role of U'lama in Promoting Ethical Governance:* Future studies can examine how Islamic religious scholars or u'lama influence public opinion, policy advocacy, and instruction about anti-corruption ethics in an Islamic context. This endeavor will enable the governance system how they can be more effectively included in the procedures used to make policy.

• *Islamic lectures on social media in shaping Anti-Corruption Attitudes:* In recent years, Islamic scholars and preachers have developed a large following in Bangladesh, thanks to the growth of digital platforms like YouTube, Facebook, and TikTok, especially among young people. Future studies should examine how people's opinions regarding corruption and moral behavior are affected by faith-based digital content, such as Islamic narratives, lectures, and reminders. It could involve experimental study, audience interaction, and content analysis.

5. CONCLUSION

In Bangladesh, corruption is still a major problem that undermines institutions, erodes public confidence, and sustains socio-economic inequality. Even if current approaches like utilizing technology, encouraging openness, and implementing institutional reforms have made considerable impacts in some cases, they significantly lack in addressing the problem's more profound moral and spiritual aspects. In order to support and enhance ongoing anti-corruption initiatives, this article argues that a paradigm shift is required that integrates an Islamic ethical framework. Three key findings emerge from the analysis: First, there are some structural weaknesses in the current anti-corruption strategies of Bangladesh, such as political influence in organizations like the ACC, an excessive dependence on punitive methods, and a lack of awareness of the socio-religious background of the nation. Second, through ideas like divine accountability (*akhirah*), public trusteeship (*amanah*), and social justice (*a'dl*), Islamic principles provide a thorough framework that tackles the moral as well as systemic aspects of corruption. Third, there are workable ways to operationalize these ideas within Bangladesh's governance structure, such as sharia-compliant financial institutions and mosque-based education.

Finally, this review bridges the gap between theory and practice by identifying practical faith-based strategies as; (a) it offers a theological basis for understanding corruption as not only a legal violation but a moral transgression in Islamic terms; and (b) it places Islamic ethics as complementary rather than contradictory to secular governance approaches in order to achieve SDG 16.5. These claims now need to be experimentally tested in future research through multidisciplinary studies that compare cross-cultural faith-based models, create transparency tools that comply with sharia, and assess the effectiveness of Islamic anti-corruption initiatives. For policymakers, the potential for moral transformation may be unlocked by incorporating Islamic ethical frameworks with current governance institutions. Bangladesh can create a uniquely successful and culturally based strategy to fight corruption that can serve as a model for other Muslim-majority countries.

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