

The Role Of Religion In Combating Corruption And Management Of Religious Crisis In Nigeria

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Abstract

Corruption and incessant crisis have become two issues negatively affecting the nation Nigeria. Corruption has unfortunately become an accepted way of life while religious crisis has shown threats that it cannot be totally solved in Nigeria. The factors of corruption and incessant religious crisis have hindered achieving of holistic and sustainable development in Nigeria. By descriptive and historical phenomenological methods the research concludes that combating corruption and managing corruption would not be result oriented if left with the government alone. Religious leaders have significant roles to play in the fight against corruption and effective management of incessant religious crisis in Nigeria.

Introduction

Nigeria is a nation that is richly endowed with human and material resources, but the effects of corruption and religious crisis have kept her from developments. Dike agreed that “there are many unresolved problems in Nigeria, but the issue of the upsurge of corruption is troubling.”¹ Muhammad noted that Nigeria “though abounds with human and natural resources, the country has since independence witnessed a number of inter and intra ethnic and religious crisis which continue to be an impediment to its overall development.”² It has been noted that Nigeria is one of the few nations in Africa that had all potentials of combating poverty, yet she is still wallowing in poverty. Poverty of the poor masses has been traced to the high level of corruption and incessant religious crisis in Nigeria.

It is noteworthy that observing the high level of religious nature of both the leaders and the citizens of this great nation, and the level of high corruption, one would only wonder at the irony of the situation: Nigeria a greatly blessed nation, and highly religious, yet a poor and highly corrupt nation. Chuta describing the religious nature of Nigerians wrote that

Even today, Nigerians can still be seen to be notoriously religious. They fill the thousands of churches and prayer houses on Sundays and Mosques on Fridays. Religious messages fly in the face of every citizen all over the country on weekends on television screens and on the radio channels. The music industry has continued to boom out of the production of lyrical religious songs in almost all Nigerian languages. These are all impressive manifestations of religiosity among Nigeria.³

Nigerians, though highly religious, are not influenced by the changing power of religion. Rather, corruption has become a normal way of living in Nigerian society. Ituma posited that “corruption has unfortunately become a lifestyle in the Nigerian society.”⁴ Corruption as posited by the above scholar has become the culture of the Nigerian society. No citizen of Nigeria can count himself or herself out of corruption. Chuta holds that “no one has ever challenged or denied,”⁵ that he or she is not corrupt. This is because every Nigerian manifests one form of corruption or another. The high rate of corruption in Nigeria has greatly affected the nation’s holistic development. Underdevelopment is one of the effects of corruption. Due to corruption Nigeria has remained among the developing nations of the world. Hence it was noted that “development in Nigeria has remained chequered and a far cry not because a section, but because every section of the polity is corrupt.”⁶ The wealthy class, the poor, the educated, and the illiterate citizens of Nigeria have contributed in one way or the other to the high rate of corruption that is obtainable in Nigerian society.

Religious crisis is another factor that is resiliently contributing its quota in hindering Nigeria from being a peaceful nation. Nigeria is experiencing high level of religious crisis every now and then. Describing the powerful effect of religious crisis to the nation, it was noted that “the latest flashpoint to threaten Nigeria's still-fragile

democracy is the issue of religious violence, related to the opportunistic moves by some Muslim-dominated northern states to use the new democratic climate to propose the adoption of Sharia (Islamic Law).⁷⁷ It holds that Nigeria is highly religious yet there is always religious crisis and Nigeria is highly blessed, yet she is highly poor: what a great contrast!

The government's effort to combat corruption and manage religious crisis has not yielded effective result. The inability of the leaders and citizenry to effectively combat corruption and effectively manage consistently occurring religious crisis in Nigeria has resulted to high poverty level, in-sustainability of good developments, bad image of Nigeria as a nation to other nations of the world, damage of both public and private properties, killing of innocent people, low level of national development, low quality scheme, insecurity of lives and property, low quality education and many more. The inability of both the leaders and citizens and even the religious bodies to effectively combat corruption and manage religious crisis in Nigeria could be traced from the point that the level of corruption affected every fabric of the nation. The leaders are corrupt, the citizens are corrupt and the religious bodies also manifest some trends of corruption.

The religious institution is one of the agents of development but when wrongly managed could lead to destruction. It has dual functions that are at variance: ability to build and to destroy. Religion as an agent of development could be seen in the likes of Christian faith which from inception in Africa and in Nigeria in particular established churches, schools and hospitals. The high level of corruption has recycled the national wealth into the hands of few, while the majority of the masses are suffering from abject poverty.

Considering the above establishments one would ask why is corruption which is consistently fought against by many bodies resiliently gripping every nook and cranny of Nigeria? Why is religious crisis recurring in Nigeria not minding the measures put in place by the security agencies? Are there effective and efficient roles which religious bodies can play in combating corruption and in management of religious crisis that would yield lasting solution to the Nigerian problems of corruption and reoccurring Religious Crisis? These questions observed above, trouble the minds of the concerned citizens of Nigeria and therefore calls for the need for putting in place religious measures that would effectively combat corruption and establish ways

of managing religious crisis in Nigeria. This is the problem this research intends to solve.

The research also seeks to establish how corruption has affected the holistic development of Nigeria as a nation, to mention and analyze ways through which corruption can be religiously fought against and effective management of religious Crisis in Nigeria. The religious institutions being referred to are Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religions. The roles which these religious institutions can play in combating corruption and managing religious crisis occupies a remarkable position in the joined efforts needed in combating the above mentioned gigantic enemies of the development of Nigeria, because religion has the ability to appeal to the conscience of its adherents and this in turn influence how they behave.

The Concept of Corruption

Corruption is a word that has been given various meaning because of its wide use. It covers a broad range of amoral or corrupt practices that are not socially described as being right. Corruption is viewed as a vice in the social development of a society. Ehusani defined corruption as “unethical and morally reprehensible, ranging from the giving and taking of bribe, to the use of public office for the advancement of purely private interests, and from the misapplication or misappropriation of public funds to outright fraud and embezzlement.”⁸ Other way corruption can be seen Leke, wrote that

Corruption can be seen as the inducement by means of an improper consideration to violate some duty for the advantage and benefit of self and the other, it portends the lack of integrity or honesty the use of position of trust for dishonest gains and advantage where in public or private domain.⁹

It holds that corruption refers to any dishonesty or exploitation of power for personal gain. This act is predominant in Nigeria. Public office holders and people in leadership positions enrich themselves to the expense of the suffering masses. Corruption could be seen as a means of securing wealth or power through immoral ways with the main aim of making private gain at public expense. In other words it means misusing public power for private benefit. This definition unravels the situation in Nigeria where people are ready to do anything

to acquire wealth to the detriments of their neighbours or country. Still in the above regard Dike sees corruption as “perversion or a change from good to bad.”¹⁰ Things are consistently changing from relatively good situations to bad or worst situations in Nigeria. As days go by instead of things getting better, things are getting worst.

Culture of Corruption in Nigeria

Corruption has become a way of life in Nigeria. The giving and taking of bribe is the most widely known form of corruption in Nigeria. Corruption has formed a branded name for Nigeria and viewed as normal way of life for Nigerians. Ituma noted that “the image of the country in the international arena has become so battered that every Nigerian should psychologically feel a scorching hurt inflicted on his individual psyche.”¹¹ Nigerians are seen as people who do not have a sense of good moral. The situation has so worsened that one can hardly be successfully in any venture without engaging in one form of corruption or the other. Arguing in the same direction, Dike wrote that “it is believed by many in the society that corruption is the bane of Nigeria.”¹² Corruption has almost defied government and nongovernment proffered solutions. Consequently, “the issue keeps reoccurring in every academic and informal discussion in Nigeria. And the issue will hardly go away!”¹³ Every aspect of the Nigerian society is being sickened by corruption. Corruption rears its ugly head in the political, education, economy, religious institutions of Nigeria and even in the home which is the basic unit of the society. Ehusani rightly observed that

corruption manifests itself in such other widespread practices as the various forms of election rigging, falsification of census figures, examination malpractice, “sorting,” certificate racketeering, visa racketeering, extortion by public officials, nepotism, Advance Fee Fraud (“419”), the forging of, or issuance of fake medical certificates without medical tests, yellow cards without necessary inoculation, drivers license without driving tests, false affidavits, false age declarations, multiple international passports, inflated contracts, over-invoicing, under-invoicing, etc¹⁴

Corruption is negatively affecting Nigeria and its effects seem to have become a permanent feature and resiliently attacking its polity. Aluko (2002) notes that

Corruption now appears to have become a permanent feature of the Nigerian polity. It had become completely institutionalized, entered into the realm of culture and the value-system; it is now a norm and no longer an aberration. The young ones are born into it, grow up in it, live with it, and possibly die in it. The aged are not left out as they are re-socialized and begin to conform to it.¹⁵

The family system is also contributing to the resilient nature of corruption in Nigeria. The parents that are suppose to teach and live by examples to their children are the ones teaching or exemplifying to their children the intricate and more they should know about corruption. Being that children look up to their parents and guardians as their models, they tend to learn from them. The children or the youths therefore having learned from their parents or guardians on how to be corrupt become more corrupt than what their parents could imagine. Thus the youths that are supposed to be great agent of development and source of manpower in Nigeria have become political thugs, robbers, kidnappers, nuisance etc. On the worst, some are being even sponsored by reputable leaders to carry out evil activities for them. The religious bodies in Nigeria are not left out from the infection of corruption. Many shameful stories arising from corruption in different religious bodies has almost made them to lose sight or focus to the part they ought to be playing in ensuring that the society in which they exist ought to be running smoothly. The level of the culture of corruption in Nigeria has made her to be designated or branded with a bad name and thus identified all over the world as one of the most corrupt nations.

The Relationship between Corruption and Religious Crisis in Nigeria

Corruption has a strong relationship with the incessant religious crisis in Nigeria. Tjaart noted that “The relationship between religion and conflict is a complex one.”¹⁶ Stringent of corrupt deeds is observed in religion. Corruption does directly or indirectly influence the incessant religious crisis in Nigeria. On the other hand, religious strives and corruption has contributed to high rate of hardship in Nigeria.

Heather, establishing the relationship that exists between corruption and religion wrote that “The basis for the increasing attention given to the religion-corruption nexus stems from the argument that fairness and honesty form the basis of many religions.”¹⁷ Religion condemns any act of corruption as well as conflict. Almost all religions claim to emphasise peace as one of the tenets of its doctrine. Management of religion can play both negative and positive functions to the both variables: Corruption and religious crisis. It is observed that the same religion that preaches peace does as well cause tension often in the society and at the end causes loss of lives and properties. This applies where religious leaders and their adherents are unable to interpret or contextualize some beliefs of the religion. It was noted that “It is sometimes assumed that religious leaders may be recruited to the fight against corruption and that religious people are less likely than non-religious people to engage in corruption.”¹⁸ It still holds that religion, her leaders and adherents have important roles to play in combating corruption as well as managing religious crisis. Heather posits that religious leaders should effectively work towards fighting against corruption and in the management of the incessant religious crisis in Nigeria.¹⁹ These leaders could engage successfully in these fights by appealing to the conscience of their adherents and by living by example, practicalizing what they teach.

Causes Of Religious Crisis In Nigeria

Many factors cause the incessant occurring of religious crisis in Nigeria. Religion has always been accused to be either the remote or immediate cause of many crises that occur in Nigeria. This could be true because religion in itself is controversial in nature. Tjaart, established that “Religion is often depicted as a trigger factor in many conflicts. Religion also is often blamed as a tool to mobilize people during conflicts.”²⁰ Tjaart, tracing the causes of religious crisis in Nigeria, wrote that “the fact that religions differ from each other leads to conflict, because the followers of every religion are convinced that their religion is the “right” and the only true religion.”²¹ The above points to one of the main causes of incessant religious crisis in Nigeria. Nigeria is a multi religious nation. Because the coexistence of differing religious groups who do not understand each other, has contributed to the resultant incessant religious crisis, each religious group parade itself as the only right

religion to exist and therefore condemns the other as bad and hence do not worth to exist. Muhammad holds that the causes of conflicts between and within ethnic and religious groups “could be seen in a number of factors, such as ways of propagating the religions, mistrust and suspicion between the followers of the various religious and ethnic groups, selfishness, ignorance and intolerance amongst the two groups.”²² He emphasises tolerance as another factor that causes the resilience of religious crisis in Nigeria. There is lack of tolerance among the religious groups in Nigeria. The muslims would not tolerate the christians and this has resulted to killing of christians in the northern part of Nigeria, demolishing of church buildings, destruction of individual and public properties. The christians who were supposed to be pacivists on many occasions retaliated and all these amount to the impoverished state of the federation. Corruption has also been listed among the factors that plumb the recurrence of religious crisis in Nigeria. People, in the name of religion, commit all sorts of evil in order to make ends meet. Politicians also abuse their political power by secretly sponsoring people to keep causing conflicts in order to achieve their political targets. Suffering and poverty of the masses have also been identified as factors that cause religious unrest in Nigeria. When there is lack of job, inadequate social amenities, the suffering masses could easily be bribed by the politicians to cause religious conflicts. Muhammad noted that in Nigeria “the prevailing crisis might not be unconnected with the deviation of the teachings of these religions by their followers.”²³ Some of the religions make inflammatory statements when delivering homily. They incite acrimony by this exercise. This, in particular, has fuelled the concurrent occurring of crisis in Nigeria.

The Effects Of Religious Crisis To The Development Of Nigeria

Religious crisis is a recurrent and incessant problem that is hindering the sustainable development of Nigeria. Religious crisis is a situation in which a group of people in the name of religion behave in a violent way in a public place, often as protest, retaliation, ambition, pride, corruption, group egotism. These dysfunctions done in the name of religion have negatively affected Nigerian’s attaining sustainable and holistic development. It is clearly observed that Religious crisis or conflict has caused much damage to the holistic development of Nigeria as a nation. In this regards, Goldstein noted that “Conflict is impeding the economic growth of both Sudan and Nigeria, so if the

conflict can be resolved the countries may see an improvement in their economies.”²⁴This is true because given the rate of natural endowment which Nigeria is blessed with; she is not supposed to still remain in the level where she is rated as a “developing country”. Supporting the above [Ikpatt](#) wrote:

Our new national complexities, however, seem impossible to streamline given that every framework crafted to contain and maintain some sense of orderliness crumbles at ends, every new goal is sabotaged by a series of obstacles and every working relationship is defined and muted by ethnic clamours, religion strives, corruption and ultra bad economy.²⁵

It is agreeable that Nigeria has been drawn backwards in development due to the incessant religious crisis in Nigeria, majorly in the northern part of the country. It has negatively influenced the holistic economy of the federation. The negative effects include corruption, insecurity, violence (mayhem), unemployment, poverty, vandalizing of public and private properties, killing of many innocent people etc. Religious conflicts have an immediate corollary of mayhem which results to destruction of lives and properties. The mobs that are raised in the name of religious riots become so brutal in nature, that they don't consider the worth of life and property. Statistically estimating the number of Igbo people that must have been killed in the North due to religious crisis, Emeagwali wrote that “The killing of 50,000 Igbos in northern Nigeria was, in part, due to religious and ethnic differences.”²⁶ People are killed as if they are animals. Campbell and Harwood documented that “In the country's so-called Middle Belt, 785 people have died in the past two years, and the government is doing little to stop it.”²⁷ In Jos it was also documented that

Bloody "religious" riots, ostensibly between Christians and Muslims in 2001, 2008, and 2010, split the community. The latest round, starting in 2011, continues. According to the Council on Foreign Relations' Nigeria Security Tracker ([NST](#)), there have been 785 sectarian related deaths in Plateau state alone between May 29, 2011 and June 30, 2013. Between January and June 2013, 481 people were killed; 61 percent of the total since May 2011. These estimates are very conservative.²⁸

In each of these riots death tolls have been connected to religious motivated crisis. The sacred value of human life as depicts by religion is violated.

Corruption is another corollary of religious crisis. Because of religious crisis many able bodied citizens of Nigeria have taken to the culture of corruption in other to make ends meet. Many adopt giving and taking of bribe, robbery, murderer, and collecting money from politicians to commit nefarious acts. The above has increased the menace of evil in Nigeria. Due to religious unrest, poverty rate of the suffering masses has drastically increased. People who are victims of these crisis experience high level of poverty. Their poverty stems from the fact that their properties are destroyed and their sources of income either burnt or closed down, leaving the victims with their lives, if they were lucky to even have it. They are exposed to poverty: hunger, sickness, looking up to relations, government, non-governmental bodies and religion to come to their aid. Unemployment rate increases as a result of the incessant religious crisis in Nigeria. Applicants looking for job cannot go to any part of the federation to look for job due to religious crisis. Those who are already working are left with the option of either quitting the job or staying back to continue doing the job at the detriment of their lives and properties. Poor security occurs where religious crisis occurred. People cannot move about freely without fear of being attacked. The concurrent occurring of religious crisis in Nigeria has hindered the coming in of foreign investments. Foreigners ban their citizens from coming into Nigeria due to the unsafe nature of violence that follows religious crisis. The prevention of the establishments of foreign companies and international bussiness partnerships negatively affects the nation's economy.

The Effects of Corruption To The Development Of Nigeria

Corruption has not in any way benefited Nigeria as a nation; rather it has negatively affected her. Hence Dike noted that in Nigeria “the menace of corruption leads to slow movement of files in offices, police extortion tollgates and slow traffics on the highways, port congestion, queues at passport offices and gas stations, ghost workers syndrome, election irregularities, among others.”²⁹ These effects of corruption have made it difficult for Nigeria to achieve sustainable development.

The Possible Ways Through Which Religious Bodies Can Combat Corruption In Nigeria

Religious bodies in Nigeria have important role to play in the fight against corruption. Through their teachings they appeal to the conscience of their adherents which is capable of influencing their behaviour and attitude towards corruption. The holy books of the Christians and Islam have verses that condemn corruption. Hence Christians and Muslims see corruption as sin while African tradition religion views corruption as taboo or sin against the earth goddess. It was noted that “Corruption whether moral or political is a sin and whosoever that engages in it is under the bondage of sin, according to the Bible, covetousness and greed leads to corruption.”³⁰ The above is founded on the premise that the essence of life does not depend on the abundance of what a person acquires. Greed is the corollary of corruption. When a person wants to acquire or be in possession of all things the tendencies for him to become corrupt so as to succeed in acquiring all that he wants is high. Solution to the problems of corruption in Nigeria is suggested below.

1. Practicing the Tenets Of Religion: The tenets of faith of the religious groups in Nigeria, condemns corruption of any sort. Corruption in Nigeria would be effectively combated when both the leaders and adherents of religious bodies put into practice what they teach and hold as their doctrine. This involves obeying the principles of morals, respect for life, love, chasing after peace etc. The escalation and resilience of corruption is energized by the fact that the religious people in Nigeria do not put into practice the dictates of the holy script of their religion.

2. God As The Right Source Of Wealth: Corruption would be reduced when it gets sucked into peoples’ heart that God remains the only source of right wealth. What one should have, should be what God gives and not ill gotten wealth. Supporting the above it was noted that “The theological solution for corruption is for all to see God as the source of wealth.”³¹ From his conclusion when both the leaders and the lead see God as the source of wealth accumulation, corruption would reduce. Seeing God as ultimate source of good wealth requires that one would walk with God in patience. People would not be propelled out of greed to indulge into immoral acts just to be enriched. The giving and

taking of bribe would drastically reduce. The leaders of religious bodies should focus on such teachings and admonitions that would redirect the minds of their adherents and focus back to God.

3. God As The Right Source Of Power And Position: One of the main stress areas of corruption in Nigeria is high level of corruption in politics and struggle for positions in governance. These power hungry people involved and indulge in unmentionable atrocities in order to get into power. Thus, politicians and leadership contestants would not mind who they trample upon to get what they want. In this process high rate of corruption are manifested. People are kidnapped and killed for ritual, for one to get to power; public money is stolen to finance rigging of election etc. Religion could proffer solution by redirecting the minds of their adherents towards understanding that the right source of power and position is from God. They should keep laying emphasis in their teaching and preaching that entering into power or leadership position by force, rigging, killing, and by magical means is against God and would always backfire. The nemesis of taking up power forcefully, does fall on the perpetrator himself or on his children or even on his generations. When this emphasis is continually laid in the places of worship, corruption would be effectively combated. In other hands when politician are made to know that they are to be in power because God want them there, corruption would be reduced.

4. Persuading The People For Positive Change Of Hearts: The Bible says, "as a man thinketh so he is" (Proverb 23; 7). The good or the bad, people do is nursed and generated from the heart. On this regards, it was noted that "No matter what has been said about corruption control, if the heart is not touched or circumcised it will continue to be corrupt."³² When peoples' hearts and minds are rightly guided, they would live on the high tendencies of proper behaviour. But when person's heart is misinformed or misguided it amounts to high rate of corruption. The habit of fearing God disposes one to godly leaving. Therefore to effectively combat corruption the religious bodies in Nigeria have important role of rightly guiding, informing, teaching and rehabilitating the hearts and minds of their adherents for right conduct in the church and society. Religious role also involves encouraging and persuading adherents to eschew evil and take up to the right attitude. The religious adherents would only be able to hate

evil when they love and fear God. Since all religions recognize God as the Supreme and Sovereign they should persuade their adherents to fear him. The result of fearing God is godly living. It is worth mentioning that it is in fearing God and godly living that corruption could be reduced in Nigeria.

5. **Being Content:** Greediness leads to corruption. Lack of being satisfied with what one has could make one greedy hence adopting corrupt ways to keep acquiring more and more of what one desires. “Lack of contentment has led some to do things that are against their conscience and against the will of God.”³³ Leaders of each religious body should emphasize the need for members to be content in what they have. It is good to aspire to get to the next level but in doing so, they should follow the right means.

6. **Being Patriotic to one’s Nation:** Loving ones nation could make one not to do things that would paint the nation black. “Rebranding Nigeria” is a concept that has been advanced. This is a call to love the Nation and to obey the constitution. Loving and obeying the laws of the nation, would reduce corruption in Nigeria. Therefore if the leaders and teachers of the religious bodies would teach and persuade their adherents to love this nation corruption will be reduced.

7. **Punishment For Corruption:** All religions teach that there are punishments for evil doers. In the regards of the above Kalin Ringkvist wrote that “Religions often teach the concept of hell, where there is eternal suffering of an unimaginable degree.”³⁴ It is fact that religious bodies do emphasize the punishment reserved for sinners or deviants. For corruption to be effectively combated, this emphasis should be intensified.

Managing Religious Crisis In Nigeria

Peace, sustainable development and holistic development would be achieved in Nigeria if religious bodies determine to manage religious crisis. Chukwuezi explained that “it is not unusual for conflicts to arise among or within communities, but these conflicts should not be allowed to destroy the development of our continent Africa.”³⁵ Having established the negative effects and destructive power of religious conflicts, it should not be allowed to destroy Nigeria. Religious crisis stems from religion. The ways through which religion could contribute her quota towards managing of religious crisis is by advocating for peace and unity of Nigeria, emphasizing respect and sanctity of human

life, appraisal of other religious practices through research and education, praying for the good of the nation, religious leaders not condemning other religions in their society and teaching their adherents not to take laws into their hands.

1. **Advocating For Peace And Unity Of The Nation:** Religious leaders can play important role in management of the incessant religious crisis occurring in Nigeria. These leaders can contribute by appealing to the conscience of their adherents to live in peace and unity with their neighbours, irrespective of religious differences. Muhammad wrote that “References are made in the holy books, such as the Glorious Qu’ran and the Holy Bible on their teachings showing how, if fully adhered to, the nation will be in peace.”³⁶ Since each of the differing religious groups’ holy scripts in one part or the other emphasise peace and unity, they should teach their members or adherents to put into practice what they are being taught. Religious leaders should preach and enhance activities that will encourage peaceful co-existence. They should keep laying more emphasis on peace rather than rioting, violence, conflicts in the name of religion.

2. **Emphasizing Respect And Sanctity Of Human Life:** Life is sacred. No human being in his right sense should kill his fellow human being. Every religion that is good should not relent in emphasizing the sacredness of life even as God made it to be. Religious leaders should not encourage fanatical members to kill their neighbour because of religion. But they should keep emphasizing on respect and sanctity of human life.

3. **Appraisal of other Religious Practices through Research and Education:** Understanding the core teachings of different religions could help educate the religious fanatics. The study of religion should be encouraged because the lessons acquired in the process of studying could help in the management of religious unrest in Nigeria. It holds that if the study of religion will be embarked on it will educate the masses on why other religious adherents do some of the things peculiar to them. Education would enhance the understanding of differing religious practices. This will help in peaceful coexistence in Nigeria.

4. **Praying For The Good Of The Nation:** Every religious group in Nigeria prays in one form or the other. What one prays for is what he or she has regardfor. When religious adherents pray they become conscious of emerging issues in the content of their prayer. They,

therefore do those things that will enhance the efficacy of their prayer. One cannot pray to God for peace and engage in things that will introduce crisis. By this, religious prayers will reduce religious crisis.

5. **Freedom of Worship:** Religious leaders should not engage in condemning other religions. Each religion should allow the differing religion to peacefully coexist. The constitutional provision of freedom of worship should be allowed to guide people's conduct. No religion has the right to subjugate the other. Religious leaders should allow this idea to control their minds.

6. **Teaching adherents not to take the laws into their hands:** The religious leaders are to teach their members not take the laws into their hands. Offences should be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agencies.

7. **Dialogue should be Advocated For:** Differing religious groups should dialogue when there is problem in steady of retaliating. Retaliation encourages the escalation of the rising religious conflicts. But when dialogue is accessed, there could be understanding between the conflicting religious bodies which would as well lead to the right management of the intended or uprising crisis.

Conclusion

It was established that corruption and religious crisis are among the debilitating problems hindering the holistic and sustainable development of Nigeria. They have both affected Nigeria as a sickness has defiled all applied treatments. The research revealed that Nigeria is greatly endowed in natural gifts but because of corruption and religious crisis the nation could not effectively manage its benefits for holistic development. Nigeria has continued to be branded a developing country in spite of her level of endowment. It is made clear in this research that corruption is a concept of the mind and should be managed from the mind. If Nigerian political and religious leaders determine to address the conscience of their followers on the ills of corruption there would be solution.

The research revealed that religion has significant roles in combating corruption and in the management of religious crisis in Nigeria. It was established that in the fight against corruption, the government alone cannot effectively combat it. Joint effort is required

if lasting result would be achieved. Religions have the roles of appealing to the conscience of her adherents. They are to inculcate right morals to their adherents. This would in turn reduce the culture of corruption in the society. With regards to religious crisis, religion from which religious crisis stems from also has roles of proffering ways through which the incessant crisis could be managed. The research encouraged religious leaders to control their members with transparent mind so that they will in turn appreciate the sanctity of human life.

Religion will also contribute in the fight against corruption when religious leaders inculcate in the heart of their adherents that corruption is against God. When adherents are made to understand that God is the right source of wealth, power and position, right values, being content with what one has, being patriotic to one's nation will follow suit. When the different religious leaders appeal to the conscience of their adherents with regards to above, corruption would be effectively combated and incessant religious crisis appropriately managed.

End notes

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³⁵ B. Chukwezi, *Issues In Community Development* . (NSUKKA:MIKE SOCIAL PRESS,1999)p 30

³⁶ Muhammad, loc.cit.