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Keywords: *sustainable development, development, christian ethics, nigeria.*

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Christian Ethical Values and the Quest for Sustainable National Development in Nigeria

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I. Introduction

Development is an issue of concern to individuals, government as well as corporate bodies at all levels. When it is elusive in any society, people are considered to be suffering, while such a society is adjudged to be a failed one. Since failure is never desired, efforts are made to ensure that development is a reality. Achieving development is not an end itself but a means to an end, hence the clamour or need for sustainable development. Literature is replete with works on various aspects of development and sustainable development across the globe. Thus, there exist studies on the subject matter from political, economic, medical and technological perspectives. This paper attempts to contribute to scholarship in the context of Christian ethics, which has not been adequately paid attention to in the previous studies by espousing the relevance of Christian ethical values to sustainable development. The justification for this hinges on the fact that though Nigeria is not a mono- religious society, yet many policy formulators are Christians. Thus, it can be inferred as would be established later that underdevelopment in Nigeria is a bye product of the neglect of Christian moral values on the parts of Christian leaders and followers.

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II. Conceptual Analysis of Development and Sustainable Development

The term development is better explained than defined as it has various meanings depending on the context in which it is discussed. Development is a state or condition - static; as well as a process - dynamic. It is a multi-dimensional process involving reorganisation and reorientation of entire economic and social system. Thus, we can think of the concept in two broad dimensions namely; economic dimension, which was dominant during the post colonial era and the humanistic dimension, which served as an apology to the economic dimension Development can be understood also as a process of improving the quality of human lives with emphasis on the following as indicated by Todaro:

1. Raising people's levels that is, income and consumption, levels of food, medical services and education through relevant growth processes.
2. Creating conditions conducive to the growth of people self-esteem through the establishment of social, economic and political systems, which promote human dignity and respect.
3. Increasing people's freedom to choose by enlarging the range of their choice variables such as varieties of goods and services. [1]

According to Dudley Seers, the questions to ask about a country's development are: What has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all these have declined, there is an evidence of development in the country concerned. The reason being that, these factors are considered as the central challenges that countries battle with; and try to at least minimize. Invariably, a rise in any of them disqualifies that society from being called developed.[2]

Development must represent the whole array of change by which an entire social system attends to the diverse basic needs and desires of individual and social groups within that system; and moves away from unsatisfactory life condition towards a life that is materially and spiritually better. Since human beings are fundamental elements in development, Human Development Index (HDI) provides an alternative measure of economic well-being of nations that may not necessarily reflect the usual measure of per capita

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income. This is understood as the people centred alternative of development and it is based on the belief that all humans can reach their potentials. Development involves empowering groups and individuals to make their own choices. Individuals and social movements are the agents of change.[3] Human development index is therefore a composite of the following indices:

- Life expectancy at birth
- Education attainment as measured by mean years of schooling and adult literacy
- Standard of living as measured by per capita income.[4]
- For any society to be described as developed, the following attributes must be noticeable:
- High level of living manifesting qualitatively and quantitatively in form of high income, adequate housing, good health, unlimited access to education, low infant mortality as well as life expectancy.
- High level of productivity, which is made possible because of the presence of complementing factors such as physical capital and experienced management.
- Low rate of population growth and dependency burden. In this case, children are no longer seen as investment that will yield dividend.
- Low level of unemployment and underemployment. This can be attained when a country is developing as there is usually proper utilisation of labour resources, which raises the standard of living, enhances productivity and further boosts the income generating capacity of the country.
- Declining share of agriculture in total output. A developed country in known for advanced technologies, good organisations and high quality physical and human inputs, which will engender commercialisation of agriculture and ultimately industrialisation.
- Liberalisation, independence and invulnerability in international relations. One of the attributes of a state is sovereignty and independence. Any country that possesses the characteristics earlier mentioned will no doubt become automatically liberated, independent and better placed on the politics of highly unequal distribution of economic and political power between rich and poor nations.[5]

In contrast, a developing country is characterised by low level of labour productivity, high level of population growth and dependency burdens, high and rising levels of unemployment and underemployment as well as significant dependence on agricultural production and primary products exports.[6]

Historically the concept of development is as old as civilization. Its extensive use in western societies from Greco-Roman civilization to the late 19th century as a generic construct that designates the most varied aspects related to humanity's well-being, however, made the concept come closer to that of a doctrine. In contemporary time, Social Darwinism has been reclaimed to explain development as a process of evolutionary succession in stages, where human societies leave rudimentary model until they arrive at a western industrialised civilization consumption model, which is considered unique and universal.[7]

Development is also seen in light of modernisation. In this sense, modernisation refers to a model of progressive transition from a pre-modern or traditional society to a modern society. This originated from the ideas of Max Weber and it provided the basis for the modernisation paradigm developed by Talcott Parsons. Theoretically, modernisation looks at the internal factors of a country while assuming that with assistance, a traditional country can be brought to development in the same manner more developed countries have been.[8]

III. Sustainable Development

The term sustainable development has been explained in different ways therefore, there is no consensus among scholars in respect of its exact meaning. The Brundlant's report of the World Commission on Environment and Development of the United Nations 1987, defines sustainable development as the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs. This has become the most often quoted definition of the concept. The content varies according to culture, time and perspective and can only be properly understood by adopting the integrative approach involving ecological, social, political and economic consideration. Thus, it can be conceptually broken into three parts namely, environmental sustainability, economic sustainability and socio-political sustainability.[9] In light of this, Hasna sees sustainability as a process, which tells of a development of all aspects of human life affecting sustenance. It emphasises conflict resolution and involves pursuit of economic prosperity, environmental quality and social equity.[10] Sustainable development is an eclectic concept thereby having a wide array of views under its umbrella.

Alternatively, it is defined as the development that is likely to achieve lasting satisfaction of human needs and improvement of the quality of life and encompasses the following:

- Help for the poorest who are left with no option but to destroy their environment to survive.
- Idea of self-reliant development with natural resources constraints.
- Cost effective development using different economic criteria to the traditional, that is to say development should not degrade the environment.

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- Important issues of health control, appropriate technologies, food self-reliance, clean water and shelter for all.
- People centred activities, that is, human beings are the resources in the concept.[11]

As opined by Donald Brooks, the paradigm or worldview emerging around this concept recognised the need to ensure and facilitate the following: Integration of conservation and development, maintenance of ecological integrity; satisfaction of basic human needs, achievement of equity and social justice as well as provision of social self-determination and cultural diversity.[12]

For the purpose of this piece, we shall be concerned with economic and socio-political sustainability with emphasis placed on the level at which Nigeria can be said to be developing in the socio-political context and the role Christian ethical values can play in ensuring development and ways of sustaining it amidst social and economic upheavals, which have become a recurring phenomenon in the country. From the foregoing, it can be unequivocally adduced that development is a precursor to sustainable development, hence, the expediency of the clarification of the two related terms – development and sustainable development. In Nigeria today, one may wish to ask if there is any noticeable development before its sustainability is conceived.

IV. Development Issues in Nigeria

From all indications, development is a hypothesis in the 21st century Nigeria. It is becoming increasingly illogical to think Nigeria is a developing society as every indicator of development has almost disappeared and what is obvious is retrogression. The attributes of underdevelopment earlier mentioned explain the true situation of things in the country. In practical sense, there is obvious poverty in Nigeria. More than 50% of the population are ravaged by poverty.[13] This is a paradox given the economic report released by World Bank in 2014, which placed Nigeria as one of countries with highest economic growth rates in the world averaging 7.4%. In spite of this, poverty still remains significant at 33.1%.[14] According to a UNICEF report released on 29 June, 2016, about 69 million children are estimated to die, while 167 million will live in poverty by 2030[15]. Factors responsible for poverty have been identified by scholars, these ranges from corruption to bad governance as established by Olukunle[16], Akanmidu[17], and Familusi and Oke.[18]

Another indicator of underdevelopment in Nigeria is unemployment as well as underemployment. There are many universities and degree awarding institutions that produce graduates every year with no provision for how they can be gainfully employed. This has pushed many of them to take up menial jobs that should be meant for those who are not educated. Recently, the federal government wanted to recruit ten thousand police men and about 750 thousand people applied. This is just one of several cases of such. The rate of unemployment was put at 12.1% by the end of March 2016 from 10.4% by the end of the last quarter of 2015[19] According to another source, 80% of Nigerian youths are believed to be unemployed.[20] Worse still, several businesses have collapsed, while factories have metamorphosed into churches.

There is high level of infrastructure decay in Nigeria as roads have become death trap, while prisons are not habitable because they are not well funded. As population increases, one would expect number of prisons to increase but this is not the case. Consequently, existing ones are overcrowded.[21] One may not be wrong to say that zoos in developed countries are better equipped than prisons in Nigeria. The health care delivery system presents a more pathetic scenario. Equipments have become obsolete, while training of medical personnel is inadequate. Consequently, several avoidable deaths are recorded on daily basis. Health workers embark on strike at regular intervals. It is worrisome that those who are responsible for the decay do travel abroad for treatment due to the level of the rot in the system. An example is that of a former Governor now a serving Senator who spent billions of naira to build a hospital in his state but went to a foreign country for medical when he had a minor accident.[22] Water and electricity are rarely supplied. In fact, an average Nigerian now performs the role of a local government as he constructs road to his house, digs well or sinks borehole and provide electricity (light) through generator, inverter or solar. Despite the failure of the government to provide necessities of life for citizen, it has never failed to mount pressure on them to pay taxes and other levies. This is the reason water and electricity bills are circulated even when there is no supply.

What can one say about the falling standard of education? Several unemployable graduates parade the streets of Nigeria. How well-trained were those who trained them in schools? How well-equipped are laboratories and libraries? Many governors are busy building bridges and constructing roads at the neglect of schools. How well are universities in Nigeria faring in world ranking?[23] Worse still, establishment of universities has been taken to the realm of politics. Of course, one logically reasons that existing ones should be equipped before venturing into establishing new ones that are more or less like advanced secondary schools. An unpalatable joke was posted on facebook sometime ago when a graduate at the NYSC orientation camp described herself as a 'Corpse' instead of 'Corper'[24]. This had long been noticed by Osundare who believes that the University system is a collapsing structure because mediocrity has replaced competence, the

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intellectual space is thereby populated with half-baked and barely literate 'Doctors'.[25] The fact cannot be denied that nothing is working in Nigeria. Therefore, branding the country, 'a failed state' cannot be said to be hyperbolic. The expectation of Nigerians from the government that came on board in 2015 has been dashed, hence, a new slogan by many Nigerians, 'APC! One chance!' while the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has also adopted 'change the change' as its slogan. It is incontrovertible that the transformation agenda of the past governments and the change mantra of the present one have proved to be non-effectual. The frustration people experience everyday is threat to life expectancy, which at present stands at 55 years for female and 54 years for male. Though this is an improvement over what obtained some years back, it can be argued that nobody may want to die at 55 and 54. Life expectancy was 52 years in 2011 and it was 17th lowest, while in 1990 it stood at 46 years, the country is ranked among the 12th lowest. This is incomparable with Japan 87 for female and 80 for male as well as countries such as Spain, Andorra, Singapore, Italy, France and Iceland where life expectancy ranges from between 79 years and 86 years.[26]

Corruption seems to have been institutionalised in the present day Nigeria and this accounts for the level of backwardness.[27] The present government promised to tackle corruption if elected during the 2015 electioneering campaign. Of course the battle has commenced but many people have become disillusioned because of the perceived one-sidedness of the crusade. The claim is that only those in the opposition party are being probed. Without exerting much energy on this, the truth of the matter is that Nigeria has been wrecked by corruption. The leadership of the Senate is facing corruption charge presently. One wonders the type of law that would emanate from such a chamber. One needs to ask how many Nigerians are not corrupt in the real sense of it. Corruption goes beyond embezzlement and misappropriation of funds. Lopsidedness in appointments, favouritism, kickback, non-executed of contracts and disregard for work ethics are all variants of corruption. Therefore, corruption, be it grand or petty is capable of endangering development.

The present economic woe cannot be blamed on the fall in the price of crude oil. It can be perceived as aftermath of visionless leadership, which failed to plan ahead during economic boom. A leader was once quoted as saying that the problem of Nigeria was not how to get money but how to spend it. Many states have not been able to pay workers salaries for many months, while some federal establishments can only afford to pay half salaries to workers. The banking sector has become endangered among other sectors that are collapsing. In recent time, retrenchment has become the order of the day. In June 2016, Eco Bank sacked 1040 workers, while Diamond Bank terminated the appointment of 200 of its workforce. The Minister of labour had issue a directive to banks to stop sacking workers when it was obvious that mass retrenchment was imminent.[28] With destructive activities of militants, both ethnic and religious, one wonders if investment is feasible. Doesn't it sound unpatriotic to agree with Chinua Achebe that there was a country? Is there any manifestation of development in Nigeria? Can Nigeria still be referred to as a developing country? Hasn't the country retrogressed to the levels of underdevelopment, low development and no development? Obviously, the issue of development at present is a mere projection and hypothesis as nothing is working. If this is the case, how then can we think in terms of sustainable development when there is no development to be sustained?

Why is Nigeria not developing in spite of several efforts by government, individuals and corporate bodies? In the context of this paper, the answer is the neglect of religious moral values on the part of practitioners of religion who have battered its socio-ethical relevance. It is no encouraging news that as highly religious as Nigerians are, so they are immoral. This must have impelled a school to argue that religiosity may not necessarily guarantee moral consciousness.[29] However, religion remains relevant no matter the disposition of practitioners as would be established shortly.

V. Christian Ethical Values as a Factor in Sustainable National Development

In this section, the relevance of Christian moral values to sustainable development shall be discussed. It is apt to do this because a large number of Christians is in various positions of authority at different levels. It needs to be stated that religion is a factor in the choice of party flag bearers and their running mates for presidential and governorship elections. This is why in the political history of Nigeria, civilian Presidents and Vice Presidents have never belonged to the same religion.[30] The current President being a Muslim has a Christian as his Vice while the immediate past President, a Christian had a Muslim as his second-in-command. This is also evident in many states while in states like Abia, Akwa –Ibom, Anambra Bayelsa, Ebonyi Dealta, Enugu, Imo, Rivers and Cross River are predominantly populated by Christians. Both the National Assembly and the Federal Executive Council have always had many Christians as members. In a study conducted on Christians participation in Oyo State party politics between 1999 and 2015 , it was discovered that, a total of 2297 contested and were appointed into the position of Federal legislators, Governors, Deputy Governors, State Legislators, Commissioners, Advisers and Chairmen of Local Government Chairmen, 746 (32%) of whom were Christians.[31] However, they have not been

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fairing well.[32] All that is heard is how they engage in sharp practices. Worse still, the church is not insulated from corruption. Unarguably, morality is presently jettisoned national issue, while Machiavellism is now the guiding principle.[33] For Nigeria to experience development and sustain it, application of the following ethical principles by both leaders and followers who are Christians is crucial and not negotiable.

VI. Patriotism

One major cause of underdevelopment is lack of patriotism, which is demonstrated in several ways by Nigerians. The sense of patriotism is fundamental for sustainable national development not to be a mirage. Christianity teaches its adherents to be patriotic. This can be exhibited in form of doing what is required. In this case, leaders and followers act responsibly. There can be no progress in a country where people evade legitimate tax and levies. Many Nigerians are guilty of this. Jesus did not only encourage his followers including contemporary Christians to pay taxes, he actually paid his own (Matthew 17: 24-27). When asked whether it was lawful to pay tax to Ceaser or not, he responded that what belonged to Ceaser must be given to him (Mark 12:17). Paul also did not shy away from this (Romans 13:6-7). Ayantayo[34] holds that patriotism is necessary for national survival. It is what makes people willing to place their country above themselves, while Eidsomoe sees it as the bond that unites nation under one people and holds them together.[35] The anthem of the National Youth Service Corp calls youth to patriotism. This is germane because youths of today are the future leaders.

Youths obey the clarion call
Let us lift our nation high
Under the sun or in the rain
With dedication and selflessness
Nigeria is ours, Nigeria we serve.

The failure of leaders to discharge their responsibilities has put citizens in state of disillusionment. This is why patriotism is no longer considered to be worthwhile. A hungry man on the street may not want to know the imperative of patriotism in the face of abject poverty resulting from incompetence leadership. However in the moral context, there is no alternative to this, akin to patriotism is obedience to constituted authority. The problem of Nigeria is not always about leadership, followership is also culpable. Therefore, there is a need for followers to obey their leaders as no one becomes a leader except God ordains him or her. The Bible is replete with several passages that emphasise this. Romans 3:1-5 admonishes Christians to subject themselves to governing authorities as whoever rebels against them implicitly rebels against God. In I Timothy 2:1-3, prayer for kings and other leaders is solicited, while Peter counsels his audience to fear God and honour the Emperor (I Peter 2:17). In supporting this, Shield says that Jesus and the apostles recognised the authority of the state and advocated that in a matter of conscience, its laws must be obeyed. In other words, the Christians have duties towards the state in which he finds himself. He is of the opinion that:

> When Jesus told his disciples that if someone forced them to go a mile, they should go two miles, he was probably thinking of obeying and showing kindness to a Roman Soldier or to some other officer of the state.[36]

Shield might indirectly be saying that obedience to constituted authorities is not always palatable as both good and bad leaders are to be obeyed. However, any law that is anti-God must not be obeyed. This must not be understood in light of civil disobedience. Jesus' counsel to render to Ceasar what is due to Ceasar and to God what is due to God suggests that in the event of conflict of interest between obedience to God and the king, God takes pre-eminence. This was demonstrated by Daniel as well as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the Old Testament (Daniel 6: 1-28; Daniel 3) and Peter and other apostles in the New Testament (Acts 5: 29). Without any doubt, obeying God rather than man will attract the wrath of the leader. Therefore, the actor must make up his or her mind for possible eventuality. Kunhiyop's take on this is that while Christians are duty bound to be loyal and obedient to the state, disobedience would become a duty if obedience would clearly contrary to the command of God.[37]

VII. Loyalty, Faithfulness and Honesty

Citizens are expected be loyal, faithful and honest. These values have largely disappeared from the lexicon of Nigerians in view of how fraud and other vices have become the order of the day. A typical Nigerian does not want to pay electricity tariff if he or she has the opportunity; a worker who gets to his or her place of assignment at 9am may write 7:30am in the register; dates of birth are falsified, while many have different states of origin; also, ghost workers abound in many establishments. All these can only worsen the already terrible situation. Virtues of loyalty, faithfulness and honesty are entrenched in the National Pledge, which reads:

I pledge to Nigeria my country
To be faithful, loyal and honest
To serve Nigeria with all my strength
To defend her unity
And uphold her honour and glory
So help me God

Nigerians recite the pledge as a mere ritual without acting the contents.[38] In fact, to serve Nigeria with all my strength is now sarcastically read as 'to serve

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Nigeria is not by force'. The values recommended in the National pledge are as a matter of reality, cardinal in Christian ethics. For example, honesty is expected of everybody because without it, no nation can develop. No wonder Nigeria is a rich country, but the citizenry lives in abject poverty. Proverbs 14:34 categorically says, "Righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people". Honesty is expected in God-man relationship and man-man relationship.[39] In other words, religious worship, business transaction, political and judicial administration, as well as employer-employee relationship must not be devoid of honesty (I Samuel 12:4; 2 Samuel 18:12, I Kings 13:8, 2 Kings 5:6, Proverbs 12: 17, Leviticus 19:36 and Deuteronomy 25:15). Perhaps Nigeria is reaping the fruits of dishonesty of her citizens. Loyalty and faithfulness to the state, which can be demonstrated in various forms, are agents of transformation and development.

VIII. Adherence to Oath of Office

Experience has shown that many a Nigerian takes oaths without obeying its content. The oath which leaders and professionals take before assuming office or getting inducted contain ethical values such as dutifulness, impartiality and justice, which if obeyed will be beneficial to humanity.[40] The link between oaths of office and religion is apparent as the oath taker is made to hold a symbol of his or her religion. Keeping it is therefore crucial as seen in Ecclesiastes 8;2, Deuteronomy 7:8 and Matthew 23:32. It is time people took oath of office seriously. It must no longer be seen as a mere ritual without any intention to obey it.

IX. Responsible Involvement of Christians In Politics

How can Christian ethical values be relevant when Christians continue to avoid politics like plagues? Their responsible involvement in politics will be a catalyst for sustainable development. According to Familusi:

> Christian politicians must be guided by the principle of servant-leadership. In other words, willingness to serve must be their driving force. If this is the case, all evils that are associated with politics will be guarded against. If Christians are followers of Christ, His example as demonstrated during His earthly ministry must be followed…The relevance of integrity in politics cannot be ignored. In fact, it is what makes the difference. Therefore, Christian politicians must always exhibit integrity no matter what it may cost them.[41]

Responsible involvement of Christians in politics can only be possible if they act as salt of the earth and light of the world by observing all rules that guide politics. Politics must no longer be seen as a dirty game but an opportunity to contribute to national development. The church has a role to play in the quest for sustainable national development. This can be done through constant advice or counsel to politicians, which must be based on moral principles contained in the scripture and other sources of Christian ethics. This will impel politicians to maintain integrity. Abogunrin has also advocated for active participation of Christian in politics because Christian Theology in some way deals with how God wants to share His goodness with everybody. This can only be realised if God hands over this responsibility to man so that he can use his God given talents to create policies that will be of benefit to others in all aspects of life. He believes that the teachings of Jesus have political implications from which Christians cannot run away. Therefore, His teachings were in many respects direct responses to political problems, political possibilities, political responsibilities and political alternatives, which He fearlessly confronted during His earthly ministry.[42] The interplay of religion and politics must not always be viewed in the negative sense. In view of this, Familusi submits that religious politics can bring about sustainable development if religious people (Christians) abide by the ethical teachings inherent in their religion as such will provide good leadership and obedient followership. Also, one expects a credible electoral process in a religious community like Nigeria if the rules are obeyed. Religion being an agent of social control helps to keep people with the norm of the society, which is the real basis of politics.[43]

X. Revival of Christian Work Ethics

For any nation to develop, the labour force must be diligent. However, Nigerians lack the sense of industry. There is poor attitude to work in both public and private sectors. The civil service is worst hit because civil servants see the work as not 'my father's work'.[44] Therefore, lateness to work, absenteeism and abscondment have become the guiding principles. Sadly, office hours are sometimes used for religious activities. All these are antithetical to national development. An average worker may not be naturally lazy as postulated by Douglas McGregor in Theory X[45] of employee motivation, but lack of incentive, poor remuneration and hostile condition of service have reduced the level of commitment of workers in recent time. However, it cannot be said that every sector is poorly remunerated, even if this is an excuse. Therefore, there is a need to revive work ethics in all sectors of the economy. Work ethics, in the word of Ayantayo, demands that workers must be punctual at work place, cooperate with co-workers, work hard to justify their salaries, contribute their quotas to progress of work they are employed to do; and exhibit honesty, sincerity and straight forwardness at work. They are to endure

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hardship when the need arises as dictated by the nature of their work.[46] Calving does not be believe that any work is inferior as emphasis in his doctrine of calling, thus if Christians follow their proper calling, every work will have splendour in the sight of God. On this premise, the puritans hold that daily works of any nature is a religious imperative. According to them, those who will not sweat on earth will sweat in hell.[47] Without any doubt, dedication and commitment to duty will promote development. Dignity of labour is not only a cardinal virtue in Christian ethics; but also a divine commandment. Thus, Christians have a duty to be hardworking. Paul in his teaching emphasises this and warns against idleness (II Thessalonians3:6-12). Also, slothfulness in business is denounced, while fervency in spirit and service to God is recommended (Romans 12:11). In proverbs 2:29, a hardworking person is accorded the honour of standing before kings and not ordinary men. However, it is not enough to be hardworking as the work done must not be defective. As noted by Shield:

> Everything a Christian does is to be done with a view to glorifying God (I Corinthians 10: 31). Work must surely be included in this. Because in his work, the Christian serves Christ as well as his employer, he must go beyond the call of earthly duty and seek to please the Lord. That means he must always seek to produce work of the highest quality. He knows that he is accountable to God for all he does and thus, from the quality of the service he renders or the goods he makes (Ephesians 6:5-8, Colossians3: 22-24).[48]

The pursuit of sustainable is a projection and hypothesis. To a large extent, it has remained obscure in Nigeria because the human factor is not considered to be relevant. One therefore doubts if there can be development, if human beings are not developed. Omoregbe belongs to the school of thought of the imperative of the development of human personality. It follows that it is the moral development of citizens that constitutes any country. The fact that development is multi-faceted cannot be denied, for a country is a living organism with many parts, each of which needs to be developed. In every structure, some parts are of primary importance, while some are secondary. Therefore, moral development is the organism of a country. Omoregbe further expatiates thus:

> The primary aspects correspond to human dimension, while secondary aspects correspond to the infra-human dimension. The later include the land, the natural resources, the roads, machines, buildings, etc. All these are important in a country and need to be developed. But they are of secondary importance. Of primary importance is the human dimension. This means that the development of a country is primarily the development of the human dimension, that is, the development of human person. Now the most important aspect in development of the human person is his moral development. Moral maturity is a mark of national development. Indeed, it is a *conditio-sine-qua-non* for national development, for we cannot talk of the development of a country, if its citizens are morally undeveloped and immature. The moral development of its citizen must precede other aspects of development; otherwise, the process of development would be obstructed by the immorality of the citizens.[49]

The argument is that while development is crucial, it can only be attained through moral transformation on the part of all who are involved. It has been adduced that underdevelopment is an after effect of moral bankruptcy arising from the neglect of religious ethical values. We are not oblivious of the fact that Nigeria is a multi-religious society; revival of Christian ethical values has been projected as a road map to sustainable national development since many Christians are involved in governance, formulation and execution of policies as well as administration at various levels of existence. In the present dispensation, 17 out of the 36 state governors are Christians as well as many other elected and appointed political officials. Therefore, they must be guided by Christian ethical values while playing their parts in the administration of the country.

XI. Conclusion

Sustainable Development is a global phenomenon. Thus, efforts are made to actualise it. This has led to formulation of policies by governments, societies, Non-Governmental Organisations, religious bodies, and international political organisations. As evident in Nigeria, hardly can one infer that there is development let alone the advanced form of it in terms of sustainable development in spite of several experiments, which have proved non- effectual because morality has been ignored in the scheme of things. Given the social effectiveness of religion,[50] application of its moral values is a good way of ensuring devolvement and sustaining it. It is on this premise that this paper has recommended moral transformation through a stringent application of Christian ethical values in governance, policy formulation and execution, discharge of responsibility by Christians in positions of authority as well as followers. Pessimism about the Nigerian project is not the answer. There is hope of a good, sane, decent and developed Nigeria if Christian ethical values are imbibed as recommended. This however can only be possible if religious leaders themselves shun immoral acts, which ravage the church today. They must always tell their followers and people in positions of authority the truth. How can one explain the attitude of Christian leaders, who hobnob with politicians thereby becoming

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their apologists?[51] The 7 billion naira allegedly collected by the leadership of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) during the 2015 elections is still fresh in the memory of Nigerians.[52] Such leaders have lost the moral right to preach ethics as doing so will be analogous to someone who has a log of wood in his eye but wants to remove a speck in another person's eye (Matthew 7: 3-5). The Anglican Bishop of Owerri, Cyril C. Okorocha should be commended for rejecting a gift from Governor Okorocha of Imo State, but rather advised him to go and pay his workers salaries.[53]

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