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Religion, Leadership, And Sustainable Development In Africa: The Nigeria Experience

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Abstract:

Africa is the theatre of many different religious persuasions. Nigeria, as an African country, is known to be very religious. Although the country has no state religion, three religions are widely practiced and recognized namely: African Traditional Religion, Christianity, and Islam. Generally speaking, every citizen subscribes to one of these major religions. This paper argues that there is no observable commensurate development that accompanies such religious convictions in the area of good governance. This has resulted in the failure to harness the country's abundant human and natural resources into meaningful developmental projects. By examining the various teachings of Christianity and Islam in relation to leadership and governance, this work evaluates the performances of Nigerian leaders in the light of their religious persuasions. The researcher employed phenomenology in the presentation of the religious tenets; historical methods to account for various activities that negatively or otherwise impacted sustainable development of the country; and participatory- observation method to present personal observations and experiences of the researcher as a citizen of Nigeria. The paper discovered that situations could change for the better if the leaders and the led would follow the religious guidelines for successful leadership as exemplified in Christian and Islamic religion respectively. The work therefore concluded that for sustainable development, leadership qualities as taught by these two religions must be imbibed and incorporated into the acts of governance. It asserts that credible leadership will enhance sustainable development.

Key words: Religion, Leadership, Development, and Tenets

1.Introduction

Nigeria, like many other African countries, is popular for religious activities. The majority of the citizens is either adherents of Christianity, Islam, or Africa Traditional Religion. Places of worship for various religions are found in nooks and crannies of many Nigerian cities, towns and villages while billions of Naira is spent annually on religious pilgrimages. All these are evidences to support the fact that Nigerians are religious. However, there are no observable correlations between the apparent religiosity and the qualities of governance and developments in the country. The focus of this paper is to challenge the leaders to live by the moral convictions and leadership principles of their respective religions. The paper therefore presents such religious teachings and leadership principles from the perspectives of both Christian and Islamic religions.

2.Sources Of Guiding Principles

From an Islamic perspective, the guiding principles for leadership are derived from: The Qur'an, the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.), the practices of his companions, as well as those of the first Caliphs. For the Muslims, Al-Qur'an was revealed and authored by Allah with universal application and eternal relevance. It therefore serves as the primary source. The Prophet's Sunnah (written and narrated as Hadith), consists of his deeds, sayings and personality. The record also includes those of his companions which he tacitly approved. The first four Caliphs, Abu Bakr, Umar, Othman and Ali, were also regarded as ideal leaders who based their leadership on the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet.ⁱ For Christians, the Holy Bible is the final authority design to teach, correct, rebuke, and lead humanity in the path of righteousness – 2Timothy 3:16, 17. It provides records for men and women of faith in different capacities and the perfect examples from the life of Jesus Christ.

3.Leadership: A Necessity

Generally speaking, leadership is indispensable in any organization. The necessity is made plain by Prophet Mohammed when he declared that: "It is not permissible for three being in an open land, to stay without a leader from among themselves" (Al Musnad).ⁱⁱ Commenting on the necessity for leadership and its link with organizational success a source explains that:

Leadership is a great quality and every great organizational success besides other factors owes its credit to the leader who led it to glory. Small groups, families, organizations, states, empires and even the world at large need good leaders who can lead their respective followers and organizations to success. Every human endeavour needs a unifying and driving force for success and that driving force is ultimately traced to good leadership. It is also worth noting that every one of us in some capacity, sometimes, or somewhere is a leader. Leadership should not be confused with the role of only those who make headlines but in essence almost everyone have sometimes somewhere, somehow played a leading role.ⁱⁱⁱ

Considering it from another dimension, White sheds light on the need for a leader to recognize the fact that leadership is a trust. She puts it this way: "One of the deplorable things upon the earth is the fact that there are passionate governors and unjust judges. They forget that they are under the authority of the great Governor, the all-wise God, and that He is above every ruler, prince, governor, or king."^{iv} It is also the responsibility of a good leader to see to the welfare of those who entrusted him with a leadership position. Such responsibilities, according to Linga et al., include "delivery of basic services, providing equal access to health and education, promotion of an environment where one can practice one's faith without threat to personal safety, among others."^v

This was taken a step further when prophet Mohammed asserted that everyone is a leader in one way or the other. The detail is provided in the following hadith narrated by Ibn Umar where the Prophet said:

Beware, every one of you is a shepherd and everyone is answerable with regard to his flock. The Caliph is a shepherd over the people and shall be questioned about his subjects (as to how he conducted their affairs). A man is a guardian over the members of his family and shall be questioned about them (as to how he looked after their physical and moral well-being). A woman is a guardian over the household of her husband and his children and shall be questioned about them (as to how she managed the household and brought up the children). A slave is a guardian over the property of his master and shall be questioned about it (as to how he safeguarded his trust). Beware, every one of you is a guardian and every one of you shall be questioned with regard to his trust." (Muslim)^{vi}

4. Religious Duties

As earlier stated, Nigerians are very religious. So, it is not out of order that a work like this attempts to call the attention of the leaders to the teachings of their sacred books to see how we are faring in leadership. Islamic scholars, Lingga, et al., observed that one who claims to be religious should demonstrate it in good deeds as it is a contradiction to do otherwise. According to them:

This is the whole Din (religion) because the Din is either an order to do something or not to do something. Enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil changes societies, shapes them and makes them distinctive. The corrupted society is infested with the Munkar (evil) and ruled by the evildoers even when the society is not devoid of good and good doers who enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil. The society that walks on the Straight Path is the society of Ma'ruf, ruled by the good doers even if the society is not devoid of evil and the evildoers.^{vii}

This fact is also made plain in the Bible. Similarly, James 1:26-27 explains:

If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless. ²⁷ Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. (James 1:26-27, emphasis supplied).

Commenting on the above passage, a source says:

"(Through inspiration,) James condemns those who claim to be religious but do not concern themselves with putting their beliefs into practice.... Without action, good doctrine is useless. Pure religion shows itself in behaviour."^{viii} Another source comments on 2 Timothy 3:16, 17 earlier referred to that "our knowledge of God's word is not useful unless it strengthens our faith and leads us to do good."^{ix}

5. Democratic Governance

It is a common knowledge that governance under military dictatorship is not as favourable as a democratic system of government. One major reason why the latter is considered to be ideal lies in the fact that it affords the governed the opportunity, though through representation, to be part of the government. No wonder why African states usually join hands together to force military juntas to hand over power to democratically elected leadership whenever the former forcefully take over leadership. Ideally, democracy does not permit a leader to have his ways without recourse to the opinions of the people. For example, the executive, legislative and judiciary work together at the federal level in Nigeria. In this way, crucial actions that can affect the development of the community cannot be single-handedly taken by the president without the approval of the Senate and the House of Representatives. Issues are therefore subjected to critical debate to consider its merits and demerits of such action vis-à-vis the welfare of the citizens. It is the role of the judiciary to see to the legality or otherwise of any action if consensus cannot be reached between the executive and the legislators. The same pattern is followed down to the other two tiers of government at the state and the local government. A nation that practices this form of government as expected will be able to develop and sustain such development levels.

From an Islamic viewpoint, the system of government described above is similar to the system of government adopted by the Prophet Mohammed and the first four caliphs. Then, the ummah was governed through Shura (consultation) and Ijina (consensus)^x

Commenting on this form of leadership, Islamic scholars explained:

Shura is a kind of open dialogue, and this dialogue is one of the best means by which to create an informed and enlightened public and to reinforce the bonds of love and confidence between the governor and the governed. As such, it is one of the best ways for a ruler to do away with doubts, misgivings and delusions and to put a stop to rumours which tend to rise and spread under tyrannical regimes and in the darkness of demagogy and oppression.

Based on the principle of Islam, each individual feels that he/she has a role to play in the life of the community and society, and shura provides opportunities to such individual to offer whatever he is capable of by way of efforts, ideas, opinions and skills for the good of society.^{xi}

It is a reality that the quality of advice given to a leader during consultation depends largely on the type of people that make up the body. According to Linga et al, qualifications of the members to serve in this body should include: piety, moral soundness, wisdom and sound judgment.

In connection with shura, Allah orders the Prophet thus:

It was by the mercy of Allah that thou were lenient with them (O Muhammad), for if thou had been stern and fierce of heart they would have dispersed from round about thee. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult with them upon the conduct of affairs. And when thou art resolved, then put thy trust in Allah. Lo! Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him).” (Qur’an 3:159, emphasis supplied.)

Those who hearken to their Lord, and establish regular Prayer; who (conduct) their affairs by mutual Consultation; who spend out of what We bestow on them for Sustenance. (Qur’an 42:38, emphasis supplied).

In obedience to the above injunctions, Prophet Mohammed practiced consultations with his companions in almost all crucial matters. A source records the following instances:

*Abu Hurayra (r.a) said : “I have not seen anyone more willing to consult others than the Messenger of Allah’s consultation of his companions.”(Tirmidhi)

*The Messenger (s.a.w.) said to Abu Bakr and ‘Umar (r.a) : “If both of you agree with me on a consultation, I will not go against you.”(Sunnan Ahmad)

*During the battle of Badr the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) sought the consultation of his companions regarding the strategic placement of the army. Al-Mundhir Ibn ‘Amr asked the Prophet (s.a.w.), “O Messenger of Allah. Has Allah inspired you to choose this spot in which we have no say or is it an opinion, war and strategy? The Prophet (s.a.w.) replied: “It is a matter of opinion, war and strategy.” So he (al-Mundhir said): “O Messenger of Allah. This is not a good spot.” Then he pointed to another place. Taking on the advice of al-Mundhir Ibn ‘Amr and other companions, the Holy Prophet decided to alter his strategy and set up camp at a different location.

*The Messenger (s.a.w.), on the Battle of Uhud, brought together the people of opinion, those amongst the Muslims and those outwardly exhibiting their profession of Islam and made them consult each other whether they should fortify Madina and force the Quraysh to stay outside, or go out and confront the enemy outside Madina.^{xii}

For a meaningful development and its sustenance, the followers or citizenry must not be passive when it comes to the national and public affairs. A good leader should welcome constructive criticism and be willing to accept corrections when mistakes are made. However, these should be done politely, in the spirit of humility and sincere love. A good example of such attitudes from both sides can be illustrated with the experience of Caliph Omar. There was a time when the Caliph was fixing the amount of money to be paid as dowry for marriage. Because the stated amount was not in agreement with the Islamic injunction, a woman opposed the leader’s statement by saying,

"O Omar, fear God." When the Caliph heard this and listened to her Qur’an-based explanation, he said: “The lady is right and the leader of the Muslims (himself) is wrong." (Ibn Hajar)^{xiii}

The role here can also be compared with that of social critics and human rights organizations and so on. Such is sometimes indispensable in a democratic governance to serve as watchdogs to excessive use and abuse of power.

6. Security Situation

One major problem plaguing many African countries is that of security. The insecurity comes in various forms and affects many sectors of the national economy. This is particularly true of Nigeria where the lives of many prominent men and women who could have made meaningful contributions to national development had been cut short. Some of these innocent lives were claimed through political assassinations. These horrific murder cases are usually masterminded by political opponents using political thugs. What worsens the situation in the case of Nigeria is the fact that hardly has any perpetrator of such heinous crimes being discovered or brought to book. As a result of this, political assassination has become a recurring decimal in Nigeria. Some of the victims include:

Dr. Ayo Daramola from Ekiti State in 2003, a gubernatorial aspirant; Alhaji Sulaiman Olajokun, a Lagos based business man on May 15, 2005; Alhaji Lateef in Ibadan, July 16, 2005; Engineer Funso Williams, July 27, 2006; Chief Bola Ige, Minister of Justice and the Attorney general of Nigeria, December 23, 2001; Mrs Emily Omope (aka Thatcher), an AD Member who was attacked with acid and died afterwards on March 3, 2003; Mr. Audio Olagbaju, Dec 19, 2001; and Otunba Dipo Dina in 2010 etc.^{xiv}

Insecurity of lives and properties resulting from assassination, kidnapping, and armed robbery especially among the political leaders in the southern part of Nigeria, has led many to occultism. Here, political office seekers and holders armed themselves with both defensive and offensive charms. Others voluntarily or reluctantly take oath of allegiance to their political godfathers and sponsors in shrines to remain loyal and submissive when voted into an office. The biblical injunction however is that ultimate security – for individual, community, or nation – comes from God. For instance, in Psalm 127:1, the Bible says: “except the Lord God watches over us, human effort, to protect himself or promised protection by any other than God is futile”. Chapter one hundred and twenty-one of the same book metaphorically presents God as a watchman or chief security officer who neither sleeps nor slumbers. It is that a nation whose leaders abandoned God to seek for protection elsewhere can hardly experience true development.

In the Northern part of Nigeria, factors militating against social security are politically, religiously and ethnically motivated. In Plateau State, for instance, land dispute, power and resources control between the predominantly Christian indigenes Berom/Anaguta/ Afizere and the predominantly Muslim settlers Hausa/Fulani had claimed many lives and destroyed valuable properties.^{xv} In other states like Bornu, Kaduna, and so on, the mayhem is championed by the Islamic sect called Boko Haram. The

actual number of lives claimed by this insurgency can hardly be determined. At the peak these attacks, the Federal Government was forced to declare a state of emergency in order to bring the ugly situations under control. In each of these cases, the allegations have always been that the insurgents were secretly sponsored by the leaders in the respective areas.

There is no doubt that the worrisome security situation in Nigeria is forcing many existing industries to fold up and scaring away both domestic and foreign investors. This, in turn, aggravates the terrible state of unemployment in the country. Under this situation, tangible new development cannot be experienced and sustaining the existing ones is practically difficult. This becomes so obvious as many investors are relocating to neighbouring countries where they believe they are more secure.

7. Corrupt Practices

Corruption has eaten so deeply into every arm of our national governance. The more the leaders claim to fight the enigma, the worse the situation becomes. The sad thing is that, the judiciary and the law enforcement agencies (especially the police), whose major roles are to curb the menace are alleged to be part of this rottenness.^{xvi} Many criminal and political cases that are begging for legal redress remain inconclusive in many of Nigerian courts. According to Ado, "Once in a while, one hears stories about how politicians sent emissaries to Judges in our special Tribunal with warts of notes to influence judgments in their favour on election matters."^{xvii}

The following is drawn from Islamic perspectives in relation to justice.

"O you who believe! Stand out firmly for God as witnesses to fair dealing and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. ..." (Al-Ma'idah 5: 8)

The need to achieve a balance and to take the middle road is quite important in a leader. This is stressed repeatedly by God in the Quran. He describes those "who will be rewarded with the highest place in heaven" as:

"Those who, when they spend, are not extravagant and not niggardly, but hold a just (balance) between those two extremes; ..." (Al-Furqan 25: 67-8)

From biblical accounts, an exemplary and God-fearing leader, Nehemiah, also sacrificed even what one may call his right as a Governor in his ways of dealing with corruption and oppression in his time. He is remembered as a leader who passionately sought for the welfare of his people and the development of the region under his care. The great leader, puts it this way:

Moreover, from the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, until his thirty-second year-- twelve years-- neither I nor my brothers ate the food allotted to the governor.¹⁵ But the earlier governors-- those preceding me-- placed a heavy burden on the people and took forty shekels of silver from them in addition to food and wine. Their assistants also lorded it over the people. But out of reverence for God I did not act like that.¹⁶ Instead, I devoted myself to the work on this wall. All my men were assembled there for the work; we did not acquire any land.¹⁷ Furthermore, a hundred and fifty Jews and officials ate at my table, as well as those who came to us from the surrounding nations.¹⁸ Each day one ox, six choice sheep and some poultry were prepared for me, and every ten days an abundant supply of wine of all kinds. In spite of all this, I never demanded the food allotted to the governor, because the demands were heavy on these people. (Nehemiah 5:14-18, emphases supplied).

What a leader!

Corruption also manifests itself in the form of injustice. The issue must also be addressed for sustainable development. The principle of justice must be observed by all — leaders and followers alike. In this respect, God admonishes Muslims thus:

God does command you to render back your trusts to those to whom they are due; and when you judge between man and man that you judge with justice ... (An-Nisa' 4: 58)

In Romans 13:3-4, the Bible explains that leaders (rulers) are to uphold justice and oppose evil as God's representatives. Commenting on the roles of such public office holders from a Christian perspective as enunciated in the above text, Ellen Gold White says:

It is for their good that they faithfully follow the plain "thus saith the Lord", keeping the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment. They are to exercise their powers without partiality and without hypocrisy, refusing to be bought or sold, scorning all bribes and standing in moral independence and dignity before God. They are not to connive at one act of dishonesty and injustice.... and not to act in such a way that God cannot ratify their judgment in the court of heaven.^{xviii}

Development and its sustenance may be a pipe dream in a nation where corrupt acts and their perpetrators are handled with kid gloves. The Bible explicitly denounces injustice in the following passages:

This is what the LORD says: "Maintain justice and do what is right, for my salvation is close at hand and my righteousness will soon be revealed. (Isaiah 56:1).

¹⁴ So justice is driven back, and righteousness stands at a distance; truth has stumbled in the streets, honesty cannot enter. ¹⁵ Truth is nowhere to be found, and whoever shuns evil becomes a prey. The LORD looked and was displeased that there was no justice. (Isaiah 59:14-15).

8. Ethnicity

The challenge posed by ethnicity to the development of Nigeria cannot be over emphasized. The fact is that, the country consists of different ethnic groups each of which desires to hold leadership position. Various approaches had been adopted to resolve the enemy of unity called marginalisation, ranging from Federal Character to Zoning System, all to no avail. In situations like this; one becomes a leader (holding a political office) not because he/she has leadership attributes but because it is the "turn" of his people to produce a leader. The current trend is that, if a particular ethnic group or zone is not leading at the state or federal level there is the danger to foment trouble and make things difficult for the one governing. This has caused and still causing insecurity in different parts of Nigeria. Gone are the days when we stand in brotherhood in spite of differences in tribes and tongues as enshrined in the old National Anthem. Little wonder then that "a nation bind in freedom, peace and unity" as enunciated in the current national anthem is becoming

a mere wishful thinking. The development of our nation will be better if we jointly elect leaders that can deliver, irrespective of their ethnic affiliation or zone.

Addressing similar issue, a hadith of Prophet Mohammed narrated by Anas and in the collection of Bukhari declared:

“Hear and obey though a negro whose head is like a raisins is appointed (to rule over you)”. (B10:54)

Another version of the hadith in the collection of Muslim rendered it, “a negro slave” (M17). This implies that even if the one leading is a slave, the prophet instructed he should be obeyed.^{xix}

9. Unfulfilled Promises

Like many other countries where democracy is practiced, leaders in political offices are usually elected by vote. The common practice is for these would-be leaders to go round to the electorates with electoral manifestoes which may be that of their party and/or that of their particular incoming government. In periods like these, wonderful promises were made in order to secure the votes of the electorates. Such promises may include but not limited to: free education, free health services, good road networks, pipe-born water, job opportunities and new salary scales. As soon as they secure the desired offices, the political leaders often fence out the electorates and sometimes shift their bases to the state or federal capital as the case may be. It then becomes difficult for the masses who voted them in to reach their leaders talk less of fulfilling the electoral promises. In some cases, the electorates feeling cheated and deceived, may decide to wait for another period of election to work against such leaders who renege or in extreme cases, kidnap some of their relations or dependants and force such leaders to pay huge amount of money as ransom. Some of them may even go to the extent of including the promised ‘benefits’ in their budgets but the implementation may never see the light of day. In a similar case, when a leader was once accused of including unimplemented projects in his budgets, he referred to budgets as ‘statements of intention!’ Since by experience electorates have learnt their lessons that the leaders will always fail them and limit the so-called dividend of democracy to their close associates and relations after the election, they either make heavy demands before they cast their votes or support their own trusted person. These leads to money politics and political ‘godfatherism’. At the end, those elected may not be the standard-bearers but those who can play the political games.

From Islamic point of view, Allah in the Qur’an declares:

“O you who believe! Fulfil (all) obligations.” (Al-Ma’idah 5: 1)

By implication, it is a contraction for one to claim to believe but refuses to keep promises – in this case, electoral promises. Since those who get to power are not determined by their qualities and integrities, what development can be made or sustained by them? A dishonest leader cannot make meaningful contributions to the development of a nation. An author has this to say about an honest leader:

Leaders are considered honest to the extent that there is ‘consistency between word and deed.’ They do what they say they are going to do. In the Quran, the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) is himself labelled as “strong and trustworthy” by one of the damsels (as in chapter 28: 26) and the Prophet Joseph (peace be upon him) is described as one who is truthful. (Chapter 12: 46) Similarly, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) used to be called Sadiq (the truthful) and Amin (the trustworthy) during his youth.^{xx}

10. Workers’ Salaries

It is the responsibility of the leaders to pay reasonable salaries for those serving under them. It is a common knowledge that one major cause of industrial action or strike in Nigeria is the problem of salaries. There were instances when the Federal Government announced an increase in salaries but it took months or even years before some states complied. Even where they payments are made, the salaries are not usually paid as at when due. This is true of the minimum wage of N18, 000 announced years ago by the government in Nigeria. Since workers make their purchases in the same market, they are usually headed-bend on collecting their dues from the government. The strike appears to be the most effective way of forcing the leaders to meet their demand. It can be argued that workers who are denied their dues would be tempted to receive bribes and embezzle money. Not until the Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Abubakar, outlawed roadblocks, it was generally believed that the deplorable conditions of our so-called law enforcement agents, especially the Police, were responsible for the unfathomable corruption in the sector. This heightened the level of criminality and insecurity in the country. Sustainable development may be a daylight dream for a government that is surrounded by unhappy work force.

Our leaders should learn from Caliph Omar Ibn Al-Khattab who did everything possible to pay high salaries to the state workers of his days. Thus, he ensured that “they would not get tempted by bribes. By treating his appointees equitably, Omar became one of the most outstanding Islamic leaders.”^{xxi}

From the Christian perspective, God decried making life difficult for workers by denying them prompt salary payments. For instance, the Bible says:

So I will come near to you for judgment. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud labourers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive aliens of justice, but do not fear me, says the LORD Almighty. (Malachi 3:5, emphasis supplied).

Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house. (Luke 10:7, emphasis supplied).

“For the Scripture says, “Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain,” and “The worker deserves his wages.” (1 Timothy 5:18, emphasis supplied).

11. What The Future Holds

The attempt in this paper will not be balanced without pointing out some rays of light that signify a brighter future development for the nation. For instance, the issue of corruption among the law enforcement agents is being tackled among the Nigerian Police. According to Karl Tsokar and John Okeke, Force disciplinary committee (FCD) represented by its chairman, Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) in charge of administration, Suleiman Fakia, said at a press conference on Monday July 8, 2013 that 195 police officers are facing the discipline. According to him, about 13 others had been dismissed on the basis of professional misconduct. Some others were compulsorily dismissed or demoted in the last one year. The committee is to make appropriate recommendations to the police service commission.^{xxii}

The challenge of epileptic electricity supply had been a great obstacle to the economic development of the nation. Billions of Naira that had pumped into the sector to improve the situation did not yield any positive result. The problem is not unconnected with the corrupt practices of concerned leaders. The federal government's effort to reform the electricity sector, through privatization, however, received a boost as many of the bidders for the PHCN had met the August 21, 2013 deadline for the payment schedule.^{xxiii} Commenting on the breakthrough, the Minister of Power, Professor Chinedu Nebo declares that "this shows that the NESI (Nigeria's Electricity Supply Industry) is going in for a big explosion."^{xxiv}

Some of the national issues highlighted in this paper had forced many industries to fold up and further compounded the problem of unemployment. Efforts are being made to resuscitate some of the ailing industries. In this direction, the plan to reopen the Arewa Textiles Limited in Kaduna after ten years of closure, will soon be materialized having entered into a refinancing deal with the Bank of Industry. The textile industries discontinued production ten years ago for its inability to meet any financial commitments including workers' salaries. According to Akhaine, "the reopening of production at the facility may signal the long awaited revival of the nation's ailing textile manufacturing sub-sector."^{xxv}

There are some other developments that are coming up, however, sustaining them may remain the sole challenge until, in line with this paper, there are changes in the mind-set of those in the corridors of power.

12. Summary And Conclusion

From the foregoing, the paper has attempted to call the attention of leaders at various levels, in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular, to leadership principles as enshrined in both Christian and Islamic sacred texts. It pointed out that since everyone is a leader in one way or the other, each person needs to put into practice his/her religion in a way that will support the sustainability of the national development. A specific national issues that can hamper lasting development such as the problems of corruption, insecurity, ethnicity, injustice, among others, were dealt with. It also mentioned some new developments that suggest possible positive future regenerative changes. It is necessary to state that a person's religion is worthless if it has no positive reflection on his/her daily life. Surely, if the leaders and the 'led' would live by the moral teachings of their respective religions, enduring sustainability of meaningful development is guaranteed.

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