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GENERAL INFORMATION AND NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

1. General Information
The journal is published by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) in collaboration with the Nigerian Journal of Educational Foundations (NJEF). The journal is published twice a year, in June and December. The journal is published in English. The journal is published by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) in collaboration with the Nigerian Journal of Educational Foundations (NJEF). The journal is published twice a year, in June and December. The journal is published in English. The journal is published by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) in collaboration with the Nigerian Journal of Educational Foundations (NJEF). The journal is published twice a year, in June and December. The journal is published in English.

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Special Edition

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EDITORIAL

This academic publication of the defunct Department of Educational Foundations has come a long way. It was almost going moribund but for the deliberate steps taken by the current Editorial Board with the cooperation of all academic staff of the former Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education. Innovative article generation and peer review programmes were initiated and doggedly implemented to enable the return of Nigerian Journal of Educational Foundations to the vibrant academic and professionally sound contributions it had always made to the advancement of knowledge. Improving the quality of the journal and bringing an international angle and status to it has engaged the attention of the Editorial Board. Phased in stages of achieving national and international focus has produced special editions based on selected themes. These themes pay attention to current issues and needs engaging the attention of specialists in educational foundations in Nigeria and the rest of the world.

GENERAL INFORMATION AND NOTES TO CONTRIBUTORS

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Address: Department of Social Sciences Education
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Editorial Description: The Journal publishes theoretical and empirical papers, results of original investigations (analytical, descriptive or experimental) in all areas of educational foundations-History, Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology, Comparative Education, Statistics and Methodology of Educational Research, Measurement, Evaluation and Teaching at all levels of Education.

Target Audience: Academics, students of education in institution of higher learning, general practitioners and stakeholder in education, policy makers and the general public.

Language: The journal is published in English.

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- iii. The next page of the manuscript should omit the author's name(s) and affiliation(s) but should include the title of the article.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EDITORIAL.....	ii
GENERAL INFORMATION AND NOTES TO CONTRIBUTORS.....	iii
Education as an Invaluable Tool for Civic Competence: Past and Present <i>Adeyemi. A. & Onigiobi. O.</i>	1
Utilisation and Significance of Instructional Materials for an Effective Teaching-learning Process and Sustainable Development in Basic Education <i>Akinbi Y. Ayoola., Fatoki, O.R. & Lawal, B. O.</i>	15
The Place of Indigenous and Western Education in Promoting Good Citizenship in Nigeria <i>Akogun, Alabelapo Kadri., Subair, Bashirat Olanike & Isiaq, Sherifat Shola</i>	24
Attitude and Preference of Junior Secondary School Students to Civic Education in Ilorin Metropolis <i>Abdulsalam, A. A., Okunloye, R. W. & Oparinde, F. O.</i>	35
Utilising Islamic Moral Values in Curbing Excesses during Ceremonies <i>Balogun, Idayat Nike & Olokooba, Issa Nasiru.</i>	46
Influence of Coaching Styles and Motivation on Performance of Athletes in University of Ilorin <i>Adebayo, B. S., Memunat. T. A. & Galaye E.K.</i>	57
Kwara State Undergraduates' Views on Remedies to the causes of Corruption as a Bane of Good Citizenship in Contemporary Nigeria <i>Rasheed, Adewuyi Shofiu & Abdulaziz Isiaka.</i>	67
Comparative Analysis of Kwara State Students' Performance in Civic Education and English Language <i>Bello, Muhinat B.</i>	77

University Education Finance and Cost Sharing in Nigeria: Considerations for Policy Direction <i>Maruff Akinwale Oladejo, Gbolagade Muritala Olowo</i>	87
Historical Analysis of Nomadic-Education in North-Central Nigeria: 1988-2011 <i>Saidu, Abubakar</i>	99
Influence Of Family Background On Career Preference Among Adolescent In Ilorin West <i>Atanda, Muritala Ridwan, Alhassan, Yahyah Seriki & Yusuf, Abdulraheem</i>	118
Revival of Civic Competence of the Nigerian Youths Through Social Studies Education <i>Afolabi Anifat Abiodun</i>	127
Education for Sustainable Development in Nigeria <i>Jekayinfa, O. J. Ojo, O. J. & Durosaro, D. O.</i>	136
Types of Domestic Violence among Upper Basic School Students in Osun Cental Senatorial District <i>Olaniyan, Joseph Olatunji</i>	143
Relationship between Motivation and Economics Teachers' Job Performance in Ilesha, Osun State, Nigeria <i>Mahmud, Jamiu Abdulqadir & Olayioye, Olalekan Muibideen</i>	151
Influence of Class Size on Junior Secondary School Students' Academic Performance In Ilorin South Local Government Area <i>Iyekolo A. O., Ajibola B. C. & Ahmed M.B.</i>	161
E-learning Facilities Availability and Accessibility Among Business Education Students and Academic Performance in Universities in Kwara State. <i>Ogbudinkpa, Ijeoma Charity & Sofoluwe, Abayomi Olumade</i>	171
Historical and Contemporary Perspective of Vocational Counselling in Secondary Schools in Nigeria <i>Ojewola, Florence O.</i>	183

Women Education As An Asset For Achieving Good Citenzinship In Nigeria In The 21 st Century <i>Okediji, Hannah Adebola Aderonke</i>	195
Effective Citizenry: Education, Parenting and Social System Interactions in the 21st Century <i>Olawuyi, B. O. & Ajayi, O. S.</i>	211
Historical Development of Colleges of Education in South West Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria (1964 - 2009) <i>Olayanju, Oladapo Johnson</i>	121
Education Policy, Social Citizenship and Changing Dynamics of Education Provisioning in Nigeria <i>Omoruan, A. I.</i>	243
Teachers Effectiveness as Correlates of Students Academic Achievement in Christian Religious Studies in Ondo State <i>Ojo Oludare David</i>	258
Citizenship Education: A Desideratum for Social Integration and National Development in Nigeria <i>Afolabi, A. B, Onipede, K. J. & Adejumo A.I.</i>	269
The Impact of Government Policy on the Development of Colleges of Education in Kwara State 1974 – 2000 <i>Oyewumi Christiana Funso</i>	284
Assessment of Learning Difficulties in Economics among Senior Secondary School Students in Lagos Mainland Local Government <i>Badamas, Omoshalewa Lasbat, Uyanne, Elizabeth Obiageli, & Oniye, Ridwanullah Kolapo</i>	307
Prevalence of Examination Malpractice in Nigerian Educational Institutions: Problems, Patterns, Pains And Panacea <i>Solomon, Adebayo Olabode</i>	316
Teachers' Managerial Function in Repositioning Education for Good Citizenship in Kwara State, Nigeria <i>Abdullahi, Nimota Jibola Kadir</i>	329

Paradigm Shift Towards Preparation of 21 st Century Teachers in Implementation of Universal Basic Education Curriculum in Multi-Grade Schools in Nigeria <i>Torpev, Terver Francis</i>	345
Ensuring Safety of Statutory and Non Statutory School Records for Quality Service Delivery in Ilorin East – Kwara State <i>Abdulwahab, R., Dije Musa Gumel, Hauwa Yunusa Abubakar & Abbas Aminu Abdullahi</i>	363
Effect of Marzano Instructional Strategy on Secondary Schools Students' Academic Performance in Economics in Ilorin, Nigeria <i>Oyewunmi, I., Yusuf, H. T, Odutayo, A. O. & Akintola, M. A</i>	374
The Investigation of Male Teachers' Teaching and Job Satisfaction in Primary Schools in Ogbomosho North <i>Ola-alani, Eniola Keji & Abidogun, Babajide Gboyega</i>	382
Citizenship Education for Good Democratic Governance in Nigeria <i>Popoola F.F., Falaiye, F.T, & Popoola S.O</i>	392

UTILISING ISLAMIC MORAL VALUES IN CURBING EXCESSES DURING CEREMONIES

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Abstract

The backdrop of this paper has to do with the experiences and observations of the writers as regards food at ceremonies and guests' attitudes to the excess food served at such ceremonies. These attitudes which are often negative have been a source of concern over the years at different ceremonies in the society (Nigerian), be it burials, naming or wedding ceremonies. As various categories of people are found at these ceremonies. The paper discusses the need sensitise the general populace about these, that is, the category of people to be served at parties and the right proportion that is expected to be dished and consumed at ceremonies in order to curb food waste. Islam acknowledges that humans would take some steps and actions for survival, among which ceremonies and food are included; hence the justifications of the above submission from an Islamic Economy perspective. This paper proffers certain tips which would help to curb and prevent food waste. The paper also recommends that these tips should be passed along, to those who need it, and that by starting with ones' family, relatives, and neighbours, others can also be sensitised. In conclusion, whether rich or poor, the time has ripe for people to operate properly in the sight of others and Almighty Allah.

Keywords: Excess, Food serving, Ceremony, Islamic Moral Values.

Introduction

There is a dearth of literature on the theme: "Food in Islamic Societies". While, social scientists have debated the function of food in societies, very few have really observed and given reports concerning food-eating behaviour in our communities (Nigerian). Although Islamic scholars make reference to some specific foods when discussing ritual purity, they hardly focus on the importance of Muslim food-eating practices. This paper intends to mention some rate of serving and eating habits of people during ceremonies, and also emphasise on the teachings of some Islamic Economic

Injunction vis-à-vis what is observed during modern weddings in the society. Having observed the attitudes of the organisers of such ceremonies and guests, the writers deems it fit to sensitise the populace about the Islamic Moral Values relevant to such functions, with the aim of curbing the excesses inherent therein. It is equally intended to emphasise the reward and punishment from Allah (SWT), as found in the Holy Qur'an for those who engage in excesses. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an: "And it is He Who produces gardens trellised and un-trellised, and date palms, and crops of different shapes and tastes (their fruits and their seeds) and olives, and pomegranate, similar (in kind) and different (in taste)".

However, the emphasis here is the last part of the verse which states 'Eat, and waste not by extravagance. Verily, Allah likes not those who waste by extravagance' (Qur'an. 6:141). In as much as humans believe that God created this planet in harmony and balance, where there is enough of all resources to provide for every living being (needy and destitute, inclusive), the food God has provided for humans is a "trust" that needs to be consumed in moderation. Therefore, humans should be careful enough to quantify just how much is needed for consumptions as guests in any ceremony. We need to make conscious efforts to do this as this means being prudent in Islam; hence, the need to create awareness to curb food waste.

Ceremonies are formal acts or set of acts which are often set up by custom or tradition, and are performed in observation of an event. The English Dictionary defines it as the formal activities conducted on some solemn or important public or state occasions, and that relatives, friends, neighbours, colleagues, families and the likes from far and near are invited to grace occasions. Ceremonies includes: wedding, child naming, burial, house warming, birthday and so on.

Excess is the state of surpassing or going beyond limit; that is, exceeding that which is proper. Other words to describe excess include: super-abundance, immoderateness, and extravagance. In this context, excess implies the degree by which the size of a person's meal is exceeded. The leftovers therefore constitute the excess and this could be described as transgression of proper moderation.

Islamic Moral Values is a comprehensive term that includes the concept of righteousness, good character, and the body of moral qualities and virtues prescribed in Islamic religious texts. The underlying idea of Islamic morality is that of love; love for God and love for God's creatures. The idea is that mankind will acquire and follow the body of moral qualities in order to seek God's pleasure and also to treat the fellow human beings in the best

possible manner. Teachings on morality and moral conduct constitute a basic principle of Islam, and the moral themes form a large part of it. The Quran and the Hadith – the central religious texts of Islam – serve as the primary source for it. Both the Quran and the Hadith are emphatic in their instructions to the Muslims to adopt good character. The most highlighted virtues in the Quran include showing kindness to people, and charity to the poor and the helpless in particular, helping people especially in their time of needs, forgiving others' offenses, respecting parents and elders, fulfilling promises, being kind to people and to animals, being patient with adversaries, maintaining justice, being honest in nature, and controlling anger are major virtues in the Islamic concept of morality. However, the concept of Islamic Moral Values or Morality in Islam cannot be discussed in isolation without making reference to Islamic Economy. This brings us to the concept of Islamic Economy.

Definition of Islamic Economy

To define Islamic Economy is to merge conventional economics with Islam. Islam is a religion from Allah SWT through prophet Muhammad (SAW) to mankind and which affects human's total way of life, that is, whatever human does or is going to do must be comply with the Islamic norms and values as well as laws and other rules and regulations (Shariah). Many scholars have defined Islamic economy according to their understanding of the concepts. The following are the various definitions of Islamic economy from different scholars:

Ahmad (1981) defined Islamic economy as a study of human behaviour in attempts to satisfy needs from abundant resources which are intended to be of benefit to both people and the society both in this world, and in the hereafter. Umar (2010) describes Islamic economy as the branch of knowledge which helps to realise human wellbeing through the allocation and distribution of scarce resources that in conformity with Islamic teachings without unduly curbing individual freedom. In the opinion of Khursid (1994), Islamic economy is a systematic effort that tries to understand the economic problems and human behaviour in relation to these issues from an Islamic perspective. From these definitions, it is sufficing to conclude that the Islamic economy is self-monitored; hence the control of the economy is very efficient and powerful, it serves a variety of goals and prevents individuals from neglecting their duties, rights and responsibilities (Mohammed, 2012). Also it is not out of place to submit that if the above definitions are put into practice, they will effect a great change in society, and offer a balanced alternative to the westernised economic systems. Thus, society prospers only when its people

put into practice the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, not only in curbing excesses but in all aspects of their life, as the submission pass one central message: "obedience to Allah."

The Principle of Islamic Economy

Islamic Economy is a term used to refer to Islamic commercial jurisprudence or what can be called an introduction to the principles of Islam as legislated to guide the economic system of the society. As a complete way of life, Islam has provided guidelines and rules for every sphere of life and society. In essence, functional economy is intended for a healthy society, as the consumption of goods and services are the facilitation of this by a common medium exchange play a common role in allowing people to realise their material and other goal in life. Islamic economy jurisprudence entails the rules of transacting finance or other economic activities in a Shariah compliant manner, that is a manner conforming to Islamic scripture (Qur'an and the sunnah). Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) has traditionally dealt with determining what is required, prohibited, encouraged, discouraged, or permissible. In the 1970's, Islamic Economics was introduced as an academic discipline in a number of institutions of higher learning throughout the Muslim World and in the West. In essence, the Islamic economic system is built upon three principles:

1. Ownership
2. Disposal of ownership
3. The distribution of wealth amongst the people

Islam has some standards based on justice and practicality, for such economic systems to be established. These standards are aimed at preventing the enmity while; it is true that getting money is a concerns of almost every human being who engages in transactions with others. Yet while these standards recognise money as being important, they do not lose sight of the fact that its position is secondary to the real purpose of human existence which is the worship of God. An Islamic economic system is not necessarily concerned with the precise amount of financial income and expenditure, import and export and other economic matters which are indisputably important. However, Islam is more concerned with the spirit of the economic system.

A society that implements Islamic laws and promotes Islamic values will find out that it brings together all the systems- social, economic and so forth, that is, it deals with Islamic teachings, one of which that God has made provision for every person He has brought to life. The earth has sufficient bounty to satisfy the needs of mankind; the challenge for humans lies in

discovering, extracting, processing and distributing these resources to those who need them. A major claim made for an Islamic economic system by Islamic activists and revivalists is hinged on the need to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor by such means as the discouragement of the hoarding of food and other sinful and unlawful activities. The principle of moderation in consumption of food is also emphasised as excessive serving of food would not only end up as leftovers, it is also harmful to health.

Islam regards extravagance and excesses as unethical acts and tries to keep people away from them by defaming them. Since Islam has contents related to the hereafter, it regards a person as being religiously responsible though these acts are not included in the formal law. This protects them from extremes and leads them towards a more moderate way. Qur'an injunctions mandate a Muslim to eat what is good for him/her. A Muslim must eat a variety of food that provides for all his bodily needs and remember not to indulge in excesses, he/she should also eat of the fruits in the season but render the dues that are proper on the day that the harvest is gathered. "But waste not by excess; for Allah 'loveth not the wasters'" - Q6: Vs 141 (Al-an'aam) An English saying also preaches this "See what magnificent means God provides in nature for the sustenance of all His creatures because He loves them all. Enjoy them in moderation and be grateful but commit no excess and commit no waste" the two statements are the same from different angles of vision.

Food Serving

The preparation of food, food serving and its consumption always take place with reference to individuals as occupants of statuses and categories within institutionalised groupings. It is often possible to infer the important groupings within the society are. For instance, invited guests are often grouped into two; the people at the front seat or the high table and others who fill up the hall or are under the canopies. The rules governing food serving within a society reflect prevailing ethical and moral orientations within that society. It has been observed that the people or guests at the front seat are the first point of target when it is time to serve food in our ceremonies, these calibre of people are also known as the 'who' is 'who' in the society. Sumptuous meals and assorted drinks are dished out to this group of guests to honour them at occasions. The thought that readily comes to mind is that "who really needs to be treated lavishly, is it the important people or the lower cadre of people at the occasion, or the destitute found around the venue of such ceremonies that need to be treated to such feasts?"

This is to point out that people consciously use food as a tool to bring together certain group of people while excluding others, therefore, food is central both to bringing people together and keeping them apart. Anderson (2005) argues that for a society to accomplish its goals of ceremony and celebration, 'such excessive and all-involving action involves food. He stated further that food is a basic and universal human concern. It is central to religion- as a symbol, a subject of prayers, as marker of sharing and vice versa and a communion.'

A fundamental factors responsible for serving excess food in our societies is the division of attendees by status or ranking where food serving is considered appropriate to certain classes of people (people at the front seat), such that their tables are flooded with assorted meals and drinks. Experience has shown that several of such meals were left uneaten. On the other hand, those described as being of lower status also order varieties of food they take, second or third they cannot finish. This attitude can be summed up with words of Imam Ja'far As-sadiq in Latest Stories in Saudi Arabia (2013) condemning wasting food. "Bread, meat, milk, vinegar and ghee; whatever you wish you can eat. But do not eat all of them at a time". Another notable factor is the habit of cooking extra in anticipation of having more attendees than the dishes prepared. Meanwhile, the guests do not notify their hosts as to whether they can attend the function or not as pointed out before. When such situation occurs, the unused portion should be given to the needy because there are people who can hardly manage to get a square meal a day. In many countries around the globe, extremely poor people search for food from waste dumps. One should hand-over neatly packed meals to the poor rather than them searching for it amongst waste. The Qur'an 17 Vs 26 & 27 also emphasises this, "And gives the relative his right and also the poor and the traveller and do not spend wastefully; for those who squander wastefully are Satan's brothers and Satan is ever ungrateful to his lord". This paper calls people's attention to the punishments that await squanderers as well as misers. On the other hand, whoever practices moderation will never become destitute.

Wealthy hosts prepare food in large quantities when it comes to ceremonies, the larger quantities of food ranges from cereal, grains, porridge to swallows of different types., these are all prepared to satisfy guests at the ceremony, the food prepared should be according to the number of guests invited, but many guests do not inform their host about their attendance hence, there are leftovers as a result of excess food being prepared. According to estimates, some 15-20% of the leftover food eventually becomes wasted. Food serves as a means of satisfying our feelings when hungry; it also serves

as a basic necessity to the existence of humanity in general. Food, when eating properly, provides all the nutrients essential for the normal functioning of the body. Good food tends to promote good health; one must therefore have the knowledge of wise choice of available food to be able to obtain the essence of eating food. Food serving in the context of this paper means size of meal for a person. Cambridge English Dictionary (2016) described "Food Serving" as an amount of one type of food that is given to one person; the quantities that is given in the recipe. Merriam (2001) also defined food serving as an amount of food and drink that is enough for one person. From the foreign description of what food serving is, it is evident that the moderation is key. Moderation means portion control, trying to avoid oversized meals. This is supported in Islamic economy by an English proverb; "See what magnificent; means God provides in nature for the sustenance of all His creatures because He loves them all. Enjoy them in moderation and be grateful. But commit no excess and commit no waste".

Some Tips to Curb Excesses

The ultimate fate of uneaten food or edible portions which constitute excess food depends on where the meal was served and eaten, for instance, home cooked excess food is often preserved to be eaten later. This is facilitated by having access to food preserving facilities such as refrigerators or freezers or microwaves or conventional ovens for re-heating. This is not the case when it comes to the matter of excess food in ceremonies, it is only if the leftovers or uneaten portions are given away that food wastage would be prevented. Zaki, a religious scholar in his sermons advised Muslims to learn to manage food by pointing out that the food one person wastes are another person's meal. He also advised that Muslims should share food rather than enjoy it all by themselves. Yaser Abu-Fayan another religious scholar in his sermon also said that "Food is seen as a gift from God and thus wasting it is seen as a sign of ungratefulness for this gift." This was expatiated upon by Anas bin Maalik (May Allah be pleased with him) when he reported that when the prophet (peace be upon him) finished eating, he would say "if a morsel of one of you falls down then he must clean it, remove the injurious, and eat it and leave it not for the devil." "He commanded us to lick the plate clean, saying, "You cannot imagine in which portion of your meal, blessing lies." This injunction reveals the gravity of food waste. Therefore, when it comes to serving and eating at ceremonies we should not be befuddled by the simple question of what quantity should be served or what quantity should be ordered but upholds what the *hadith* says. The following tips can curb food waste:

- Poverty exists and as such, people live an unhealthy lives because they do not have sufficient food. Charity is one of the main characteristics of an Islamic economy, it seeks to promote social solidarity and address the needs of the poor. The Qur'an says that the righteous are those people who fulfil their promises and feed the needy, the orphans and the captives for the love of God (76: 5-8).
- Reduce the quantity of food by planning and catering according to the number of invited guests such that the number of dishes will not exceed the number of invited guests.
- Practise FCFS if possible- that is, "First Come First Serve"
- Dish reasonable portion of meal for each person. Islam says we should eat in thirds i.e. one-third for food, one-third for water and one-third for air; this implies that humans should be able to move easily and breathe easily after meals.
- Attendees should decide what they really want to eat and the quantity. It is harmful to eat on a full stomach and it is a waste of food
- Share the meal when eating outside, if served heavy meal, it should be split with a friend or neighbour so that the food is not wasted.
- Take surplus meals home: In a situation where invited guests are not into sharing meals, the portioned dishes need not to be wasted, just ask for a container to put the portions in and take it home. This is encouraged and supported by (Qur'an 2:219) which says, "And they ask you (Muhammad) as to what they should spend. Say: What you can spare (over and above your needs)."
- Share -: excess meals should be shared to neighbours, family and friend this tends to give rise to maximal solidarity within the community where the ceremony took place. This also prevents excess food from going bad. This is reiterated in (Qur'an 17 Vs 26) "And give the relative his right and also the poor and traveller and do not spend wastefully"
- Donate -: Support charity homes by giving out extra, untouched food that would have otherwise gone to waste good thing donations is that there are no losers and you get to help others. Charity is also never regarded as extravagance. The following Ayat of the Holy Qur'an states "And prefer (them) before themselves though poverty may

afflict them, and whoever is preserved from the niggardliness of his soul, these it is that are the successful ones (Suratul-Hashr; Qur'an 59 Vs 9)" In another Ayat, "And they give food out of love for Him to the poor and the Captive (Suratul-Insaan Qur'an 76 Vs 8)"

- Educate other people-: Raise awareness about the issue of excesses in ceremonies and how food waste can be curbed. Campaigns or support campaigns to minimise food waste at ceremonies; this could be done by getting volunteers to public events periodically to rescue food from getting bad, and give it to the needy.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, food serves a positive role in our societies, and eating has also become a celebration of religious and social heritage. In various Nigerian communities, eating has been an expression of social, personal and religious communion, hence, food is not only to fill one's stomach, but an expression of religious duty, love for the community, and love of Allah. Therefore, food has become a symbol of positive change that will help to facilitate and define ideal community relationships. In an Islamic economy, the interests of both individuals and communities are addressed because individuals and communities are symbiotic. The individuals in question are the ceremony organisers, the guests and the less privileged. Thus, this paper uses Islamic moral values to point out the need to focus on the less privileged and the needy, especially when there is excess food during any ceremonies instead of concentrating on the wealthy who may not even consume all the dishes placed before them.

It is the belief of every practicing Muslims that giving is an act of worship which earns more blessings from Allah. It is also the opinion of the writers that whoever reads this paper will utilise the message contained therein and propagate it by informing the immediate and extended family and neighbours, so as to cultivate in them the culture of curbing excesses. It is also the intention of the writers that efforts should be made in the nearest future to collaborate with other likeminded individuals to curb excesses such as food waste at ceremonies, this will take Islamic moral values beyond paper presentation

Recommendations

This paper therefore recommends that people should be generous with their wealth by responding to the calls of mankind's needs, and they are also reminded that helping should be a fundamental duty especially to the needy.

Modesty is to be maintained in public which is generally related to people as well as in private which has to do with God. Islam expects that a Muslim who believes in God should fear God and this will prevent him/her from disobeying God and partaking in any immodest act.

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