

ISLAM, POLITICAL ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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# ISLAM POLITICAL ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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## Abstract

*Prior to the emergence or rather introduction of Islam in Nigeria and the Danfodio's Jihad of 1804 that conquered almost all the Hausa state oligarchy system. The political economy was more communal, slavery and the feudalistic system. The development led to a more reformed in the political system through Islamic theology. The development of Islam in the contemporary Nigeria led to the emphasis on the Shari'ah legal system in the twelve (12) Northern states. Scholars from different quarters viewed the development as a political mission by some gargantuan elites to control the power and theory which hinges on the trust that public policy is by and at large the mirror image of the elites' interest was employed to guide the analysis of this work. Content analysis was equally used as a source of data collection and it revealed that, Islam had played a vital role in the political economy of Nigeria due to its fair doctrine such as good leadership, just sharing of resources among individuals of a given society. This role played by Islam brought about sustainable development. However, the lack of sincere application of the Islamic doctrine between the ruled and the rulers (i.e. the political economy approach), which equally affects sustainable development. The paper critically reviewed the existing literature both conceptually and thematically relied on secondary source of data and examination of official documents as its methodology. The paper is structured into five interrelated components and recommends that Islam should not be used as a tool instruments or rather a conduit pipe for primitive accumulation of wealth by some religious leaders. The paper concludes that good governance is a wheel for sustainable development, to include effective poverty alleviation through Zakah and other means of Sadaqah to the needy ones as lasting solution to the bitter political economy using Islam as a means to an end.*

**Keywords:** *Islam, Political Economy, Sustainable Development*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Prior to the introduction of Islam in Nigeria and the Danfodio's jihad of 1804 that conquered almost all the Hausa States, the Political Economy of Nigeria had, passed through several stages. These stages include the communal, slaves, feudal and the capitalist stage. The system of administration then, was centralized or more or less the monarch. The judicial system was based on Islamic injunction or doctrine. The tax collected was aimed at developing the caliphate; also the economy was based on land tenure system based on peasant production. However, the activities of the head of the Muslim community is tied to Islamic doctrine as earlier captured.

The understanding of the interaction, the interplay and the mutual influences of the politics and the Islamic economic development necessitate a discipline that enable the possibility of an in-depth analysis. (Arniff 4), This referred to as of capitalism in the global economy in the banking system with

high interest rate on the customers. In that regards, Islamic banking with zero tolerance of Usury (*Riba*) was later introduced in most of the Arab countries, Africa and Nigeria in particular (Adlaman 20). And the success and failure of Islamic banks could be one of the obvious examples of the importance of political (state) and economic integration.

This paper therefore, argues that Islam has played a vital role in seeing that leadership provides an enabling environment for sustainable development.

The objective of his paper is: (i) To identify the role of Islam in sustainable development (ii) Describe the nexus between Islam and politics for sustainable development (iii) To identify the challenges which Islam is currently facing in its quest for sustainable development.

## **1.1 OPERATIONALIZATION OF KEY CONCEPTS**

This segment will operationalize some key concepts for the purpose of this work:

### **1. Islam:**

Connotes voluntary submission to the will of Allah. It also derives from the concept 'Salam' meaning Peace. Abraham (Ismail 10). The religious of Islam originated from a root word which equally implies "Peace" and "Submission. The religion teaches that one can only find peace in his or her life submitting to Almighty (Allah) (SWT) and obedience to His law

In the word of Ahmad Fauzi (9), Islam is a major world religion with over one billion followers worldwide (approximately one-fifth of the world population). He further states that, it is one of the Abrahamic monotheistic faiths, the other two being Christianity and Judaism. Although, Islam is usually associated with the Arabs

of the Middle-East, less than 10% of Muslims are in fact Arabs. It is evident that Muslims are found all over the world, including Africa and Nigeria, and of every ethnicity or race Muslim majorities are found throughout societies in the Middle-East, in North Africa, in East Asia and in the Pacific Islands. Large numbers Western Europe in Eurasia, and North America (Ahmad, 2005).

## **2. Political Economy:**

Political economy as a sub-discipline of political science is one of the oldest terms in the social science lexicon. In the words of Audu (16) political economy is originally synonymous with the study of economics, with emphasis on the study of the state and other philosophical issues as it relates to human needs and economic history. Albo (10) argues that political economy has become an orphan of modern social sciences with it splintering into present disciplines. He further reiterated that economics has the narrow and limiting study of resource allocation via prices and the determination of aggregate output on the basis of overly formalistic and mathematical framework.

In this regard, therefore, the term political economy involves the interaction of politics and economics. The discipline relates to the spheres of material production and relation of production, politics and economics are two separate social science disciplines but the two are originally linked (Audu 14). For instance, the economic conditions of social life are determined primarily by material production. To rationally identify means is economics and to authoritatively determine ends is politics. Economics is a way of acting and politics is a place to act. Wealth (economics) and power (Politics) are ultimately linked and lack of wealth means no power and

without power the struggle for wealth becomes odious (Audu 14).

This explains why understanding of power relationship, class, institutions and group require a sound knowledge of the economic basis of society.

The concept political economy has been subjected to multiple understanding and interpretations. However, its origin can be found in the work of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, of David Ricardo and Karl Marx. In this body of works, the term referred to the conditions of organization of production in states or what today is understood as "economics". Today, the term is defined as analysis that studies the linkages or relationships between politics (in terms of allocation of resources): drawing on theories of economics, law as well as political and social sciences. However, political economy studies the basis of the development of studies (Ake 25)

This centres on the production of material wealth and the mode of production, that is, it studies production and the basis of society from the point of view of the economic relations between people in the production process.

Judging from above, one can deduce that it is clear that political economy is the science of development of social production, that is, economic relations between people. It therefore, clarifies the laws governing production, distribution, exchange and consumption of the material wealth in human society at various stages of its development.

### **3. Sustainable Development:**

The Brundland (6) report reiterated that "Sustainable Development is a concept that in corporate meeting" the needs of present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". This emphasises that the heart of

achieving this vision lies in three facts: economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection. In this process, Islamic finance plays a crucial role in the first two aspects making its analysis necessary (Manusinghe, 24). This enhances and contributes to achieving sustainable development as the normal functioning and longevity of nested hierarchy of ecological and socio-economic systems ordered according to scale. Which is also concern with the sustainable linkage between and co-evolution of socio-economic and ecological systems.

Sustainable development paradigm consists of three pillars, namely-economic growth, environmental protection and social dimension (Syndorowych & Wossik 3) sustainable development can also be seen as a development which can stand the taste of time for generation unborn to benefits.

### **Role of Islam in Sustainable Development**

With the development of global economy, Islam play an important role to include:

1. **Values:** This implies that the less interest or zero rate on the individual customers of the various Islamic banks. Islam equally ensures that ethics are adhered in terms of governance and the social relation with regards to economic exchange between states and individuals.
2. **Encourage efficient production by financing agriculture:** This is to increase food supply thereby, discouraging importation in high cost. By so doing, soft loan is granted to farmers to boost their financial capacity for sustainable development.
3. **Self-development:** This implies that Islam encourages self reliance for

sustainable development. In other words, citizens of a given country are encourage to be self sustain (Badawi 6 ).

### **Challenges of Islam in Global Political Economy**

1. **Terrorism:** The activities of the terrorist attack experience in the global scene, had posed a challenge on the Islam such terrorist act include the ongoing Boko Haram, Alka'eda among others, and some states like Syria is penciled globally as terrorist, which invariably affects most economic policies, and relations with other countries.
2. **Poor leadership:** Some contemporary leaders in most Islamic Sates were dictatorial or adopted a sit tight syndrome on their citizens. Libya during Gaddafi, Morsi of Egypt and the attitudes of some Arab leaders towards their citizens in terms of democracy and the respect for rule of law. These challenges has multiplier effect on the future generation which calls for Arab spring versus states in Africa (Jonathan, Maingwa, 148 )
3. **Elitism:** This implies that some Islamic cleric use religion as conduit pipe for self enrichment to have both political and economic control of the state, at the detriment of the masses. The attitude of these greedy Islamic Scholars on the governance and the economy of the state, which really affects sustainable development (Maryaman, 30).

### **1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

In both arts and social sciences theories are very vital in analyzing phenomena and issues of contemporary relevance. For the purpose of this work, modernization theory is adopted within the "Development framework, in guiding the analysis of this



work.

The proponents of the modernization theory includes: W.W Rostow, Gunder Andrew Frank among others. The theory became famous or rather popularized in 1960.

The major thrust of the theory is briefly highlighted as follows:

1. That traditional values, norms behaviours and institutions are antithetical to development in the real sense. Since societies and their institutions multiply, change and become complex to move from simple underdeveloped states to sophisticated developed situation, traditional societies cannot retain traditional values and institutions that are naturally atavistic to development as the society become complex.
2. The theory believes that the yardsticks and standards of development of poor developing countries are developed countries of America and Europe. The theory further states that, for developing countries to develop, they must emulate the American model of development, and restructure their traditional, beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviours to be like Europeans.
3. The theory also maintained that the development problems and debacle of developing nations is purely an internal problem of those nations without external relation dynamics.

The relevance of the modernization theory on the Islam and political Economy of most of the Arab states is the recent adoption of European mode of Life and economic policies to suit the global trend. It is also a point to note that Saudi Monarch is currently undergoing social, economic and political reform, to suit the modern globalization. Which is contrary to the issue in Asia Tigers,

where home grown, initiative facilitates or enhances their economic and political development.

### 1.3 CONCLUSION

The contribution of Islam in the global political economy and sustainable development is clearly discussed in this paper. Which includes the ethical values in promoting economic development of the society. However, the stages through which the Islamic political Economy had passed though is thoroughly examined/up till the contemporary economy.

The paper highlighted some major challenges confronting Islam in global political economy-which includes terrorism, the role of elite in manipulating power and economic control. The paper concludes or rather recommends that the political and economic policies of the Islamic societies with some admixture of secularism like Nigeria must be home grown as against the modernization theory that is concomitantly Eurocentric in nature with American model as a case in point. The paper finally reiterated that Asian Tigers are good example of home grown states, that become an emerging economy in the globe, with sustainable economic development.

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