THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF MUSLIM WOMEN IN DEALING WITH SECURITY CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract
The issue of insecurity has remained the most challenging problem in the world including Nigeria. In Nigeria, reports of kidnapping, armed robbery, assassination and killing/bombing which lead to lost of lives and destruction of properties kept on featuring in our media channels. In addition, women are the most vulnerable of this insurgency. They have been killed, widowed, raped or kidnapped etc. It is however to be noted that given the broader perspective of national security, government security agencies, nongovernmental organizations, Muslims both men and women, Islamic Scholars, youths etc. All should play the vital role of maintaining peace and curtailing insecurity in Nigeria. Therefore, everybody has a role to play at enhancing the national security. Islam being a comprehensive system of life provides preventive measures to curb insecurity in human society. This paper therefore examines the responsibility of the Muslim women in curbing insecurity in Nigeria. The paper observes that the causes of insecurity in Nigeria include; corruption, erosion of virtues and moralities values, youth unemployment, ignorance misuse of Islamic knowledge, globalization etc. This study uses the librarian research in which both primary and secondary sources were utilized for the work. These comprise of Qur'an, Hadith and other literatures. The result of research found that Muslim women by their pedigree and character have the potential to ensure security in the society through good child upbringing, God consciousness, acquiring true Islamic knowledge to mention a few. It concludes that if these measures are implemented, they will go a long way in arresting this quagmire of insecurity in our society.

Keywords:
Islamic values;insecurity; security; corruption;muslim woman; Nigeria.

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Abstrak
Masalah ketidakamanan menyisakan banyak persoalanyang harus dihadapi dunia, termasuk di Nigeria. Di Nigeria, bermacam laporan tentang penculikan, perampokan bersenjata, pembunuhan, dan bom bunuh diri, yang ditujukan untuk menghilangkan nyawa serta merusak hak milik terpampang di berbagai *channel* media kita. Sementara, perempuan paling rentan terkena dampak dari kekacauan ini. Mereka-lah yang paling rentan menjadi korban pembunuhan, pemerkosaan, penculikan, dan sebagainya. Hal ini harus menjadi perhatian serius yang membutuhkan keterlibatan masyarakat luas, baik dari keamanan nasional, agen-agen keamanan pemerintah, organisasi-organisasi non-pemerintah, masyarakat muslim baik laki-laki maupun perempuan, para sarjana Islam, dan para pemuda. Semua harus berperan untuk memelihara perdamaian dan menghapus ketidakamanan di Nigeria. Oleh karena itu, setiap individu memiliki tanggungjawab untuk meningkatkan keamanan nasional. Islam merupakan sistem kehidupan komprehensif yang memberikan langkah-langkah pencegahan untuk melawan ketidakamanan dalam masyarakat. Oleh karena itu, artikel ini berusaha memeriksa bagaimana tanggungjawab perempuan muslim dalam melawan ketidakamanan di Nigeria. Artikel ini juga berusaha mengamati berbagai penyebab ketidakamanan di Nigeria, seperti korupsi, terkikisnya nilai-nilai moral dan kebajikan, pengangguran para pemuda, kebodohan penyelewengan pengetahuan Islam, globalisasi, dan sebagainya. Dengan menggunakan penelusuran kepustakaan, hasil investigasi menemukan bahwa perempuan muslim dengan latar belakang dan watak mereka memiliki potensi untuk meneguhkan keamanan dalam masyarakat melalui pengasuhan anak yang baik, kesadaran akan nilai-nilai ketuhanan, penyampaian pengetahuan Islam yang benar secara terus menerus. Sehingga dapat disimpulkan bahwa apabila langkah-langkah tersebut dilakukan, mereka akan sangat berguna dan berpengaruh dalam mengatasi kubangan ketidakamanan dalam masyarakat kita.

Kata Kunci:
Nilai-nilai Islam; ketidakamanan; keamanan; korupsi; perempuan muslim; Nigeria.

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A. INTRODUCTION

Security issue has become a component of global political and development agenda. As Thomas (2000) aptly puts it: "*The global development and security agendas are merging. It is no longer confined within the framework of the state and associated national security concerns*".[1] This shows that, the protection of individuals is a strategic concern for national as well as international security. In addition, security conditions for people's development are not bound to traditional matters of national defence, but rather encompass all political, economic and social issues enabling a life free from risk and fear.[2] Although attention is geared towards human security, security of the state remains a necessary condition for the security of the people. In emphasizing the importance of human security, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the 1948 proclaimed that "*everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being of himself, his family, including the elimination of hunger.*"[3] Furthermore, Article II of the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights reaffirms the right to a standard of living for the household, while also recognizing the fundamental right to be free from hunger.[4]

The Nigerian constitution of 1999 Section 14 (2) (b) of the constitution states that "*the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government.*"[5] Invariably therefore the Constitution has saddled the Government with the responsibility of safeguarding lives, property, welfare of Nigerians against both internal and external threats including other forms of danger. Thus it is incumbent on the Government to monitor public order and safety, including law and order. Hence, safeguarding the lives and properties of the people become the first and most critical responsibility of governance. It is sad to note that despite all these lofty declarations countries like Nigeria is faced with lot of security challenges.

Oyebode (2015) argues that there is hardly any state in Nigeria that does not experience violence sometime under the guise of ethnicity, induced by political sentiments.[6] He observes that groups and communities who had lived together in peace and harmony become susceptible to political machination under the ethnic togs. According to him, the claim over scarce resources, power, land, chieftaincy, local government control of markets among other trivial issues has resulted in large scale killing and violence amongst groups in Nigeria.[6]

Egbewole (2013) cited in his paper Gbolabo Ogusanwo saying:

> What kind of a country is this in which you don't know whether anybody wearing police uniform is for real or a robber staking out a potential victim? If a serving minister and his family are not safe in a country, who is safe? Do we all have to live in Aso Villa to be safe?[7]

[1] Thomas Caroline, *Global Governance, Development, and Human Security: The Challenge of Poverty and Inequality* (London: Routledge, 2000), 3.

[2] Karim Hussein, Donata Gnisci, and Julia Wanjiru, "Security and Human Security: An Overview of Concepts and Initiatives - What Implications for West Africa?," 2004, 2, http://www.oecd.org/swac/publications/38826090.pdf.

[3] "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," *United Nations*, accessed September 2, 2017, http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html.

[4] "International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights," United Nations Human Rights Office of The High Commissioner, accessed September 2, 2017, http://www.ohchr.org/en/professional-interest/pages/cescr.aspx.

[5] "Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria" (1999).

[6] Oyebode A, "Pursuing Human Security Through Governance in Nigeria: Agenda for the Next 100 Years," in *Politics between Nations: 100 Years of Security in Nigeria*, 2015, 9.

[7] Wahab O. Egbewole, "Security Challenges : The Role of the Nigerian Woman," 2013, http://wahabegbewoleandco.com.ng/publications/SECURITY_CHALLENGES_ROLE_OF_NIGERIAN_WOMAN.pdf.

Thus, it has not been easy as a nation as its peaceful existence in recent times has continually been threatened by general insecurity through the activities of criminals who have resorted to violent robbery, bombing/killing, kidnapping, assassination and other forms of criminal activities. Women are the most vulnerable of this insurgency. Women have been killed, widowed, raped, kidnapped, etc. The effects markedly inhibit their development because they have been subjected to various forms of challenges. The government at one point or the other has taken measures to frustrate those bent on making the country a haven for criminality. According to Olatayo (n.d), there has been increased in the security budget by more than fifty percent ahead of other sectors. The entire security apparatus have received adequate training in counter terrorism. Modern military and intelligence gadgets were also procured to improve intelligence gathering.[8] In spite of all these measures, the act of criminality in the country has continued unabated. However, the government needs to do more in order that the human society might attain peace and security, by paying serious attention to the welfare of its citizenry. This welfare lies in complete justice, mercy and provision of at least, basic amenities such as housing, good roads, potable water, health care delivery, light and education etc. In addition, the role of Muslim women in arresting this dilemma of insecurity is infact indispensable. Hence, this article attempts to present all this subject matter under the following headings: Conceptual clarifications, Peace and security in Islam, Causes of insecurity in Nigeria, negative effects of Insecurity on Women, an overview of the Muslim woman, Contributions of Early Muslim Women in maintaining peace and security, Role of Muslim Women in curbing security challenges in Nigeria and Conclusion. This study adopts the descriptive method. Data for the study were derived from both primary and secondary sources. Its primary sources included the Qur'an, Hadith and Personal observations. All other relevant library sources are the secondary sources of the study.

1. Conceptual Clarifications

In the language of social science, "security" is a controversial concept, as there is not a broad consensus about its meaning. Depending on people's ideas, culture and perceptions of reality, the term security has a different value. The documents from the institute for strategic studies states that this fact is supported by the important number of security definitions that have appeared, especially since the end of the Cold War. National Security, Common Security, Collective. Security, Shared Security, Human Security or Cooperative Security make a description of what their ideologists consider must be understood by security and, what could even be more important, how to obtain it. In recent years, other terms have appeared apart from the ones already quoted like Sustainable Security, as well as other hybrid concepts like "hard power-soft power" or "smart power."[9] As a simple dictionary definition 'Security' means a state, feeling or means of being secure, while 'secure' means free from danger, safe, assured.[10] It has also mean 'things that are done to keep a person, building or country safe from danger or crime.[11] Insecurity on the other hand is the state of being subjected to danger or injury.[12] According to Ugiagbe, (n.d), insecurity is a feature of Hobbesian state of nature where life was said to be short, brutish and nasty, and the weak and common

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[8] Mubin Olatoye Raji, "State of Insecurity in Nigeria: Muslim Women as Agents of Change," n.d., https://www.academia.edu/7060386/State_of_Insecurity_in_Nigeria_Muslim_Women_as_Agents_of_Change.

[9] Michael S Dohan and Sepandar Sepehr, "The Evolution of the Concept of M-Health," *IEEE Framework Document*, no. 5 (2011), 1.

[10] Thomas Davidson, ed., *Chamber's Twentieth Century Dictionary of The English Language* (London, 1903), 866.

[11] Longman, *Dictionary of Contemporary English* (London: Pearson Longman, 2003), 1482.

[12] Raji, "State of Insecurity in Nigeria: Muslim Women as Agents of Change."

man lived at the mercy of the strong.[13] Thus, security could mean a "public good", responding to the strategic need to support sustainable human development at the same time as promoting national, regional and global peace and stability. The human security approach also argue that any attempt to address security-related matters needs to be based on consultation and collaboration with different sets of actors which frequently have different interests, e.g. civilian/military; governmental/non-governmental; local/national/regional/international and other related *UN* initiatives.[14] Furthermore, there is consensus across Africa that security should be people-centered; security means, first and foremost, people's safety. This idea is reflected in the 1991 OAU Kampala document – Towards a Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Co-operation in Africa. The document states that:

> Security embraces all aspects of the society including economic, political and social dimensions of individual, family, community, local and national life. The security of a nation must be constructed in terms of the security of the individual citizen to live in peace with access to basic necessities of life while fully participating in the affairs of his/her society in freedom and enjoying all fundamental human rights.[15]

Thus, the importance of security cannot be over emphasized because without security there cannot be any meaningful development. The issue of security may be internal or external; it is therefore, the responsibility of the government to protect allcitizens from any form of internal insurrection or external aggression.

2. Peace and Security in Islam

The word "Islam", which is the title of this religion, is derived from the word "*As – Salam*", meaning peace. The words *As – Salam* peace and *Al-Islam*, which is total submission to the will of Allāh meet in fulfilling the achievement of confidence, peace and security. Therefore, Muslims believe that Islamic religion is an embodiment of peace love and total submission to Allāh. Allah secures human beings through the principles of His/Her legislation through the messenger who spread peaceto humankind to the bridge of guidance, light, goodness and consciousness. Allah says about him/herself: "*I am a mercy showing the right way.*"[16] And the Qur'an says about the Messenger hood: "*We sent thee not, but as a mercy to all creatures*" (Q21:107). The greeting of the Muslims which unites the heart, strengthens their relationship and ties them with one another is peace, while the most deserved honor of Allāh is he or she who begins the sending of peace to others. Propagation of peace and its maintenance is part of the Islamic belief.[17]Allāh the Almighty made the Muslims greeting in the expression of peace, notifying that their religion is that of peace and security, and they are the people of peace and tranquility. The prophet of Islam was reported to have said: "*Allāh made the word of peace the greeting of our people and security upon the people who entered into agreement with us*".[18] Muslims are obliged while communicating with their Lord in prayers to send peace to their prophet, himself and to the righteous servants of Allāh. While after finishing the prayers, and facing the world, they face it from the angle of peace,

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[13] Thompson Bobby Ugiagbe, "Peace and Conflict Monitor, Electoral Violence in Nigeria: Implications for Security, Peace and Development," *University for Peace and Conflict Monitor*, 2010, http://www.monitor.upeace.org/innerpg.cfm?id_article=697.

[14] Hussein, Gnisci, and Wanjiru, "Security and Human Security: An Overview of Concepts and Initiatives - What Implications for West Africa?"

[15] Hussein, Gnisci, and Wanjiru, "Security and Human Security: An Overview of Concepts and Initiatives - What Implications for West Africa?"

[16] Al-Sayyid Sābiq, *Fiqh Us-Sunnah* (Illinois: American Trust Publications, 1983), 5.

[17] Abubakar Aliyu Khalid, "Justice and Peace: The Qur'anic Perspective," in *The Second International Conference on Christian Muslim Mutual Relations* (Miango Plateau: Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria, 1995), 34.

[18] Sābiq, *Fiqh Us-Sunnah*.

compassion and blessing. The salutation of Allāh to the believers is the greeting of peace. He says: "*Their salutation on the day they meet Him is peace*" (Q33:44). The salutation of angels to human in the hereafter is peace. The Qur'an stated: "*And angels shall enter unto them from every gate with the salutation. Peace unto you that ye persevered in patience. Now how excellent is the final home*" (Q13:22 – 24)

However, the settlement of the righteous is the home of peace and security. The Qur'an says: "*Allāh doth call to the home of peace*" (Q10:25). Allāh, the Most High, the Blessed, has named Himself "peace": "*He is Allāh order than whom there is none (that has the right to be worshipped) the King, the Holy, and the Peace.*"(Q59:23). Of course the Muslims are expected to answer this call of peace, and should never reject it. Allāh says: "*And say not to he who seeks to make peace with you, "you are not a believer" seeking the perishable goods of the worldly life. There are many more profits with Allāh*" (Q4:94).

The above statement shows that Islam encourages the establishment of peace. Islam has ordered the practice of this great virtue through respect and self-restrain even at the most testing of times such as Hajj (pilgrimage).[19] If any opportunity of peace arises, then Islam makes it compulsory for the Muslim to take it. In his paper, "*Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* in the Islamic legal principle and its Security implications in the society," Adegoke (2014) argues that the main objective of *Sharī' ah* cannot be said to be achieved until it leads human's life to the high standard of living and the avoidance of mischief, danger and security in the society.[20] Hence, Muslims should understand the *Sharī'ah* the way that this feature of peace would dominate their lives.

B. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS
1. Causes of insecurity in Nigeria

Of course, things do not normally happen without known cause. However, in the case of the insecurity being experienced in the country (Nigeria), it is a combination of many near and remote factors, these include the following:

a. Corruption

One of the causes of insecurity in Nigeria is the problem of corruption. Infact, corruption is tearing up the fabric of the nation, and plundering resources that should be used for investment in basic infrastructure and the development of human capital as well as tackling security challenges.[21] Corruption has a lot of negative consequences on every sphere of societal development whether social, economic or political. Over the years, past governments have made efforts to fight corruption but corruption has remained widespread. The challenge of fighting corruption was therefore a major issue during the 2015 elections in Nigeria. President Muhammadu Buhari made the fight against corruption one of his cardinal programmes along with security and the economy. Hence the current president, (Muhammad Buhari), is making his own efforts to bring corruption in the country to the minimal level. This made few who looted in the past regime to bring back some of the money they embezzled.

b. Erosion of values and virtues

Values and virtues are being eroded. These are being replaced by individualism, materialism, apathy and moral degeneration, etc.

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[19] Al-Banna Hassan, *Peace in Islam Nigeria* (Lagos: Al-Fathi Islamic Publishers, 2002), 26.p.

[20] Adekoge K. Adekunle, *Maqasid Ash-Shari' Ah in the Islamic Legal Principle and Its Security Implications in the Society: Perspectives of Arabic and Islamic Studies on Security and Peace Building*, ed. Badmos O. Yusuf (Lagos: The Nigeria Association of Teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies (NATAIS), 2014), 19-20.p.

[21] Abdulhamid Rafatu, "The Responsibility of the Muslim Ummah in Defending Itself amidst Security Challenges in Nigeria," in *Ramadan Symposium Terrorism in Nigeria between Myth and Reality* (Keffi: the Muslim Community of Nasarawa State UniversitY, 2014), 6.

There is also deterioration of the family system. Parents find it increasingly difficult to cater for and monitor their children and wards in their attempts to cope with the challenges of modern living.[22]

c. Youth Unemployment

The engagement of these unemployed into criminality is a matter of concern for all well-meaning Nigerians. An idle mind they say is the devil's workshop. Joblessness leads to idleness, and idleness leads to vices i.e. armed robbery, kidnapping, killing etc. In Nigeria, on many occasions many youths have been used as thugs during political campaigns and in time of crisis. Economic depression leads to mass unemployment. Unemployment leads to frustration and crimes. Research has shown that uncontrolled unemployment, often promotes social decadence and criminal tendencies among the affected, especially the highly mobile youths. There is usually progression from optimism to pessimism, from pessimism to fatalism, accompanied by that dreadful feeling of insecurity. This is the state we are currently.[23] The 500,000 Teacher Corps, nicknamed N-Power Teach on the portal, is one of the three direct job creation and training schemes that the administration of Muammadu Bukhari has introduced to address the problem of youth unemployment in Nigeria. Others are N-Power Knowledge, which will train 25,000 Nigerians in the area of technology, and N-Power Build, which train another 75,000 in the areas of building services, construction, utilities, hospitality and catering, automotive vocations, aluminum and gas services. Unemployed Nigerians selected and trained will serve in teaching, instructional, and advisory roles in primary, and secondary schools, agricultural extension systems across the country, public health and community education — covering civic and adult education.[24]

d. Ignorance and misuse of Islamic knowledge

Ignorance and misuse of Islamic knowledge is another factor responsible for the country's insecurity. Some Muslims are being misled as a result of their little or no knowledge of Islam. They are made to believe that causing violence or killing is an act of Ibadah (worship).[25]

e. Poverty

One of the issue bothering on peace in our society today is the problem of poverty. Although there has been attempt at poverty alleviations, most notable the 2001 National Poverty alleviation programme (NAPEP). This programme and many others though could not overcome the problem of poverty in its entirety, have appreciable efforts to address the issue of poverty in Nigeria. This situation is capable of creating unrest thereby leading to violence. There can be clashes between the haves and the haves not. This category of Nigerians lack material comfort and in plain language they live in abject poverty. In his key note address, on the theme: "Islam peace and Security in a Contemporary Society, the Imam of University of Nigeria Nsukka, A Idoko Adam (2012) stated that, the prophet of Islam explained the concept of Zakat and Sadaqah which emphasize that the wealth should not be concentrated in the hands of the few. According to him, Islam makes it obligatory on every Muslims to pay a certain "tax" called Zakat on his accumulated wealth. The money

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[22] Rafatu, "The Responsibility of the Muslim Ummah in Defending Itself amidst Security Challenges in Nigeria."

[23] Rafatu, "The Responsibility of the Muslim Ummah in Defending Itself amidst Security Challenges in Nigeria."Rafatu, "The Responsibility of the Muslim Ummah in Defending Itself amidst Security Challenges in Nigeria."

[24] "Nigeria Begins Recruitment of 500,000 Unemployed Graduates," Premium Times, accessed October 2, 2017, https://www.premiumtimesng.com/-news/headlines/204953-nigeria-begins-recruitment-of-500000-unemployed-graduates.html.

[25] Rafatu, "The Responsibility of the Muslim Ummah in Defending Itself amidst Security Challenges in Nigeria."

collected from this Zakat is to be distributed among the poor and needy.[26]

f. Globalization

Globalization has also been fingered as another major cause of insecurity in the land. It has been argued that global market forces can generate wealth and spread prosperity but where development is uneven it can also create "increased political tension and risks of instability." A corollary to this is the internationalization of criminal activities of certain types which is now perpetrated in a borderless world through all sorts of devices.[27]

2. Negative Effects of Insecurity on Women

The effects of insecurity on women are enormous. For instance, the consequence of sexual violence on women is ruinous. The widespread systematic use of rape as weapon of war has led to a multiple of physical, psychological, socio-economic and socio-cultural effects. Women have the role of reproduction. They are assaulted and prevented from this. They are sometimes mass-raped and beaten to death. Infection, illnesses and injuries such as HIV, hepatitis, and their sexually transmitted diseases are also some of the effects of using rape as a weapon of war. Psychologically, women who have been raped are traumatized and may become substance addicts.[28] Other general effects that affect every individual whether male, female or children include: loss of lives and property; displacement of victims; deprivations such as deprived educational and health facilities leading to high rates of

illiteracy and sickness, etc.[29] In the long run, the negative consequence of insecurity in Nigeria can be linked to underdevelopment hitherto regarded as commercial hub.

3. Contribution of Early Muslim Women in Peace Building

There no doubt (as generally agreed by both Muslims and non-Muslims scholars), that Islam has brought positive and peaceful changes to the Arabian society which was described as a barbaric society where survival of the fittest is the order. The services of the lady companions in initiating and making peace in their societies in the early and crucial period of Islam can never be under-estimated. These were noble women who were contemporaries of the Prophet (SAW). They were pure, virtuous crusaders of Islam and were honored during the life time of the Prophet (SAW) with the predication that they would forever live in Paradise. Their achievements and influence are found in every sphere of that momentous period in the history of the world. When the whole of the humanity would be transfigured forever, they were as active in religion as in politics, as courageous in war as in the peaceful and persuasive propagation of teaching of Islam. These noble selfless women could be found in the battlefields among the foremost ranks of those taking part in Jihad. They were to be found in the political arena, in the field of education, in the courts of Islamic Jurisprudence, in short there was no sphere that did not benefit from their intellect, their wisdom and their gentle yet firm strength of character.[30] Khadijah was not only the first to embrace Islam and accept the Prophet hood of Muhammad (SAW), she continued to be the most active and devoted supporter of the

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[26] Idoko Adam, "Islam, Peace and Security in a Contemporary Society," in *The 27thAnnual National Conference of the Federation of Muslim Women's Associations of Nigeria (FOMWAN)* (Imo State: unpublished, 2012), 3.

[27] Egbewole, "Security Challenges : The Role of the Nigerian Woman."

[28] Tolulope Monisola Ola, "An International Journal of Language , Literature and Gender Studies A Semantic Analysis of Ferdinand Oyono ' S Houseboy," *Afrrev Laligens: An International Journal of Language, Literature and Gender Studies* 2, no. 2 (2013), 16.

[29] S. R Ochekpe, "The Role of Christian Women on Peace Building," in *Muslim/Christian Dialogue on Peace in Jos*, ed. Dennis Ityavyar and Zacharys Gundu (Jos-Nigeria: Inter-Gender Monograph Series, 2004), 18-19.

[30] Mahmood Ahmad Ghadanfar, *Great Women of Islam: Who Were given the Good News of Paradise*, trans. Jamila Muhammad Qawi (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2001), 11.

Prophet. It was partly due to the great influence of Khadija that the pagans were reluctant to harm and persecute the Prophet in the first few years of Islam. After ill treatment and annoyance by the pagans of Makkah, the Prophet found a greatly solace, peace and support from the person of Khadijah.[31] She was a true minister and adviser.

Umm Salmah (RA) was unique in her practical knowledge of human psychology. On the occasion of peace of Hudaybiyyah, the Prophet asked his companions to make sacrifice of animals, due to great anguish at the apparent conditions of the peace. The people could not be persuaded to make sacrifice. The Prophet went inside when Umm Salmah was present.He narrated the attitude of the people to her, Umm Salma (RA) advised him to make his own sacrifice as a precedent for all. The Prophet followed her advice, made his sacrifice, put off his Ihram and got his head shaved. On seeing this, everybody followed and the problem was solved.[32] Thus, by so doing she acted as peace negotiator between the Prophet and his people.

Shafa bint Abdullah was such a shrewd and intelligent lady that Umar the second Caliph often consulted her and quite frequently entrusted to her the administration of the local market.[33] In his lecture titled "*The Role of Muslim Women in Peace building*", the Imam of Apo legislative Quarters Juma'at Mosque Abuja Khalid Nura (2012) pointed out that, Umm Hanni entered into agreement with the unbelievers and when the prophet was informed, he (SAW) replied: "*Ajarnaman Ajarti*" (We have given security to any person you have given security) on this according to him, the Ulama are of the view that a woman can go into agreement on behalf of her community.[34]

From the aforementioned, it is clear that the women companions played an important role in the establishment of the Arabian society.

4. An Overview of the Muslim Woman

A woman in Islam is thus, an independent person fully responsible (on attainment of maturity) for her faith and action, the basis of which she will earn reward or punishment. The woman is required to strive along with men, to establish a peaceful society and to maintain it. She is expected to acquire skills to meet the requirement for performing the role. She is also expected like men to offer her life and property to the cause of Allāh.Above all, they (Muslim Women) must work for their own personal salvation by worshipping Allāh as He has prescribed. Allāh, the most High, has described this spirit of solidarity and cooperation between righteous men and women, for noble cause in these words:

> The Believers, men and women, are protectors, one of another; they enjoy what is just, and forbid what is evil; they observe Regular prayer (Salat), practice regular charity (Zakat), and obey Allāh and His messenger, on them will Allāh pour His Mercy; For Allāh is Exalted in power, Wise. Allāh has promised to Believers men and women. Gardens (Aljannah) under which rivers flow, to dwell therein and beautiful mansions in Garden of everlasting Bliss. But the greatest Bliss is the good pleasure of Allāh; that is Supreme Felicity (Q.9:71 – 72).

In these verses lies the security of every nation. The verses sets forth that women too are equally responsible for reforming the society through social, political, educational and economic mediums. Islam urges us to continually think, ponder and achieve wisdom. The gross personality traits of the Muslim woman as defined by the teachings of Islām makes her unique and distinguished being. Her true

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[31] Abdul-Mu'ti Abdullah, *Our children:A Practical Guide for Islamic Education* (Cairo: Reda Bedeir, 2003), 5.

[32] Saeed Nadvil,et al, *Biographies of the Women Companies of the Holy Prophet and the Ways of Their Sacred Lives* (Pakistan: Daru-Ishaal, 1995), 12.

[33] Ghadanfar, *Great Women of Islam: Who Were given the Good News of Paradise*.

[34] Khalid Nura, "The Role of Muslim Women in Peace Building" (Abuja, 2012).

Islamic personality is a reflection of her character which is guided by the will of Allāh. The Muslim woman in the first instance fully understands her duties towards Allāh and towards herself, her parents, her husband and children, her relatives, her neighbours, her friends and her society as a whole. She observed all the rights of her religion with a proper and adequate understanding of the holistic Islamic view of life and humanity.[35] Thus she is religious and knowledgeable.

5. The Responsibilities of Muslim Women in Dealing with Security Challenges in Nigeria

The Nigerian Muslim women share the same fate as their counterparts in other parts of the world and naturally feel the pains of insecurity the same way as their male folks. This is due to the fact that the Nigerian Muslim women are the daughters, sisters, wives and mothers of those involved in the security situation in the country. Furthermore, it has been indicated earlier thatthe Nigerian Government should give special attention to the welfare of the citizenry. In addition, Peace Education should be integrated in the Educational Curriculum from Primary to Tertiary Education and a robust countering violent determinism (CVE) should be an integral part of the Curriculum. All Muslim groups and individuals should lend their support and join hands in working assiduously towards ensuring the much needed unity, peace, stability and development in Nigeria. Therefore, the roles of Muslim women have both preventive, pre and post security implications for the polity.

a. At the preventive and pre security challenge period the Nigerian Muslim women must properly play the role of mothers by inculcating good Islamic moral values in the hearts of their children. This bearing in mind that peace and security must start from home. A woman as a wife, a sister or a mother has serious influence on the life of a man who is her husband, son or brother as such she can influence their thoughts and actions better.

b. Muslim Women must be involved in peace-making processes at the religious and community levels to secure a partnership in peace-building processes.

c. The various Muslim women organizations should network together and also build alliance with and between grassroots, national, regional and international women's group. Through this they can build partnerships for information sharing, and campaign on prevention of security challenges.

d. Women should utilize advocacy to reduce as much as possible tension in the country, by paying visits to leaders in government, district heads, community leaders, important stakeholders and urging them to engage in peaceful coexistence.

e. They should evolve better practices to curb poverty through skill acquisition, agriculture, business ventures and other ways too.

f. In order to achieve better results in conflict management, Muslim women in various positions/organizations should embark on relevant training which will improve their capacity in applying mediation processes in conflict situation and to enhance their communication skills for negotiation and mediation.

g. Muslim Women in post conflict are expected to provide care for orphaned or the abandoned children as a result of insecurity leading to conflicts.

h. Finally, cases of security challenges should immediately be reported to security agencies.

C. CONCLUSION

We have in this paper identified the issues of security and insecurity and their various causes with the twin concept of peace. The paper argues that, the government needs to do more in order that the human society might

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[35] Muhammad Ali Al-Hashimi, *The Ideal Muslimah* (Riyadh: International Islāmic Publishing House, 2005), 235.

attain peace and security, by paying serious attention to the welfare of its citizenry. This welfare lies in complete justice, mercy and provision of at least, basic amenities such as housing, good roads, potable water, healthcare delivery, light and education etc.

Security is considered basic in Islam because the Islamic law is purposely framed to ensure peace/security – of life, property, progeny, intellect, religion and honour. In Islam, whatever is necessary to enhance peaceful and meaningful existence of the community is considered a security measure for which every Muslim must work. Therefore, any act that threatens the security of any of the human endowments is prohibited by Islam.

An attempt was also made at projecting the roles of the Nigerian Muslim women in the resolution of security challenges and the post-conflict engagements. In the meantime, the vital role Islam has for the Muslim women is maintaining peace and security in the society is sum up through encouragement of the children in doing righteousness and forbidding that which is harmful for them in this world and hereafter. The paper also reveals that the collaboration among Muslim women organizations to start capacity building and to put machinery in place to play the post-conflict roles will go a long way in preventing the menace from happening again.

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