

## Curbing The Challenges Of Politics And Development In Africa: A Sample Survey Of Nigeria, West Africa (*Religious Approach*)

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### ABSTRACT

It is highly germane to examine the political situation of Nigeria especially at this present dispensation. The nation's politics is embedded with a number of challenges at all levels administration. This is a core reason why the nation is backward in her governance. The causes of these challenges are not only from the rulers both also the ruled. The most significant factors include corruption, egocentrism, vandalism, religious-bigotry, ethnicity, nepotism and economic recession. The challenges have caused a lot of damages to the country's growth and development economically, socially and politically. These are hindrances towards the actualization of the dream of Nigeria on her sustainable development. The nation's political system has not been able to curb the menace of any of these challenges. The case has even been aggravated to the extent that the corruption which is a major cause of the challenges has become a cankerworm in the nation. This paper therefore examines the nature of the challenges of the Nigerian politics and governance since her amalgamation till the present political era and proffers solutions to them as mechanisms for growth, development and advancement of the country in all facets of life via religious polity. The paper is analytical, historical and expository. Primary and secondary data were employed for effective analysis of the work. Recommendations are also put forward at the end of the work as mechanisms towards the actualization of sustainable development in the Nigeria political system.

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**Keywords:** Nigeria, Religion, Politics, Development and Challenges.

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### INTRODUCTION

The system of governance in Nigeria is confronted with a myriad of challenges. This is a primary cause of hindrances in the nation's efforts for development like other advanced countries of the world. Hindrances to Nigerian system of administration are multi-various. These are centred on corruption, political crises, ethnicity, economic recession, socio-vices, terrorism, kidnapping and religious bigotry. The worst of them is corruption. Corruption affects virtually all aspects of the country to the extent that the question is not what is corruption in Nigeria but who is not in Nigeria. Mechanisms to curb the bane of corrupt practices and other factors that cause hindrances to the development of the nation that have been proffered by her system of polity are abortive. Nigeria has practised presidential, military, diarchy and democracy; still the problems persist and the nation is not progressing in her administration. How will a nation develop talkless of sustaining her development when her politics and economics are grossly corrupt? Therefore, the mechanisms to transform the country from challenges of sustainable development via religious approach is examined in this work. It is examined that if a nation is peaceful and free from corruption, hoodlums of political and economic challenges that it can develop and sustain her development.

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### Historical Survey of Nigerian Polity in Retrospection

System of governance in Nigerian polity can be broadly divided into colonial and post-polity. Succinctly, in the history of Nigeria after her years of governance by the British. Three main political parties ran in the preparatory elections in 1959 (Egbosa, 2016 and Political Leadership in Nigeria, 2016). The National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) which had control of the Eastern Region (Igbo) led by Nnamdi Azikiwe the Northern People's Congress (NPC) which had control of the Northern Region (Hausa-Fulani), led by Ahmadu Bello and the Action Group (AG) which had control of the Western Region (Yoruba), led by Obafemi Awolowo. When no party won a majority during the 1959 elections, the NPC merged with the NCNC to form a government. Abubakar Balewa was made the Prime Minister when independence arrived in 1960, and Nnamdi Azikiwe was appointed Governor-General (Political Leadership in Nigeria, 2016 and Oluleye, 1985). Nigeria became a Republic in 1963, Nnamdi Azikiwe was elected President of the Federal Republic, and Balewa remained as Prime Minister. The NCNC split with the NPC and joined with a splinter of the Action Group led by Obafemi Awolowo to form the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) while the NPC led a coalition with

Akintola's faction of the old AG to form the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP).

In January of 1966, a coup d'etat was staged to overthrow the government. Members of the army. Tafawa Balewa, Bello, Akintola, and some senior officers were killed except Nnamdi Azikiwe who was outside the country at the time. Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi was placed in charge of the new military government (Boragadus, 1985 and Egbosa, 2016). Despite the fact the coup was a bloody one, the new government promised a progressive programme, a return to civilian rule determined by elections, and vowed to stamp out corruption and stop violence. This is so because, corruption has been identified as core of challenges of sustainable development since the dawn of the nation's system of administration. Aguiyi-Ironsi tried to restore discipline within the army, suspended the regional constitution, dissolved all legislative bodies, banned political parties and formed a centralized Federal Military Government. However, when Gowon moved to split the four existing regions into twelve states in 1967, Chukwuemeka Ojukwu, the leader of the Eastern Region refused to accept this and declared that the Eastern Region would become its own independent republic named Biafra. In June 1967, civil war broke out which lasted until Biafra surrendered in January of 1970 (Boragadus, 1985 and Egbosa, 2016).

In July of 1975, there was another military coup; for a change, Gowon was not killed. Murtala Muhammed took over, promising the continuation of the federal system of government with constitutional laws guaranteeing fundamental human rights, maximum democratic participation, and an orderly return to civilian rule. Plans were made to move the national capital from Lagos, but this became a tremendous drain on the economy. General Murtala Muhammed was also Killed on February (Achebe, 1983 and Dimka,2013).

From February 13, 1976 - September 30, 1979 was Olusegun Obasanjo's regime. In February 1976, there was an attempted coup by Buka Dimka, though it was unsuccessful. Olusegun Obasanjo was chosen to take the place of Muhammad Murtala. He was his vice. As the new ruler, he promised to continue what Muhammed Murtala had started. During his term, he raised University fees, and this led to student riots. The government banned student organisations, restricted public opposition to the regime, controlled union activity, nationalized land, and increased oil industry regulation. However, in 1978, a new constitution was written that would return the country to civilian rule, and elections were held in 1979 (P.M. News, 2016 and Egbosa, 2016). By October 1, 1979 - December 30, 1983 Shehu Shagari emerged the new civilian president in the 1979 elections. December 31, 1983 - August 27, 1985 General Muhammadu Buhari

became another military head of state. Another coup took place on December 31 1983, although this one was actually quite welcome at the time because many Nigerians felt that the nation had deteriorated into shameless corruption and economic mismanagement (Joseph, 1985). Shagari was placed under house arrest, and Muhammadu Buhari was named the new leader. Buhari set out to try to revive the economy, giving this priority over returning the country to civilian rule.

From August 27, 1985 - August 27, 1993 Ibrahim Babangida became another military head of state. Another coup took place on August 27, 1985. This time General Ibrahim Babangida (Buhari's chief of army staff before the coup) was named Chairman of the Federal Executive Council. Babangida claimed that the reason while he rebelled against Buhari was the insensitivity of the regime to the feelings of the Nigerian masses. He began his rule claiming to be a human rights activist. A new constitution was set up in 1990, and the country was to return to civilian rule in 1992. As the date approached, there were suspicions that this promise was not going to be kept. Pressure started mounting, and finally, in 1992, the Federal Council allowed an election to take place. However, the Babangida government annulled the results of that election, claiming fraud, and postponed additional elections for a year. Another election was held in June of 1993 and the winner was declared to be Moshood Abiola. Babangida claimed that the election was characterized by fraud. He (Babangida) annulled the results of the second election, which was believed to be the first fair election held in the history of Nigeria. Hundreds of protesters were killed in demonstrations, human rights and pro-democracy activists were arrested, and opposition newspapers were shut down. Internal and external pressure mounted, and finally on August 27, 1993, Babangida resigned. Ernest Shonekan, a civilian, was appointed an interim President in the history of Nigerian polity (Oluleye, 1985 and Egbosa, 2016).

From August 27, 1993 - November 17, 1993 Ernest Shonekan became an interim president. He ruled for the shortest period in the history, lasting less than three months. He was overthrown by General Sanni Abacha on November 17, 1993. Abacha is believed to have been instrumental in both the 1983 and the 1985 coups, and was Babangida's defense minister.

November 17, 1993 - June 8, 1998 marked the regime of General Sani Abacha . He promised to return the government to civilian rule within two years. In the meantime, he dismantled all elected institutions, terminated all national and state assemblies, closed independent publications, banned all political activities, and suspended the constitution. On March 1, 1995 there was another attempted coup by Lawan Gwadabe. Also suspected as part of this

coup were Olusegun Obasanjo and Shehu Musa Yar'Adua. They were sentenced to twenty-five (25) years of imprisonment for this. Yar'Adua died while in prison, and Obasanjo was there for the remainder of Abacha's life (Achebe, 2016 and Boragadus, 1985). On December 21, 1997, there was another attempted coup on the Abacha government by Oladipo Diya, the vice president to General Sanni Abacha, and he was imprisoned. In April of 1998, Diya and four other officers, and a civilian were sentenced to death while many others were sentenced to prison terms of varying lengths, but they were later free due to the death of Abacha. Elections to return to civilian rule were set for August 01, 1998, with a return date to civilian rule set for October 01, 1998. However, in April, Abacha became the only nominated candidate for the presidency. Opposition to his rule had been mounting more and more in recent months, because it was suspected that he did not intend to step down. Demonstrations and riots broke out, and many were killed. On June 08, 1998 Abacha died at the age of fifty-four (54). June 08, 1998 - May 29, 1999 after the demise of General Sanni Abach, General Abdulsalam Abubakar took his place, and set up a transition programme that would lead the country back to democracy by May 29, 1999. He fulfilled his promise and Nigeria was returned to civilian in the second phase since then till now.

Olusegun Obasanjo Obasanjo after the demise of Abacha was released from prison by General Abubakar, and was subsequently encouraged to run for president in the upcoming elections. After a series of primaries, Obasanjo was declared the new democratically elected president, and was inaugurated as the new civilian president on May 29, 1999. He ruled the nation for two years' tenure of democracy which are eight years (1999 – 2007). On 29 May 2007 - Umaru Musa Yar'Adua became another civilian government in the nation. The second President of Nigeria's forth Republic under the People's Democratic Party (PDP). He had once served as governor of Katsina State in northern Nigeria between May 29, 1999 and May 28, 2007. However by May 29, 2011 - 2015, Ebele Goodluck Jonathan emerged as the next civilian president. He was succeeded by Muhammad Bukhari, the present civilian government of the federation on May 29, 2015.

### **Concept of Religion, Islam and Christianity: An Overview**

Religion is of polysemous definitions. It is defined by many scholars in different perspectives. It is referred to as a "belief in, or the worship of, a god or gods" or the "service and worship of God or the supernatural". The sociologist, Durkheim (1915) defines religion as a "unified system of beliefs and practices related to sacred things". The origin of Religion is based on an idea of reality. It goes back to the beginning of

mankind which provides an explanation for the existence of itself as well as the world surrounding it.

Islam is an Arabic is derived from a word meaning peace. In the religious context, it means a complete submission to the will of God (Abdullah, 2000). 'Mohammedanism' is thus a misnomer because it suggests that Muslims worship Muhammad rather than God. 'Allah' is the Arabic name for God, which is used by Muslims. The religion of Islam is not named after a person as in the case of Buddhism which was named after Gotam Buddha, Confucianism after Confucius and Marxism after Karl Max. It was not named after a tribe like Judaism after the clan of Judah and Hinduism after the Hindus. Hence, Islam is the true religion of God (Almighty Allah) and as such, its name connotes the central principle of God (Bilal, 2005).

Islam is not a new religion, but the same truth that God revealed through all His prophets to every people. It is both a religion and a complete way of life. The message of Islam expresses the nature of God, who in Arabic is called Allah and it addresses itself to humanity's most profound nature. Islam shares with the other Abrahamic religions; their sacred history, the basic ethical teachings contained in the Ten Commandments and above all, belief in one God. It renews and repeats the true beliefs of Jews and Christians whose scriptures are mentioned as divinely revealed books in Islam's own sacred book, the Quran (Muhammad, 1990 and Abdullah, 2000). It is a religion with articles of faith based on the Islamic monotheism. This faith centres on the belief in one God; the Angels created by Him; prophets through whom His revelations were brought to mankind; the Day of Judgement and individual accountability for actions; in God's complete authority over human destiny and in life after death. Muslims believe in a chain of prophets starting with Adam including Nuh (Noah), Ibrahim (Abraham), Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Moses, Aaron, David, Solomon, Elias, Jonah, John the Baptist, and Jesus (Abubakar, 1994 and Abdullah, 2000). The Qura'n, the God's final message to man, a reconfirmation of the eternal message and a summing-up of all that has gone before was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad from Allah through the angel Jibril (Gabriel) (Abubakar, 1994). Islam possesses a religious law called the Shari'ah in Arabic which governs the life of Muslims and which is the embodiment of the Will of God. This Law caters for the needs of a society and its laws are essentially preventive and are not based on harsh Punishment.

Christianity is a divine religion. It is derived from the Ancient Greek word Khristos (U.M.C. 2007). "Christ", literally means "anointed one". It is a monotheistic religion based on the life and teachings of Jesus. Adherents of the Christian faith are known

as Christians. The religion teaches that Jesus is the Son of God, God having become human and the saviour of humanity. Christians commonly refer to Jesus as Christ or Messiah. The three largest groups in the world of Christianity are the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox churches, and the various denominations of Protestantism (Briggs, 2003 and Manners, 2007). The ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection are often referred to as the gospel, meaning "Good News". The term gospel also refers to written accounts of Jesus's life and teaching, four of which—the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John—are considered canonical and are included in the Bible.

### **Nigerian Governance and Sustainable Development: Challenges and Causes**

A number of factors constitute the challenges of Nigeria in her efforts towards the realization of its sustainable development. These problems have been persisting since her independence till date. The challenges can thus be broadly categorised into internal and external political challenges. While the internal ones are caused by leaders at the helm of affairs (both civilian and military), the external factors were caused by the British colonial masters. They explored all Nigerian mineral resources and used them in the development of their own region.

Nigeria is plagued by the crisis of Perverted religion, sectional and political upheavals. The consequences of the above are big challenges that hinder the growth and development of the country. Nigeria, a multi-religious and ethnic society, had experienced massive ethnic, sectional, religious and political violence that have led to grievous socio-economic and political consequences on the nature of the nation. The nation is blessed with natural resources, but since she got her independence in 1960 from the colonial masters, her major problem has been on mal-system of governance. This was constituted by her leaders at all levels of administration viz, federal, state and local governments. Causes of the bane of Nigerian political problems include: greed, bad governance, religious bigotry, electoral mal-practices and Boko Haram insurgency. Other factors include kidnapping, robbery, incessant terrorism, vandalism, oil theft and many other issues. These can be succinctly expressed below.

Corruption is at the root cause of many of Nigeria's problems in totality. Corruption takes many forms and infiltrates all political institutions and economic sectors. It is a persistent phenomenon in Nigeria. Nigerian is a country that corruption has become a cankerworm. It was a factor that led to the intervention of military into Nigerian politics. However, the military also followed the suits of corruption. Nigerian leaders in lieu of using the nation's natural resources for the development of the

country and her citizens are acquiring them for their personal needs. This makes the country and her citizens to continue living with poverty.

Nigeria's Biggest Problem that led to other challenges is corruption (Yusuf, 2016). Corruption is defined by scholars in many ways. It is a form of dishonest or unethical conduct by a person entrusted with a position of authority, often to acquire personal benefit. It includes many activities such as bribery and embezzlement. The worst of all is the government, or 'political corruption. This occurs when an office-holder or other governmental employee acts in an official capacity for personal gain. It is an action to secretly provide a good or a service to a third party so that he or she can influence certain actions which benefit the corrupt, a third party, or both in which the corrupt agent has authority. The concept of corruption include 'legal corruption' in which power is abused within the confines of the law as those with power often have the ability to make laws for their protection (Yusuf, 2016).

In governance, corruption is payment for services or material to which the recipient is not due, under law. This may be called bribery, kickback, or baksheesh. In general sense, corruption is highly related to materialistic tendencies due to real needs that are caused by desire to live beyond one's means, which tends to manifest in the desire to become distinguished by all means among one's peers. There are petty corruption - among a small number of people, grand corruption (among the government and political officials) and systemic corruption (everyday corruption). Petty corruption occurs at a smaller scale and takes place at the implementation end of public services when public officials meet the members of the public. Grand corruption is defined as corruption occurring at the highest levels of government in a way that requires significant subversion of the political, legal and economic systems. Such corruption is not only commonly found in countries with authoritarian or dictatorial governments but also in those without adequate policing of corruption. Systemic corruption (or endemic corruption) is corruption which is primarily due to the weaknesses of an organization or process. It can be contrasted with individual officials or agents who act corruptly within the system. Embezzlement of public funds is common. Many leaders have helped boost the economies of other nations by depositing embezzled money in foreign banks (Yusuf, 2016 and Temitayo, 2017). Thus, while other countries are advancing, Nigeria as a nation continues to wallow in the state of backwardness.

The blame is not only on the government but also on the entire citizens. This is a reason why it has become a culture in the nation. It is so entrenched that anyone that hopes to transact any business with the Nigerian

bureaucracy must take it into account. Indeed the situation is now so bad that even some government officials are alleged to bribe one another to get government business done (Yusuf, 2016). There are indications that many Nigerians, especially the politicians, retired civil servants, judges, and even generals in the army, are involved in corrupt practices. It has bedeviled Nigeria's political scene encompassing abuses by government officials such as embezzlement and nepotism, as well as abuses of public and private sectors through corrupt practices such as bribery, extortion, influence peddling, and fraud. This is highly addressed by Yusuf (2016) as he expresses:

Corruption in Nigeria has attained a level that the question that Nigerians should be asking is not 'who is corrupt'? but rather, 'who is not corrupt'? That this must be so is evident from the way many Nigerians today seem to live above their visible legitimate incomes (Yusuf, 2016). It is spread to the extent that the religious leaders who are expected to be free from corruption and instill sense of honesty, sincerity, truthfulness, integrity and candor to people are also corrupt. Corruption saturates all aspects of public life and the entire Nigerian society because of the general opinion and belief that public and private business and even religious matters cannot make progress without indulging in some corrupt practices.

A number of factors constitute factors that debar the efforts of Nigerian government on sustainable development. These could be summarized as Poor youth empowerment, poverty and unemployment. Greed has caused a lot of crises in the world, including Nigeria. It is because of greed that political leaders embezzle from the funds they are supposed to use for national development for their own selfish ends. Poor youth empowerment is another contributory factor to corruption. Internet fraud, sexual harassment by male and other bad acts are because Nigerians lack understanding on the importance of youth empowerment. When parents and governments empower youths both financially and morally, the level of corruption among them will diminish. Unemployment is a significant challenge in Nigeria. It has broken the hearts of many citizens. People are pushed into corrupt practice because of high level of unemployment. An unemployed citizen can be tempted to indulge in corruption to make money and live better (Onuba, 2015 and Business and Economy, 2016).

Consequences of corruption are many. These include Poor investment, rise in poverty, poor national development and incessant national crises. More so, the effect of corruption has resulted to insecurity. However, no investor will establish his resources in a country that is devoid of security like Nigeria. Any country with high corruption like Nigeria is likely to

experience developmental bankruptcy. When Nigerians keep on our commonwealth illegally to foreign countries, it will be so difficult to attain a level of sustainable development. The insecurity in Nigeria brought about by Boko Haram is a consequence of corruption. The attacks by Boko Haram have caused disorderliness in Nigeria and seriously affected the economy of the country. It has greatly repelled intending investors and by extension, affected the economic status of the country. However, any affected nation by economic recession sinks into loss of jobs, a decline in real income, a slowdown in industrial production, manufacturing and a slump in consumer spending.

Bad leadership is a major hindrance to the Nigerian development. Initially, every citizen of the country felt very happy that the country, "Federal Republic of Nigeria" is now free from the bondage of the selfish Britain that colonized them for many years. The independence then turn to sadness because of the type of leaders that hold the mantle of leadership in the nation's governance. The quest for power in Nigeria gave birth to the most remarkable political crisis in the country. Most of her political are self centred ones. By and large, the nation's concept of democracy is antithetical to the practice of democracy in other countries of the world. In lieu of benefitting from the dividends of democracy, the people are oppressed by the leader. The summary of the system is like survival of the fittest. While the politicians reap the goals of democracy, those that voted them to the power are living in abject poverty. How will a nation of this type of governance survive and develop? The growth and sustainability of a nation lies on the ruled and the rulers.

The leader of a nation determines the system of governance. While the ruled always cry of starvation and lack of basic amenities, the leaders are enriched by themselves from the wealth of the masses. The fundamental human rights are violated with reckless abandon and the accumulation of money in banks, at homes and abroad. While millions of Nigerians continue to starve and die. A number of them (leaders) have mansions not only in Nigeria and Africa but also in other parts of the world. This had been the cankerworm that has caused a lot of damages to the political as well as economic affairs of the nation. By and large, a nation cannot be grown unless her leaders are dynamic, patriotic and merciful to the masses.

Kidnapping is another challenge. High rate of kidnapping in the country increases always. It occurs everyday in the nation. It has now become business in all parts of federation. There are many cases of kidnapping and demanding for money before the kidnapped is released. Many had died in this cause on the hands of the kidnapers. These include that of the

Boko Haram, the abducted Chibok girls and many similar incidents of such. The worst of it is that the government has not been able tackle this insecurity.

**Electoral Mal-Practices:** Political corruption is a persistent phenomenon in Nigeria. There are cases of mismanagement of resources in all arms of the country's polity. There has never been any record of free and fair election in the country since her independence. The 1964 electoral crisis marked the watershed in the nation's political history. The political and electoral manipulation in the old western region escalated to other parts of Nigeria and led to a National crisis which eventually became part of the problems that culminated in the first military coup. Besides, it also led to the Nigerian Civil War. However, that of the June 12, 1983 that could be claimed as perfect election was turned-off by the then government of the federation. However, election serves as a feature of reviving the nation out of corruption by putting a dynamic leader into the power. In Nigeria, election is not by the choice of the masses but through the power of dictatorship.

**Greed and ostentatious lifestyles:** These are other challenges in Nigerian system of governance. The word "greed" has caused so many problems. Nigerian leaders irrespective of high salaries and incentives are still embezzling the public funds. This had been in the history of the nation since her inception. It was one of the major causes of military intervention into Nigerian politics. However, it is regretted that the military that overthrew the power based on the greediness on the part of the civilian rulers also joined the suits when gotten the power. Their own was even worse than the civilian they overthrew via coup. This does not only make Nigeria suffer a setback in her polity but also make her standard of living burdensome.

**Boko Haram Insurgency:** Nigeria is now characterised with many political and ethno-religious crisis in all her geo-political zones. The worst of this entire crisis is the Boko Haram which its genesis in the nation is multi-dimensional. The group has caused so many problems in the country. Statistics shows that Boko Haram has killed many Nigerians and this is because of the political corruption and other issues in the country. The Boko Haram insurgency emerged in Nigeria in the year 2007. These are men who have come together to destroy the leadership of the current administration yet no better impact has been made by the government to conquer them. This is a great burden for people to live peacefully in Nigeria.

**Incessant religious crisis:** Religion especially Islam and Christianity in Nigeria plays important role in politics of the country. It is hard for any aspiring president or governor in Nigeria to do without

alliance to the two principal religions. The reason is because the large numbers of citizens of the country are either in Islam or Christianity. As religion can make or mar a governance, most of the political crises especially in the Northern Nigeria are connected to religion and ethnicity. Many lives and property had equally been claimed due to this type of crisis. Southwest Nigeria is not an exception. There are also religious conflicts virtually in all administrations among the adherents of the two principal religions. Religious leaders are also among the causative agents of this conflict via the claim of superiority of religion over another and provocative sermons in mosques and churches.

Unemployment in another economic problem in Nigeria. Many graduates of the higher institutions graduate to jobless environment. They therefore depend on the little resources of those that work either as government officials or on entrepreneurship. Unemployment in Nigeria is like a disease that its cure is not yet discovered. According to official statistics, 24% of Nigerians are unemployed. This number is worse for young people. Official Nigerian statistics say 38% of those under 24years are unemployed, but the World Bank estimates this number to be closer to 80%. It is so sad to hear that the government which is set up to build the country, fight against any form of corruption and provide jobs to the graduate are not responsible to combat the situation (Onuba, 2015).

#### **Curbing the Challenges of Nigerian Sustainable Development via Islamic and Christianity Approaches: An Overview**

Islam proffers sustainable development as a measure towards the progress and advancement of a nation. It condemns all forms of corrupt practices via sustainable Economy. Once, the Economy is stable, all other forms of hindrances to the development will be solved. It therefore focuses on the standard economics of a nation as bed-rock for the smooth running of the governance. Islamic economy is built upon the real economy with agriculture and manufacturing the key sectors in the economy that generates wealth. It does not recognise the interest-based financial markets in their current form as seen in the west. Central government is saddled with the responsibilities to intervene in the economy in cases of misdistribution of wealth and to create the necessary environment where the basic needs of society can be fulfilled. Its principle of development includes development of human personality through education, continues sustain increase in national production, improvement of quality of life, provision of employment and evaluation of indigenous technology (Muhammad Sanusi, 2015). If the Economy of a nation is standard and devoid of injustice and corruption; other problems will be solved and the nation will grow and develop. The

Qur'an lays emphasis on justice and piety as the principles of economic progress of a society in her business and trade- activities. It also forbids usury, bribery, corruption and unlawful interest. These are obstacles to the development.

The first and most important economic principle in Islam is that all wealth belongs to Allah for He is the absolute owner, while man uses it in his capacity as His vicegerent. Other principles are to guarantee a sufficient amount for a decent living. As every member of the society establishes social justice and maintain economic equilibrium among all members of a society. Islam ensures respect for the private ownership of individuals and groups. It embodies the tenets which comprise the divine directives on economic and business transaction. They range from labour, debt, mortgage, taxation, state expenditure, spending and prices, scales and weights. All these are well analyzed in both the Qur'an and the traditions of the prophet. For instance Q2:275 expresses the Islamic perspective on forbiddance of usury as an element of corruption and a cause of economic instability or disintegration.

Islam provides a complete and simple economic system which is the alternative for both capitalism and socialism. It has the good things of both without sharing the evils. Its laws are divine and perfect in all aspects than that of man-made economic system. The revenues generated in Islam are used for the welfare and defense of the state. In peroration, this economic system speaks about the common interest of society like socialism without the rigid philosophy of common ownership. This is the primary duty of the Islamic state (Fakir, 2002 and Ahmad, 2002). It provides the basic necessities of life like food, clothing, shelter and education to every citizen living in the country.

In addition to the economic standard, Islam commands righteousness and forbids wrong doings and evil deeds. It commands all noble moral and forbids all ill and despicable behaviours. It is the complete guidance towards righteousness, and success. The most valued virtues of a man as portrayed in Islamic ethics include truthfulness, justice; helping the poor and the needy. Likewise, it prohibits blasphemy, murders, terrorism, oppression, injustice, enmity, misery, adultery, drug addiction, suicide and graft which are harbingers of corruption (Mat and Ismail, 2015). These are perfect guides to mankind and society of all ages, generations, races, and social strata and full of solutions to any kind of challenges including corruption of any kind such as the economic corruption, the root of other corrupt practices in Nigeria.

Islam forbids any injustice and all acts of corrupt activities. It obliges every individual to contribute to

his societal quota and work hand in hand towards the social advancement. By and large, it enjoins love of one another for the joint upliftment of the humanity. This is illustrated by many verses of the Quran such as the Quran 3:110 which reads:

You (true believers in Islamic Monotheism, and real followers of Prophet Mohammed and his Sunnah) are the best of communities ever raised up for mankind: you enjoin the good, forbid the evil, and believe in Allah...

Mechanisms towards the sustainable of a society are revealed by the above extract of the Qur'an viz, enjoining good, forbidding evils and having faith in Allah. These are first antidote to eradicate corruption. Islam identifies corruption as amoral and ethical problem of an individual. It thereby provides the ability to foster self-restrain through the knowledge of interpersonal relationship as ethical framework for human behaviour via justice, equity, honesty, fear of Allah, decency, moral values and accountability (Yusuf, 2016).

...give full measure and Full weight with equity and defraud not people of their things and Commit not inequity in the earth causing disorder. (Quran 11:85).

Additionally, Islam denounces any form of evils including corruption but promotes morality and justice for the betterment of mankind, rule of law, environmental balance, peace and harmony in the society. It as well focuses on promoting and enforcing a code of universal values which defines the relationship that humans have with Allah and all creations among which are justice and equity. These are to enhance not only human happiness but also to transform the society. Therefore, if good is enjoined, corruption will be shunned. If Nigerian leaders at all helms of affairs do good and forbid evil they will not embezzle funds or resources that are meant for the generality of the people or indulge in any other form of corruption. Islam condemns all sinful and unlawful accumulation of wealth. The Shariah does oblige Muslims to desist from illegal acts. This is highly emphasized in the philosophy of the religion as it says "The flesh that grows out of unlawful income has no place in the hereafter but hell (Muhsin, 2009)"

The religion provides a moral framework for fighting corruption in a society. Leaders in authority should remain conscious of Allah, whether in private or in public. The most fundamental characteristic of an individual is piety, humility and fear of Allah, the Creator. One must not only be virtuous but must also enjoin virtue and refrain from evil and vices. The ruler and the ruled are thus enjoined to be morally healthy and also to contribute to the moral health of the society. This is by establishing a corrupt-free society. Not only this, Islam calls upon every member

to behave in a just and ethical manner as a measure to sustainable development.

Fear of Allah should be the bed-rock of all leaders at all levels of administration (Yusuf, 2016 and Muhsin, 2009). This will enable them to do justice to all aspects of the administration politically, socially and economically. This is very paramount in every individual's life. If this is imbibed they would not steal or squander public resources entrusted to them. "...And whoever fears Allah He will make for him a way out. And will provide for him from where he does not expect. And whoever relies upon Allah- then he is sufficient for him. Indeed, Allah will accomplish His purpose. Allah has already set for everything a (decreed) extent" (Quran 65:2-3).

Other features of Islamic approach which can be adopted in curbing the menace of corruption include magnanimity and social justice. This is a core reason why Islam establishes the institution of Zakat and made it a very fundamental pillar of Islam. It also is a cornerstone of the Islamic socio-economic system. It is emphasized by the Quran as a critical component of socio-economic justice and sustainable development. Zakat works to ensure an equitable distribution of wealth and establishes a safety net for needy members of the society. Both the sources and disbursement categories of Zakat are specified in Islam (Qur'an 9: 60). One very positive economic effect of Zakat is an increase in the money supply and a consequent increase in the demand for goods and services. It as well provides debt relief and enhances price stability. Other significance of Zakat fund aids a society in times of depression or recession as it has been experienced in Nigeria today. Islam thus instills fear of Allah and provision of basic needs, necessities and protection of the weak or less privileged from the state resources.

Islam teaches that leaders are servants of their followers (Muhsin, 2009). They are recommended to seek for the welfare of their subjects and guide them towards what is good. The Prophet was reported to have declared that: "A ruler who has been entrusted with affairs of Muslims but makes no endeavour for their material and moral uplift and not sincerely concerned (for their welfare) will not enter paradise." Therefore, Islamic justice system demands transparent and honest leadership, restraining from evil, illegal enrichment or any other form of corrupt practices. It also emphasizes that mankind is the vicegerent of Allah on earth and is therefore accountable to Allah for their deeds and choices (Q2:30). Such responsibilities and accountability provide the motivation not only to abide by Islamic moral and ethical code but restrain mankind from any act of corrupt practices. It expresses this in a number of Ahadith such as:

Beware of bribery for verily it is a sheer infidelity, and the briber will not even smell the fragrance of paradise" (Muhsin, 2009)

According to a former governor of the central bank of Nigeria, Muhammad Sanusi Lamido (2015) establishment of Islamic Bank is a crucial solution to Nigerian economic backwardness and measure to its sustainable development. He thereby urged the federal government to introduce Islamic banking across the country. This will be another mechanism to the economy amid the effect of the decline in oil prices. The ex-governor buttressed his word that some countries in Africa and oversea have adopted the system of banking operation on their economic growth such as Britain, South Africa, Cote D'voire (Muhammad Sanusi, 2015). This will solve the problem of accumulation of wealth on a few people who are affluent in the nation. It will also pave way for economic growth and development due to interest free characteristic of the Islamic economic system. Hence, Nigerian government needs to rapidly find solutions to rescue the nation from its current economic recession. Many have lost their jobs while others are suffering severe hardship and dying and at risk of death and abject poverty.

It is highly imperative for the entire citizens to be patriotic and loyal to the nation. This is by contributing individual quota to the development of the nation. An example of this is by investing in the nation and patronize its products. Though this does not mean that the country should not involve in the import trade. The both, import and export rates are highly essential for the economic advancement of a nation. Youth empowerment is one of the ways with which Nigeria can also sustain her development. This is by giving the youth more opportunities to participate in the government, economy, and society. They (the youth) are the leaders of tomorrow. This is a reason why Islam lays emphasis on education of youth as the primary assignment of the parents. Young people are the prime beneficiaries of school improvement, and the percentage of youth in higher learning institutions is currently very high. If these measures especially Economy are implemented by the government, Nigeria would realise its dream towards her sustainable development.

In the same vein, corruption of all kinds is condemned in Christianity. This is due to its havoc to the society. It is emphasized in the Bible that corruption and other forms of related practices are detrimental to the growth and advancement of the society. This is a reason why such practices are forbidden in Christianity. As a measure to solve the problem of corrupt practices and others illicit acts, impartiality is forbidden in Christianity. This is comprehensively expressed in the new and old testaments (James 2:1,9; 1Tim. 5:21). Such as:

"God does not show favoritism--nor should believers."32 James 2:9 says, "But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors." This is a ratification of the Deuteronomy 1:17 command "you shall not show partiality in judgement; you shall hear the small and great alike. You shall not fear man for the judgement is God's."

The above exact from the Bible forbids injustice in society as the root cause of corruption and other vices such as bribery. If the society is free from injustice their will be peace and no room for corruption. By and large, the scripture thus enjoins individual and those in the helms of national affairs to imitate *God (Eph. 5:1) and not be partial or show favoritism. The God we are to imitate is "a judge ever vigilant, incorruptible, discriminating in no one's favour...* The both testaments establish a number of reasons to condemn bribery, corruption and injustice. The distortion of justice is one of the three reasons set forth in the Old Testament why bribery is wrong. Another reason why corruption should be condemned is because it undermines impartiality and it is a form of dishonest.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made as measures to tackle the challenges of Nigerian politics and governance as a measure of sustainable development:

- Government should ensure that the rights of every citizen is fulfilled according to the constitution of the nation,
- The politicians should be merciful to the needs of the masses.
- Academics should also not relent in their efforts on sensitizing the government on the reason why the rights of every citizen should be catered for in their administration.

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