

Religion, Corruption and Economy: The Problem of Nigeria in this 21st Century

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Abstract

Religion and society are intertwining potent families that should marry an acceptable moral norms and values capable of enhancing and promoting stability in the global society. By virtue of this supposedly compatible alliance, corruption and abuse of nation's economy would have been a thing of history in Nigeria. The religious crisis, corruption and economic recession still loom in the very centre of government functionaries and have paralysed national development, is a reason of concern for this paper in that direction. This study adopted historical and descriptive methods to achieve its success; textbooks, Journals and internet exploration to enable critical analyses of the ethical aberration of corruption and economic bedevilment seen in the mist of religiosity which permeate the Nigerian society. The paper recommends that religious leaders should go deeper in teaching their adherents to imbibe moral standards to face the challenges and vices which have bartered the integrity and economy of Nigeria. On the side of government, the paper further encourages that adequate screening be conducted before any religion will be allowed to operate in Nigeria.

Keywords

Religion, Corruption, Economy, Society, Development, Education and Ethics

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1. Introduction

This study examines the nature of religion, corruption and economy: the problem of Nigeria in the 21st century. Religion, in the real sense of it, is “one of the most important institutions” (Asu, 2011) to reconstruct the corrupt humanity whose original nature was deprived of the divine privileges in the society meant by his Creator. The sacred books in religion have the moral codes to correct the imported vices in man after sin had invaded the righteous environment. The worries of all Nigerians is that religion has failed or dashed their hope in her inability to combating vices buried in the very marrow of the nation's central nature and system of its society.

The worst of it all boils down that religious leaders are into

materialism and pursuing wealth instead of propagating the message of hope to correct vices which has eaten deep to very marrow of the nation's blood stream. This has led to the gospel of corruption which has taken multi-dimensional approach. Corruption in Nigeria has grown to be the tallest ‘tree’ with diverse branches. The branches range from Kick-back, lobby, Obtaining by Tricks (OBT, 419), wise pen, ghost-workers, police and check point contributions from cyclists, motorists, illegal fire arms trafficking and incessant killings of innocent citizens unabated. Yet same arms trafficking could be allowed through check points and so on depending on the status of the trafficker in Nigerian government. The pioneers of “419” Obtaining By Tricks (OBT) were extravagant enough to attract recognition and admiration of a greater population of the people (Nwazonobi, 2016: 336) and likewise those involved in corruption live

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flamboyant lives; money laundering as well as invest their ill-gotten money abroad instead of investing them in Nigeria.

The government has invented another method of corruption by exchange of Boko Haram members for the release of Chibok girls and paying lip service to the terrorist activities of the Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria. The war against Boko Haram will not end because of corruption in the army and among the officers. The Northern states of Nigeria are the hub of crises in time and space (Nwazonobi 2015: 68); it continues in earnest whenever there is a northern president as experience in this political dispensation.

Corruption is undoubtedly a spiritual disease of the mind and the mind thereby manifests in many characteristics, thus bringing evils such as “all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful” (Rom.1:29-31). The scriptures attribute these vices to a corrupt ‘tree’ as an allegory of man metaphorically. Taking a close look on Christian religion, it has become imperative that the prevalent corruption in our Nigeria society is to be blamed because of the failure of Christianity to correct the vices in the society. Christianity has rather gone deep into establishing ritualistic and even commercialises “churches” where corruption conceives and promotes various kinds of vices daily instead of eradicating them from the society.

Islamic religion has not fared better in Nigeria as they take their turns in act of corruption and economic sabotage. But it seems the bone of contention is obviously on the faulty interpretations and explanations of thought, intellectual circumstances which set bounds to thought, a curious mixture of positivism, evolutionism, and the remains of a sentimental religiosity (Nwazonobi 2015: 65). The paper therefore, focuses attention in this direction and examines religion and its indispensable functions in human society and culture viewing its positive and negative impacts and consequences.

The paper, therefore, adopts investigative historical and descriptive method to explore into internet, texts books and personal experience encountered in life. To this end, our discourse includes conceptual clarity: a preview, religion and society in Nigeria, religion and corruption in Nigeria, religion and economy in Nigeria with suggestion and ways to challenge religion to play its role by inculcating and promoting acceptable right values and giving high spiritual standards to her adherents. Also on the side of government to issue license to only worthy churches with high morality and integrity to save the image and the intention of religion. This would bring about correcting also and eventual stability of

the economy in Nigerian society. We encourage religious ethics that further promotes the fear of the Unseen and Designer whose intention was to create man in his “own image and likeness”.

The conclusion of this study allows further study to contribute for the health of humanity, imbibe right values towards economy and the eradication or at least minimise corruption in Nigeria. The concern in this discourse, therefore, focuses on the way forward to save Nigeria from total collapse.

2. Conceptual Clarity: A Preview on Religion, Corruption and Economy

We are aware of intellectual efforts of scholars have so far made to reach an acceptable definitions of religion; corruption and economy but these have proven a futile exercise. This, of course, applies to all fields of discipline and such intellectual struggle ends only when each scholar may be caught by inevitable death. More so, the contemporary society today faces multiplication of religions; corruption in all spheres of life and a dwindling economy with different teeth of faith or beliefs practices and principles.

2.1. Religion

“Marxism and religion” (2017), The nineteenth-century German thinker Karl Marx, the founder and primary theorist of Marxism, had an antithetical and complex attitude to religion, viewing it primarily as “the soul of soulless conditions”, the “opium of the people” that had been useful to the ruling classes since it gave the working classes false hope for millennia. At the same time Marx saw religion as a form of protest by the working classes against their poor economic conditions and their alienation as it is the case in Nigeria today.

Eggers (2015) emphasizes on Marx and Engel’s ideas of religion. For Fredrick Engels, all religion, however, is nothing but the fantastic reflection in men’s minds of those external forces which control their daily life, a reflection in which the terrestrial forces assume the form of supernatural forces. “All religious bodies without exception are to be treated by the state as private associations. They are not to receive support from public funds or exercise any influence over public education.” The reverse is the case in Nigeria and where religion controls all spheres of life.

For Idowu (1973), religion results from man’s spontaneous awareness of and spontaneous reaction to, his immediate awareness of a living power, ‘wholly other’ and infinitely greater than himself, a power mysterious because unseen, yet

a present and urgent reality, seeking to bring man into communion with himself. This awareness includes that of something reaching out from the depths of man's being for close communion with, and vital relationship to this power as a source of life.

Religion according to Okoro, Edward (2012) possesses powerful influence in various "dimensions of human experience that hardly is any aspect of man's earthly life that is left untouched by it"

2.2. Corruption

OECD Observer (2017) observes that, the United Nations definition of Corruption as enshrined in the UN Convention covers embezzlement, misappropriation of property and obstruction of justice.

"The United Nations Convention against Corruption" 'UNCAC' (2012) is a multilateral treaty negotiated by member states of the United Nations (UN) and promoted by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). UNCAC's goal is to reduce various types of corruption that can occur across country borders, such as trading in influence and abuse of power, as well as corruption in the private sector, such as embezzlement and money laundering. Another goal of the UNCAC is to strengthen international law enforcement and judicial cooperation between countries by providing effective legal mechanisms for international asset recovery. UNCAC covers five main areas: preventive measures, criminalization and law enforcement, international cooperation, asset recovery, and technical assistance and information exchange. It includes both mandatory and non-mandatory provisions. There is an urgent need for them to take on Nigerian institutions and purge them of corruption.

Adewale, Victor (2015) opines that Corruption is a dishonest exploitation of power for personal gain or an extremely deprived immorality. It is a total departure of public officials from the oath of office aimed at observing all norms to the betterment of all; corruption becomes endemic when there is an increasing tempo in money and material consciousness as it has become a trend in leadership and politics in this twenty first century.

Esthons and Nenchi (2015) describe corruption as "the diversion of essential materials or financial resources meant for the development of the nation, community, or society and the people for personal gains or interests". To this end, it becomes an easy profitable venture to political holders and the underdevelopment of Nigeria in general.

2.3. Economy

Newman, Mehretu, et al (2017) in analysing the intense of corruption in Africa at the first summit of African Union in

Durban, South Africa, in July 2002 "the economic system that Africa inherited at independence". Making Africa even more dependent, the prices paid for its exported raw materials were set in the major financial markets of the world: New York City, London, Paris, Frankfurt, Hong Kong, and Tokyo. The prices on African commodities rose and fell according to the needs of the industrial world, bearing no relationship to the cost of production or the economic needs of Africa. The full implications of these were powerfully demonstrated during the energy crisis of 1973. As oil prices quadrupled, the Western world went into recession and African commodity prices tumbled.

Although North African oil producers benefited, sub-Saharan Africans were not yet oil producers on a significant scale and they too suffered from the hike in oil prices. The industrial world paid less and less for African commodities, while at the same time demanded higher and higher prices for its manufactured goods, which African needed to import. In this way Africa helped subsidize the industrial world's economic recovery while most African countries spiraled into debt, poverty, corruption, and political instability, from which they have spent decades trying to recover.

Eskor Toyo (2010) in his paper "the Poverty Question" points an accusing finger on the practice of capitalist economy in Nigeria and Africa in general as the cause of poverty. Toyo argued that in capitalism the means of productive and trading activity belong to few people, called capitalists, in form of profit-seeking capital. Owners of capital use the full time labour ability of less fortunate people to work for them to produce and sell goods for a profit. The goods and profit belong to the capitalist and the wage earner is merely hired-as a machine or a horse could be hired. The hired human machine or employee is paid an income for his upkeep just as a machine needs servicing. The purpose of a capitalist enterprise is to make as much profit for its capitalist owner or owners as the situation permits.

Esko Toyo (2010) again in his "Project Nigeria: the Journey so Far" traces economic problem of Nigeria from its creation in 1914. Toyo maintained that Nigeria was created as a result of West European capitalist imperialism that began between 1870 and 1880 throughout the world. In that imperialism, British, France, German, Italian, and Belgian military men and other adventurers scrambled for territories in Africa that they could exploit as raw material producers and markets for the leading capitalist firms in their respective countries.

Nwogu and Ijirsha (2016) summarise economic growth "as the increase in the monetary or market value of goods and services produced by an economy over time". This becomes a challenge to the leadership in Nigeria to accept for a need to view the nation's economy as a priority for growth taking

a retrospective in the down drop in of the economy since independence.

Religion, corruption and economy seem to be the problem of Nigeria in this 21st century hence, religious leaders and adherents are advocates of mediocrity, religious fraud and deceit; corruption is practised in religious and public places which have crumbled and crippled Nigerian economy. Wherever religious and political leaders act as checks and balances to each other, there is always high rate of capacity utilization and grass root development.

3. The Impacts of Religion on Nigerians

Religion plays major roles in human life and the society in general. Nwazonobi (2015:787, 788) in her work "Religious and Cultural Dynamite: Peril to Societal Ethics "strongly argues that:

The dominant roles religion and culture play in the social, moral, economic, and political lives of nationalities, ethnic groups, traditions and values attached to them determine their acceptance or rejections of life circumstances.

This no doubt, is the contributing factor which we must acknowledge and examine for acceptance or rejection of economic realities in the Nigerian society. Akpan (2011:43) expresses worries over churches everywhere and yet "evil practices seem to be on the rise". We are therefore constrained to ask what the problem with religion is in the real Nigerian context or view. As scholars are unique so also are the definitions of religion. This brings us the definition which may suit best in the context and content in the study hence the inexhaustible various definitions of religion by scholars. "Religion contains values that promotes human rights; human relationship and human virtues" (Akpan 2011:49). Religion expects and enjoins every member of society to bear in mind. Akpan further explains that "they are duty bound to respect legitimate authority and demonstrate cooperation with them for peace and progress".

The general notion in all of these definitions explains a strong belief in a supernatural and invisible being that governs the universe who in essence binds man to his ultimate. This state demands a man to totally involve his motives, actions, attitudes, produce principles, morals or ethics and beliefs to worship and honour him for a better and peaceful society.

There may be differences in religions as exemplified in Christianity, Islam, and African traditional religion and so on, but all point to a supernatural being unseen. As religions are different even so are definitions but they conveying one

notion of a supreme being as the controller of man and the universe. Iwe (2011: 24-26), states the positive role of religion admonishes that:

Religion defines the relationship man has with his

Creator: and equips man with adequate and practical guide in his moral life. Religion further stands as the repository and custodian of human social values...deals with morality and its relationship with religion and finally examines ethics as the scientific study of the principles of human conducts as well as how morality has been established as an institution in human life and society.

Iwe further stresses that by definition, therefore religion may be considered from four basic view points, namely, "subjectively, objectively morally and institutionally" (1) Subjective definition conveys religiosity of man's natural capacity bring man to seek for his fundamental human existence concerning the origin and purpose of life. The ultimate justification for morality and moral uprightness; nature and significance of evil and innocent suffering; meaning of death etc. (2) Objective denotes a moral-spiritual relationship of the creature with his Creator which personally or collectively express acts of worship. (3) Morally religion may be defined as a virtue in a person owed to God), (4) institutionally, religion may be defined as definite system of beliefs, activities and values in a body of doctrines, ethical code and system of worship in an organisable structure.

It is basically on this background that one would react to the state which corruption has rooted deep in the Nigeria society in the 21st century. Religiously, politically, socially, economically, and socially, the Nigerian society has almost been given, obituary stemmed from corruption. There is need to appraise the ultimate role religion is expected to play in the society like Nigeria where freedom of worship has rather proliferate churches. The proliferation of churches rather multiplied vices which contaminates African traditional religion. African traditional religion instills good morals which detest crimes of any kind. It treated the fear of death, sickness and punishment if one goes against moral principles in the society. But Christianity and Islamic religions, with competing tendencies, have ruined the traditional morality. Traditional morality has given way to the gospel of material prosperity. Once prosperity and materialism have taken root in the society system, leaders become corrupt. Religion has therefore, lost its potency to fight the virus of corruption rather, an accomplice; corruption has perfectly succeeded to manipulate and taken over the brain box of religion.

The trace of the drift of religious discipline in African traditional religion stem from its drift and the mixing up of Christianity and Islamism in the Nigerian society. Thus, the traditional chieftaincy which one was coroneted and

respected based on good morality is now given to the highest bidder (Nwazonobi: 2016). Such individual coroneted through corrupt means will definitely corrupt the society or community he is ruling. Azomo, (2005: 909) affirms that “those who are found to be corrupt are affiliated to either the church or mosque. In the same vein, political leaders clamoring for political positions ascend the political positions with corrupt tendencies for selfish gains.

The end product of corrupt political leadership is to corrupt the economy and the masses therefore suffer the ill product. The manifestation of ill and chaos in Nigeria today is end result of corruption which religion and her leaders have failed to correct. Religion has failed to control vices and stand in the gap to control the checks and balance in the Nigeria system. Adenugba and Omolawel (2014: 522) affirm that “religion serves as a means of social control.” Thus, corruption as social vices has gradually destroyed the norms and values of our traditional lifestyle and has affected the moral psyche of large majority of our people. For instance oath taking with the Bible and Quran do not weld same power and do not achieve same result because traditional oath taking yields instant result and punishments on the adherents and offenders of the rules of the judgment. Amadi (1982: 84) adds that,

In land disputes it was possible for a rich litigant to buy over many false witnesses, but the system had safeguards against this fraud. In serious cases all witnesses testified on oath. Usually this practice eliminated all false witnesses; for no one would swear if he knew he was going to tell a deliberate lie, so powerful was the fear of the gods.

4. Religion and Corruption in Nigeria

Religion has links in both aspects of the society which include also corruption as deviant morality against moral harmony in a particular society. Corruption in the opinion of Adenugba and Omolawel (2014:523) as contained in the Act establishing the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) includes bribery, fraud and other related offences” (Corrupt Practices Act 2000). He further quotes that the World Bank defines corruption as:

The abuse of public office for private gains. It involves the seeking or exacting of a promise or receipt of a gift or any other advantage by a public servant in consideration for the performance or omission of an act, in violation of duties required of the office. It may also involve extortion of monies or theft by public amount due or payable to public coffers.

The above refers to human and not animal as inanimate

cannot hold office or capable of articulate thinking faculty. Amadi (1982: 88) bitterly expresses the height of corruption which he referred to as ‘*awuf*’ in Nigeria by highlighting them thus:

Today ‘*awuf*’ exists in the Nigerian civil Service. Some Treasury clerks routinely demand bribes from contractors before paying them money duly approved by government for contracts properly executed; time- keepers demand *awuf* to mark even diligent labourers present; head labourers take *awuf* to protect workers absent from duty; messengers receive tips from members of the public in order to trace files dealing with their affairs; clerks demand *awuf* before they will give out supposedly free scholarships or employment forms to members of the public. Under the influence of *awuf*, tax officials reduce tax assessments; custom officials connive at the trafficking of contraband goods; recruitment officers ignore qualified candidates and recommend poorly qualified ones; top civil servants inflate contract figures and arrange for the balance to be paid into their bank accounts overseas....

Corruption is a cankerworm which has not only destroyed the image of Nigeria within and without the frontiers of the Nigeria borders but has paralyses the scientific, technological cultural, political social and the general developmental stratification. If we accept that man is the central being for character, scientific, technological and infrastructural development of any nation therefore, the citizens of any nation with inherent corrupt tendencies, such a society heads for catastrophic doom.

As was earlier stated here that corruption is a disease that corrupts the mind and produce vices. Corruption has become a global problem. This phenomenon has retarded Africa in general and Nigeria in particular developmentally, socially, politically, culturally and economically since her independence. Nigeria with her oil wealth, corruption has remain the greatest enemy to the progress of this country. The leadership in Nigeria, with all the material and natural resources, is widely accepted that has corruptly misappropriated public funds.

Nigeria scores poorly on Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index as it gained two points in 2014 as compared to 2013 receiving a score of 71 on scale from 0 (most corrupt) to 100 (least corrupt). The country was therefore, ranked the 38th most corrupt country in the World, that is, 136th out of 176 countries assessed” (Nwogu and Ijirsha: 2001). Without mincing words, religion and corruption have changed the psyche of an average Nigerian to believe that moral uprightness and integrity cannot make anyone succeed economically without scheming and manipulating to acquire excess share of wealth anywhere,

anyplace and anytime without considering the effects on the country and other individuals. “Now, the most important aspect in the development of the human person is his moral development. Indeed, it is a condition-sine qua-non for national development. For, we cannot talk of development of a country if its citizens are morally undeveloped and immature” (Omogrebe 1993: 147).

Religion serves as a means of social control. One becomes demoralised when the clerics with all of the official professional titles, but are now accepting political and traditional titles of ‘Chief, Rev. Justice of Peace (J.P.) is a proof of a drift away from the religious inclination and now competing with the world. Where are the religion’s integrity, holiness and moral ethics in this? How can the religious leader stand bold to wage religious war against corruption in Nigeria? Ritualists have filled some churches in the name of ‘prophets’ and ‘man of God’ or ‘daddy’. This is pathetic and worrisome situation. Corruption has filled every facet of Nigeria both physically and spiritually. Corruption thrives in all religions in Nigeria both alien and indigenous but seems to be more in the aliens. Scheming and manipulations are more in religious bodies than elsewhere.

No one needs to be told that religion has become a channel of corruption giving aid and support for corruption in the society. But true religion ought to always checkmate corruption by inculcating transcendental values and moral principles. This in turn promotes high level of spiritual ethical standards and discourages the spirit of grab of public treasury wealth selfishly and corruptly

Religion as social institution ought to reveal its most important correlation between it with economy and the society, Asu (2011:58) posits that:

...religion is one of the most important social institutions that make up the total socio-economic system of an organized society. Religion has remained the strongest pillar of progress in the society.

This confirms Omogrebe (1993: 300) whose view is that religion and society are inseparable part of culture and is therefore, “the product of a particular culture within which, it grew, its doctrines reflect the world view of that culture”. In the relationship between religion and economy, Asu (2011: 61) posits that: “The relationship between religion and economy processes -production and distribution is a glaring phenomenon”. The above assertion in a way identifies economy as product of religion in variously influencing (Asu 2011:61) “the production process in terms of the resources, skill, time and value”. The processes involved in economy as regards religion, Asu (2011:61) further reveals “Resource allocations in most countries are religiously motivated. Employment of personnel to manage the resources is

religiously influenced and values follow religiously motivated policies”.

The economic reckless expenditure and mismanagement of the countries resources are clear evidence of abuse of religious values in the distribution of goods and services. There is need for economic value re-orientation. Obasola, Qtd in Nwogu and Ijirsha (2016) declare that:

Value re-orientation is the ability to bring back the good values of old, back into existence...corrupt practices stem from the various callous greed, self-motivation and seeking attitudes of our leaders who are only interested in serving their pockets rather than serving the people. It has... deteriorated the cherished and acceptable standards and cultural standards and cultural values in the state.

It should be noted that the economy of any society is greatly revealed by the economic power of religion, namely, festivals, ceremonies, tourism, industry, agriculture, business, etc. which if jeopardized according to Asu (2011: 63) may pose “tremendous obstacle to economic development as a social institution that make up the socio-economic system in an organized, society”.

5. Economy: the Centre Nerve of Religion and Corruption in this 21st Century Nigeria

The quest for riches and wealth in Nigeria have twisted the psyche of many irrespective of their political or religious mandate to champion the execution of fairness, equity, equal rights and justice without discrimination to enable the nation to compete with other nations of the world. In 2002 African leaders inaugurated the African Union, an organization intended eventually to establish a common economic market and political union across the entire continent (Newman, Mehretu: 2009). Achieving this goal, which would make Africa a formidable world power, remains Africa’s primary task for the 21st century. Will it be an overstatement to say that Nigeria has lost the focus of African Union and taken to self enrichment and aggrandizement? “Capitalism ultimately vests the economy in the hands of the few rich and effectively dispossesses the individual, converting him into a mere workhorse chained to the whirling wheels of huge industrial machines” (Amadi 1982: 103). Nigeria’s debt profile has risen because of corruption. Religious and political leaders compete in wealth and who flies the best and greater numbers of private jets with tax payers’ money; tithes and offerings of religious faithfuls. The top five richest religious leaders in the world are from Nigeria and as well Nigeria is rated as one of the most corrupt nations in the world. Islamic religion fares better in tuition fees of Islamic

schools but Christian schools and hospitals are exorbitant beyond the rich of the poor who contribute money for the buildings of these institutions yet pay meagre salaries to their employees.

In Nigeria in the Twenty-First Century, respected scholars offer strategies for dealing with the virulent nature of competitive politics in Nigeria (Azindow: 2006). Azindow decries diverse issues as military politics, ethnic and religious tensions, management of the economy, and democratisation. Ultimately, the inequalities between North and South are neither political nor economic but moral problems (Stott 1990: 146). Until we feel indignation over worldwide social injustice, and compassion for worldwide human suffering, we are not likely to act. It is perhaps equity of opportunity in these three areas (education, responsible decision-making and trade) which would ensure more than anything else, a fairer distribution of world's wealth (Stott 1990: 146). The acquisition of wealth or property makes a person powerful in the society hence, the crave for making money profit increase everyday.

6. Recommendations

Based on the foregoing discourse, this study therefore, proffers the following recommendations. Towards building a new Nigeria, new religion, a new way of life; our pulpits should stop preaching about miracles and breakthroughs because the message as understood by our youths today is that you can get something out of nothing. The National orientation Agency (NOA) should reorient Nigerians on the importance of virtues, dignity, hard work, faithfulness and diligent, creativity, perseverance, commitment, responsibility, strategic planning, accountability, principle of wealth creation, critical thinking, process of production of goods and services which are capable of building a new Nigeria.

- (1) That all and sundry have roles to contribute to the transformation of Nigeria detach from these vices, especially corruption, which has destroyed the economy and image of Nigeria both locally and internationally.
- (2) The government should compel the registration of religious institutions; screen every religious body seeking registration with cooperate affairs to ensure permission and certificates are issued to religions with integrity in moral principles.
- (3) Such religions with moral integrity and religious leadership should have the qualities to teach moral discipline to her adherents to enable minimise or eradicate corruption and to correct selfish amassing of wealth and save Nigeria from economic chaos.
- (4) Nigerian leaders should put Nigerian economic viability as a necessity to economic growth and development in the

citizenry and in infrastructural technological, educational, socio-political, and other aspects of national life.

If Nigeria will adopt traditional oath taking in swearing in of public office holders and justice there will be accountability and sincerity in all works of life.

7. Conclusion

What is the attitude of Nigerians towards the deviation of religion from character molding and rather, become a tool to corruption and economy driving force in this 21st century? To an extent, greater number of Nigerian population understand that the current trend in religion in abetting corruption and indecent drive for economic wealth is not for the best interest of the nation but believe that nothing can be done to curtail it if it ought not to be completely eradicated. The study revealed that religion is a necessary institution in any human society. It has not only failed in impacting good morals, socially, politically, and so on; but has aggravated corruption and marred Nigeria's reputation locally and globally to an extent everyone is assumed to be corrupt. Esthons & Nenchi (2013:915, 933) ascribe corruption as "damage to the society, thereby affecting the political, economic, social, educational and religious system, corruption is everywhere in Nigeria, it is in the church, in the mosque, in the shrine and even among the atheists".

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