

ANALYTICAL STUDY ON THE MIS-USE OF MOSQUE (*MASJID*) AMONG SOME NIGERIAN MUSLIMS

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ABSTRACT

A Mosque (*Masjid*) remains a sanctimonious place of worship for Muslims as it serves different purposes. Therein, observation of five daily prayers, supererogatory prayers, teaching and learning of religious studies, economic and entrepreneurship values (around the Mosque), serving as a reconciliation centre, among other functions. However, misplacement of priority comes to play sometimes, especially among some Yoruba, Hausa and other Nigerian tribes. It is unimaginably disheartening, seeing some Muslims staging wedding, naming and other ceremonies right inside the four walls of a Mosque (*Masjid*), where menstruating Muslim and non-Muslim women enter into the Mosque with impurity; others without headgears or scarves while drumming, jamboree and mixed dancing followed at interludes. Others, in the name of practicing asceticism (*Sufism*), beat the drums called *Bandiri* which at times galvanized mixed-dancing. The research methodology used was historical, analytical, relevant literature; in addition, oral interview via telephone was conducted as well. The findings revealed that the acts (misuse) of Mosque (*Masjid*) was as a result of ignorance, deliberate violation of the rules of using the Mosques, levity on the part of Mosque coordinators and their Imams; all of which this paper addressed and further suggested some recommendations while conclusion was also drawn.

Keywords: *Masjid, reconciliation, dancing, Muslim, non-Muslim.*

Introduction

Though, Muslims' five daily prayers, Friday prayers and other supererogatory prayers can be observed at any clean place; but most specially consecrated for these purposes are Mosques. Right from inception of Islam, the Mosque has been serving spiritual, educational, political, religious and socio-economic purposes for all Muslims. Abdul Fattah (252-253) opined that sometimes the Mosque or its immediate environment provides conducive atmosphere for knowledge seekers. Children, adults, male and female have for long been acquiring knowledge through the Mosque, and it remains as an indisputable symbol of Muslim unity globally. Prominent among the historical oldest Mosques in Islam are: Al Masjid al-Haram in Makkah and Al Masjid al-An-Nabawi in Madinah; Masjid al-Quba located at a short distance to Madinah and Al-Aqsa Mosque, located in the old city of Jerusalem, which is the third holiest site in Islam (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org>). Mosque is a centre of unity for Muslims. All Mosques throughout the

world face the same direction called Al-Qiblah (Abdul Fattah 253).

Concept of the Mosque (*Masjid*)

Masjid is an Arabic word, which is simply translated to mean Mosque. Mosque is a building where Muslims worship (Hornby 1008). Mosque is the house or a specified place where Allah is worshipped (Abdul Fattah, 252). A Masjid or Mosque is also a place where Muslims prostrate and perform their obligatory prayers (Sakraton A. et'al 1). The researcher, therefore, views a Masjid (Mosque) as a place specially consecrated for all acts of sincere worship and submission to Allah which includes teaching and learning of religious studies and activities of preaching (*Da'wah*) and reconciliation of disputes or rifts. The Mosque was the place where believers assembled for prayer around the Prophet, where he delivered his sermons, which contained not only appeals for obedience to God but regulations affecting the social life of the community. The importance of Mosque in Islam is so paramount that dif-

ferent verses of the Glorious Qur'an epitomize its usage by all Muslims' circumstances. For example, as a cardinal importance to remember Allah therein, the Noble Qur'an states:

And who is more unjust than he who prevents (men) from the Mosques of Allah, that His name should be remembered in them, and strives to ruin them? (As for these, it was not proper for them that they should have entered them except in fear; they shall meet with disgrace in this world, and they shall have great chastisement in the hereafter (Q2:114).

The above verse establishes the fact that Mosque in Islam has origin. In furtherance to that is the question of which of them was established first?

A Brief Historical Background of Mosque in Islam

Masjid al-Haram (Ka'abah) Masjid al-Haram is known by different names: Bayt al-Haram and Bayt al-Atiq (Ahmad 16). Its significance in the history of Islam and Muslims cannot be overemphasized. Apart from being the direction (*Qiblah*) which all Muslims all over the world face during their five daily prayers, supererogatory prayers, during slaughtering of animal of sacrifice, making the right hand side of deceased Muslims facing the direction; circumambulations (*Tawwaf*) are made round it during pilgrimage (Hajj) and lesser Hajj (*Umrah*). It remains the first *Qiblah* for all the Prophets of Allah and had been in existence since the time of Adam (AS) (Ahmad 16). Moreover, facing *Qiblah* by all Muslims is a great symbol of unity and an obedience to Allah's instruction. Allah (SWT) says:

We have certainly seen the turning of your face (O Muhammad) toward the heaven and We will surely turn you to a *Qiblah* which you will be pleased. So turn your face [i.e. yourself] toward al-Masjid. And wherever you [believers] are, turn your faces [i.e., yourselves] toward it [in prayer] indeed, those who

have been given the Scripture [i.e., the Jews and the Christians] well know that it is the truth from their Lord And Allah is not unaware of what they do (Q2:144).

The Noble Qur'an explicitly makes mention of some Mosques: The sacred Mosques (in Makkah) and the Mosque in Palestine (Masjid al-Aqsa). Considering its chronological order, and as stipulated in the Noble Qur'an, the sacred Mosque in Makkah stands to be the first. Allah (SWT) says:

Glory is to Him Who made His servant to go on a night (journey) from the Sacred Mosque to the remote Mosque of which We have blessed the precincts, so that We may show to him some of Our signs; surely He is the Hearing, the Seeing (Q17:1)

The first Mosque to be established was the Masjid al-Haram (Ka'bah) in Makkah as established in the Glorious Qur'an, Allah (SWT) says:

Most surely, the first House (of worship) established for mankind is the one of *Bakkah* [i.e.; Makkah] blessed and guidance for the (entire) world Prophet (3:96).

Abu Dhar reported: I said: Messenger of Allah, which Mosque was set up first on the earth? He said: Al-Masjid al-Haram (the sacred). I (again) said: Then which next? He said: It was the Masjid Aqsa. I (again) said: How long the space of time (between their settings up)? He (the Prophet (SAW)) said: It was forty years. And whenever the time comes for prayer, pray there, for that is a Mosque; and in the Hadith transmitted by Abu Kamil (the words are): Whenever time comes for prayer, pray, for that it is a Mosque (for

you). (Sahih Muslim 520, Book 5, No 1).

According to Oloyede (np) Al Basra Mosque was believed to have been built by Utbah bn Gazwan in 637CE. Followed by the establishment of Kufa Mosque by Sa'ad bn Abi Waqas in 638/639CE; and the establishment of a Mosque at Fustat (old Cairo) by the Muslim army led by 'Amr bn al-As marked the establishment of the first Mosque in Africa in 641 (britannica.com).

The Prophet's Mosque (Masjid an-Nabawi) Madinatul-Munawwarah was formerly called *Yathrib* before the Prophet's migration from Makkah in 622 C.E to Madinah. On getting to the new land (Madinah), a field was used for the first Friday prayer, led by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) with about a hundred men behind him, which marked the first Friday prayer with the first sermon (*Khutbah*); in Madinah. Later on, a Mosque (*Masjid*) was erected at the same place (Najeebabad 147). The visitation made to the Prophet (SAW)'s Mosque in Madinah is an evident that he built a Mosque in Madinah on his arrival in the city of Madinatul Munawwarah.

Uses of Mosque in Islam:

The primary aim of human creation is for the purpose of Allah's worship; all other objectives are secondary. The acts of worship are numerous and include observation of five daily prayers, supererogatory prayers, recitation of the Noble Qur'an among many others. Allah (SWT) says:

And I did not create the Jinn and mankind except to worship Me (Q51:56).

Worship, known as *Ibadah* in Arabic, takes different forms; as they can also take place in and around the Mosque as well. Some of the uses are:

(A) Spiritual worship: Observation of five daily prayers is attached to the Mosques. Al Ghazali as cited in Oloyede (<https://www.nscia.com, ng>) asserted that the Mosque is a very important institution. It is the source of spiritual and material guidance; serves

as a hall of worship, a school and a center for other religious activities. Though, the prayers can be observed in any place except in seven places: dunghills, slaughterhouses, grave yards, middle of the road, bathhouses watering places where camels drink and rest, and on the roof of the House of Allah [the Ka'abah in Makah] (Ibn Majah). In connection with the five daily prayers, Allah's names are mentioned, Qur'anic verses and chapters are recited, mentioning the Prophet Muhammad's name, especially during the call to prayer; personal supplications are made, directing all requests to Allah, the All-Hearing. The establishment of Islamic organizations and societies such as: Ansarul-Islam, Ansarul-Deen, Anwarul-Islam, Nawairud-Deen, Al-Mustofiyah Society, Fat'hu -Qareeb, Islamic Youth-League, Islamic Brotherhood of Nigeria and many others; increase the impacts of the utilisation of the Mosque where activities inside the Mosques and designated centers are staged on weekly basis and as occasion warrants, naming, marriage, Hajj orientation exercise; and most common of all is the weekly Jum'at and Sunday 'Asalat session, during which male and female members gather at their quarters, within the Mosque's premises chant Allah's name and shower more blessings upon Prophet Muhammad (SAW), all gearing towards spiritual improvement.

(B) The Mosque as a welfare center:

The Mosque was then, among other things, a seat of learning, a place where the Prophet received delegates, and where homeless would take refuge, the sick received treatment, and the poor be given charity (Sayed Ad-Darsh np) In this contemporary era, there are a number Mosques where alms (*Zakah*), endowment (*Waqf*), charity (*Sadaqah*) are collected, collated and distributed to the indigent Muslims for their betterment and economic development. Recently, during

COVID 19 pandemic lockdown, between March and July, 2020; Ansarud-Deen, Al-Mustofiyyah, Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN), Anwarul-Islam, Abuja central Mosque and many other Islamic organizations and community Mosques in Abuja to be precise, shared both government and Islamic organizations' palliative in the Mosques to the indigent members which was a great succour to many beneficiaries.

Categories of Mosques:

Mosques are of different categories and purposes. Some Mosques are used for multi-purposeful functions. A *Ratib* Mosque is generally referred to as a portion or place where only five daily prayers are observed. The plural form of *Ratib* is *rawatib* (Ahmad 29). In such Mosques, Jum'ah prayers, seclusion (*I'tikaf*) and Eid prayers are not observed therein. Allah (SWT) says:

(Such niches are) in houses (i.e. Mosques) which Allah has ordered to be raised and that His name be mentioned (i.e., praised) therein; exalting Him within them in the mornings and the evenings (Q24:36).

Another type of Mosque is the Friday (Jum'ah) Mosque. In it, five daily prayers are observed and Friday prayers also take place, making it to perform dual purposes. Allah says:

O you who have believed, when the (adhan) is called for the prayer on the day of Jum'ah (Friday), then proceed to the remembrance of Allah and leave trade. That is better for you, if you only knew (Q62:9).

Consequently, at the same time, it serves the purpose of seclusion (*I'tikaf*), during the month of Ramadan. The Noble Qur'an states:

And do not have relations with them as long as you are

staying for worship in the Mosque.... (Q2:187).

The third type is the Masjid al-*Eidain*. The open field Mosques where *Eid* prayers are observed, twice a year; during *Eid al-Ad'ha* and Eid al-Fitr'.

Misuse of Mosques:

Despite numerous importance or usefulness of Mosques, and the high sense of morale, sanctity, dignity and sacredness that are attached to Mosques; there are some acts or activities that are prohibited to taking place in the Mosques. Such activities include:

- a. **Direct and Indirect Beggary attitude in the Mosque:** The attitude of begging after completion of prayer (Salat) or when a lecture has been delivered has become a common practice in some Nigerian Mosques. This attitude puffs of so many Muslims who are members of the congregation of particular Mosques where such practice exists. The usual methodology of begging is, immediately after any of the five daily prayers is terminated, the lecture is delivered while at the tail end, personal financial assistance would be solicited for which, in most cases, get eroded away from the hearts of the listeners or audience in general, whatever good message the lecture was intended for. Besides, it will also discourage many to be in attendance for such subsequent lectures. Oloyede (np) asked: Or how do we feel when a Muslim cleric ends up his message begging for money or trying to sell out a product in the Mosque? Many Jum'ah and *rawatib* Mosques are places where begging takes place. Immediately after the Imam has terminated the congregational prayer, the seasonal and habitual beggars would rise up to tender their requests from the large congregation. In some *rawatib* Mosques, as soon as the Imam terminates the congregational prayer, some of the habitual beggars would begin to give explanations and exege-

sis of the Noble Qur'an with expectation of money in return to their pockets.

- b. **Killing inside the Mosque:** Every Mosque is a sacred House of Allah, no matter its size. Expectedly, whoever enters therein has achieved tranquility and safety. Allah (SWT) states:

In it are clear Signs manifested; the station of Ibraheem, whoever enters it attains security, and pilgrimage to the House is incumbent upon men for the sake of Allah, (upon) everyone who is able to undertake the journey to it; and whoever disbelieves, then surely Allah is Self-sufficient, above any need of the worlds (Q3:97).

Every Mosque must, therefore, be accorded the honour it deserves. Generally, functions of every Mosque include dissemination of messages of Islam and doctrines. In a research carried out in Katarko village in Yobe state, by Amnesty international (73) Muhammad Yakubu, during an interview, explained that after Boko Haram had set fire on their houses, they took them to the Mosque, separated women and children; slaughtered and dumped their bodies in a well, 50 meters from the Mosque. Furthermore, Amnesty International (34) reported that the Boko Haram gunmen, entered a Mosque, during prayer, in North East Nigeria, and killed those who refused to become their members. In Islam, rape is dastardly a sinful act, likewise killing as they both belong to the category of grievous sins. Committing any of these or both in a Mosque is unspeakably unacceptable in Islam. Abdul Salam (np) reported that the remains of a six-year old girl (Khadijah Ya'u) who was allegedly raped to death by her captor(s) was found in a Mosque located at new road, Kurmi Mashi, Kaduna North Local Government of Kaduna State. If not for lack of faith, why would such atrocities be committed, worse still, in a Mosque?!

(e) **Duplication of Mosques:** The establishments of sects, organizations, societies, communities and Islamic and Arabic schools have led to proliferation of Mosques among Muslim communities. Though, many reasons are as well responsible for this development. Amongst the reasons are power or leadership tussle, envy, money mongering, family-rifts, self-esteem, lack of unity and comfort. Oloyede (np) asked: Are we conscious of the fact that the proliferation of Mosque could be a plan to frustrate the Muslim Ummah, just as Abu Amir, a Christian monk collaborated with some hypocrites to build a Mosque in Quba? The order to either burn down or demolish the Mosque built by the hypocrites was once given by the Prophet (SAW) to Malik bn Dukhshum Salimi and Ma'n bn Adi Ajli (RA) (Najeebabadi 234). The Prophet (SAW) knew that the Mosque was likely to cause division among Muslims. The Glorious Qur'an affirms:

And there are those who put up a Mosque by a way of mischief or infidelity-to disunite the Believers-and in preparation for one who warred against (Allah) and His Prophet aforetime. They will indeed swear that their intention is nothing but good though declare that they are certainly liars. Never stand you forth therein. There is a Mosque whose foundation was laid from the first day on piety; it is more worthy for you to standing therein. In it are men who love to purify themselves; and Allah (God) loves those who purify themselves (Q9:107-108).

In an interview with Zikrullah Bukhari, (a teacher of Arabic and Islamic school in Ilorin) he explicitly said that due to monopoly of knowledge and self-esteem, some Islamic scholars did not want to pray behind the others, while the other institution claimed being the first to have been established around 1963. Those were the

three reasons that brought about the establishment of two Friday (Jum'ah) Mosques; Shamsudeen, Arabic and Islamic Studies School along Akerebiata, Sobi road, Ilorin and Shehu Aminu's Ameena Society behind U-Sanda Filling station Ilorin, Kwara State. Abdul Wahab & Maisuna (7) opined that most Muslims who established such Mosques (Masajid) do so for leadership tussle, money mongering and perhaps to segregate or cause disunity among Muslim community; such a Mosque (Masjid) is referred to as Masjid-Dirara. Also, at Okelele area, Adeyi compound, one Lukman Adeyi, during an interview explained that the two *Ratibi* Mosques came into being after a family rancor escalated, a group of people split and built another Mosque at a distance of less than thirty meters to the earlier Mosque. Aside the above example, in Sokoto State, at Hajiya Halimah-estate, opposite Sokoto central market, and directly opposite Sokoto Motor Park, has two Friday (Jum'ah) central Mosques. According to an interview with Abdul Rafiu Abdul-Salam, a resident in Sokoto said that one of the Mosques belongs to Hausa while the other one belongs to the Nawarud-deen society. It is expected that since Hajiya Halimah is an estate, a Jum'ah Mosque would have sufficed for the Muslim community of the estate instead of two Mosques within such a community that may mar the unity of Muslims. Despite the fact that Islamic ordained activities are the same globally, divisions within sects, promote proliferation of Mosques even when they were not very necessary, which proportionately have resulted to some unspeakable consequences, such as creating some disgruntled elements that cause duplication of Mosques. Abdul Fattah (253-256) posited that consequently, they have created and continued to sustain the impression of Mosque plurality in the Nigerian Muslim community. Furthermore, Abdul Fattah explained that during his research tours, mostly Northerners, each of the two groups established (*Tariqah/Izalah*) their Mosques preaching sectarianism. In Umuahia in particular, the tension was very high. Mosques of the two

parties were located within a close vicinity; thereby creating an image of two Islam in incompatibility variant from one another.

Furthermore, on Keffi-Akwanga- Jos road, shortly before A. A Rano filling station, there are two Mosques lying unused. According to Elesin Abdul Wahab, he observed that, rivalry between *Qadriyyah* and *Tijaniyyah* sects made them to split and finally led to the construction of the second Mosque, and by so doing, the first Mosque was abandoned and became completely unused; and it had already started dilapidating, while mushrooms and grasses turned to be the occupants of the first Mosque. Islam is Allah's cord, much that every Muslim should hold unto. Therefore, the issue of sects or organization should not be a source of disunity or disintegration in the spirit of brotherhood as Islam advocates. To this end, Allah (SWT) says:

And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided. And remember the favour of Allah upon you-when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favour, brothers. And you were on the edge of a pit of the Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus does Allah make clear to you His verses that you may be guided (Q3:103).

One of the repercussions of emitting disunity, disintegration or division among Muslims is that, a great punishment awaits them, possibly here in this world; or in the hereafter. An avenue for the enemies of Islam should not be created, so much that they will then make mockery of Islam and Muslims. In respect of this, Allah (SWT) says:

And do not be like the ones who became divided and differed after the clear proofs had come to them. And those will have a great punishment (Q3:105).

(g) Reservation of spaces (in the Mosque) for some distinguished personalities

One of the beauties of Islam is equity; and it advocates against discrimination or segmentation in any form, among Muslims. Apart from the gender segmentation, this is meant to avoid uncivilized attitudes, and to also curb illicit relationship; it is only the Imam that is allowed to stand alone at the front, when leading prayers in the Mosque. Other than that, all followers are expected to stand in rows, and shoulder to shoulder. How then can there be reservation of space in Mosques? In addition, reservation of seats or specifications of spaces for particular prominent and eminent persons are not part of ethics of observance of prayers in the Mosque, according to the teachings of Islam. This scenario was observed at the Ansarud-deen Mosques, situated at Ahmadu Bello way, Sokoto, Abuja-Maitama Head-quarters of Ansarud-deen, Kaduna-Abeokuta street; also, Abuja national Mosque, Ilorin Jum'ah central Mosque Oja-Oba, opposite emir's palace etc. In some cases, spaces were reserved for the executive members of the Mosques, important dignitaries that attended congregation prayers with them, such as Ministers, governors, local government chairmen and Emirs. Abu Khadeejah (np) said that the male worshipper is committed with attending the Masjid early and with standing near to the Imam himself, and not reserving his place by the use of a stick, or a staff or a prayer mat; by so doing, one contravenes the tradition (*Sunnah*) of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Maintaining first row for men is *Sunnah*, but it is wrong to reserve seats, depriving others who are there to get the reward of maintain first row as well. Abu Khadeejah (np) expatiated that people in the Masjid are the same, so, reservation of seat is not allowed. The issue of nobility, class, royalty, status or high position, middle or lower ranking individuals does not arise in the Mosque, as Islam upholds equality except on basis of piety. Similar to that is the issue of using tribal name or

language to address or tag some Mosque. For example, the Mosques of Yoruba, Hausa, Igala, Nupe; with the impression that such Mosques belong to a particular race or tribe as tribal names were ascribed to them. Such a notion does not depict the spirit of unity and brotherhood as professed by Islam and as against the practice of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). To this end, Bakr (35) incurred that for example there exist Pakistani Mosques, Bengali Mosques, Syrian Mosques, Persian Mosques, Kurdish Mosques, Turkish Mosques and so on. As observed critically, especially in Nigeria, it destabilizes the expected solid unity and brotherhood which has resulted to more of political than religious propagation; and of course, all Mosques are supposed to be for Him alone and not for racial or tribal rivalry. The Noble Qur'an says:

Say, indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds (Q6:162).

In addition, the Noble Qur'an states further:

O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is knowing and Acquainted (49:13)

Abu Tariq (np) articulated that Bilal bn Rabah (RA) was a Negro from Habasha (Ethiopia). He was an evident story of Islam's respect for human equality, anti-racism and social equity. Generally, it was observed that considerable number of Muslims found it uncomfortable to shift or create a space for other Muslims to enter into the row either to sit while anticipating prayer's time in the Mosques, or; as at when prayer was on, while observers of prayers were already standing. This act is against the ethics of prayer in Islam. Allah says:

O you who believe! When it is said to you, make room in (your) assemblies, and then make ample room, Allah will give you ample, and when it is said: Rise up, then rise up. Allah will exalt those of you who believe, and those, and those who are given knowledge, in high degrees; and Allah is aware of what you do (Q58:11).

Celebration in the Mosques

Muslim women are not banned or deprived from entering into Mosques for socio-spiritual, education and as well having cordial relationship with same gender through socialization. Women who pray together in the Mosques, tend to learn better ways of praying from their women colleagues, and as they pray behind the Imam; gaining a lot of Islamic moral teachings during lectures and educational segments. According (Nyhagen 5) by praying together, women feel a religious connection to God and to fellow Muslim women. Indeed, there were some acts of violation of regulations Mosque some women engaged in, either knowingly or ignorantly. Some marriages that were staged in Mosques usually attract the presence of different people, especially among Nigerian Yoruba speaking region. In this regard, some Muslim celebrants and parents are used to inviting non-Muslim families and friends to felicitate with them by gracing the occasion. In Ilorin central Mosque, the daughter of the former Senate President, Oluwatosin Halimat Bukola Saraki who got wedded in 2017 to Niyi Olukoya, a male Christian, and both Muslims and non-Muslims gained entrance into the central Mosque of Ilorin and witnessed the occasion. Ihenacho (legit.ng) reported that Nurudeen Adeyemi lamented that Tosin Bukola Saraki married a Christian man coupled with the fact that the marriage was conducted in the Mosque and it is prohibited (haram) for any Alfa in Ilorin to coordinate such a marriage. It is a clear point that non-Muslims are prohibited from entering the Holy Mosque of Ka'bah, and by extension (even in the Mosque), all Mosque are sacred. Allah (STW) says:

O you who have believed, indeed the polytheists are unclean, so let them not approach al-Masjid al-Haram after this, their [final] year. And fear privation, Allah will enrich you from His bounty if He wills. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Wise. (Q9:28).

On other Mosques, Muslim scholars have divergent opinions about whether non-Muslims may enter inside the Mosques, apart from Makkah and Madinah Mosques. Non-Muslims are not allowed to enter the Masjid Al-Haram in Makkah, and this is agreed upon by the four schools of Thought Bakri. (27). Hanafi School maintained that, non-Muslims are permitted to enter while Maliki School opined that it is prohibited to allow non-Muslims into the Mosque except for cogent reason, such as to allow repairs and construction, particularly, if such repairs and construction cannot not be carried out by the Muslims. The Hanbali School adjudged that, non-Muslims are not permitted except that they intend to obtain information about Islam. If they are a delegate or envoys, a similar case occurred when Prophet Muhammad (SAW) hosted non-Muslims in the Mosque (Bakri 27). Firmly speaking, admittance of non-Muslims into the main hall of Mosques may not be appropriate because of filth, such as menstrual or blood birth and *junub* remained unclean by them, due to the fact that it is only Muslims who are aware of these cleanliness from filthy conditions (*Attaharatu minal anjaas*). The Glorious Qur'an states:

The idolaters have no right to visit the Mosques of Allah while bearing witness to unbelief against themselves, these it is whose doings are null, and in the fire shall they abide (Q9:17)

In the above verse, Allah used the plural of Mosque, Mosques (Masaajid), which by implication may refer to all designated places for Allah's worship. Dressing modestly is part of the etiquettes of Islam. This must certainly be observed by both male and female, both in private and

public. Therefore, giving a chance of catching a glimpse of one's nudity is against the ethics of Islam. Ismail (271) posited that Islam defines the private parts, as those parts of the body that must be covered in front of others. For men, this is the area.

It is a common practice of some Islamic organizations to stage marriage feasts inside their Mosques where invited guests consist of Muslims and non-Muslims alike. In some instances, some of the female non-Muslims attended the occasion while menstruating, perhaps because they knew not the rules for entering into the Mosques. Also, some Muslim women sometimes deliberately entered inside the Mosques during their congregational *Asalat* days; or, whenever there were special occasions. However, according to Bakr (30), he quoted the stand of Imam Malik that, according to Maliki's school of thought, such an act is (disliked) *Makruh*; but according to Hanbali and Shafi'i, it is *Mubah*; Shafi'i further specified that such women under menstruation can sit in the Mosque as long they do not allow the Mosque to become unclean.

Wrong usage of veil (*Hijaab*) and wearing short dresses to the Mosque. Dressing decently is part of the ethics of Islam which must be observed by both male and female in private and public places. Therefore, giving a chance of catching a glimpse of one's nudity is against the teachings of Islam. Ismail (271) posits that, Islam defines the private parts as those parts of the body that must be covered in front of others. For men, the area is between the navel and the knee, which other men and women are not allowed to see. However, as for women, this area is the whole body, except the face and the hands. According to some scholars, the feet is inclusive. In other words, it is absurd to go to the Mosque without observing the proper manner of Islamic mode of dress; for, Islam kicks against being showy and obnoxious by exposing any private part to other people. Allah (SWT) says:

O children of Adam, take your adornment (i.e., wear your clothing) at every Masjid, and eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess (Q7:31).

Specifically, Islam addresses the wives of the Prophet (SAW) on how modest their dresses should look like including the use of veil (*hijaab*); and by extension, all Muslim women to cover themselves as going out either half naked or in an improper dress is tantamount to the condemned attitudinal behaviour of Barbaric (*Jahiliyyah*) period. However, proper mode of dress, including the use of *hijaab*, brings honour without abuse or molestation to the Muslim women who are in compliance with the use of veil (*hijaab*). Allah says:

O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves (part) of their garment. That is more suitable that they will be known and not be abused. And ever is Allah Forgiveness and Merciful (Q33:59)

Muslims must not, therefore, appear half naked, or wear dresses that reveal any of their shapes or nudity, even when they go to Mosques. The Noble Qur'an states:

And tell the believing women to reduce (some) of their vision and guard their private's parts and not expose their adornment except that which (necessary) appears thereof and to wrap (a portion of) their head covers over their chests and not expose their adornment (i.e.,) except to their husbands.... (Q24:31).

Conclusion

Every Mosque (Masjid), no matter its size, is a special space dedicated solely for the worship of Almighty Allah(God), His remembrance, boosting and chanting His names, recitation of the Noble Qur'an, engaging in supererogatory prayers, teaching and learning, delivering religious lectures and dissemination of other useful important messages. Functionally, Mosques are places that are established for solidifying and concretizing the unity and brotherhood of Muslims. Unfortunately, reverse remains the cases, in that, Mosques are

now duplicated for religious leadership tussle. On the whole, unity of Muslims is paramount and any attempt to mar it may attract the anger of Almighty Allah (SWT).

Recommendation:

The paper, therefore, recommends the following as a remedy to the problems of misuse of Mosques.

- (a) The Mosques should be made to maintain the original primary usage, without any deviations. Therefore, every community Mosque must strive hard to have an event hall.
- (b) The administrators of the Mosques should always remember the Day of accountability, by so doing, they should manage well, the associations' accounts and funds.
- (c) Begging inside the Mosque should be frankly discouraged by the Mosques' committees.
- (d) All Muslims need to see duplication of Mosques at short distances as a threat to the unity and brotherhood of Muslims.

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