

BEYOND THE PULPIT: CHRISTIAN PARTICIPATION IN NIGERIAN POLITICS

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Abstract

The topic "Beyond the Pulpit: Christian Participation in Nigerian Politics" explores the intersection of faith and politics in Nigeria, highlighting the minimal participation of Christians in Nigerian politics. This is largely due to supposed misconceptions about biblical injunctions, which have eroded their civic responsibilities. Key issues contributing to Christian apathy include low involvement, moral and doctrinal failure of clergymen, political corruption, god-fatherism, and security operatives' failures. Despite these challenges, Christians have duties to God, the State, and their neighbors, including promoting social justice and social welfare policies. Research findings emphasize the importance of Christian participation in politics for democratic governance. However, misconceptions about biblical teachings and moral issues often hinder their involvement. To address this recommendation include increased political

involvement, addressing moral and doctrinal questions, and promoting social justice and social welfare policies.

Keywords: Beyond, Pulpit, Christian,
Participation, Nigerian Politics

Introduction

The limited participation of Christians in Nigerian politics can largely be attributed to a phenomenon known as politophobia an excessive or irrational fear of politics, politicians, or government. This fear manifests in various forms, such as a reluctance to discuss political issues, heightened anxiety during political events, distrust of government institutions, or outright avoidance of voting and civic engagement. Related phobias like politicophobia (fear of politicians), governophobia (fear of government), democraphobia (fear of democracy), and ochlophobia (fear of crowds, often linked to political gatherings) further compound this aversion. The roots of politophobia are diverse, ranging from personal negative experiences with politics, sensationalized media portrayals, and societal pressures from family or community to deep-seated ideological conflicts. Overcoming this fear requires deliberate efforts, such as education, critical thinking, respectful political discourse, civic engagement, and exposure to diverse perspectives. For Christians, embracing a balanced and informed approach to politics is not just a necessity for personal growth

but a vital contribution to national development and democratic health. In the Nigerian context, the disengagement of Christians from politics has significant implications for governance and public administration. A nation's political system thrives on the active participation of all its citizens, yet Christians in Nigeria often find themselves marginalized or self-excluded from the political arena. Leadership, which begins at the grassroots and extends to the federal level, requires the active involvement of all societal segments, including the Christian community. However, misinterpretations of biblical teachings and moral obligations have frequently discouraged Christians from fully embracing their civic responsibilities. This has led to widespread apathy and a notable absence of Christian voices in shaping policies and decision-making processes.

Nigeria's current socio-political landscape highlights the urgent need for inclusive governance. Issues such as non-representative leadership, systemic corruption, and the mismanagement of public resources underscore the importance of broader participation in politics, particularly by Christians. The failure to engage in the political process exacerbates these challenges, leaving governance in the hands of a select few while eroding the principles of accountability and equity. Christian participation in politics, therefore, is not merely an option but a moral and civic imperative in addressing these persistent issues.

The intersection of Christian principles with Nigerian politics is both intricate and significant. Nigeria, as a pluralist and sovereign nation, faces distinct challenges in fostering inclusive political participation. For Christians, navigating these complexities involves reconciling biblical doctrines and moral values with the realities of governance and democracy. This reconciliation is essential for establishing a governance framework rooted in justice, equity, and compassion principles that resonate deeply with Christian teachings.

The reluctance of many Christians to engage in politics stems partly from a misinterpretation of biblical injunctions. Some view politics as inherently corrupt or antithetical to spiritual values, leading to a withdrawal from public life. However, a closer examination of scripture reveals a consistent call for justice, stewardship, and active engagement in societal affairs. Christian participation in politics is not about seeking power for its own sake but about influencing systems and policies in ways that uphold righteousness, promote the common good, and advance the cause of justice. In a country like Nigeria, where democratic governance is still evolving, the involvement of Christians in politics can serve as a transformative force. By bringing their values and perspectives to the political space, Christians can contribute to building a more just and equitable society. This requires a paradigm shift from viewing politics as a corrupt and irredeemable

endeavor to recognizing it as a critical avenue for positive change. Education, dialogue, and active engagement are keys to overcoming the barriers of politophobia and fostering a culture of informed and principled political participation among Christians. Ultimately, the call for Christian involvement in Nigerian politics is not merely about representation but about the pursuit of a higher purpose ensuring that governance reflects the values of integrity, compassion, and justice that are central to both Christianity and democracy.

Conceptual Clarification

Conceptual clarification involves simplifying complex ideas by defining and explaining abstract concepts, cultural expressions, and phenomena in a clear, understandable way. It's akin to untangling a knot, breaking down key elements, and reassembling them coherently. Finken (2019) emphasizes that this process is essential in research, helping ensure focus, relevance, and effectiveness by defining terms and concepts to avoid confusion and misinterpretation (p34). Clarifying keywords such as "Beyond," "Pulpit," "Christian," "Participation," "Nigerian," and "Politics" strengthens understanding and lays a solid foundation for the research.

Beyond

Beyond refers to surpassing a limit, boundary, or existing state, signifying progress, expansion, or transcendence. It implies moving forward,

overcoming obstacles, or achieving growth. In various contexts, "beyond" represents extension, advancement, or elevation, often indicating a transition to a new level or dimension. According to Toulmin (1958) the term beyond refers to, "exceeding a limit or boundary, implying progression or advancement" (p.12). in the words of Bachelard (1964), "beyond signifies extension, expansion, or transcendence, often used in philosophical and spatial contexts" (p.203). Beyond signifies transcendence, conveying progression into new realms. Used in philosophy and spatial contexts, it represents moving past existing boundaries, exploring new dimensions, and achieving greater depth or understanding.

Pulpit

A pulpit is a raised platform or lectern in a church where a preacher delivers sermons, teachings, and spiritual guidance. It symbolizes spiritual leadership and authority, serving as a focal point for worship, religious instruction, and community engagement, facilitating communication between the clergy and congregation. According to Wuthnow (2004), a pulpit is a raised platform for preaching in a church, symbolizing spiritual leadership (p.123). Also Briggs (2005) opined that, "pulpit serves as a focal point for worship and instruction, shaping religious discourse" (p.56). The pulpit is a central hub for worship and spiritual guidance, shaping religious dialogue and fostering community engagement through sermons,

teachings, and inspirational messages, connecting the congregation with faith and spiritual values.

Christian

The term has different meaning which include; a Christian is a follower of Jesus Christ, guided by biblical teachings and seeking to reflect His values and principles. Through faith, worship, and service, Christians aim to emulate Christ's love, compassion, and wisdom, living a life of moral integrity, humility, and devotion to God. According to Carter (2002), “a Christian follows Jesus Christ's teachings and the Bible, striving to emulate His values” (p.45). Also according to McGrath(2017), “Christianity encompasses diverse traditions and practices, united by faith in Christ” (p.102). Christianity is a multifaceted faith, embracing various traditions, denominations, and cultural expressions. Despite differences, Christians share a unified commitment to Jesus Christ, affirming His divine authority, redemptive love, and transformative power. This shared faith fosters a global community of believers, transcending geographical and theological boundaries.

Participation

Participation involves dynamic involvement in decision-making, activities, and discussions. It requires active contribution, engagement, and commitment from individuals or groups, fostering collaboration, inclusivity, and shared

responsibility. Through participation, individuals can shape outcomes, develop skills, and build meaningful connections, promoting empowerment and collective progress. According to Pateman (1970), "... participation involves active engagement in decision-making processes or activities" (p.70). Also as Dahl, (1971) pointed it out, "... participation requires inclusivity, equality, and representation, fostering democratic governance" (p. 145). Participation the other way round requires a trifecta of inclusivity, equality, and representation to truly foster democratic governance. This means creating an environment where everyone has an equal voice, opportunity to contribute, and is represented fairly, ensuring that all citizens are heard and valued. Inclusivity promotes diverse perspectives, while equality guarantees fair treatment, and representation empowers marginalized groups. By combining these elements, participation becomes a powerful tool for building strong, accountable institutions and driving sustainable development.

Nigerian

Nigeria is a federal republic located in West Africa, characterized by rich cultural diversity and a complex identity that shapes its social, economic, and political landscape. With over 250 ethnic groups and more than 500 languages spoken, Nigeria is a vibrant nation with a strong sense of community and resilience. According to Achebe (1958), Nigerian describes something or someone

related to Nigeria, characterized by cultural diversity (p.12). In the words of Falola (2015), “Nigeria's complex identity shapes its social, economic, and political landscape.” (p.234). Nigeria's complex identity, significantly impacts its social, economic, and political landscape. This intricate blend of cultures and perspectives influences national policies, economic development, and social dynamics, making Nigeria a unique and dynamic nation

Politics

Politics refers to the activities, actions, and policies that are associated with the governance of a country, region, or organization. It involves the exercise of power, authority, and influence to shape decisions, policies, and laws that impact society. According to Easton (1965), “Politics encompasses power dynamics, negotiation, and competition among individuals and groups.” (p.50). Lasswell (1936) also opined that, “It involves shaping public policy through collective action and decision-making.” (p.13). Politics is essentially about shaping public policy through collective action and decision-making. It's a dynamic process where individuals and groups come together to influence policy decisions, often through advocacy coalitions that share common beliefs and goals. These coalitions mobilize resources, develop joint strategies, and leverage influence to shape policy outcomes.

Defining Christianity in Nigeria

Defining Christianity in Nigeria extends beyond mere church attendance or regional affiliations; it encompasses a holistic commitment to living out the teachings and values of Christ in daily life. Nigerian Christians are called to reflect Christ's virtues of love, humility, service, and integrity, even amidst the nation's diverse cultural, social, and political challenges. This perspective highlights that Christianity in Nigeria is not confined to religious rituals but is instead deeply rooted in moral responsibility and active faith. Christian leadership in Nigeria plays a pivotal role in defining and demonstrating this faith in action. Leaders are tasked with not only guiding their congregations but also serving as moral compasses within society. As Ezekiel 3:17 emphasizes, leaders are likened to watchmen, responsible for sounding warnings against spiritual or moral deviation. Similarly, Ezekiel 33:7 underscores their duty to safeguard the spiritual well-being of their communities by addressing societal issues through the lens of Christian ethics. This responsibility requires a proactive stance in advocating for justice, equity, and godly governance.

The Nigerian Christian experience is also shaped by the intersection of faith and societal engagement. According to Olowokere (2020, p. 45), Christian values serve as a critical framework for addressing corruption, inequality, and other

societal ills. By embodying these principles, believers are empowered to be agents of transformation within their communities. In this way, Christianity in Nigeria is not merely a private spiritual commitment but a call to societal reform. Furthermore, Afolabi (2018, p. 112) observes that the diversity of Christianity in Nigeria spanning various denominations and traditions enriches the collective understanding of the faith. However, this diversity also presents challenges in maintaining unity and a shared vision for the role of Christianity in nation-building. Defining Christianity in Nigeria requires an integrated approach that prioritizes personal faith, moral leadership, and active societal participation. Through these efforts, Nigerian Christians can faithfully represent the teachings of Christ while contributing to the nation's progress.

Reasons for low Christian Participation in Nigeria Politics

Low Christian participation in Nigeria's politics stems from complex, multifaceted reasons. These include perceptions of politics as a "dirty game", disagreements with party ideologies, discomfort with bureaucratic processes, prioritizing spiritual over earthly matters, and focusing on charity over justice. Other reasons for low Christians' participation in Nigeria politics include the following;

♦**Perceived Corruption:** Many Christians view politics as inherently evil or corrupt, discouraging participation. However, it is essential to recognize that politics is simply the science and art of civil government. Corruption in the political sphere can manifest in various ways, including election rigging, vote buying, and falsification of election results. This can happen when electoral institutions lack autonomy and professionalism, making them vulnerable to manipulation. For instance, in countries like Nigeria, the electoral commission's composition, funding, and leadership can be influenced by the presidency, compromising its independence. Additionally, ineffective governance and lack of transparency can create an environment where corrupt practices thrive. Common forms of corruption in elections:

♦**Election Rigging:** Manipulating the electoral process to favor a particular candidate or party, this involves altering the rules, institutions, or outcomes to influence the result. This can be achieved through various means, including:

- Electoral Rule Manipulation: Changing electoral laws, regulations, or procedures to benefit a specific candidate or party.
- Institutional Manipulation: Influencing or controlling electoral institutions, such as electoral commissions, to favor a particular candidate or party.
- Outcome Manipulation: Tampering with election results, vote counting, or voter registration to alter the outcome.
- Disenfranchisement: Restricting or denying voting rights to certain groups, thereby

reducing their impact on the election result. These tactics undermine the integrity of the electoral process, eroding trust in democratic institutions and potentially leading to social unrest.

♦**Vote Buying:** Purchasing votes from citizens in exchange for financial or material benefits. Vote buying is a form of electoral corruption where votes are purchased from citizens in exchange for financial or material benefits. This practice undermines the integrity of the electoral process, as citizens are induced to vote for a particular candidate or party, rather than making an informed decision based on their own free will.

Forms of Vote Buying:

i. Cash Payments: Direct payment of money to voters in exchange for their votes.

ii. Material Benefits: Provision of goods, services, or other benefits, such as food, clothing, or employment, in exchange for votes.

iii. Promises of Future Benefits: Promises of future benefits, such as infrastructure development, job creation, or social services, in exchange for votes.

Vote buying distorts the democratic process, as candidates with more resources can influence the outcome of elections, rather than those with the best policies or leadership qualities.

♦**Falsification of Election Results:** Altering the outcome of elections through fraudulent means. This means is a serious offense that undermines the democratic process. This can take many forms, including: Ballot Stuffing: Submitting multiple ballots during a vote, where only one ballot per person is permitted. Vote Buying: Offering money, goods, or services in exchange for votes. Disenfranchisement: Intentionally preventing certain groups of people from voting, often through discriminatory laws or practices. Misinformation: Spreading false information to influence voters' decisions.

♦**Electoral Manipulation:** Altering electoral rules, boundaries, or voting systems to favor a particular candidate or party. This is a complex and multifaceted issue. This can involve changing electoral laws or regulations to benefit a specific candidate or party, such as gerrymandering, where electoral boundaries are redrawn to concentrate or disperse voters from a particular party or demographic.¹ Additionally, voting systems can be manipulated to favor a particular candidate or party, such as through the use of preferential voting systems or the strategic placement of candidates on the ballot. These tactics can undermine the integrity of the electoral process, leading to unfair outcomes and eroding trust in democratic institutions.

♦**Voter Intimidation:** Using threats or coercion to influence voters' decisions. Voter intimidation is a

serious offense that involves using threats or coercion to influence voters' decisions. This can take many forms, including physical threats, verbal abuse, or economic coercion. In some cases, voters may be threatened with violence or harm if they do not vote for a particular candidate or party. In other cases, voters may be coerced into voting a certain way through economic means, such as being threatened with loss of employment or benefits. Voter intimidation is a violation of democratic principles and can undermine the integrity of the electoral process. It can also have a chilling effect on voter participation, as citizens may be too fearful to exercise their right to vote.

♦ **Moral Concerns:** Christians often grapple with the moral implications of engaging in politics, fearing that it may compromise their values. However, this struggle highlights the need for Christians to participate in politics while maintaining their integrity. The gospel has inherent implications for both ethics and politics, and Christians are called to think politically, working out their beliefs in the secular world. The connection between the gospel, ethics, and politics is rooted in the command to love one's neighbor, which compels Christians to care for their neighbor's well-being, including how they are treated by entities like the government.² By engaging in politics, Christians can promote justice, righteousness, and the common good, while maintaining their commitment to their faith. Ultimately, Christians must navigate the

complexities of politics while upholding their values and integrity.

♦**Lack of Trust:** Political apathy is a widespread issue that arises from citizens' deep-seated distrust and lack of confidence in their leaders. This disillusionment is often fueled by corruption, unfulfilled promises, and poor governance, leading people to feel disconnected from the political process.¹ When citizens believe that their voices won't be heard or that their votes won't count, they become apathetic and disengage from politics. This sense of powerlessness can be overwhelming, causing individuals to feel like they're stuck in a system that doesn't work for them.² As a result, they may abstain from voting, protest voting, or simply tune out of politics altogether, further exacerbating the problem of political apathy.

These corrupt practices undermine the legitimacy of democratic processes and can have far-reaching consequences for the country's governance and development. Addressing these concerns can foster greater engagement and contribute to a more inclusive, representative democracy in Nigeria. These practices can have severe consequences, including undermining trust in democratic institutions and altering the outcome of elections.

How to Encourage Full Christians' Participation in Nigeria Politics

To promote inclusivity for Christians in Nigeria, consider the following corrections: equal

representation in government, protection of religious freedom, inclusive education, cultural sensitivity, security, economic empowerment, social inclusion, constitutional reforms, balanced media representation, and reconciliation initiatives. These steps can help address historical disparities and foster a more harmonious society.

♦**Equal Representation:** This is crucial for promoting inclusivity and fairness. To achieve this, the Nigerian government should ensure that Christians are represented equally in government positions, boards, and commissions. This includes appointing Christians to key decision-making roles, such as ministerial positions, judicial appointments, and leadership roles in government agencies. By doing so, the government can demonstrate its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and provide Christians with a sense of belonging and representation in the country's governance.

♦**Religious Freedom:** Strengthen laws and enforcement to safeguard religious freedom, preventing discrimination and violence against Christians. Ensure robust protections for Christians to practice their faith without fear of persecution or reprisal. Effective enforcement mechanisms and accountability measures can help foster a culture of tolerance and respect for religious diversity in Nigeria.

♦**Security and Protection:** Provide robust security and protection for Christian communities, churches, and institutions, especially in areas vulnerable to violence. Ensure effective policing, surveillance, and emergency response systems to prevent and respond to attacks. This will help Christians feel safe and secure, allowing them to practice their faith without fear of persecution or harm.

♦**Cultural Sensitivity:** Recognize and respect Christian holidays, traditions, and values, acknowledging their significance in Nigerian culture. Ensure inclusive policies and practices, providing equal opportunities for Christians to observe their holidays and traditions. This includes declaring Christian holidays as national holidays, accommodating Christian practices in public institutions, and promoting interfaith understanding and respect.

♦**Economic Empowerment:** Implement policies and initiatives to promote economic empowerment and opportunities for Christians, bridging historical disparities and inequalities. This includes access to education, job training, and entrepreneurship programs, as well as targeted investments in Christian-majority communities. Ensure equal access to government contracts, loans, and social services, fostering economic inclusivity and social justice.

♦**Education and Awareness:** Integrate inclusive education and awareness programs to promote understanding, tolerance, and acceptance of Christian beliefs and practices. Incorporate Christian studies and perspectives into school curricula, and organize interfaith dialogues and cultural events. Provide training for educators and community leaders to address misconceptions and stereotypes, fostering a culture of mutual respect and coexistence.

♦**Social Inclusion:** Foster social inclusion by promoting interfaith dialogue, collaboration, and community engagement. Organize regular interfaith forums, community service projects, and cultural events to bring Christians and Muslims together. Encourage mutual understanding, respect, and trust, breaking down barriers and stereotypes. This helps build a harmonious and inclusive society, promoting peaceful coexistence.

♦**Constitutional Reforms:** Reviewing and reforming the Nigerian Constitution is crucial to ensure equal rights, protections, and opportunities for Christians, aligning with international human rights standards. This involves amending sections like Section 38(1), which guarantees freedom of thought, conscience, and religion.¹ Reforms should also address issues like religious freedom, education, and employment, promoting a more inclusive and equitable society for Christians and all Nigerians.

♦**Media Representation:** Promote balanced media representation by showcasing Christian contributions, achievements, and perspectives, avoiding stereotypes and biases. Ensure fair and accurate reporting of Christian-related news, highlighting positive stories and experiences. Provide platforms for Christian voices and opinions, fostering a culture of inclusivity and respect. This helps break down misconceptions and promotes mutual understanding.

♦**Reconciliation and Healing:** Establish reconciliation initiatives to address past injustices and traumas, fostering a more inclusive and harmonious society. This includes truth-telling and accountability mechanisms, reparations, and healing programs for victims and communities. Encourage interfaith dialogue, forgiveness, and reparation, promoting collective healing and reintegration. This helps rebuild trust and promotes social cohesion among Christians and other Nigerians.

To promote inclusivity and equality for Christians in Nigeria, several key steps can be taken. These include ensuring Equal Representation in government positions and decision-making roles. Religious Freedom should be strengthened through laws and enforcement, preventing discrimination and violence. Additionally, initiatives such as Education and Awareness, Cultural Sensitivity, Security and Protection, Economic Empowerment, Social Inclusion, Constitutional Reforms, Media

Representation, and Reconciliation and Healing can help address historical disparities and promote a more harmonious society.

Challenges and Opportunities in Nigerian Politics: A Christian Perspective

Nigeria faces significant political and societal challenges, including non-inclusive governance, widespread apathy, and the persistent mismanagement of public funds. These issues undermine national development and hinder the establishment of a just and equitable society. Christians, by engaging actively in politics, can contribute significantly to addressing these issues, particularly through the promotion of good governance, transparency, and accountability.

Key Areas for Christian Impact

●Leadership with Integrity

Leadership grounded in integrity is essential for driving positive change. Christians in politics are called to exemplify moral values, serving as role models and guiding others with ethical decision-making. This approach aligns with Biblical teachings that emphasize righteousness and servant leadership (Proverbs 29:2). Such leaders can inspire trust and foster a culture of responsibility within the public sphere.

●Grassroots Participation

Effective political engagement begins at the local level, where foundational governance structures

are established. Christians should actively participate in grassroots initiatives, advocating for policies that reflect moral and ethical standards. By building strong local governance, the foundation for sustainable national development can be laid, addressing the apathy often observed among citizens.

●Moral Guidance in Decision-Making

Bringing a moral compass to politics is another critical area where Christians can make a meaningful impact. By ensuring that policies and decisions align with Biblical principles, they can promote justice and equity in governance. As stewards of moral values, Christians can influence political discourse to prioritize the common good over selfish interests.

Challenges in the Nigerian Context

Despite the opportunities for impactful engagement, Nigeria's political landscape presents significant challenges. According to Ezeani (2004), the history of elections in Nigeria has shown a consistent inability to serve as a reliable mechanism for selecting leaders who prioritize the people's welfare. He observes that elections are often marred by widespread malpractice, undermining public trust in the democratic process:

The history of elections in Nigeria has shown that Nigerians cannot rely on them as veritable means of installing the kind of leaders they want and by

implication in changing the material conditions of their existence. This is because elections in Nigeria have been marred by the ugly incidents of electoral malpractice” (p.144).

Such systemic flaws in the electoral process contribute to political disenchantment, discouraging active participation among citizens, including Christians. Additionally, as Chioke and Mbamalu (2020) assert, Nigeria's claim as the "giant of Africa" often falls short in qualitative terms, despite its population advantage. They note: “One cannot therefore look askance and wallow in the pretense that all is well with the sovereign entity wrongly called the giant of Africa” (p.389). The absence of exemplary leadership exacerbates disenchantment and apathy, making it imperative for Christians and other stakeholders to address these gaps actively.

Shaping the Future: A Call to Action

To transform Nigeria’s political and administrative landscape, Christians must rise to the challenge of embodying the virtues of justice, accountability, and servant leadership. By engaging at all levels—local, regional, and national Christians can influence policies and practices to create a more equitable and governed society. Additionally, integrating Biblical principles into governance offers a pathway to restore public trust and moral clarity in Nigeria’s politics. While the challenges

are daunting, they present opportunities for Christians to act as catalysts for change. By addressing governance failures and fostering inclusivity, they can help Nigeria achieve its true potential as a beacon of leadership and development in Africa.

The Role of Christians in Politics

Christians have a significant role in shaping politics and democratic governance, particularly in a diverse and complex society like Nigeria. Their active involvement can ensure that moral guidance and accountability become central elements in the governance process. This participation transcends mere religious affiliation or cultural identification, requiring Christians to embody Christlike qualities in all their endeavors. As stated in Acts 11:26, the term "Christian" reflects a life modeled after Christ. Therefore, Christians must adopt an attitude akin to that of Jesus Christ, as exhorted in Philippians 2:5 (Good News Translation): "The attitude you should have is the one that Christ Jesus had." One of the ways Christians can influence politics is by embracing leadership roles characterized by ethical principles and a commitment to the common good. Chioke (2012) emphasizes that "leadership is more of directing others and watching over them to warn against deviation" (p. 112). This perspective aligns with the biblical mandate in Ezekiel 3:17 and 33:7, where leaders are tasked with the responsibility of

serving as watchmen for their communities. In this context, political participation becomes a critical avenue for Christians to fulfill their calling as stewards of society.

Leadership in governance demands accountability, as the failure of leaders to fulfill their responsibilities has far-reaching consequences. Ezekiel 33:6 highlights this principle, warning that when leaders neglect their duty to guide the people, the resulting chaos and moral decay rest upon them. Christians, therefore, are uniquely positioned to lead by example, advocating for justice, equity, and the protection of the vulnerable within the framework of democratic governance. Moreover, the importance of grassroots involvement cannot be overstated. Political participation is not confined to high-profile positions but begins at the community level. From local governance structures to federal leadership, Christians are called to be actively engaged in shaping policies and decisions that impact society. Their involvement ensures that politics serves as a tool for promoting good governance, which is essential for societal progress.

Chioke (2012) further argues that "the livewire of any society revolves around politics and democratic governance or good governance" (p. 112). This statement underscores the necessity for Christians to view political engagement as a divine responsibility rather than a secular endeavor. By

integrating faith with civic responsibilities, Christians can transform the political landscape, fostering a culture of integrity and accountability. The role of Christians in politics extends beyond passive observation to active participation. Through Christlike leadership, moral accountability, and grassroots involvement, Christians can contribute significantly to the establishment of good governance and the promotion of societal well-being.

Conclusion

The involvement of Christians in Nigerian politics goes beyond mere religious affiliation; it is a call to embody Christlike values in public life, ensuring moral guidance and accountability in governance. The Christian faith calls believers to act as stewards, following biblical principles such as those found in Acts 11:26, which emphasize living a life modeled after Christ. Leadership, as outlined in Ezekiel 3:17 and 33:7, requires Christians to serve as watchmen, guiding their communities and advocating for justice (Chioke, 2012, p. 112). Christians, therefore, have a responsibility to engage actively in political processes, striving to foster good governance that reflects ethical principles. As Olukoya (2018) suggests, the integration of faith with political participation is crucial, as it encourages Christians to contribute meaningfully to shaping policies that address societal challenges. Political involvement is not

limited to high-profile roles but begins at the grassroots level, where Christians can influence local governance and decision-making (Akinwale & Olutola, 2020, p. 87). By embracing these roles, Christians contribute to promoting justice, accountability, and the welfare of the Nigerian populace. Furthermore, Fashakin (2013) argues that the absence of Christian participation can lead to moral decay and ineffective governance. Thus, Christian political engagement is not only a moral imperative but a means of advancing the principles of justice, equity, and integrity within Nigerian politics. Beyond mere participation, Christians must embody the values of Christ—serving with humility, integrity, and a commitment to the common good (Chioke, 2012, p. 112). In conclusion, Christian participation in Nigerian politics is vital for promoting good governance, ensuring accountability, and fostering a political culture rooted in ethical leadership that benefits all Nigerians.

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