

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF SOKOTO JIHAD LEADERS TO GOOD GOVERNANCE

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ABSTRACT: *The research paper an assessment of the contribution of Sokoto Jihad leaders to good governance is aims at reveal the Contributions of the Leaders of Sokoto Jihad to good governance. It studied the literature of activities of the Jihad leaders and their practice of good governance. The Jihad carried out by prominent Muslim Scholars and reformers under the leadership of Shaykh Usmanu Dan Fodiyo was a significant historical event that shaped the political landscape of the region that is now called northern Nigeria in the nineteenth century. The paper also looked at the political situation of Hausaland before the Jihad and how it was administered before the emergence of the Sokoto Caliphate. This study seeks to explore the role played by these Leaders in promoting good governance principles and its impact on the socio-political development of Hausaland. The paper employs a qualitative research methodology, utilizing historical analysis and literature review. Primary and secondary sources such as historical texts, scholarly writings and relevant documents were consulted to gather the required information.*

Keywords: *Leadership, Governance, Jihad, Leaders, Sokoto, Caliphate*



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A. Introduction

The Sokoto caliphate was a revolutionary movement that sought to and established an Islamic government in what is now Nigeria. The Caliphate headed by Muslim Scholars reformed the society by establishing governance based on Islamic Principles. Islam and literacy are intricately intertwined; they are tied up together. This is because the more learned a person, the more reformed he is expected to be, and the more distant he stays from animalistic life. The Islamic educational traditions are deeply associated with every aspect of human life. This made the Jihad Scholars to pursue educational reforms at an accelerated mode.

One of the results of the Jihad activities of the nineteenth century was the spread of Islamic and mundane education in Arabic throughout the western Sudan. This had been important before the Jihad of the nineteenth century, but as a result of these Jihad activities, education spread at unprecedented rate.¹ Education is one of the agents of development as it enhances empowerment which in turn leads to human development. Perhaps this explains why education occupies a central place in the Jihadists capacity building activities. They lamented how people in Hausaland were left in ignorance as a result of which illiteracy became prevalent. In many instances they criticized Scholars of the region for neglecting education of the people particularly women. In order to remedy the situation, they adopted the Principle of mass literacy as an educational policy. Through such efforts they succeeded in creating a knowledge-based society. Scholars and students did not stop at pursuit of knowledge only but they passed it to others through its transmission. Through such method education was made available to all seekers of knowledge. This endeared people to the Jihad leaders. *Masajid*, open spaces, residences of scholars and of prominent individuals were used as learning centres. Home-Schools, Quranic schools and *'Ilimi* schools flourished.² The Impact of such comprehensive approach manifests itself in the level of literacy achieved. This is who they were rightly guided. This is because Islam is a knowledge-based system of life. Hence without education, hardly you get people organized.

¹ M. Crowder, *West Africa: An Introduction to its History*, Longman Group Limited, London, 1977, P. 76.

² S. Yusuf, *A History of Islam, Scholarship and Revivalism in Western Sudan, Being an Annotated Translation with Introduction of Infaqul Maisur fi Tarikh Bilad Al Tukrur of Sultan Muhammad Bello bin Fodiyo*, Tamaza Publishing Company Limited, Zaria, 2013, p.41.

B. Literature Review

Good governance is perceived in diverse ways.³ First, it is often taken as a normative concept, as a model or an ideal of governance. Second, it has been viewed as a ‘depoliticized’ concept, that is, it is regarded as a purely administrative or technocratic notion. Third, “good governance” is employed as a concept based on daily experience: ‘real governance’ unlike the one wished-for, one which starts from the gap that exists between the norm and the application of the norm. Real governance takes governance as an analytical tool, an ideological instrument and, finally, as political device, successively. A related concept is that of ‘legitimate governance,’ which underscores an important marker of “good governance” and legitimacy.⁴ Legitimacy derives from participation and representation (which speak to inclusivity in governance), transparency, dialogue and consensus building and ownership of the concept by stakeholders in governance.

Governance, a concept that is greatly debated, is now inviting greater attention within and amongst countries and as the number of democratic administrations is continuously increasing, good governance has evidently become a key standard to judge a nation’s credibility as well as respect on international scales.⁵ Governance refers to several ways by which social life is coordinated. It is a process of social engagement between the rulers and the ruled in the society which implies that governance is predicated on the relationship between the ruling class and the ruled class in the society.⁶ Governance can be referred to as the traditions as well as institutions that define how authority is exercised in a given country.⁷ Salman asserts that Governance entails the procedure through which governments are selected, monitored, held accountable, and replaced; it is government’s ability to judiciously manage resources well and formulate, implement as well as enforce good policies and regulations; and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interaction between them.⁸

³ L. Damiba, *The Concept of Governance in Africa: Historical Trajectory and Appropriations*. Discussion Paper No.1, African Governance Institute, 2011.

⁴ O. Sy, *Reconstruire l’Afrique. Vers une nouvelle gouvernance construites sur les dynamiques locales*. Paris: Edition Charles Léopold Mayer, 2009.

⁵ F.O. Iyoha, D.F. Gbervbie, C.T. Iruonagbe, & M.E. Egharevba, Cost of Governance in Nigeria: In Whose Interest? *International Journal of Social, Education, Economics and Management Engineering*. 9, (1), 2015.

⁶ V. Nyewusira, Selected Socio-Political Issues in Nigeria: Religious Institutions as Agents of Change. *Journal of Pedagogy and Educational Development*, 12, (1), 2007.

⁷ D. Kaufmann, A. Kraay, & L.P. Zoido, Governance Matters: From Measurement to Action, *IMF Finance and Development*. 37, (2), 2000.

⁸ S. Salman, A Comparative Study of the Major Economic Systems in the Aftermath of the Great Recession, MPRA: Munich Personal RePEc Archive, MPRA Paper No. 19588, 2009.

According to Kolade, Governance involves participation by both the governor and the governed (i.e. the leader and the follower). He asserted that in order to get the expected governance in Nigeria, there is the need to provide „leadership education that highlights service delivery, quality and accountability; severely curtail the excesses of position holders, encourage the culture whereby position holders vacate office when being investigated for wrong doing; and openly celebrate leaders that excel or perform well.⁹ Recently, good governance has been an important subject in economic development discourse because of its connection to information dissemination which, could improve resource allocation, enhance efficiency and increase the prospects of economic growth provided it is made available on time and without being distorted. Ijaya & Ijaya asserted that this is a vital pre-requisite for the improvement of wellbeing of the citizens. A general agreement has been building throughout Africa that good governance is indispensable for transforming its economy.¹⁰ Certain qualities are connected with good governance, which comprises protecting respect for human rights, justice and rule of law; strengthening democracy through public participation and pluralism; encouraging transparency, accountability, anti-corruption policies and practices and capacity in public administration.¹¹ Good governance is indispensable for institutional growth and effectiveness. According to Akanbi, good governance is the capability of a government to sustain social peace, guarantee law and order, promote conditions needed for generating economic growth and ascertain a minimum level of social security.¹² Development will be a mirage where good governance is lacking. Good governance is hinged on the capacity to exercise power and to make sound decisions over a period of time in economic, social and environmental areas.¹³

Governance is the exercise of power or authority-political, economic, administrative or otherwise-to manage a country's resources and affairs. It comprises the mechanisms, process and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligation and mediate their differences. Good governance means competent

⁹ C. Kolade, *The Possibility of Good Governance in Nigeria*, 2012.

<https://www.businessdayonline.com/NG/index.php/news/111>.

¹⁰ M. Ijaya, & G. Ijaya, *Transparency in Governance and Economic Growth in Sub-Saharan Africa: Cross Country Analysis*, *Babcock Journal of Management and Social Science*. 2, (8), 2006.

¹¹ World Bank, *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth: A long-Term Perspective Study*. Washington DC: World Bank, 1989.

¹² M.M. Akanbi, *Corruption, Accountability, and Good Governance*” In Saliu H.A. (ed), *Nigeria under Democratic Rule (1999-2003)*, Ibadan; University Press, 2004.

¹³ World Bank & International Monetary Fund, *Review of the PRS Approach: Balancing Accountabilities and Scaling Up Results*, 2005. <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPRSI/Resources/PRSP.Review/2005>

management of a country's resources and affairs in a manner that is open, transparent, accountable, equitable and responsive to people's needs. Good governance according to Ebiringa, is founded under political and economic principles.¹⁴

Ukaogo see governance as essentially tinged on transparency, planning and budgeting. They maintain that the process of budgeting in any country determines the level of transparency and accountability.¹⁵ More so, that governance can be viewed as the totality of the process of constituting a government as well as administering a political community.

Ninalowo identifies the major difference between government and governance. He identifies the salient features of governance such as socio-political empowerment, socio-economic empowerment, legal-rational empowerment, cultural empowerment, gender empowerment, civil society organizations etc. He notes that governance is the totality of executive or administrative functions of the state with a view to fulfilling terms of social contract or constitutional obligations to the citizenry, while government refers to position or office of authority to administer the affairs of the state.¹⁶

C. Research Method

The research methodology adopted in this paper is a literature study approach. Basically the study of literature is the same as research in general, but the data obtained by the researchers is secondary data using the literature study and historical methods. Some steps that the researcher employed in preparing this article include: first, the researcher searches for and collects reference sources that are relevant to the theme of this research. Second, several scientific papers that have been collected are then processed and elaborated, in order to comprehensively explain the inter-sections of this article. Third, is an assessment of the contributions of Sokoto Jihad Leaders to good governance in the entire caliphate.

¹⁴ O.T. Ebiringa, *The Role of Credible Candidature and Election in Good Governance*. Being a paper presented at the 2013 South-East Zonal Management Summit. Organized by Nigerian Institute of Management (chartered) South-Eastern Zone Owerri May 2013 Theme: Impact of Good Governance on National transformation: The South East Experience, 2013.

¹⁵ V. Ukaogo, "Transparency and Accountability in Nigeria," *The Constitution*. 1 (1) 211-217, 2000.

¹⁶ M.O.A. Ninalowo, "Autinomies of Corruption and Democratic governance." In; Lai Olurode and S.O. Akinboye (eds.) *Good governance and corruption in Nigeria*, Friedrich Ebert Shiftung (FES), 2005.

D. Findings and Discussion

Political Situation of the Hausaland

Though the Sarkuna (rulers) of Hausaland: Gobir, Kano, Katsina, and Zamfara among others held the reins of power from the establishment of their respective city-states in a corrupt and manipulative manner up to the outbreak of the war. Though the Sarkuna professed Islam and adopted it as the state religion, most of them continued to mix Islam with syncretism which warranted the call for Revivalism. The Jihadists revivalists' activities were characterized by preaching, teaching and writing. But the rulers saw it as a threat to their authority hence the antagonistic attitude exhibited towards the Jihad leader and his followers. In addition, to that the rulers ruled with high-handedness. They were oppressive, corrupt and exploitative.¹⁷

Naturally, such rulers prefer customs and traditions which they Revere over religious teachings. This is because with religious teachings being followed, they cannot impose their whims and caprices on their subjects. On the other hand, by employing teaching, writing and preachings as strong means of transforming their society, the Jihadists did not come with something new. This is because such missionary activities have been in operation in Hausaland long before the Jihadists came to life; the difference between them and their predecessors was the approach. The approach was centred on returning people to the true teaching of Islam without any compromise. This is because the whole mission was built upon calling people to the way of Allah; to promote personal prestige, game or superiority over others.

The antagonistic attitude of the rulers was not something new or strange, since it has happened in history as contained in the Glorious Qur'an. Examples here are the cases of Prophet Musa (A. S) and the Pharaoh of Egypt, as well as that of the Queen of Saba' and her lieutenants. It therefore could be understood that the rulers of Hausaland at that time governed or managed with a firm, authoritative, or overbearing manner. They embraced the idea of acting in a way that shows a lack of concern for the opinions or rights of others, often implies the sense of arrogance or autocracy. In this context, it indicates that the rulers exercised their power in a forceful or dictatorial manner, disregarding the wishes or well-being of the people they governed.

¹⁷ S. Yusuf, A History of Islam, Scholarship and Revivalism in Western Sudan, Being an Annotated Translation with Introduction of Infaul Maisur fi Tarikh Bilad al- Tukurur of Sultan Muhammad Bello bin Fodiyo, ... p. 29.

The political Situation was made stifled. The Jihadists attempt to bring about peace failed because of the inequity and belligerent attitude of the rulers. They persecuted the Jihadists and their followers, initiated war against them as a result of which the relationship between the two groups degenerated into warfare.¹⁸

After the defeat of Gobir kingdom, the Jihadists established a state which became known as the Sokoto caliphate. Bello gave a description of the kind of political structure put in place by the Jihad. Allah conquered all these countries (Hausaland) for him (Danfodiyo) and he ruled with justice and fairness over its people. He appointed for each province a representative who carried out the rule as required. Prayer was carried out, zakat was paid, Jihad was launched, education was spread, discord was extinguished, the oppressors were subdued, the wronged was treated justly, the roads were secured, life and the sacred and the mundane were protected. Though war and development are often seen as antithesis, the Sokoto Jihad presents a contrary picture because the Jihad resulted in the creation of a wider and cohesive political landscape that brought about the realization of justice, peace, equity and economic development.¹⁹

The Administration of the Sokoto Caliphate

The Caliphate was a product of a revolutionary movement known as the Sokoto Jihad because it was led by leaders whose ideas were Islamic and wanted a society built on that basis. Having fought and won the revolutionary leadership, *Mujahidun*, found themselves by 1808 heading an Islamic State standing over the ruins of the Hausa city – states of Gobir, Kabi, Zamfara, Katsina, Zaria, etc.²⁰ This suggests that they changed the notion many people of that epoch bore of disconnecting religion from state affairs. They provided practical proofs that, it was an erroneous perception to regard Islam as a religion of devotion alone. It also indicates that the region was robbed of visionary leadership as a result of the planted. The Jihadists therefore demonstrated rare courage and commitment to justice.

¹⁸ S. Yusuf, A History of Islam, Scholarship and Revivalism in Western Sudan, Being an Annotated Translation with Introduction of Infaqul Maisur fi Tarikh Bilad al Tukrur of Sultan Muhammad Bello bin Fodiyo, ...ibid, p.29.

¹⁹ S. Yusuf, A History of Islam, Scholarship and Revivalism in Western Sudan, Being an Annotated Translation with Introduction of Infaqul Maisur fi Tarikh Bilad Al Tukrur of Sultan Muhammad Bello bin Fodiyo, Tamaza Publishing Company Limited, Zaria, 2013, p.30.

²⁰ U. M. Bugaje, The Sakkwato Model: A Study of the Origin, Development and Fruition of the Jihad of Uthman B. Fodiyo (1754-1817), np, Badmus Press, 2011, p.24.

The birth of this new Caliphate, cutting across all former boundaries and identities; unprecedented in its scope and complexity, was what finally solved the crisis and diequilibrium of the societies and politics of this vast region. Deep rooted in Islam, the Jihad not only culminated into the establishment of a state system, the Sokoto Caliphate but that it produced an effective administrative structure which lasted for about a century.²¹ The triumvirate that constituted the leadership of the Jihad, i.e. Shaykh Usman B. Fodiyo, his brother Abdullahi B. Fodiyo and his son Sultan Muhammad Bello, all of them Scholars of great repute, spared no effort at ensuring that they create and maintain viable political institutions in order to realize the basic goals of the state. The Sokoto Jihad leaders saw the need for establishing a number of institutions through which the emergent Caliphate would be administered. The offices include: Caliph (Head of State), that of the *Wazir* (Vizier), *Arkan* (Ministers), *Ummal* (Provincial Governors), *Qudat* (Judges), *Muhtasibun* (Inspectors of Public Morals), and a host of others.²²

The principles of politics as elucidated by Bello are seven, all of them- signifying the meaning of justice. The triumvirate advocated for an Islamic state built on the principles and practice of Shariah. Its ideals are to establish justice by the leadership. Islam, at least, in the case of Sokoto Caliphate proposes: first, a decentralized and federal system of government due to problem of distance and poor communication system in those days. Second, multiple structures of government; the executive, judiciary, council of scholars and shurah.²³ The principles of politics as elucidated by Bello emphasize the importance of justice in governance. Bello advocates for an Islamic state based on Shariah principles, with a focus on establishing justice through leadership. The Sokoto Caliphate's approach includes a decentralized and federal system of government to address challenges related to distance and poor communication during that era. Additionally, the proposal includes multiple structures of government to ensure effective governance and decision-making processes within the Islamic state.

²¹ S.S. Muhammad, "Islam and the Political Evolution of Nigeria: Lessons from the Sokoto Caliphate" in A. A. Gwandu et-al (eds), *Islam and the Contemporary World Politics*, UDUS Press, 1995, p.157.

²² S.S. Muhammad, "Islam and the Political Evolution of Nigeria: Lessons from the Sokoto Caliphate" in A. A. Gwandu et-al (eds), *Islam and the Contemporary World Politics*, UDUS Press, 1995, p.157.

²³ M.G. Dass and M. A. Sulaiman, *The Contributions of Muhammad Bello to the Islamic Political Thought with reference to Contemporary Leaders*, A paper presented at the Abubakar Tatari Ali Polytechnic Bauchi.

Knowledge and Pursuance of Islamic Scholarship among the Jihad Scholars

Knowledge is the key to every success and goodness. The learned is extolled for piety, and for wisdom acquired through knowledge. He is also extolled for understanding and perceptiveness of the works of Allah.²⁴ This emphasizes the importance of knowledge as a fundamental element for achieving success and goodness in life.

This suggests that those who are educated and knowledgeable are praised for their piety, wisdom, understanding, and perceptiveness, particularly in relation to the works of Allah the Almighty. This further conveys the idea that knowledge is a powerful tool that not only leads to personal success but also helps individuals develop a deep understanding of the world around them, fostering qualities such as wisdom, insight and spirituality. It suggests that through learning and acquiring knowledge, one can gain a greater appreciation and recognition of divine or higher truths.

Shariah is all encompassing, it covers all aspects of our lives in both worlds. The religion of Islam is complete and perfect in the sense that it does not only concentrate on the aspects of devotion to the detriment of other essential components of life. So the coverage is enormous as it establishes a strong bond between Allah the Almighty and His servants, it also lays a solid foundation in one's relationship with his parents, family members and others, be them from his religious background or outside that. It teaches one how to deal with animal in a very nice and orderly manner.²⁵

In view of this, seeking the knowledge of Islam is necessary so that people will know how to conduct their life successfully. Hence, Muslim scholars and students are expected to persevere and follow all avenues available in furthering their knowledge ranging from frequenting educational centres, conducting researches, holding conference and seminars to display knowledge as well as writing of books and conducting preaching to liberate the society from the clutches of religious ignorance.

It is this culture that was adopted by the Jihad scholars which generated monumental contributions that brought about intellectual transformation and advancement by becoming established authorities in virtually, all branches of Islamic Sciences. For instance, Sultan

²⁴ A. Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddima-An Introduction to History*, in F. Rosenthal (trans.), N. J. Dawood (abr. &Ed.), Routledge Kegan Paul, London, 1967, pp. 46-7.

²⁵ A. Ibn Khaldun, *ibid* p.333.

Muhammad Bello has revealed that he read about twenty thousand, three hundred (20,300) books. And he confirmed that this does not cover gnosis and unveiling which Allah endowed him with. This alone explains the degree of scholarship activities during that material time. The number of literary books they produced include; Danfodiyo, the leader of Jihad has for instance about Fifty books written on *Tawhid* alone,²⁶ Shaykh Abdullahi has about one hundred and seventy books, and Sultan Bello had to his credit at least one hundred and fifty – two books.²⁷ So were many Scholars around, like, Amir al-Jaysh Aliyu Jedo, Malam Tafa, Al-Muhtasib Muhammad Jolid, Waziri Gidado, Shaykh Muhammad Sambo Kulwa, Shyakh Khalil Bin Abdullahi Bin Fodiyo, etc.²⁸ which tells categorically that the greatest legacy of the Jihad scholars was and is still knowledge and its dissemination. This explains that the Jihadists, or individuals associated with the Jihad, have produced a significant number of literary works, specifically around five hundred books. The statement implies that this substantial output of literary works underscores the fact that the most significant legacy of the Jihad scholars, historically and presently, has been the creation and sharing of knowledge. By highlighting the volume of literary works produced by the Jihadists, it suggests that their focus on knowledge creation and dissemination has been a central aspect of their legacy. It indicates that the Jihad scholars prioritize the acquisition, generation and sharing of knowledge as a key aspect of their intellectual and cultural tradition.

Major Political and Educational Achievements of the Jihadists

One of the most significant changes effected by the Jihad Scholars was the setting up of an Islamic administration which consisted in the creation of a central leadership. The Amir al-Muminin of Sokoto became the supreme commander of all the Muslims in Hausaland, and he gave the emirs the task of administering the Caliphate at the provincial level. A chief Qadi or Muslim Judge was also appointed to supervise the administration of justice based on Islamic Principles throughout the Caliphate. There was also an army commander (Amir al-Jaysh), a chief of police and a wazir or chief minister of state and a head of the Muslim civil service. The wazir, moreover, linked the rest of the emirates with Sokoto and acted as moderator in disputes within and between

²⁶ M. I. Talata Mafara, *Daular Usmaniyya*(1-3), Nadabo Print Production, Kaduna, 2010, p 340.

²⁷ A. Ibn Fodiyo, *Al-Fara'id Al-Jalila*, in A. AbdulAliy (Ed.&comm.), np, np, nd, pp. 103-4.

²⁸ M.I. Talata Mafara, *Daular Usmaniyya*...ibid pp. 112, 320 &463.

the emirates.²⁹ This philosophy of establishing Institutions for the administration of the Caliphate was a commitment, sincerity and determination to the promotion of Islam.

In the educational sphere, the Caliphate did achieve a good deal. Through it, literacy in Arabic was spread over a much wider area, and so also was literacy in Hausa and Fulfulde, making it possible for far greater numbers of people to become acquainted with the actual text of the Quran, Islamic history and the Islamic sciences in general. The reform movement also gave rise to a greater interest in and concern for the education of women, to the establishment of more Muslim schools and the training of ever-increasing numbers of Muslim teachers who enjoyed considerable moral and religious authority in the towns and villages transforming the attitudes and in general the style of living of the people.³⁰ Deduced from the foregoing discourse, it is understood that there was a great deal of revolution in the area of education and scholarship.

The Jihad Scholars received their intellectual and moral training from the Scholars of immediate generation most of whom belonged to the eighteenth century. They were greatly influenced by their virtuous conduct so much that they tended to copy the entire patterns of their lifestyle. Their activities could therefore be understood to be the continuation of what their predecessors started in terms of their mode of teaching, preaching and the production of literary materials. There were casual references, in the writings of the Jihad Scholars, of their teachers whom they fully acknowledged. The development which Islamic scholarship gained in the eighteenth century Hausaland could be seen in the monumental writings of the nineteenth century authors.³¹ The works of the Jihadists are therefore a continuation of the earlier scholars. This made the region progressive and prosperous with this indelible legacy of Islamic scholarship.

The intellectual reputation of the Jihad leaders also served to bind the emirates together. The works of the triumvirate, Da fodiyo, Abdullahi and Bello, formed the main courses for constitution and law throughout the Caliphate. Since the bedrock of the Caliphate system was Islam, those better learned in it deserved the respect and support of all. The Caliph also found within Islam the vital means to keep the emirs within the fold. The Qur'an and Sunnah were, from time to time, employed to remind the emirs of their duties and the need for loyalty to constituted authority. There was a general awareness that the Caliph and his emirs were merely to enforce Shariah. Allah

²⁹ P.B. Clarke, *West Africa and Islam*, Edward Arnold Publishers, London, 1982, pp.122-123.

³⁰ P. B. Clarke, *West Africa and Islam*, Edward Arnold Publishers, London, 1982, p.123.

³¹ A. M. Kani, *The Rise and Influence of Scholars in Hausaland before 1804*, in *Al-Muntaqa*, vol.11, No. 1, 1986, p.16.

the Almighty is the ultimate source of all authority and all powers were exercised on His behalf. The Caliph was not therefore a sovereign and the Caliphate was not an empire. The main functions of the former and his emirs were mainly to implement Islamic policy and there should be no conflict if each adhered to his defined responsibilities.³²

This piece highlights the significant role of intellectual reputation in binding the emirates together within the context of the Caliphate system. It specifically focuses on the Jihad leaders, including Danfodiyo, Abdullahi, and Bello, whose works were instrumental in shaping the constitution and law of the Caliphate. The intellectual prowess of these leaders not only earned them respect but also played a crucial role in maintaining unity and coherence among the emirates. As Islam formed the foundation of the Caliphate system, those with a deep understanding of the religion were held in high regard and enjoyed widespread support. The Caliph, as the religious and political leader, leveraged Islamic principles to ensure the allegiance of the emirs and to uphold the unity of the Caliphate.

It also underscores the importance of intellectual authority, particularly in matters of religion and governance, in fostering cohesion and stability within a complex political system like the Caliphate. It demonstrates how knowledge and expertise can be powerful tools for leadership and for maintaining social order in a diverse and decentralized political entity.

It also emphasizes the religious and legal foundations of authority within the Caliphate system. It highlights the role of the Qur'an and Sunnah, the two primary sources of Islamic law, in guiding and reminding the emirs of their responsibilities and the importance of loyalty to constituted authority. It underscores the principle that the ultimate source of authority lies with Allah, and all powers exercised by the Caliph and his emirs are done so on His behalf. This perspective reinforces the idea that the Caliph and the emirs are not absolute rulers but rather servants of Shariah (Islamic law) and are accountable to a higher authority.

Furthermore, the distinction is made between a sovereign and the Caliph within this context. It clarifies that the Caliph is not a sovereign in the traditional sense, and the Caliphate is not an empire based on the notion of absolute power. Instead, the Caliph's authority is derived from religious principles and is bound by the laws and ethics prescribed by Islam; emphasizing the relationship between religious principles, governance, and the limitations on the exercise of power.

³² S. Abubakar, "The Established Caliphate: Sokoto, The Emirates and their Neighbors" in O. Ikime (Ed.) Groundwork of Nigerian History, Heinemann Educational Books Nigeria Ltd, Ibadan, 1984, pp.323-4

It illustrates a framework where rulers are seen as custodians of divine authority and are expected to govern in accordance with Islamic teachings and values.

The Caliphate had established the frontiers it was to maintain roughly intact throughout the nineteenth century. The credit for this is largely due to the efforts of Bello. At all points where there was danger of invasion by rulers who had been driven out of their kingdoms by the Jihad, ribats or fortified towns were established. For instance, a series were built on the north western frontier to deal with the Gobirawa, Zamfara and Kabawa.³³

This discusses the efforts of the Caliphate, particularly attributed to Bello, in establishing and maintaining the frontiers of the Caliphate during the nineteenth century. The text highlights the strategic measures taken to safeguard the Caliphate's borders from potential invasions by rulers who had been displaced by the Jihad. One significant strategy mentioned is the establishment of ribats or fortified towns at key points along the frontiers where there was a risk of invasion. These fortified structures were likely intended to serve as defensive outposts or strongholds to protect the Caliphate's territories and populations from external threats.

It mentions the construction of a series of ribats on the northwestern frontier to address potential incursions by groups such as the Gobirawa, Zamfara, and Kabawa. These fortified towns were strategically positioned to defend against incursions from these groups and to help maintain the integrity and security of the Caliphate's borders in that region. It highlights the proactive approach taken by the Caliphate, led by figures like Bello, in implementing defensive measures to secure its frontiers and protect its territories from external threats during the nineteenth century. It sheds light on the importance of strategic planning and fortification in maintaining stability and security within the Caliphate's borders.

The spiritual position of the Caliph thus was the glue that held this series of otherwise semi-independent emirates together in one of the largest political entities ever to have been created in Western Sudan. The advantages to the merchants and city dwellers resulting from this were many. The new political system greatly enlarged upon the states built up by the Have rulers and provided wider opportunities for the acquisition of wealth. Trade and movement were made safe over a large area. New towns were founded; old towns like Zaria, Kani and Katsina expanded rapidly. Kano in particular became the most important market in Western Sudan.³⁴

³³ M. Crowder, *West Africa: An Introduction to its History*, Longman Group Limited, London, 1977, p.82

³⁴ M. Crowder, *West Africa :An Introduction to its History*, Longman Group Limited, London, 1977, p.83

It is clear from the above that the unity facilitated by the Caliph's spiritual leadership brought significant benefits to merchants and city dwellers within the Caliphate. The consolidation of these regions under a centralized political system created a more extensive and secure environment for trade and economic activities to flourish. The new political system expanded upon the foundations laid by previous rulers and offered increased opportunities for wealth accumulation through trade and commerce. The emphasis on safety in trade indicates that the Caliphate's centralized authority and stability helped create a conducive environment for economic growth and prosperity.

Justice and Fairness in the Administration

The Jihad was inspired by two main purposes: to remove the misrule and to reform the Islamic way of life, which includes not only moral behavior but political institutions and the system of law. The first purpose had the support of non-Muslims as well as Muslims, and of the Habe as well as the Fulani.³⁵ This statement explains that the Jihad was motivated by two primary objectives. The first goal was to eliminate the oppressive rule of the Habe group and to establish a more just and fair system of governance. The second objective was to reform the Islamic way of life comprehensively, covering not just moral conduct but also political institutions and legal systems. The first purpose, which aimed to remove the misrule of the Habe, garnered support not only from Muslims but also from non-Muslims. Additionally, it mentions that both Habe and Fulani individuals supported this initiative, indicating a broad base of backing for the movement. The Jihad therefore was driven by a desire for social justice, political reform, and the establishment of a more righteous and equitable society, with the support of a diverse range of individuals regardless of their religious or ethnic backgrounds.

Justice is one of the cardinal requirements of an Islamic state. This denotes equal treatment and equal opportunity for all, with no distinction or discrimination; giving no regards to race, tribe, color or region. In an Islamic state, justice for all citizens, strong, weak, rich and poor, Muslim and non-Muslim must be ensured. Corruption therefore in whatever form, nepotism, favouritism, squandermania, indulgence at the expense of others are serious crimes.³⁶ The impression of Justice is not necessarily what we feel it is or it should be, rather it is what Allah the Almighty conceives and determines.

³⁵ S. J. Hogben and A. H. M. A. Kirk-Greene, *An Introduction to the Islamic States of Northern Nigeria*, Oxford University Press, Ibadan, 1967, p.55

³⁶ M. U. Bunza, "The Islamic State: A Panacea to Nigeria's Political Impasse", in A.A. Gwandu et-al, *Islam and the Contemporary World Politics*, Islamic Research Centre Sokoto, Seminar series No. 2, 1995, p.148.

The type of Justice conceived by Islam is not exclusively reserved for the Muslims to the exclusion of non- Muslims. Non- Muslims are also eligible, and Islamic history is replete with such instances where non-Muslims on their own came to Islamic courts to redress their wrongs or a situation where a non- Muslim received a favorable judgement against his Muslim litigating partner. It is only in Islam that this kind of equity is obtained.³⁷ If justice is established peace and tranquility will reign in the society; and all manner of people will have a sense of belonging.

There are seven fundamentals to politics, the attainment of which equates to justice. Politics is nothing but justice. Two among the seven fundamentals have to do with the emir, the governor or the leader. Two have to do with the cabinet and other workers, while the remaining three have to do with the subjects. First, the emir, governor or the leader should be Allah fearing in his activities and in following the footsteps of Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.). He should be concerned about his hereafter by not exceeding the limitations set by Allah the Most High. Second, the emir, the leader or the governor should be of simple character with inclination of forgiving spirit, avoiding anger, favour and transgression. Third, the leader should always be interested in the rightly guided Scholars and be Keen in listening to their advices. Fourth, a leader, an emir or a governor should make it a prerequisite for his workers to be just. He, in the first place selects them from among the best of his people and constantly supervises them.³⁸

Fifth, Though the leader, emir or governor demands of his subjects to be just and good and avoid being aggressive among themselves, love for the good and resistance for the evil, the bottom line of the matter is that the behaviors of the leader is always determined by the behaviors of his subjects. If the subjects are good to their Lord the Exalted; He puts His Mercy in the heart of their Leaders and he becomes just to them. But if they commit sins against their Lord and spread mischief in the land, Allah would subject them to the will of their Leaders and they would be harsh on them. Sixth, the leader, emir or the governor should create religious and social jobs (vacancies) for his subjects. He should train manufacturers and be concerned about professionals who are necessary for the well-being of the people. These include, farmers, smiths, tailors, butchers, carpenters and all other professions without which life is impossible. He should employ their services and post them to all towns and quarters. He should encourage his subjects to seek for their

³⁷ M. S. A. Al-Kafawy, " Islam and Democracy" in A.A. Gwandu et-al, *ibid*, p. 23

³⁸ S. M. Bello, *Principles of Leadership*, in M. K. Yusuf (trans.) & A. B. Yahya (Ed.), *In Selected Writings of Sultan Muhammad Bello*, Volume 2, Iqra'a Publishing House, Gusau, 2013, pp. 263-266.

food and keep a good deal of it, creating infrastructures in both small towns and big cities, constructing walls and bridges, taking good care of markets, roads, and the provision of all social infrastructure so that the basic structural system of the society would be in place.³⁹ This shows that Islam is a comprehensive way of life which caters for both worlds and promotes the general well-being of the society.

Seventh, the leader, emir or governor should be passionate about the way he treats his subjects. He should give the key positions to the important personalities among them, each in accordance to his position in the society.⁴⁰ This calls for mercy and kindness towards the followers. A leader must not be harsh in dealing with his people. But it does not suggest that he should be loose; rather there should be a combination of sternness and simplicity in his attitude.

There is an obligation to be kind and equitable. Being equitable means that the Amir should give everybody the right he owes him or from some other person. This is true, even if the right would be against the Amir or against somebody among his subjects. Any person who does not give his subjects their rights from each other would not be an equitable person. Kindness however, means that the Amir should give (by being benevolent) from his own side, not from people.⁴¹

The Sokoto Caliphate, established through the Jihadists aimed to establish a Muslim state based on the principles of Islamic law and governance. The scholars and leaders of the Sokoto Caliphate implemented various measures to ensure justice and fairness in the society of Hausaland during their rule. Some of such measures include:

1. **Implementation of Islamic Law (Sharia):** The Sokoto Caliphate implemented the Sharia legal system as the basis for governance. This system aimed to uphold justice, fairness, and equality in the society by providing guidelines for legal matters, social conduct, and economic affairs according to Islamic principles.
2. **Appointment of Just Leaders:** The caliphs and local rulers appointed by the Sokoto Jihad scholars were expected to be just and fair in their governance. They were required to rule according to Islamic principles, protect the rights of the people, and ensure that justice was served in all matters.
3. **Redistribution of Wealth:** The Sokoto Caliphate implemented policies to ensure the fair distribution of wealth and resources within the society. They aimed to reduce inequalities and ensure that everyone had access to basic necessities.

³⁹ S. M. Bello, Principles of Leadership, in M. K. Yusuf (trans.) & A. B. Yahya (Ed.), In Selected Writings of Sultan Muhammad Bello, Volume 2, Iqra'a Publishing House, Gusau, 2013, pp. 266-267

⁴⁰ S. M. Bello, Principles of Leadership, in M. K. Yusuf (trans.) & A. B. Yahya (Ed.), In Selected Writings of Sultan Muhammad Bello, Volume 2, Iqra'a Publishing House, Gusau, 2013, p. 268.

⁴¹ A. Bn Fodiyo, A Guide to the Sultan and Other Brothers, in A. B. Luwa (trans.) & S. Musa (Ed.) In Selected Writings of Shaykh Abdullahi Bn Fodiyo, volume 1, Iqra'a Publishing House, Gusau, 2013, p.139

4. Promotion of Education: The Sokoto Jihad scholars emphasized the importance of education in the society. They established schools and centers of learning to educate the population about Islamic principles, governance, and other fields of knowledge. This helped in promoting a more informed and just society.
5. Protection of Rights: The Sokoto Caliphate sought to protect the rights of all individuals in the society, including minorities and non-Muslims. They promoted tolerance and coexistence among different religious and ethnic groups, ensuring that everyone was treated fairly under the law.

Promoting Transparency and Accountability

Transparency in governance is basically about holding public officials responsible for their actions. It is concerned with the need to ensure that public funds are spent for the purposes specified and without personal gain to any individual beyond fair compensation for his or her services. Accountability is imperative to make public officials answerable for government behaviors and responsive to the entity from which they derive their authority while consciously aware of accountability before Allah in the hereafter.⁴² If this is ensured, the entire world will be habitable where peace and tranquility reign.

Transparency is the requirement for openness in all gamuts of public affairs. Transparency allows stakeholders to gather information that may be critical to uncovering abuses and defending their interests. In essence, transparency is basically concerned with open and institutionalized system of government, the eradication of corruption and the institutionalization of a system that is fair, just and based on the rule of law.⁴³ But, today where are all these ethical values in the entire world. In most of the government Institutions, it has gone into extinction paving the way for rancour and anarchy. It is necessary to look for people of proven integrity with high degree of reliability to be installed in positions of authority, though it may be a tedious task of enormous challenges.

Shaykh Usmanu Danfodiyo mentioned his practical experience: "I interacted with people in a nice manner through forbearance, patience and consideration. Each one according to what is befitting for him in a simple and subtle manner particularly if it is aimed at promoting Islam and establishing faith in the hearts of people."⁴⁴ I am not a king but a leader to his people who guide

⁴² A. S. Mikailu and M. M. Maishanu, Islamic Value System, Accountability and Transparency in the Public Service, p.6, available on www.academia.edu

⁴³ A. S. Mikailu and M. M. Maishanu, Islamic Value System, Accountability and Transparency in the Public Service, p.6, available on www.academia.edu.

⁴⁴ U. Bn Fodiyo, "Wasiyyat al- Shaykh Usman bn Fodiyo", in Majmu' Rasa'il al-Shaykh al- Mujaddid But al-Zaman Usman bn Muhammad bn Usman bn Fodiyo, al- Nahar, Cairo, 2009, p. 4

them in attaining their well-being and calling them to the religion of Allah while seeking His forgiveness and mercy as well as His pleasure. I have surely interacted with people justly in goodness and dependably following the Qur'an and Sunnah as well as consensus of Muslim Scholars and loving Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). In view of this, I am emphatically telling you to follow this and emulate that closely if you really like salvation and success from all tribulation in both worlds".⁴⁵ Look at this courage and confidence in expressing his personal experience and how successful he was in his leadership, as well as the ethical values of transparency and accountability, he demonstrated throughout the period of his leadership.

As a confirmation, Bello explained that Danfodiyo grew up as a self-restrained, religious and pleasantly friendly person. He was very friendly, pleasant and self-reclusive. The epitome of leadership rests with him. He was the sign-post of scholars and the bearer of the banner of relation. He revived a Sunnah and put an end to innovations. He disseminated knowledge and unveiled worrisome issues. His knowledge dazzled all minds.⁴⁶

He added that, for many years he translated and interpreted the Glorious Qur'an in the presence of many great scholars and righteous men. An expert in its different branches, from its elucidation, to its law...in addition to his mastery in Hadith. He was the flagbearer of learning. He was venerated by the chosen and the common folks; he was the reformer at the head of this (his) century. He was an eloquent orator, a fluent poet, of good virtues, good of association, of good companionship, of an unquestionable personality and one whose sainthood and pivothood was ascertained. (He was) full of humility and compassion for mankind. He was humble and he regarded himself as the least of insects (creatures) and the one who stops at the limit of Shariah.⁴⁷

Bello confirmed that:

We thank Allah our time is time of light; time of removing darkness fry the world. We thank Allah our time is time of revival of the way of Master of Messengers. We thank Allah our time is time of victory, time of defeat for the disbelief. We thank Allah our time is time of honor, time of happiness for the Muslims. We thank Allah our party, the party of Abdulkadir the relief, the master of the theologians. There is no doubt that Allah favored us with commanding good and forbidding

⁴⁵ U. Bn Fodiyo, "Wasiyyat al- Shaykh Usman bn Fodiyo", in Majmu' Rasa'il al-Shaykh al- Mujaddid Nur al-Zaman Usman bn Muhammad bn Usman bn Fodiyo, al- Nahar, Cairo, 2009, pp.5-12

⁴⁶ S. Yusuf, A History of Islam, Scholarship and Revivalism in Western Sudan... p.141

⁴⁷ S. Yusuf, A History of Islam, Scholarship and Revivalism in Western Sudan...ibid pp¹⁴¹⁻²

evil, with Hijrah and allegiance, Jihad, congregational prayers, Friday prayers, assigning judges and governors and executing many of the principles of Shariah.⁴⁸

This expresses gratitude to Allah for the perceived positive attributes and advancements of the current era from the perspective Bello. This reflects a sense of optimism, gratitude, and faith in the current era as a time of progress, religious revival, victory, and honor for the Muslim community, with a belief in divine support and guidance.

Problems associated with lack of prudence and accountability in public offices have been the major cog on the wheels of development of Nigeria as a nation. The responsible agencies for checking excesses of Public servants should be strengthened for good governance and development. In the Sokoto Caliphate, Abdullahi Fodiyo (who was in charge of the western flank of the Caliphate) directed all governors and officers as contained in Diya' al- Hukkam, that all Public officers must declare their assets and interests before they assume Public responsibilities and do the same when they leave office.⁴⁹

Whoever is found to have wealth above what he earns from his work, the ruler (president) shall confiscate and return it to the treasury. Abdullahi further stressed that, the leader does not have the right to revert to acquiring power and wealth from people. Nor is he, let alone his lieutenants, permitted to either receive gifts or use his office/position to acquire wealth in excess of his lawful entitlements. It was the practical application of this rule and guiding principle in the Caliphate that resulted in the fact that the early Caliphs up to recently the Premier of Northern Nigeria, the late Sardauna of Sokoto did not leave behind estates and wealth, unlike the crazy show and display of wealth being seen today from political leaders.⁵⁰ The key word of the Sokoto Caliphate was 'justice' in theory and practice. One finds the following as the opening statements in the books of the Sokoto Jihad leaders: 'A kingdom (country) can endure with unbelief but not with injustice', victory is gained through justice and defeat comes through injustice, justice and mercy safeguard the kingdom (country). The basis for the wellbeing of the world is justice.⁵¹

⁴⁸ M. Bello, *Sufficient Advice*, in M. A. Saura and Y. M. Yunus, & S. Musa (Ed.) *Selected Writings of Sultan Muhammad Bello*, volume 1, Iqra'a Publishing House, Gusau, 2013, pp. 152-153.

⁴⁹ M.M Bunza, "The Application of Islamic Law and the Legacies of Good Governance in the Sokoto Caliphate, Nigeria (1804-1903): Lessons for the Contemporary Period" in A.Buchler (eds), in *Electronic Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law (EJIMEL)*, vol.1, 2013, p.98.

⁵⁰ M. M. Bunza, *The Application of Islamic Law ...* p.98

⁵¹ M.M. Bunza, *The Application of Islamic Law and the Legacies of Good Governance in the Sokoto Caliphate, Nigeria (1804-1903):...* , p.98

These statements reflect the belief that justice is not only a moral imperative but also a practical necessity for the stability and prosperity of a kingdom or country. The idea that a kingdom can endure with unbelief but not with injustice underscores the belief that injustice undermines the very foundations of a society. In contrast, the display of wealth by some political leaders today can often be seen as a symbol of power and privilege, rather than a commitment to justice and the well-being of the people they serve. This disconnect between the principles of justice and the actions of some leaders is a source of concern for many people who value fairness, equality, and accountability in governance.

It is worth reflecting on the enduring wisdom of the Sokoto Jihad leaders' emphasis on justice as a cornerstone of good governance. As we navigate the complexities of modern politics and leadership, the principles of justice, mercy, and fairness can serve as a guiding light towards a more just and equitable society.

Another instance is, after they had emerged as the undisputable leaders of the new Caliphate it was debate, not funfare or celebration that occupied the time of the personnel of this revolution. It was not a debate on who should rule what territory or appointed to what post, far from it, it was a debate on how such and such concept of Islam should be translated into practice. While Abdullahi insisted on the letter and spirit of the law, Danfodiyo and Muhammad Bello (his son) were generally flexible and practical. It is interesting to note that the debate, hot as it was, never led to a rift or constraint in running the new Caliphate. This rare and exceptional incident should leave us in no doubt that the leadership of this revolution is committed to an ideal (Islam) which ranks higher than the state and all that contained in it.⁵² The luxuries were readily at their disposal but they never turned their attention to that; but in our society today, political leaders are given every opportunity to enjoy luxuries far beyond what is necessary but they still engaged in various irregularities of financial mismanagement, subjecting their people to untold hardship.

Victory invariably carries with it a notion of achievement of a goal or an objective. But victory or lack of it must depend not on the achievement of any goal or objective but on the achievement of a specific goal or objective fought for. The victory of the Jihadists must be seen not in terms of territory, polity least of all economic gains but in terms of the ideal they fought for.

⁵² U. M. Bugaje, *The Sakkwato Model- A Study of the Origin, Development and Fruition of the Jihad of Uthman B. Fodiyo (1754-1817)*, Special Edition for the Islamic Vacation Course (IVC) of M. S. S. A Zone held in Katsina 22nd-28th December, 2011, p.26

That Amir al- Mu'minin, Danfodiyo, abandoned the Caliphate soon after the fighting that established it and retired to Sifawa to continue writing is more than a display of sincerity- which indeed Danfodiyo had- but more important it indicates that the leadership has an ideal higher than and beyond the state. True the Jihadists were fighting for a change in the state of affairs of the Hausaland, but it must be realised that the change was not the end it was only the means and the end is unmistakably Islam - in its comprehensive form.⁵³ They have done it successfully, and the society in which that change was introduced is still enjoying the fruits of the indelible legacy.

E. Conclusion

The findings of this research shed light on the contributions of the Sokoto Jihad leaders to good governance in West Africa. The analysis explores the principles of governance propagated by the leaders, such as justice, accountability, transparency and inclusivity, and examines the extent to which these principles were implemented in practice. The study also evaluates the impact of the Sokoto Jihad on West African society, including its influence on political systems, education, and the overall socio-economic development of the region. This was done by analyzing historical data and conducting an evaluation of the reforms implemented by these leaders, the study contributes to a better understanding of the influence of the Sokoto Jihad on the region's governance systems. The findings are valuable for scholars, policymakers, and researchers interested in West African history, Islamic governance, and the impact of historical movements on contemporary governance practices.

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⁵³ U. M. Bugaje, *The Sakkwato Model- A Study of the Origin, Development and Fruition of the Jihad of Uthman B. Fodiyo (1754-1817)*, Special Edition for the Islamic Vacation Course (IVC) of M. S. S. A Zone held in Katsina 22nd-28th December, 2011, p.25

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