

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRANSPARENCY IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR NATION BUILDING: AN EXPOSITORY ANALYSIS FROM ISLAMIC THOUGHT

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Abstract: *Sustainable development for nation building is not a new concept to Islam, sustainable development principles have existed for centuries in the Glorious Qur'an and the Hadith. However, sustainable development concept may have been recently adopted for government and civic society in Islamic world. The Islamic thought embraces that everything on earth is created for humanity and Allah's award to people. Islam allows the consumption of the natural environment without involving unnecessary destruction. Islamic thought views that human activities should support environment, and protection of people's rights, and needs ensuring that human activities do not compromise the essentials of social, economic and natural systems either now or in the future. The aim of this study is to discover the application of Islam in sustainable development debate. Sustainable development in the context of Islamic concept is taken as an opportunity to refresh the relationship between human being and the nation building. This paper will also discuss the role of transparency and accountability in building good governance. With Ihsan and Taqwa based on Iman, people can control, manage and report their actions, although there are no punishments or responsibility questions from others. The principles of transparency and accountability in the Qur'an guarantee social control and report, wide public participation, kind public service, self-honest, self-control and*



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self-responsibility so that various forms of distortion such as corruption or discrimination can be avoided and controlled.

Keywords: *Transparency, Sustainable Development, Nation Building and Islamic Thought.*

A. Introduction

Islamic thought on sustainable development arises from its vision of a moral economy and society, which may, in turn, be articulated into a structure of values and principles that are conducive to sustainability and growth. This would entail a coherent reading of the Islamic scripture as well as a number of Islamic thought concepts, such as the principle of public interest (*maslahah*), the higher purposes (*maqasid*) of Islamic thought, the divinely-ordained balance (*mizan*) in the created universe, and moderation (*wasatiyyah*). This last proscribes prodigality and waste in the use of resources, but more importantly, it seeks to inject moderation as an integral part of the personality and outlook of Muslim individuals and communities. Other principles that relate to our understanding of the Islamic perspective include that of Divine Oneness (*tawhid*), the vicegerency of humankind in the earth (*khilafah*), and justice (*al- 'adl*).

Sustainable development is not a new concept to Islam, sustainable development principles have existed for centuries in the Glorious Qur'an and the Hadith. However, sustainable development concept may have been recently adopted for government and civic society in Islamic world. The Islamic perspective embraces that everything on earth is created for humanity and Allah's award to people. Islam allows the consumption of the natural environment without involving unnecessary destruction. *Shari'ah* views that human activities should support environment, and protection of people's rights, and needs ensuring that human activities do not compromise the essentials of social, economic and natural systems either now or in the future.

B. Method

The aim of this study is to discover the application of Islam in sustainable development debate. Sustainable development in the context of Islamic concept is taken as an opportunity to refresh the relationship between human being and the nation building. This paper will also discuss the role of transparency and accountability in building good governance. Thus this paper use qualitative approach and use various literature to analyze the problem.

C. Result and Discussion

1. Definition of Sustainable Development in Islamic thought

Sustainable development from the Islamic thought can now be defined as sustainable development from Islam seeks to establish a balance between the environment, economic and social dimensions. It means the balanced of consumer welfare, economic efficiency, achievement of ecological balance in the framework of evolutionary knowledge-based, and socially interactive model defining the social justice, *shuratic* process, charity and zakat are two mechanisms to reduce poverty.¹

2. Definition of Nation Building in Islamic Thought

Nation is defined as a country considered as a group of people with the same language, culture and history, who live in a particular area under one government. The Webster's New College Dictionary, defines nation as "a stable historically developed community of people with a territory, economic life, distinctive culture and a language in common". Furthermore, the Thesaurus Dictionary defines nation as "people in a land under a single government; a community or people living in a defined territory with organized authorities. In the modern period, nations have replaced empires as the basic unit of human political organization."²

Nation-building refers to the process of constructing or structuring a national identity using the power of the state. It is thus narrower than nation formation, the broad process through which nations come into being. Nation-building aims at the unification of the people within the state so that it remains politically stable and viable in the long run. Nation-building can involve the use of propaganda or major infrastructure development to foster social harmony and economic growth.³

Nation-building is therefore about building the tangible and intangible threads that hold a political entity together and gives it a sense of purpose. Even in these days of globalization and rapid international flows of people and ideas, having a viable nation remains synonymous with achieving modernity. It is about building the institutions and values which sustain the collective community in these modern times.

¹ Hassan, A. and Cajee, Z., (2002), "Islam": Muslim and Sustainable Development, www.imase.org [Access time 2004]

² Ojoajogwu, O.N. 'Religion as a catalyst of nation building in Nigeria', Net Journal of Social Sciences (Vol. 2(2), June 2014), p. 73. Available online at <http://www.netjournals.org/pdf/NJSS/2014/2/14-022.pdf>. Accessed on 20/09/2015.

³ *ibid*

3. Good Governance and Nation Building: The Islamic Thought Example

Islam cares for the human soul and gives utmost attention to governance that encompasses the individual and the society and deals with all of man's stages of life: as an infant, a child, a youth, middle-aged, and old person. Allah sent prophets and messengers as teachers and educators, as guides and preachers. He revealed books in order to lead mankind out of the depth of darkness into light by the leave of their Lord, to the way of Him the exalted in power, worthy of all praise.

Good governance is pivotal to the growth of any society. To bring about this, the Prophet (SAW) framed correct social, political, educative, as well as religious and economic policies which include:

4. Societal Reformation

Apart from spiritual resurrection wrought by the holy prophet (S.A.W), he brought about a marvellous moral and psychological metamorphosis of his followers. The conditions prevailing in Arabia (as also the world conditions) at the time of the advent of the Holy Prophet was that of a society in disarray. Compare the same with the conditions that prevailed at the time of his demise, and the conditions that prevailed during the rule of his immediate successors, the four rightly-guided caliphs, and you will have to admit that the Holy Prophet effected a complete transformation, an absolute metamorphosis. He raised the morals of his followers to sanity and angelic heights. By emulating the Holy Prophet, they became Allah conscious, and the presence of Allah became for them a living reality. For this reason, they eschewed evil and tried to do good deeds.⁴

5. Peaceful Co-existence

As its name signifies, Islam is a religion of peace and security²⁶ and so almost the first thing which the holy prophet did on settling down in Medina was to enter into a solemn pact with the Jews of Medina.

Quran has invited all People of the Book to retain their faith and reach an agreement with Muslims over commonalties as this will be the firmest ground for peaceful coexistence. Aside this, the Prophet also organised his followers into a well-knit and disciplined community. Despite differences of language, colour, race, country of birth, and social and economic status,

⁴ Altaf A. K. (1981), *Islam A comprehensive guide-book*, Idara Sirat-i-mustaqeem, Pakistan, (1st ed).

they all became one *Ummah* - brethren in faith, living in peace and harmony. They acted on the Holy Prophet's precept that a Muslim is one from whose hands and tongue a man is safe.⁵

6. Youth Empowerment

The prophet of Allah (SAW) directed his attention to the young people of his time. He brought them from the corrupt society where they constituted nuisance to the society. They embraced Islam, memorised the Qur'an, and undertook the call to the new religion. The youths were well trained and drilled by the prophet. He gave them education, transformed their lives and engaged them positively. The knowledge and skill they acquired helped determine their degree of patriotism and contribution to societal integration and progress. The prophet appointed them in high positions of leadership in the army, the judiciary and government, and assigned important tasks to them (Altaf, 1981).

7. Stable Economic System

The policies that open up the economy will become people-oriented only if the government is able to direct proper resources towards the youth and provide them access to jobs that are created due to liberalization of the economy. It is in recognition of this that the holy prophet (SAW) formed and implemented policies that would benefit the rich and poor so that there is fair and even competition. The prophet established Zakat institution on the commandment of his Lord,⁶ where obligatory charity is paid by the rich to the poor at a fixed rate. Zakat, called poor-rate or poor-tax, is really a welfare tax. Zakat is the back bone of the economic system in Islam.

8. Mutual Consultations (*Shura*)

Most of the companions of the prophet (SAW) were from the youth. He consulted his companions on all matters. The prophet recognised the youth as a strategic resource and vital decision-making agents. He allowed them participate in decision-making processes on issues that affect their lives. He also gave them a voice to articulate the kind of required assistance and the opportunity to participate in the delivery of assistance policies, whether in private domestic affairs, as between husband and wife, or other responsible members of the household; in affairs of business, as between partners or parties interested; and in State affairs, as between

⁵ ibid

⁶ (Qur'an, 9: 60)

rulers and ruled, or as between departments of administration to preserve the unity of administration.⁷

Islam reflects the common interest of the world, of the nation, of the community and of the family. It is not a self-serving faith; but rather, a consort of fellow brethren that transcends racial, ethnic, gender, and socio-economic status. Islam is the path that provides a sound foundation for civil and political stability, and economic growth. Islam does not separate the secular from the spiritual. It is a trio of state, mosque and citizenship.

9. Transparency in Sustainable Development for Nation Building from Islamic thought

Islam is the name of religion which arose in what is now known as Saudi Arabia in 610 A.D.⁸ Its initiator was the prophet Muhammad (Peace Be upon Him). The message of Allah revealed to him is contained in the *Glorious Qur'an*. The prophet Muhammad (Peace Be upon Him) taught the Muslim followers some lessons that touch their lives. These lessons have been recorded and compiled in the *Hadith*. Muslims learn from these two books, Qur'an and *Sunnah*. The rules in those two books and the body of legal opinion recorded by Muslims lawyers relating to all facts of social life in Islamic society are called (*Shari'ah*). *Shari'ah* covers all areas of economic, social, political and also ecological aspects. Islam is not just a religion; it represents an entire sense of community and a way of life. It defines both a world view and a guidance framework for actions in all spheres of life.⁹ Sustainable development is not a new concept to Muslims. The *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* provide the framework for the spiritual and physical welfare of humanity. There are over 500 verses in the *Qur'an* giving Muslims guidance on matters relating to the environment and how to deal with it, and there are numerous examples from the prophet Muhammad's life (PBUH) and his sayings, which provide a model for justice, transparency and equity.¹⁰

The Islamic thought embraces that everything on the earth was created for humanity and is Allah's grant to people. However, it is a grant with conditions and it is unquestionably that

⁷ (Qur'an 42:38 and Qur'an 3: 159)

⁸ Abd-Allah, A., (2004), "Muhammad" Prophet and Politician, www.islamlib.com, [Access time 2004]

⁹ Ahmed, A., (1988), *Discovering Islam*, New York: Rutledge.

¹⁰ Hassan, A. and Cajee, Z., (2002), "Islam": Muslim and Sustainable Development, www.imase.org [Access time 2004]

carries responsibilities. The earth then is a testing ground of the humankind. The tests are a measure of man's acts of admiration.¹¹ On this subject *Qur'an* says:

“Allah sends down water from the sky and by it brings the dead earth back to life.

There is certainly a Sign in that for people who hear. There is instruction for you in cattle. From the contents of their bellies, from between dung and blood, we give pure milk to drink, easy for drinkers to swallow. And from the fruit of the date palm and the grapevine you derive both intoxicants and wholesome provision. There is certainly a Sign in that for people who use their intellect. Your Lord revealed to the bees: Build dwelling in the mountains and the trees, and also in the structures which men erect. Then eat from every kind of fruit and travel the paths of your Lord, which have been made easy for you to follow. From inside them comes a drink of varying colours, containing healing for mankind. There is certainly a Sign in that for people who reflect” (Qur'an, 16: 65).

In Islam it is not allowed to harm women, children and, not to harm Animals, destroy crops or cut down trees.

10. Preservation of Sustainable Development in Islamic thought

In the context of Islamic perspective, it would be possible to consider that the preservation of sustainable development is a process to maintain the beauty of Allah's creation and managing it over in a way that connote with Islamic teachings. Thus, a kind of development or progress that would bring a better life and concerns with basic human need without being merely fulfilling one's interest and profit-oriented, has to be sustainable or ongoing. The Prophet (SAW) once, has said: ‘The best of deeds is those which are performed over the longest period of time, even if they be little’.

11. Transparency and Accountability: Three of the Most Fundamental Principles of Good Governance in Islamic thought

Transparency and accountability are two of the most fundamental principles of good governance. Both are interrelated concepts. Without transparency, there is no accountability and without transparency, accountability becomes meaningless. Transparency is a precondition for the implementation of the principle of accountability, although the normative principles relate as equals. Public accountability demands that public bureaucracy can be explained with transparency and openness to the public on what actions and policies have been done. Transparency and openness aim to explain how the responsibility to be carried on, what

¹¹ Khalid, F., (2002), “Islam and the Environment”, *Social Economic Dimension of Global Environmental Change*, John Wiley and Sons Ltd, Vol.5.

methods are used to carry out the task, how the reality of implementation and what impact of it. Through the transparency of governance, people are given the opportunity to know the policies that will be or have been taken by the government so that the public can provide feedback or outcomes of the policies taken by the government. Thus, people can personally know clearly and without any cover-up of the process of formulation and implementation public policy.¹²

The implementation of the principle of transparency will open information about the determination of public policy to all stakeholders. Thus the public decision-making process will be controlled by the stakeholders or outsiders. Controlling is one of the criteria of accountability. Accountability means responsibility by creating conditions of mutual monitoring among all stakeholders. Controlling can be created if the transparency realized so all stakeholders have sufficient and accurate information about public policy and the process of its formation. It hoped that the emerging public policy can deliver optimal results for all stakeholders. The existence of transparency and accountability contributes to the effectiveness, efficiency and equity in public management.¹³

Belal & Roberts (2013) show that the business organization is as an engine of economic development and as an institution that should be responsive and accountable for the consequences of social relations and the environment for their activities. Complete and transparent of social and environmental disclosure become a mechanism for holding business organizations in order to compute a strong influence on the economy. In resolution 50/225 on public administration and development, the General Assembly where reaffirmed its belief that “democracy and transparent and accountable governance and administration in all sectors of society are indispensable foundations for the realization of social and people-centred sustainable development” and further stated that “governments in all countries should make their procedures transparent in order to avoid and combat all acts of corruption.¹⁴”

Undertaken process so that this disclosure is expected to be a feedback for the implementation of more accountable public management. Transparency that not followed by accountability does not guarantee the output of the implementation of effective and efficient public policy. These conditions will influence poor performance of governance and public

¹² (CUI ITB, 2004).

¹³ *ibid*

¹⁴ UN. (1999). *Transparency and accountability in government financial management*. New York: Author.

services, public dissatisfaction for provided services, and further, the people become no longer in trust with government.¹⁵

12. Sustaining Spiritual Development in Islamic Thought

Human's spiritual development means the process of attaining a complete knowledge of Allah (*ma'rifatullah*) and His attributes, and an absolute belief in Him. This knowledge and belief have to be translated into actions that follow basic Qur'anic outline and guidance. In doing so, several stages have been identified to be very influential upon human's spiritual and physical development. Those stages are testimony (*shahadah*), thankfulness (*shukr*), patience (*sabr*), remembrance of Allah (*zikrullah*), deeply thinking (*tafakkur*), justice (*cadl*) and knowledge of Allah (*ma'rifat*).¹⁶

13. Shahadah

Shahadah is related to human's awareness about his existence in terms of spiritual and physical elements. This concept is based on two testimonies: faith to Allah (*iman*) and the management and exploration of worldly elements. Proper understanding of this concept leads human towards knowing himself and the surrounding environment (seen or un-seen world) that resulting in utilising the natural resources responsibly for their benefits, honestly maintain and preserve it, use it considerately and moderately and pass it on to future generation in an excellent condition. Therefore, a combination of these elements, coupled with a clear testimony is seen to be the most appropriate model for sustainable development.¹⁷

14. Islamic thought takes Place to Value Nature

The Arabic word Islamic thought means the source of life and contains both legal rules and ethical principles. It is established since the founding of Islam in the 7th century (Cone, 2003:64). *Qur'an* says: "But no, by your Lord they can have no faith until they make you judge in all disputes between them" (Qur'an, 4: 65).

"And verily, you (O Muhammad) are indeed guiding (mankind)
to the Straight Path" (Qur'an, 42:52).

¹⁵ (CUI ITB, 2004).

¹⁶ Ahmed, A., (2002), "Planning for a Sustainable Future from the Islamic Point of View", *Response to the State Sustainability Strategy*.

¹⁷ *ibid*

Narrated An-Nu'man bin Bashir: The Prophet said “Both legal and illegal things are obvious, and in between them are (suspicious) doubtful matters. So who-ever forsakes those doubtful things lest he may commit a sin, will definitely avoid what is clearly illegal; and who-ever indulges in these doubtful things bravely, is likely to commit what is clearly illegal (Al-Bukhari, 2001).”

Therefore, the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* teach human being that there are two purposes of his/her creation:¹⁸

- a. To be Allah’s Vicegerent (*Khalifa*) on earth, even as Allah said in the *Qur'an*: “It is Allah who has created for you all that is on earth....And remember when your Lord said to the angels: ‘Verily, I am going to place a viceroy (mankind) on earth.’ They said: ‘Will You place therein those who will make mischief therein and shed blood, - while we glorify You with praise and sanctify You?’” Allah said: ‘Verily, I know better what you do not know” (Qur’an, 2: 29- 30). This last verse refers to the time when Allah announced to the angels that He was going to create the first man, Adam (PBUH).
- b. To serve and worship Allah by fulfilling all acts of worship prescribed by Him, and by keeping good relationship between human beings, as Allah said in the *Qur'an*: “I have not created the Jinn and men but to serve me” (Qur’an, 51: 56). This is indicated by the division of the *Shari'ah* relevant to human action into four categories as stated by *Shari'ah* scholars, a Muslim is required to perform those actions:

1) **Obligatory actions (*Wajib*):** it is any act Islam makes obligatory on a *mukaluf* Muslim in a significant way and which under no circumstances can she/he ignore (Ibid). Islam warns against exceeding in using of natural resources (Qur’an, 17: 26). For example, the prophet (peace be upon him) dedicated specific area in Mecca and Medina as where no natural plants could be uproot and no animals hunted¹⁹ “Allah's *Hima* (i.e. private pasture) and whoever pastures (his sheep) near it, is likely to get in it at any moment”. The use of *Hima* system and *haram* zone is still widespread in some Muslims countries especially in rural areas where *Himas* are created to support animals grazing on a more communal basis.²⁰

¹⁸ ibid

¹⁹ (ISESCO, 2005)

²⁰ Fakir, S., (2002), “The Nation of Public goods, Sustainable Development and Islam”: Islamic Economics: 1-4, www.islamic-world.net/economics/notion, [Access time 2004]

- 2) **Ethical actions (Mustahab):** a Muslim is encouraged to perform those actions, sustains no adherence, no responsibility of those actions, examples of those actions is protecting the environment.²¹
- a) The environment is Allah's creation and to protect it is to preserve its values as a sign of the Creator.
 - b) The component parts of nature are entities in continuous admiration of their Creator. “The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein praise Him, and there is not such a thing but hymneth his praise; but ye understand not their praise. Lo! He is ever Clement, Forgiving” (Qur’an, 17: 44).
 - c) The law of nature is law made by the Creator and based on the concept the absolute continuity of existence. “Hast thou not seen that unto Allah payeth adoration whosoever is in the heavens and whosoever is in the earth, and the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the hills, and the trees, and the beasts, and many of mankind” (Qur’an, 22, 18).
 - d) The *Shari’ah* acknowledges that humankind is not the only community to live on the earth. “There is not an animal in the earth, nor a flying creature flying on two wings, but they are peoples like unto you” (Qur’an, 6: 38).
“See you not (O Muhammad) that Allah, He it is Whom glorify whosoever is in the heavens and the earth, and the birds with wings out-spread (in their flight)?. Of each one He (Allah) knows indeed his *Salat* (prayer) and his glorification, [or everyone knows his *Salat* (prayer) and his glorification]; and Allah is All-Aware of what they do” (Qur’an, 26:41).
 - e) Islamic environmental ethics is based on the concept that all human relationships are established on justice and equity. “Lo! Allah enjoined justice and kindness”. And Prophet Muhammad thought: “Verily Allah has prescribed equity in all things” (Al-Bukhari, 2001).
 - f) The balance of the universe created by Allah. Functions carefully measured and exactly balanced by the Creator. "Has taught (you mankind) the *Qur’an* (by His Mercy). He created man. He taught him eloquent speech. The sun and the moon run on their fixed courses (exactly) calculated with measured out stages for each (for reckoning, etc.).

²¹ Izzī-Deen, M., (1990), “Islamic Environmental Ethics, Law and Society” *Ethics of Environment and Development*.

And the herbs (or stars) and the trees both prostrate. And the heaven He has raised high, and He has set up the Balance. In order that you may not transgress (due) balance, and observe the weight with equity and do not make the balance deficient"(Qur'an, 55: 1-9).

"Everything with Him is measured" (Qur'an, 13: 8). "There is not a thing but with Us are the stores thereof. And We send it not down save in appointed measure"(Qur'an, 15: 21).

3) Permission actions (*Mubah*): a Muslim is given complete freedom of choice within the circle of permission; in terms of environmental point view, the prophet Mohamed said "whoever brings dead land to life, for him is a reward in it, and whatever any creature seeking food eats of it shall be reckoned as charity from him"(Selleh,1992). Also the prophet claimed about this matter that:

- a) People who reclaim or revive land have permission to its ownership.
- b) Land grants may be made by the state for reclamation and development.
- c) Land may be leased for its usufruct by the state for its reclamation and development.
- d) Special reserves may be established by the state for use as conservation zones.

4) Abominable actions (*Makruh*): those which are morally but not legally wrong, it is preferable to avoid such acts in the interests of self or society (Ibid). The Islamic thought also evolved within these actions a principle, which is a bigger loss cannot be prescribed to ease a smaller loss and a bigger benefit takes precedence over a smaller one. Conversely a smaller harm can be prescribed to avoid a bigger harm and a smaller benefit can be dispensed with in preference to a bigger one.²²

5) Prohibited actions (*Muharam*): It is any act that Islam prohibits the religiously responsible Muslim (Ibid, (2005). Islam allows the consumption of the natural environment without involving unnecessary destruction.²³ "O Children of Adam look to your adornment at every place of worship, and eat and drink, but be not prodigal. Lo! He loves not the prodigals"(Qur'an, 7: 31). The environment is not down in the service of the present generation alone. It is rather the gift of Allah to all generations, past, present and future.

"He it is Who created for you all that is in the earth" (Qur'an, 2: 29).

²² Khalid, F., (2002), "Islam and the Environment", *Social Economic Dimension of Global Environmental Change*, John Wiley and Sons Ltd, Vol.5.

²³ ibid

In these Qur'anic verses, eating and drinking refer to the utilization of the sources of life; such utilization is not without controls. The component elements of life have to be protected so that their utilization may continue in a sustainable way.²⁴ The forbidden things or acts are limited and whatever else besides, is to enjoy according to a system which preserves the way of life and provides balance and harmony in every human activity (Ibid). Khalid, (2002) explains in this matter that the interests of the community have to take precedence over the interests of the individual:

- a) Allah is the only owner of the earth and everything in it. People embrace land on usufruct - that is, for its utility value only. There is a restricted right to public property.
- b) Mistreatment of rights is prohibited and disciplined.
- c) There are rights to the benefits derived from natural resources held in common.
- d) Scarce resource utilization is controlled.
- e) The common welfare is protected.
- f) Benefits are protected and detriments are either reduced or eliminated.

15. Islamic thought takes Place to Value Society

There are six elements that are considered by Islamic thought to be key unique perspective of Islam in matters of value society; these four elements are social cohesion, responsibility (*Faradh*), empowerment (*Shura*), equilibrium (*Al'adl wal ihsan*), endowment (*Al-Wqaf*) and almsgiving (*Zakat*). Those five elements are main indicators of sustainable development agenda.

- a. **Social cohesion (*Ummah*):** Islam has called for society cohesion more than one thousand four hundred years ago (ISESCO, 2005). Islamic thought emphasise the inspiration of cohesive society as is the process of developing a society of shared values, shared challenge and equal opportunities. Allah said: “O mankind! Verily We have created you out of a male and a female, and We have made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Indeed, the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the most conscious of Him.

Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware” (Qur’an, 49: 13).

“And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the difference of your languages and colours, Verily in that are signs for men of sound knowledge” (Qur’an30:.22).

²⁴ Izzī-Deen, M., (1990), “Islamic Environmental Ethics, Law and Society” *Ethics of Environment and Development*.

- b. Responsibility (*Faradh*):** individual and society have the responsibility to use of welfare in a responsible way.²⁵ Responsibility from the recognition that comes with human awareness. Humans are responsible as Allah's vice-regents (*Kalifah*) for the care of the earth Allah said in the Qur'an:

It is Allah who has created for you all that is on earth....And remember when your Lord said to the angels: 'Verily, I am going to place a viceroy (mankind) on earth.' They said: 'Will You place therein those who will make mischief therein and shed blood, -while we glorify You with praise and sanctify You?' Allah said: 'Verily, I know better what you do not know' (Qur'an, 2: 29). The stress on individual responsibility is seen to be realised in the function of understanding of mankind creation. In all circumstances there is a pressure on Muslims to act in accordance with their understanding (*ijtihad*) (Cone, 2003).

- c. Empowerment (*Shura*):** human beings should fully participate in decision making and implementation in their life (Zuhaili, 1997). In Islamic perspective the empowerment means the *Shuratic* decision making of all levels of the Islamic society. It applies collectively to the decision making on social matters (Salleh, 1992). Such a cure of *Shura* is closed to its meaning in the *Qur'an*:

"And who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation" (Qur'an, 42:38).

- d. Equilibrium (*Al'adl wal ihsan*):** in which individuals have the freedom to act, but must do so with manner from welfare of the present and future generation (Fakir, 2002), Allah says: "if you loan Allah beautiful loan, He will double it in your credit, and He will grant your forgiveness"
- e. Endowment (*Al-Wqaf*):** Islam has through its principles endeavored to fight against poverty. This fight can either occur through provides a source of income for a person, or through government assistance and unique to Islam and that ensures that man is free from the shackles of poverty (Zuhaili, 1997). Allah said in the *Qur'an*: "Give your kinsman his due, and the needy, and the way-farer, and squander not (your wealth) in wantonness. Indeed, the squanderers are brothers of the devils, and the devil is ever an ingrate to his Lord" (Qur'an, 17: 26-27).
- f. Alms (*Zakat*):** Zakat is one of the five pillars of Islam. Zakat provides a vital mechanism for addressing social welfare issues. In *Shari'ah*; the word zakat refers to the determined share of wealth given by Allah to be distributed among the categories

²⁵ Fakir, S., (2002), "The Nation of Public goods, Sustainable Development and Islam": Islamic Economics: 1-4, www.islamic-world.net/economics/notion, [Access time 2004]

of those allowed to receive it. It is used to mean the action of payment of this share. All Muslims are required to give away at least two and half per cent (2.5%) of their income to the poor people (www.salaam.co.uk/islamicfinance). Zakat enables to fulfill the social and moral objectives of an Islamic society. It has a moral purpose with respect to the individual. The social objective of Zakat is to eliminate poverty and the desire for personal accumulation at any cost and to encourage socially orientated behavior.²⁶

D. Conclusion

This study hopes to provide a theoretical background for the present debate on sustainable development from an Islamic thought. The concept of sustainable development took root in 7th century; however, it was not until 20th century that this ideology was translated into a modern context. Islam, for example, warns in the Glorious *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* against excess and over extension of natural resources. Islam calls collective as well as individuals to refer to Allah's Islamic law. Islam calls for a sense of transparency and accountability awareness of the reason of mankind creation. All these are natural outcomes of the Islamic thought rules.

Good governance has been at the lowest ebb in most parts of the world especially African countries including Nigeria. The citizens are to reap what is popularly referred to as the dividend of democracy. The failure of government in various places for instance, to impact on the people welfare positively has been associated with the unwholesome corruption pervading the entire global political climate.

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