
ISLAMIC PRINCIPLES OF *ADL WAL-IHSSAN* (JUSTICE AND GOOD DEED) AND *AMR BIL-MA'ARUF WANAHY ANIL MUNKAR* (COMMANDING RIGHTEOUSNESS AND FORBIDDING EVIL): A PANACEA FOR CURBING ELECTION VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA.

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Abstract

Democracy has been widely accepted as system of government around the globe. Nigeria is among those countries of the world that adopt democracy as their choice of government. Election therefore becomes the process and major machinery of getting legitimate leaders. The credible, fair and free election relies on sincerity, piety, freedom and ability to display maturity by the electorate and electoral officers during election. The objective of Islam is to ensure justice and righteousness in society through spiritual and material development. The essential devices for the spiritual and material development are the Principles of *Adl wal- ihssan* and *Amr bil-Ma'aruf Wanahy anil Munkar*. These are premise upon which Islam is built. It is on this note that this paper, examines how *Adl wal- ihssan* and *Amr bil-Ma'aruf Wanahy anil Munkar* can be used to tame electoral violence in Nigeria. It is concluded that people should be encouraged to do good and avoid evil so as to have free and fair election. Instilling of piety, doing good, being just, avoiding evil among others are recommendations of the study.

Key Word: Election, Justice (*Adl*), Righteousness (*Ihsan*), Good deed (*Al-Maaruf*), Evil (*Al-Munkar*).

Introduction

The beginning of electoral crises in Nigeria can be traced to various politics that spelled Nigerian landscape in early Twentieth Century and the amalgamation of 1914 which focused on creation of a nation out of the multi-cultural and hitherto autonomous political entities. Ever since then, effort to bring about acceptable

government in Nigeria, either at the local, state or national level, through free and fair election has become worrisome and it has drawn attentions of Nigerians, home and abroad, as well as individuals, groups, professionals, politicians, academia, scholars opinion leaders in particular and the general society at large. Added to this is the nature and outcome of elections and the collapse of the First Republic (1960 - 1966), the Second Republic (1979- 1983) and the abortion of the Third Republic which led to several uprising that metamorphosed into the birth of Fourth Republic (1999) and the subsequent elections of 2003 ,2007, 2011, 2015, 2019, 2023.

The alarming rate at which crises persistently cripple elections in Nigeria since independence is as a result of inability of the previous elections conducted to yield fruitful and mutual outcomes that are acceptable to all competing political actors. Added to this is the corruption syndrome that bedevilled the Nigerian society, which by one way or the other, breeds immorality and politics of desperation thereby leading to gradual collapsing of the system. As such, periodic elections review and assessment is required in order to establish careful, free and fair election that would bring about legitimate democratically elected government and stick firmly to the realization of stable political institutions, most especially in a multi-ethnic and pluralistic environment like Nigeria. Election therefore serves as a major tool for decision making and acceptable way of determining winner or loser to the seat of power; provided the election is well conducted and electorate votes are sincerely counted. Election in most cases, pave way for the electorates to select between optional candidates in order to ensure free and fair transfer or transition of political power from one set of power holders to another.

Election is a determining factor for installing, transiting and consolidating democratic government. However, sustainability of democratic transition and consolidation might be a mirage when elections are not properly conducted and peoples' votes were neither counted, nor do the people have choice in electing representatives and leaders, because of subversion or manipulation of the entire electoral process either by individuals, groups, political parties or institutions which resulted to electoral crises. Unfortunately, this has always be the case in Nigeria since independence in 1960.

Trend in Electoral Crises in Nigeria

Nigeria is an independent state with ethnic diversity and religious differences that have been negatively affecting her political processes. After independence, efforts to institute political leadership through election usually resulted into chaos that often forced the military with their civilian collaborators, who felt aggrieved with outcomes of the election, to topple the civilian administration. This problem firstly surfaced with the first post-independence national election crises of 1964 and 1965 Western Region election which led to January 15, 1966 coup (Ugwuja, 2015). Election generally in Nigeria is characterized by chaos and violence that resulted to the military intervention and instability that characterize the country for over three decades. The conduct of elections in Nigeria after the 1964 and 1965 elections have

not been better off the previous ones. For instance, the election of 1979 which brought Alhaji Usman Aliyu Shehu Shagari as the democratically electoral president was reported to had been bedevilled with electoral fraud. While the general election of 1983 involved massive rigging in some states like Oyo, Ondo, Anambra, Cross-River, Imo state among others. The violence that emanated from electoral malpractices and polling irregularities led to military intervention of December 31, 1983. The military stated that electoral malpractices, indiscipline and corruptions are among other reasons for taking over power from the civilian government.

A Free and fair election was conducted in the history of Nigeria on June 12, 1993 under the military administration of General Ibrahim Babangida and it was annulled. Unfortunately, Nigeria was denied of the opportunity of having a unanimously agreeable elected president free of religious, regional and ethnic sentiments (Ugwaja, 2015) The realization of this laudable success was put to mirage on the path to true democracy as it was aborted by the then military president who perpetuated himself in power (Ugwaja, 2015 and Ayo, 2011). In 1999, the military eventually handed-over to democratically elected civilian government, after a long period of ruling. Since then, almost all the general-elections that have been conducted from then to 2023 have been faulted with riggings that often lead to crises.

Election crises involve actions taking by the supporters of political parties who use dangerous weapons like cutlasses, arms and ammunitions to attack, intimidate, beat, and in some cases kill political opponents prior to, during and after elections. In this regard, election crises can be classified into three categories: pre-election crises, crises during election and post-election crises. Pre-election crisis occurs when political opponents attack one another during campaign rallies purposely to intimidate or weaken the other parties. For instance, in the build-up to the 2011 General Elections, it was reported that on the 23rd of March 2011, the supporters of the People Democratic Party (PDP) and those of the defunct Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) clashed in Ikot Ekpene in Akwa Ibom State in South-South Nigeria resulted to burning of over 400 cars and death of about 18 party loyalists in Uyo, the state capital, in a reprisal attack (Matthew, John and Peter 2018). On-election day crises involve crises that erupt during elections or on election days involving the use of dangerous weapons such as guns, cutlasses, sticks and others to intimidate and chase away voters in order for the hoodlums to hijack election materials – ballot papers and result sheets – to thumbprint and fill for their parties. This is due to the high stakes involved in political contests.

Crises during elections often resulted to bloodshed, loss of life and properties. Post-election crises are crises that trailed the announcement of election results. Such crises are caused by insincerity of purpose, lack of piety, injustice, greediness and uncontended on the part of some election officers, party agents, electorates and contestants. More so, it is glaring that the perpetrators of these crises assumed that the elections were rigged in favour of the candidates who were declared winners. For

example, the crises that erupted in some states in the Northern parts of Nigeria, particularly Bauchi and Kaduna States after the declaration of the 2011 Presidential Election results in favour of former President Goodluck Jonathan was largely due to the perceived manipulation of the process by the supporter of the main opponent, General Muhammadu Buhari. Other problems facing Nigeria's electoral process are irrational behaviours, selfish interest of the political elites, politics of divide and rule, politics without ideology, corruption and poverty level of some electorates, ethnic or regional and religious politics. All these form basements for electoral crisis which transform in to public desperation, state of anarchy, insecurity and politics of assassination (Mathew 2018).

Factors Influencing Election Crisis in Nigeria

Several factors have been identified as instrumental to election crisis in Nigeria. Dominant among these factors are discussed as follows:

a. Lack of Faith (*Iman*) and Contentment: Religiously, it is believed that power belong to Allah and He gives it to who He wishes as He retrieved power from who He wishes. In the quest for power, the politicians lost faith and contentment to allow free and fair election and bare whatever happen as Allah's decision. Instead, they always device means of getting to power at all cost which involve the use of thugs, rigging during and intimidate opposition during election process. This can be observed from the report of Ugwuja (2015) which shows that political elites display irrational actions, play politics of division that devoid of ideology, promote corruption, artificial poverty, injustice and religious acrimony. Had it been these politicians imbibed the culture of *Iman* and contentment, they would have allowed free and fair election by displaying good virtue before, during, and after election.

b. Lack of Sincerity: It is believed that political offices are the fastest 'profit' yielding venture in Nigeria. The moment people secured political offices, they used these offices as an opportunity of amazing ill-gotten wealth through looting of public treasury, inflating contract, misappropriation of funds and diversion of public fund for their personal used. Therefore, they could make all effort to retained these offices at all cost without minding what it will cost them. This can be observed from the submission of Mathew *et al* (2018) which revealed that inter party conflict resulting, from high stakes with which political party approach election, desperation to win election at all cost, often driven parties supporters to engage on unholy act of violence including assassination of political opponent and mass destruction. If actually there is sincerity in the mind of politicians and the electorate as well as electoral officers, election should be free and fair with display of high-level sincerity.

c. Dishonest and Loss of Value: Since people got to power through fraudulent act, they are no longer appreciating value, instead they celebrate dishonesty even in the religious houses. People are no more concerned about how someone gets his wealth, except the negligible members of the society who cared to promote value.

Therefore, the politicians see this opportunity to display dishonesty during and after election which, often lead to crisis during electoral process because everyone wants to share out of 'national cake'. This can also be attested to, from the statement of the onetime Governor of Abia State and former All Nigerians People Party's Chairman, Ogonnaya Onu (*Daily Champion Newspaper*, August, 2006) who lamented that Nigerians no longer have any choice because nothing can be so damaging to the cherished values and ethics of our people as to when those who govern get to such exalted positions through fraudulent means. It destroys the spirit of honesty; it erodes and weakens the desire for integrity, it devastates the urge for hard work; it ruins the thrust which should exist between the leaders and the led and above all, it sharpens the destructive instincts to cut corners through fraud, cheating, deceit, treachery and dishonesty (*Daily Champion Newspaper*, August, 2006, p. 16).

d. Religion and Cultural Diversity: Nigeria society is a pluralistic environment with cultural and religious diversity. These two factors are being used by politicians to cause divisions among Nigerians before, during and after election. The reason for this is that every politician wants to get to power or wants his party to win election; they use religion and ethnicity to attract supporters thereby disrupting sense of unity and nationalism in the country. This was witnessed in the just concluded (2023) elections whereby candidates campaigned with religion and ethnic affiliation. In such situation, the spirit for integrity, honesty and sincerity is eroded as no one cares to look at personality of candidates; instead, they place religious and cultural affiliation to everything without considering whether or not such candidate sincerely loves the religion or the ethnic group that they claim or abide by the values of their religion or ethnic group which promote sincerity, honest, piety, love and feelings for others. In line with this, Mathew *et al* (2018) concluded that ethno-religious consideration as another factor that influences election crisis in Nigeria. They stressed that Nigeria is multi-ethnic and multi-religious society. These diversities couple with failure of Nigerian political system to contain the fissiparous and centrifugal tendency of ethnic groups as they jostle for power. If the teaching and practice of religion and cultural value were strictly followed in the conduct of election, there will be a level playground and smooth-running election with little or no violence before, during and after elections.

Principles of *Adl wal Ihssan* and *Amr bil Ma'aruf wa-Nahy anil-Munkar*

In dealing with election violence, there is the need to examine how the principle of *Adl wal Ihssan* and *Amr bil Ma'aruf wa-Nahy anil-Munkar*, tame violence in all its ramifications. 'Justice and good deeds', as well as 'commanding righteous and forbidden evil' are stipulated model and standard of life in which a Muslim is expected to display in order to maintain exemplary life in accordance with the dictates of Allah (S.W.T). Islamic ethics and morality revolve round worship (*Ibadah*), faith (*Iman*) and good behaviour (*ihssan*). These are the major cardinal principles of Islam that revolve round the entire life of a Muslim. The manifestation of faith and worship can be attested to in individual action. Prayer (*Sallah*) for

example; refrains indecency and evil from individual Muslim who establishes it regularly as mentioned by Allah (S.W.T) in Qur'an 29:45 (al-Hassan *et al.*, 2013, p. 9), *Zakat* purifies soul of the giver from being miser and sinner and as well purifies the soul of the receiver from hatred and jealousy, elevates the living standard of the poor and the needy, creates employment and serve as source of empowerment. (Hadi, 2005, p. 5) Fasting inculcates Islamic ethical principles, values, piety in the mind, abstains from lying, repugnance statements, falsehood and idle speech as mention in Hadith:

عن أوسط قال أخطبنا ابوبكر فقال قام رسول الله صلي الله عليه وسلم مقامي هذا عام الأول وبكي ابوبكر, فقال ابوبكر سلوا الله المعافاة او قال العافية فلم يؤت احد قط بعد اليقين افضل من العافية – او المعافاة عليكم بالصدق فإته مع البر في النار ولا تحاسدوا ولا تباغضوا ولا تقاطعوا ولا تدابروا وكونوا إخوانا كما أمركم الله (احمد : ٥ : ٢٨)

Narrated by Awsata who said: Abubakar addressed us and said: The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) stood last year where I am standing, Abubakar wept, then said: Ask Allah to keep you safe and sound, for no one is given anything after certainty of Allah than well-being. And you should be truthful for that goes with righteousness and leads to Paradise. And beware of lying for that goes with immorality and leads to hell fire. Do not envy one another, do not bear grudge against one another, do not turn away from one another be brothers as 16: Allah (S.W.T) has commanded you (Ahmad, 5.25)

The pilgrimage (Hajj) develops Muslim's virtues of patience, endurance, tolerance, perseverance and altruism and encourages social relations. The main purpose of Allah's (S.W.T.) messengers is to guide mankind towards righteousness. Faith (*Iman*) is the foundation upon which entire life of Muslim is built because life without faith is meaningless as faith guides the ethics of Muslims. Faith without morality is meaningless and strong faith generates virtue as weak faith results to vices (al-Hassan *et al.*, 2013).

Justice refers to act of being just, firm and fair without favoritism or nepotism. It deals with maintaining equality and equity among the people. Election cannot be free and fair except when it is accompanied by justice. This is the reason why Ali (2007) stated that justice is a comprehensive term, and may include all the virtues of good philosophy. This is correlated with Allah (S.W.T.)'s statement in Qur'an 16: 90

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ٩٠
God commands justice, kindness and giving their [due to] near relatives, and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and transgression. He admonishes you so that you may take heed!

Good deed (*Ihsan*) is the peak of Islamic teaching. It is understood from the Prophet's (S.A.W.) haddith thus,

"...ما الإحسان؟ قال: أن يعبد الله كأنك تراه فإلم تكن تراه فإنه يراك... " (بخاري ٨١: ١.٥٠).

'...What is *ihsan* (Sincerity)?' Allah's Messenger replied, "To worship Allah (S.W.T.) as if you see Him, and if you cannot achieve this state of devotion then you must consider that He is looking at you..." (Bukhari 1.50, 1997, p. 81).

Worship (*Ibadah*) goes beyond establishment of five daily prayers; it covers economic, social and political life of Muslim *Ummah*. Muslims in any society are expected to exhibit worthy characters like honesty, justice, truthfulness calmness, perseverance endurance, tolerance, and give selfless service to Allah and humanity and other good virtues. This is manifested in commanding righteousness and forbidding evil.

Commanding righteousness and forbidding evil encompassed what Allah (S.W.T.) and His Messenger (S.A.W.) deem to be good and command Muslims to do it, while whatever they forbid should be abolished or prohibited. For instance, Allah (S.W.T.) commands justice and goodness to every human being and other creature. This is buttressed by the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) in the Hadith.

عن ابي موسى رضي الله عنه قال: قالوا يا رسول الله أي الإسلام أفضل؟ قال: "من سلم المسلمون من لسانه ويديه (البخاري ٦٠: ١.٥)

Narrated by Abu Musa. Some people asked Allah's Messenger, "Whose Islam is the best (i.e., who is a very good Muslim)?" He replied, "One who avoids harming the Muslims with his tongue and hands"(Bukhari, 1.5, 1997, p. 60)

Allah (S.W.T) also forbids certain actions such as backbiting, gossiping, usury and infanticide, arrogance, transgression, thuggery, usurpation, greediness, lying etc. The also Prophet kicked against them and they become prohibited. They are prohibited because of their harmful effect on the society particularly in a pluralistic environment like Nigeria. Therefore, it becomes forbidden to every Muslim in Nigerian environment to involve in any of these actions. Finally, vice in whatever form is prohibited among Muslims and righteousness is enjoined. The principle of 'commanding righteousness' and 'forbidding evil' has been in operation from the Prophet era. The principle is useful to address election crises among Muslim *Ummah* in Nigeria. In doing this, al-Ghazali (2001, p. 112) stated that classes of human nature need to be considered He classified human nature into four; (a) beastly nature (b) animal nature (c) devilish nature and (d) angelic nature. Beastly nature is characterized with enmity, hatred, rebuke and attack on people; Animal nature is characterized with sexual passion when it becomes stronger; Devilish nature is characterized with deceit, fraud and conspiracy; while Angelic nature is distinguished by dedication to the service to Allah (S.W.T.) and humanity, sincerity

of purpose and action, and doing good to all. An Angelic individual is also a person who has gotten the divine soul, the nature of lordship and would like to be free from servitude and meanness (Al-Ghazali, 2001, pp. 112-113).

This means that there is a Law Giver Who decide value judgement between good and bad and for any action to be the best option, it must be an action commanded by revelation of Allah (S.W.T.) (Sacred Law), while an action forbidden by Him are bad and evil. Just as a case of someone who has two actions to perform and in each of them, he has motive for performing it at the expense of the other. This depends on which of the two actions is the best. For instance, if a person has option to select lying , deceiving and fermenting trouble to achieve his political objective or remain honest in keeping the public peace to safeguard his dignity, integrity out of fear of Allah (S.W.T.) during election, then the bottom line is now between to transgress or righteous, which is battle between intellect and mind and for a person to scale through, he needs to comply with Allah's (S.W.T.) command and be righteous or otherwise and faced the consequence. The truth of the matter is that, worship revolves round the entire life of Muslims; they are expected to live exemplary and worthy life for the attainment of eternal bliss. In order to realise this purpose, they need Allah's guidance to solve both mundane and celestial problems and be able to differentiate between wrong and right and avoid ambiguity.

Application of *Adl wal- Ihssan* (Justice and Good Deed) and *Amr bil Ma'aruf Wanahy anil Munkar* (Commanding Righteousness and Forbidding Evil) in Combating Election Violence

The application of *Amr bil Ma'aruf* could serve as the backbone for combating election crises in Nigeria. This is due to the fact that human intellect is incapacitated to determine or pass moral judgement. On the other hand, the free will option granted to man by Allah (S.W.T.) to select between the best consequence and best profitable action makes man accountable for all his actions. In the same vein, the principle of *Amr bil-ma'aruf* could be a solution to election crises. However, it is a collective responsibility to uphold the principle of 'commanding righteous' and 'forbidding evil' in the bid to combat election crises. This could be done through the Revelation (Divine scripture), particularly al-Qur'an as mentioned by Allah (S.W.T.) in the Qur'an.

ذٰلِكَ الْكِتٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ۝۲

This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah (S.W.T) (Q2: 2)

The solution to election crises starts with war against mind (*Jihad Nafs*). To do this, is to acknowledge the nature of person- self and its problems and how to amend this nature and solve these problems. Faith (*Iman*) is used to purify, both inner and outer person-self (Inner has to do with the purification of mind through repentance (*Istigfar*), remembrance of Allah (*Adhkar*), prayer (*Sallat*), fast (*Sawm*), charity (*Zakat*) and pilgrimage (*Hajj*) as earlier explained. The war against one's mind is followed by knowledge of what will be amended through the required obligation

such as rules of prayer (*Sallat*), purification (*Taharah*), and fasting (*Sawm*). It is incumbent upon a Muslim to safeguard or protect Allah (S.W.T)'s boundary (*Had*) and to uphold His command (*Amrihi*) and also repent unto Him (Abdul Rahman, n.d. p. 3).

i. Repentance (*Istigfar*) as a Means of Curbing Corruption

A way of purifying one-self is repentance. Repentance is to seek for the forgiveness of wrong action taken by man with intention of not repeating such action in life. Dar-Salam (n.d. p. 329) stated that repentance is not one saying "I repent to Allah (S.W.T.)" or "O Allah (S.W.T) forgive me" while at the same time, one insists on sinning or being careless about sin he has committed. To repent means that the person has to regret his past and determine not to repeat the mischief of the past, to desist from evil act in good time, to desist from causing delay in repentance and not to make pronouncement or rest his mind on the statement "until Allah (S.W.T) guides him aright (Abdul-Sami, n.d. pp. 3-4). Repentance, therefore, means to abstain from repugnance statement in the sight of Allah (S.W.T.) to what He loves. It revolves round the faith (*al-Iman*) and good deed (*al-Ihsaan*). Faith is the peak of every belief as it forms the peak of righteousness (Muhammad, 2010, p. 213).

ii. Faith (*Iman*) as a Means of Curbing Election Crises

Heart is a special seat for *Iman* and place for the confirmation of truth while the tongue interprets it (verbal words or speech). Islam is to submit to Allah (S.W.T.) and to obey Him (S.W.T) by sincerity of purpose in practicing sacred laws (*Sharia*) and the person who works within the dictate of Allah (S.W.T.) is said to be righteous. Faith refers to being righteous (*Muhsin*) (Abdul Lateef, 2010, p. 281). A faithful (*al-Mu'min*) always works for Allah's (S.W.T) sake, he believes that for every action, he does Allah (S.W.T) sees him. *Iman* is a foundation upon which morality of a Muslim stands. *Iman* therefore relates to day-to-day activities of man. This can be seen in the statement of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) when his Companions were taking allegiance with him:

عبادة بن الصامت رضي الله عنه وكان شهيد بدر، وهو احد النقباء ليلة العقبة أن رسول الله ﷺ قال: وهولاه عصابة من أصحابه! بايعوني على أن لا تشركوا بالله شيئاً ولا تسرقوا ولا تزنوا ولا تقتلوا اولادكم بايديكم ولا تأتوا ببهتان تفترونه بين ايديكم وأرجلكم ولا تعصوا في معروف فمن وفي منكم فأجره على الله ومن أصاب من ذلك شيئاً فعوقب في الدنيا فهو كفارة له من أصاب من ذلك شيئاً ثم ستره الله وهو إلى الله إن شاء عفا عنه وإن شاء عاقبه.... (البخاري ١٨:١ ص:٦٢)

Narrated by 'Ubada bin as-Samit, who took part in the battle of Badr and was a Naqib (a person heading a group of six persons), on the night of al-Aqaba Pledge: Allah's Messenger said while a group of his Companions were around him, "Give me the *Bai'ah* (pledge) for: Not to join anything in worship with Allah not to steal, not to commit illegal sexual intercourse, not to kill your children, not to utter slander intentionally for going falsehood (i.e., by making illegal children becoming their husband) or (not to accuse an innocent person and spread such accusation among people); not to be disobedient (when ordered) to do *Ma'raf* (Islamic monotheism

and all other good deeds), (The Prophets (SAW) added: Whoever amongst you fulfills the pledge will be rewarded by Allah, And whoever indulges in any one of those (sins) and get the punishment in this world, that punishment will be an expiation for that sin. And if one indulges in any of them, and Allah (S.W.T) conceals (his sin), is up to Him to forgive or punish him (in Hereafter) (Bukhari 1.18, 1997, p. 62)

Iman is an action in the mind that confirms the truth and establishes the right of the truth in the mind. It is interwoven with Islam and guides against Hell-Fire as it protects one from being evil. *Iman* therefore comprises of internal conception, verbal words and action by implementation of what goes in mind and tongue. When one lacks the inward confession, he/she is identified with major sin and become a sinner (*fasiq*) or arrogant or transgressor. When one has confession in mind and reflect in action, such person is saved from hell fire while verbal pronouncement alone might not save one from hellfire (al-Ghazali 2000, 1:130)

Iman increases when a person has selected the best option of consequence to search for Allah's (S.W.T.) pleasure, but when it decreases, it is said the person has selected the option of material life at the expense of Allah's (S.W.T) pleasure. And when it is stagnant, it is said the person has become confused. Those who increase in faith (*Imam*) are promoted to the state of belief (*taqwa*), as mentioned in the Qur'an:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَّتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ۚ

For, Believers are those who, when Allah (S.W.T) is mentioned, feel a tremor in their hearts, and when they hear His signs rehearsed, find their faith strengthened, and put (all) their trust in their Lord; (Q8: 2)

The second category are those, who in their faith by one way or the other reasons, tend to deviate and they need guidance to put them through. When faith is well placed in mind, such person will not involve in actions that truncate election and cause public disturbance.

iii. Piety (*Taqwa*) as a Means of Tackling Corruption

Piety is the basement for every good action and the most benefiting to the heart. Faith is fruit of *Iman*, a mind without *Iman* lacks piety because *Iman* is the foundation upon which piety stands; it is the beginning of wisdom. Muhammad (2010, p. 343) stated that a believer combines good deeds and fear of Allah (S.W.T.) while a hypocrite combines evil deeds and remains hard-hearted. A mind with the fear of Allah (S.W.T) remains righteous and dutiful to Allah (S.W.T). A pious mind always be sincere, truthful and trust worthy, it often sees duties and obligations as Allah's trust. This type of a person will therefore not engage in corrupt practices such as election fraud and violence.

iv. Sincerity of Purpose in Relation to Curbing Corruption

Sincerity is another attribute of a believer. To be sincere is to do thing for Allah's (S.W.T.) sake and His messenger alone and nothing more than that. The motive behind any service to humanity supposed to be for Allah's (S.W.T) pleasure and all human *Ibadah* (worship) is also for Allah's (S.W.T) sake not for show- off or people's recognition or to enslave, or to extort or exploit others. People with sincere mind to Allah (S.W.T) would always render selfless service to humanity; they would rather think of Allah's (S.W.T) favour or pleasure than benefit they would get from populace. Such people, when they lead, they lead with justice and good deed (*Ihssaan*) in compliance with Allah's (S.W.T) instruction. And when they are subjects, they obey the constituted authority in compliance with Allah's (S.W.T) decision (Abdul Lateef, 2010, p. 27). Such people will not cause trouble on election result.

v. Contentment as a Means of Curb Corruption

Contentment means to be satisfied with what one has or what Allah (S.W.T) has given to someone. Contentment is another attribute of a *Mu'min*. A mind filled with piety and sincerity will be pleased with Allah's (S.W.T) decision. On the other hand, greediness takes over when one lacks faith or is ignorant of the fundamental principle of *Iman*, particularly, in the area of predestination (*al-Qadar*). Such a person would not accept his fate, live to appreciate Allah (S.W.T), and he will always compare what he has with what others have. Such people are dangerous because they are always greedy. They have quest for material things and quick wealth. Such people can do anything to get what they want. They are arrogant people, betrayers, oppressors, greed-usurper and liars (Qutub, 1992, 15, pp. 256-258). A contented person will be devoid of these characters and will not frustrate election process. Contentment can be instilled in people's mind through collective responsibility. Individual member of the society should be steadfast in taking their responsibilities with full mind of sincerity and readiness to promote morality and justice in the society. This responsibility can be divided into three categories. This is in line with the narration of Abubakr, who said the Prophets (SAW) said:

عن طارق بن شهاب، وهذا حديث أبي بكر قال: أول من بدأ بالخطبة يوم العيد قبل الصلاة، مروان، فقام إليه رجل فقال الصلاة، قبل الخطبة؟ فقال: قد ترك ما هنالك فقال أبو سعيد: أما هذا فقد قضى ما عليه، سمعت رسول الله ﷺ يقول: من رأى منكم منكراً فليغيره بيده، فإن لم يستطع فبلسانه، فإن لم يستطع فبقلبه، وذلك أضعف الإيمان (مسلم ١: ٧٨: ١ ص: ٤٣)

Narrated by Târiq bin Shihab - and this is the *Hadith* of Abi Bakr (one of the narrators) - said: "The first one to start with the *Khutbah* on the day of *'Eid*, before the prayer, was Marwân. A man stood up and said: '(Shouldn't) the prayer (come) before the *Khutbah*?' He said: 'What was there has been left.' Abü Sa'eed said: 'This man has done his duty: I heard the Messenger of Allah (S.W.T) (SAW) saying: Whoever among you sees an evil action, let him change it with his hand (by taking action); if he cannot, then with his tongue (by speaking out); and if he cannot, then with his heart (by hating it and feeling it is wrong), and that is the weakest of faith.'"(Muslim 1.78:143, 2007).

The above Hadith can be explained in the following order, the ruler, the scholar and subject.

- a. The people in position of authority include the head of governments, the executives, the legislatures and the judiciary and other law enforcement agencies. They are people who can enforce morality and justice in the society by the authority conferred on them. Corruption and other acts that frustrate election process cannot be curbed except these categories of people clean their houses and are ready to uphold Justice in the society.
- b. The second categories are the traditional rulers and the clerics who are expected to checkmate the activities of the people in government through preaching and acting righteousness, and followers by giving useful advice and encouraging them to uphold justice and morality. They are supposed to stand firm to check the excesses of the politicians and the people elected or appointed to the positions of authority. The traditional and religious leaders are expected to rally round and join force to fight against public disturbance in whatever means. They are expected to advise the government on electoral policies that would facilitate free and fair election.
- c. The general society (The Led); this is the last category who is expected to be made to realise that violence in whatever form causes Allah's (S.W.T) wrath and punishment because it leads to loss of lives and properties as well as giving bad reputation to the country and its democratic process.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Effort has been made in this paper to showcase how the principle of *Adl* (Justice) *wal-Ihssan* and *Amr-bil-Ma'aruf wal-Nahy ani-l Munkar* can serve as a panacea to election violence in Nigeria. The paper examined the overview of election crises right from 1964 till 2023. It is argued that lack of piety, faith, contentment and host of others factors are the major causes of election violence in Nigeria. The paper, therefore, concludes that if faith, piety, contentment and sincerity of purpose are instilled in the minds of people, they will go a long way in taming election. Based on the argument of the paper, the following are recommended:

- The people in power should endeavour to conduct free and fair election and maintain justice prior to, during and after election.
- They should formulate policy as well enact laws that will allow electoral officers to discharge their duty and responsibility without being influenced by anybody. Likewise, such laws will also make provision for adequate security of the electorate so as to fulfil their franchise.
- Muslim organisations, as well as traditional rulers, should endeavour to orientate their followers on election as well as instil piety, faith, contentment, commanding justice and refuting injustice and vices in the minds of the political leaders and the electorates.

- They should always encourage Muslim to do good and to forbid evil in order to have free and fair election.
- The Muslim *Ummah* generally should bear the responsibility of commanding truth and forbidding evil among Muslims in particular and society at large.

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