

Religious Values and Good Governance in Nigeria's Democratic Landscape

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Abstract

Religion can promote good governance judging from its rich moral and ethical values, which are enshrined in virtually all religions of the world. For example, in developed democracies, religion played a significant role in entrenching their current democratic ethos of good governance. However, in Nigeria, the importance of religion in entrenching good governance is often undermined during national discourse. Therefore, using a discursive approach in analyzing data gathered through literature review and personal observation, the paper examined the nexus between religious values and good governance in Nigeria's democratic landscape. The entire discussion is hinged on the application of Max Weber's Protestant Ethic which conceived religious values as playing a significant role in economic success of certain Protestant groups. Drawing from this, the paper argued that religious values such as godliness and contentment, trust, selfless service, respect for human dignity, and hard work deep-rooted in the Christian Scripture can facilitate good governance in Nigeria if adequately applied. In this light, the study recommends that such religious values should be taught at various levels of Nigerian education system as a way of promoting good governance in Nigeria.

Keywords: Religious Values, Good Governance, Democracy, Protestant Ethics

Introduction

There is no doubt that Nigeria is endowed with abundant human and natural resources that can promote sustainable economic development. However, the country is currently faced with a number of intractable challenges namely corruption, political instability, unemployment, adverse poverty, poor healthcare system, insecurity, amongst others (Koko, 2020; Oke, 2023). This irony is well-captured by Akinyele (2003:15) who describes Nigeria as "a land of contrast" judging from the fact that the inability of political elite to harness both material and human resources for the purpose of development has transformed Nigeria into "the sleeping giant of Africa." These

intractable challenges are largely due to a marked absence of good governance since the country gained independence in 1960 (Koko, 2020). Moreover, this ugly situation has further deteriorated with the advent of democracy in Nigeria's fourth republic. As a result, the country has continued to experience serious political and socio-economic woes that have earned her the "poverty capital of the world" thereby affirming the position of Ekpeku (1986:12) who describes Nigeria as a "rich country full of poor people". Whilst this is the case, national discourses on how to entrench good governance in the country in a manner that would promote socio-economic and political development have often undermined the indispensable role which religion can play. In other developed democracies like the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, France, Netherlands, Germany, etc., religion contributed significantly in entrenching their current democratic ethos of good governance. On the contrary in Nigeria, the importance of religion in entrenching good governance has not been given its due emphasis (Koko, 2020). Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to examine some religious values that if adequately applied by those in political leadership can promote good governance in the country. To achieve this, the paper will adopt the discursive and analytical approach to discuss data gathered through critical review of literature and personal experience. It is also important to state for purpose of clarity that the word "religion" in this context shall be used in a restrictive sense to refer to Christianity without any bias to other religions of the world.

Theoretical Framework on the Impact of Religious Values on Human Life and Society

No genuine scholarly work can be done in isolation because in a way, the purpose of every scholarly work is usually to advance an already existing theory, disprove it or even formulate a new one. Therefore, this paper is an application of Max Weber's theory of *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* on the issue of religion and good governance. Weber, a German sociologist and political economist is considered one of the principal forefathers of modern social sciences (Mitzman, 2023). Unlike the denigrators of religion like Marx, who conceived religion as an oppressive tool of the wealthy class on the poor, Weber was a rehabilitator of religion and a key proponent of methodological anti-positivism. Rehabilitators of religion are those who conceive religion as playing a positive role in human life and society, while the anti-positivists are those who believe in the truth claim of religion despite lack of verifiable evidence.

According to Weber's Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, translated into English by Talcott Parsons in 1930, Western capitalism developed as a result of the Protestant work ethic which allowed for pursuit of individual's spiritual aspiration- *otherworldly* alongside one's mundane affairs- *this worldly* (Crossman, 2019). Weber arrived at this

conclusion because he observed that Protestant countries gained economic prominence over Catholic countries following the aftermaths of the Reformation. He also observed that in countries with different religions, the most successful business leaders tended to be Protestants especially from Calvinist and Puritan denominations. Prior to the Reformation, Christian religious devotion had tilted towards a complete rejection of mundane affairs, including economic pursuits. However, after the Reformation, some Christian denominations notably Calvinism and Puritanism accepted worldly activities and the rational pursuit of economic gain. Weber observed that believers in these denominations expressed their piety towards God through hard work and achievement in secular vocation or calling. Hence, for him, the Protestant ethic, while promoting the pursuit of economic gain, relinquished all semblances of hedonistic pleasure. As a result, believers were motivated to work hard, become successful in business and reinvest their profits rather than spend them on frivolous pleasures and it was this ethic that gave rise to capitalism (See the Libre Texts Libraries). It is important to state as Crossman (2019) observed that even after religion became less important in Western society, these norms of hard work and frugality remained, and continued to encourage individuals to pursue material wealth side by side with religiosity.

Today, Weber (1904)'s view has generated two main theories referred to as "religious economics" and "economics of religion", respectively. Iyer (2016:397) explained that "religious economics" concerns itself with how religion exerts reasonable amount of influence on economic behaviors or attitudes. This means that the main idea in religious economics is on how religious competition, religious regulation, new religious movements, and theological and institutional propagation of religious faith impact either directly or indirectly on economic behaviors and attitudes. However, in "economics of religion" interest is vested in using the tools and methods of economics to study religion as a dependable variable or to study religion as an in-dependable variable on other socio-economic outcomes. Economics of religion draws heavily upon ideas in public economics, labor economics, industrial organization, development economics, and international trade, and uses tools developed in game theory and econometrics (Iyer, 2016:397). The benefits of economics of religion and religious economics are overwhelming. For example, some scholars like Landes (1995), Norris and Inglehart (2004) have argued that when explaining countries' economic growth, we should evaluate the role of culture more deeply. Similarly, Iyer (2016:396) had identified three contributions of the economic studies of religion. First, they show how economic and statistical tools can be used to evaluate the role of religion in society; second, they continue to cast light on the economics of nonmarket behavior illustrating the role that norms, values, social capital and spiritual capital may play in influencing human

behaviors by affecting both beliefs and actions; and third, they show how culture more broadly, whether through religion or other kinds of cultural beliefs, affect economic systems. Others such as Friedman (2008), and Bowles (1995) emphasized that economists should be concerned about the moral consequences of economic growth when dealing with issues of the economy of any country. Moreover, Iyer (2016:407) also explained that since spiritual grace from religion is attained by demonstrating temporal success in one's calling through diligence, discipline, self-denial, and thrift, the Protestant ethic promoted a work ethic that increased savings, capital accumulation, entrepreneurial activity, and investment. An important consequence is that, it also encouraged human capital formation and literacy, all of which might have contributed to economic growth.

Adding to the above, Guiso, Sapienza, and Zingales (2003) have also shown in their survey on World Values Survey data between 1981 and 1997 that religious beliefs were associated with economic attitudes conducive to economic progress as measured by attitudes towards cooperation, government, women, legal rules, thrift, and the market economy, with different effects across religions, controlling for country fixed effects and individual characteristics. They also found out that religious people were more trusting, trusted others and governments more, and believed more that markets are fair, compared to those who were less religious. Most importantly, Benabou and Tirole (2006) have observed some interconnectedness between having more religious populations, high work effort, and its implications for low taxes and redistribution. Woodberry (2012:244) argued that conversionary Protestants influenced the development of democracy around the world because they espoused particular things that spurred democracy, including liberty, education, printing, newspapers, voluntary organizations and reforms associated with colonialism, creating preconditions for the success of democratic institutions. Furthermore, Friedman (2011:166) believed the evolution of economics as we know it today was influenced profoundly by changes in religious beliefs in the times in which Adam Smith lived. While Warner (1993:1049) averred that in the United States, organized religion flourished in an open market and that this idea was prompted by the fact that societal modernization went hand in hand with religious mobilization.

In all, emphasis need to be made that the relevance of Protestant ethic is that it recognizes the important role of religion particularly, the Christian religion in promoting socio-economic and democratic development of any nation. And since religion can promote socio-economic and democratic development, then it means it could also promote good governance which is the central focus of this paper.

Scholarly Conception of the Term Good Governance

According to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission, the terms “governance” and “good governance” are not strange in recent development literature. However, both words are increasingly being used with no precise definition. Bad governance on the contrary is being increasingly regarded as one of the root causes of all evil within our societies.

Syntactically, the term good governance is a synopsis of two English words: good and governance, and should be understood independently before providing its compound meaning. Consequently, the New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language, defines the term good to mean “satisfactory in quality or kind, striking in appearance, morally excellent, worthy, well-behaved, proper, pleasing, beneficial, favorable, reliable, considerable,” etc. (2010:544), and “governance” simply as “exercise of authority” (2010:546). Drawing from this dictionary meaning, the term good governance may casually refer to a government that is satisfactory to a greater number of the population, morally excellent in the management of public funds and other public properties, well-behaved with respect to upholding the rule of law, beneficial to the populace in regards to providing basic social amenities, reliable in matters of policy formulation and implementation and considerable to the plight of the common people.

Similarly, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights conceives good governance to include all processes of governing, the institutions, processes and practices through which issues of common concern are decided upon and regulated. Good governance in contrast to bad governance, adds a normative or evaluative attribute to the process of governing. Hence, it refers primarily to the process whereby public institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources and guarantee the realization of human rights (UNCOHR). Moreover, the International Monetary Fund's has identified two reasons why good governance is important to any nation. One, because governance covers all aspects of how a country is governed, including its economic policies, regulating framework, and adherence to the rule of law. Two, because poor governance offers more incentives and opportunities for corruption and corruption does not only undermine public trust but threatens and endangers market integrity, healthy competition and economic development (IMF). The implication of the above definitions is that good governance promotes rule of law and economic development while bad governance gives access to corrupt practices. This point is also clearly made by the World Bank (1992) which argues that good governance is central to creating and sustaining an environment which fosters strong and equitable development and it is essential complement to sound economic policies. In addition to this, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provides some indices of good governance to include participation, transparency, accountability,

effectiveness, equitability and rule of law. It also ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision making over the allocation of development resource. What the UNDP description attempt to portray is that good governance is all encompassing, constituting a wide range of roles and responsibilities expected of any given government. This explains why Biswas (2023) conceives it as the process of mobilizing the people of a country in the best direction possible as well as ensures people utilization of all the resources of the state for its citizens in a manner which promotes sustainable development. Regrettably, in Nigeria's governance system, this process of mobilizing people and resources in the best possible way appears grossly missing due to bad or corrupt leadership.

Furthermore, Bhattacharya (2013) has identified eight characteristics of good governance which all national and state governments should have. These are participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus oriented, equity and inclusiveness, effectiveness and efficiency and accountability. This implies that for any government to be so described, it must necessarily have, not some but all of these characteristics. Therefore, it is understandable as Awoniyi and Olasunkami (2020:152) observed that good governance dovetails on development indices, good social amenities and healthcare for the overall development of a nation. It is also the responsibility of leaders in every good government to remain committed in creating a system founded on justice and peace and which protects individual's human rights and civil liberties (Adamu, 2020:245). The relationship between good and bad governance is well noted by Aristotle who in his work argues that a good government governs for the common good and happiness of the people while in a bad one, the rulers govern for their own private and selfish gains. He also stresses that the good life and happiness which everybody desires and searches for cannot be realized in an arbitrary and unorganized system but in a well-ordered socio-political framework or structure anchored on good governance (Aristotle, 1962). The key emphasis in this Aristotle's view is that the responsibility of good governance rests primarily on the shoulders of those entrusted with political leadership. This point needs to be clearly made here because in the Nigerian narrative, those given political authority have always found a way of blaming ordinary citizens for their colossal leadership failure. Unfortunately, the consequences of lack of good governance as Elechi, argues is an index for political instability and societal decay and in Nigeria it has manifested itself in various ugly situations ranging from injustice, tribal expediency, consummate selfishness, inequality and non-adherence to the rule of law, ineffective and inefficient leadership, and lack of accountability, irresponsive and non-inclusive governance: to political instability and

intolerance. These situations are experienced in almost every facet of our lives, including the socio-political, economic and even religious atmospheres (Elechi, 2018:273).

Drawing inferences from all the above, it is safe to simply describe governance in this context as the exercise of political power to manage the affairs of a nation by those in political positions namely presidents, governors, and other top elected and appointed officials in Nigeria (Koko, 2020) and good governance as all processes of governing that lead to citizens' flourishing and fulfillment of their individual aspirations and goals in a manner that will promote socio-economic and political development. Sadly, the Nigerian situation as presently observed grossly lacks in all its ramifications the tools of good governance. This explains why the role of religion should be taken seriously in the quest to advance the course of good governance in the country. The next section will examine the interconnectedness between democracy, good governance and religious values.

Interconnectedness between Good Governance, Democracy and Religious Values

Like good governance, the term "democracy" has been variously conceived and defined in different ways. This is probably due to the widespread notion that democracy is the best form of government. According to the New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language, the term "democracy" could be defined as:

A theory of government which, in its purest form, holds that the state should be controlled by all the people, each sharing equally in privileges, duties, and responsibilities and each participating in person in the government, as in the city-states of ancient Greece (2010:341)

Etymologically, Becker and Raveloson noted that the term originated from two Greek words: *demos* meaning the people and *kratein* connoting to govern or to rule. Therefore, the term democracy literally translates as "government of the people or government of the majority" (2008:4).

One significant difference that emerges from the above definition between democracies on the one hand and monarchy, aristocracy and dictatorship on the other hand, is that the former is legitimized by voting through electioneering processes, while the later are achieved by inheritance, imposition or selection. Again, in democracy, the people are the primary and central reason for governance whereas in aristocracy, monarchy and dictatorship, power and authority reside on the political leader who in most cases sees himself as a demi-god. It is in line with these differences that Abraham Lincoln had provided one of the most widely accepted definition of democracy as "the government of the people, by the people and for the people." Following this, some proponents of democracy have hinged their untiring support for it on the ground of certain fundamental

principles which include promotion of human rights and freedom, seasonal elections, rule of law, separation of powers, fairness, equity, justice, etc., (Becker and Revaloson, 2008:4-13). Similarly, Dunn (1994) has highlighted some indispensable principles of democracy to include freedom and equality of all citizens, supremacy of the rule of law and a commitment to the progress of the political entity. In this light, a state can only be said to be democratic if such a state or society recognizes as Salami (2006) observed, the differences in human interests and strives to provide the basic structures required to meeting such needs using politics as the sphere of negotiation. Unfortunately, in the Nigerian democratic situation, some if not all of these basic tenets of a true democratic state are obviously lacking. Instead, what has emerged in Nigeria is a form of pseudo-democracy that allows high level corruption, impunity, poverty, unemployment, insecurity, political thuggery and religious bigotry to thrive.

Ordinarily with the advent of democracy from 1999 till date, the above indispensable and widely accepted principles of a true democratic society ought to have been entrenched in Nigeria's socio-economic and political affairs. Regrettably, this is not the case as the country has continued to be bedeviled by intractable challenges such as unemployment, adverse poverty, high level corruption, infrastructural decay and threatening insecurity. One that has appeared insurmountable and defied all military and security strategies is insecurity. In fact, the insecurity situation in the country has become hydra-headed and brought the country to a near standstill situation. For example, there is the problem of Boko-Haram, ISWAP, Banditry and farmers versus herders' conflict ravaging the northern region of the country, while kidnapping, cultism and brutal agitations have almost crippled the entire southern region of the country. Arguably, these intractable challenges occur because there is a marked absence of good governance in the country. Hence, it is safe to hypothesize that there is a strong connection between good governance and democracy. And this relationship is such that the former provides oxygen for the later to thrive. Perhaps, to be more precise is to argue that where good governance is lacking, the dividends of democracy may be difficult to achieve no matter how promising they may be as the situation in Nigeria has clearly demonstrated. In this way, what makes democracy to thrive in any given context is not simply because it is a system of government that has the capacity to guarantee and protect citizens' aspirations and welfare, but because its key drivers and in this case the political class upholds the rule of law and eschew all forms of corrupt practices that are inimical to true democratic tenets. Indeed, this is one major area that differentiates developed democracies of the western world from the pseudo-democracies in Africa and particularly Nigeria. In western democracies, political leaders adhere strictly to the rule of law while carrying out their political responsibilities, whereas in Nigeria, the rule of law is usually jettisoned by

political leaders for their personal gains. This possibly explains why the twenty-four years democracy in Nigeria has been characterized by endemic corruption, adverse poverty, massive unemployment, threatening insecurity, and to say the least infrastructural decay.

Suffice it to state that a second major factor that could possibly account for this retrogressive pattern of Nigeria's democracy aside the lack of good governance is the apparent lack of moral rectitude of political leaders which religion provides. This does not in any way suggest that those who take up political positions are atheists, that is, godless people. Instead, it presupposes that a greater number of those entrusted with political positions in Nigeria actually lack the requisite moral values which regulate individuals' intentions and aspirations when given public trust. For instance Smart (1969) and Spiro (1968) in their respective works have observed that every religion has a set of social and ethical norms which differ from society to society and which serve as guiding principles for actions and inactions of worshippers. Therefore, religion invariably is an instrument of morality in human society. Some of these moral values which Christianity offers and which have the tendency to engender good governance and drive home the tenets of democracy include respect for human dignity, fear of ultimate judgment, self-sacrifice/self-denial, godliness with contentment, and dignity of labor. Hence, it is safe to argue that these values are directly or indirectly related to good governance and democracy as we would demonstrate in the last section of this paper.

Religious Values that can Promote Good Governance in Nigeria's Democratic Landscape

As the case with other compound words, the term "religious values" is better described than defined. For example, in defining the word "religious", the Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (1960:715) described it as "the act of manifesting devotion to, or to have the influence of religion or to be godly." This implies that a religious person may be said to be one who believes strongly in the existence of a god or gods; committed to what he or she believes; and is strongly influenced by it. In this case, a religious person refers to a Christian who is committed to his or her faith. The same dictionary defines "value" as something desirable, worthy, or right, as a belief, standard, or precept like the values of a democratic society (1386). According to Kanu (n.d), the question of values is akin to human society and activities, and as such are the guiding principles found in any society. In other words, the value system of any society is the religious or cultural outlook of the people and the understanding of the belief and cultural systems. For example, in a typical traditional African society, cultural or social values were the regulating principles, guiding policies, or codes of conduct, which regulated the day to day activities of individuals in the society. This means that values may be social, cultural, political or

religious as the case may be but which are so crucial to the existence of any society or religious organization. Falade, Akinola and Adejube (2009:482) believed that values are a coherent set of attitude, behavior and action adopted and or evolved by a person, organization or society as a standard to guide its behavior and preferences in all situations. Thus, religious values as de Jong (2008:5-6) described are values and norms taught and adhered to by members of a particular religion based on a Holy Scripture such as the Bible or Quran. However, in keeping with the purpose of this paper, only religious values of Christianity shall be considered.

There are innumerable religious values taught by Christianity in Nigeria that can promote good governance in the current democratic dispensation but for lack of space only a few would be discussed.

One of the religious values identified in the Pentecostal ethic and spirit of capitalism of Weber (1904) that can stimulate good governance in Nigeria's democracy is *self-denial*. The term self-denial connotes an action that sacrifices one's own benefit for the good of others. It may also refer to a phenomenon in which personal benefits are deliberately and decisively forgone for purpose of national interest and economic development. Iyer (2016:407) listed self-denial amongst other religious values that were characteristic of the Protestant and Puritan denominations which promoted the work ethic that culminated into Western capitalism. Particularly, self-denial promoted a work that increased savings amongst Protestants and Puritans following the aftermaths of the sixteenth century Reformation. The importance of the virtue of self-denial if inculcated by citizens and political leaders in Nigeria is that it would afford public office holders the opportunity to see their positions of responsibility as opportunities for service rather than for accumulation of ill-gotten wealth to satisfy their personal desires. In this way, public office holders would be willing to make sacrifices for the common good of everyone. As Koko (2010:87) argues, self-sacrifice can help to create a society devoid of corruption, nepotism, bribery, antagonism, and insecurity and this could translate to good governance in Nigeria. It is not out of place to state that lack of self-denial by political leaders is one major reason why socio-economic development has been a far cry in Nigeria.

Another religious value enshrined in Weber's Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism that can promote good governance in Nigeria's current democratic dispensation is the value for *dignity of labour* which is usually driven by diligence and hard work. As stated earlier, Christian religious devotion had tilted towards a complete rejection of mundane affairs prior to the Reformation. This complete rejection of mundane affairs meant that the pursuits of all social, economic and political involvements were considered unholy and inconsistent with the pursuit of true Christian spiritual aspirations. However, with the

effects of the Reformation, some Christian denominations notably Calvinism and Puritanism accepted worldly activities and the rational pursuit of economic gain. This made believers in these denominations expressed their piety towards God through hard work and achievement in secular vocation. As a result, believers were motivated to work hard and become successful in business. Thus, in part Western capitalism developed as a result of the Protestant work ethic which allowed for pursuits of both spiritual aspirations- *otherworldly* and mundane affairs- *this-worldly*. Crossman observed that even after religion became less important in Western society, these norms of hard work and frugality remained, and continued to motivate individuals to pursue material wealth side by side with religiosity (Crossman, 2019). The Christian Bible puts it clearly that “those who refused to work should not eat” (1Thes. 4:11-12 and 2 Thess. 3:10-12). By this the Christian Bible endorses the spirit of hard work and rejects in totality all forms of idleness. Regrettably, as Maxey and Ozodo (2017:96) observed, the high value for material success has taken over the center stage of Nigeria's religiosity thereby displacing value for dignity of labour. Prior to independence, Nigeria arguably occupied a prominent place in the committee of nations because of her contributions to the world's economy that was primarily based on agriculture. However, with the rise of the oil boom in the 1970s, Nigeria's socio-economic landscape became drastically transformed and a culture of value for material possession overpowered the culture of the value for dignity of labour. Today, the culture of hard work has become a mirage in Nigeria. Desperation for quick money has become a normal phenomenon amongst politicians and ordinary citizens. The fact that the masses celebrate people who are wealthy over those who work hard has further worsened the situation. This in part accounts for the economic woes currently bedeviling the country. Therefore, for good governance to be achieved in Nigeria there is need for citizens and political leaders to embrace the ethic of hard work.

A third religious value that can also promote good governance is the virtue of *contentment*. The idea behind contentment is that of self-satisfaction with whatever one rightfully or lawfully owns rather than being notoriously insatiable with economic and material resources. A person who lacks the virtue of contentment would most likely abuse public trust and mismanage economic and material resources in his or her disposal. One of the main features of good governance is the proper management of public funds and other public properties. However, where contentment is grossly lacking, proper management of public funds and properties would be difficult. Generally, experience has shown that in Nigeria, public office holders are known for their insatiable quest for material acquisitions. This in parts accounts for why to win an election in Nigeria is tantamount to amass unprecedented wealth. Consequently, politicians would be willing to kill and maim their political opponents whom they consider as potential threat to them.

Furthermore, lack of contentment is also one of the main reasons why corruption is endemic and good governance has become a mirage in the country. It is not misleading to add that the present economic woes resulting from the endemic corruption in the country is a pointer to the fact that a greater proportion of citizens and leaders lack contentment. Hence, to promote good governance in Nigeria's current democratic dispensation, political leaders and citizens must embrace this virtue of contentment. The Christian Bible aptly expresses the importance of contentment when it teaches that "godliness and contentment is great gain" (1 Tim. 6:6, NIV).

Finally, the fear of ultimate judgment is another cardinal religious virtue that can facilitate good governance in Nigeria. In fact, the Christian Bible is replete with teachings that anticipate an ultimate judgment in which the righteous shall be rewarded with heaven- everlasting life and the wicked rewarded with hell- second death. (cf. Matt. 25:1ff; Rev. 21 and 22). The relevance of such Christian teaching to good governance is that it has the tendency of provoking right actions and good morals in political leaders and citizens which will eventually translate into socio-economic development. This fact is well captured by Barro and Mc Clearly (2003:773) and Mc Clearly and Barro (2006:67) who in their survey on the influence of religion on economic activities observed that belief in hell potentially contributed to economic growth. This happens because while belief in heaven could motivate citizens to embrace good morals, the fear of hell would certainly constrain them from doing what is wrong. Therefore, once citizens and political leaders have the fear of ultimate judgment as a religious virtue, the entrenchment of good governance becomes achievable. Other religious values that can promote good governance which we may not be able to discuss due to space are respect for human dignity, prudence, honesty, integrity, etc. These were all features of the Protestant ethic which encouraged hard work, increased savings, capital accumulation, entrepreneurial activity, and investments.

Conclusion

The role of religious values in promoting good governance in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. This is because there is a strong link between religious values, good governance and democracy. The interconnection between the three variables is such that religious values provide the background under which good governance and democracy thrives. This was clearly manifested in Weber's Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism in which certain religious beliefs impacted either directly or indirectly on economic behaviors and attitudes, eventually culminating in Western capitalism. Unfortunately, these religious values that have the tendency of promoting good governance as we have discussed are conspicuously lacking in the lives of political

leaders and citizens and accounts for the protracted bad governance bedeviling the current democratic dispensation. Therefore, for good governance to be entrenched in Nigeria's current democratic dispensation there is need for citizens and political leaders to embrace such virtues as: self-denial, contentment, dignity of labour, fear of ultimate judgment, etc. This can be achieved through introduction of aggressive and decisive religious education in all public settings.

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