

The Moral Fiber of Life, Death and Resurrection in the Light of Islam: Lesson for Nigerian Youth

*Usman Jimoh Muhammad

Abstract

The youthful stage of human life is considered in the paper as being paramount in the history of man. To this effect, this stage of life from the Islamic perspective is given crucial attention in a bid to ensure its judicious utilisation so as to achieve a fulfilled life, attain a memorable end and guarantee a pleasurable reward on the day of resurrection. The paper looks into the concept of youth, quantitative analysis of the Nigerian youth and some kinds of misconducts prevalence among them. Such misconducts examined are promiscuity, lust for vanity, cupidity and lack of respect for law and order. The paper avows that dereliction of parental upbringing, poverty and unemployment, glorification of corruption as against its condemnation and lackadaisical attitude of man to the concept of hereafter are among the key factors responsible for the glitches. While proposing a way out to the anomalies, the paper upholds that the youth must always checkmate their heart as it soundness paves way for emanation of good thoughts, noble utterances and laudable acts. The consciousness of the youth is further reawakened in the paper to the fact that at every point in time, man is tested by the devil attached to him. It reiterates that man subservient to the devil results into engrossment in all the aforementioned diabolic acts. However realisation of the concept of life as a test and its ephemeral nature, coupled with the concept of reward and punishment the paper asserts, are lessons for the Nigerian youth to make meaningful use of the sole opportunity of life and death which are precious to man. The paper recommends that parents should try to live up to expectation in the discharge of their duties to their children. In addition, the government and the well-to-do people in the society should rise up to the clarion call to free the nation from the scourge of poverty. This gesture would assist greatly in averting crimes and restoring peace and normalcy to the society.

Keywords: Islamic Morals, Nigerian Youth, Life, Death and Resurrection

Introduction:

In the history of man and chronicles of nations, the youth occupies a paramount position especially as the youthful stage of life is the fulcrum upon which life revolves. The youthful stage of the nation's youth no doubt depicts a clear prediction of the future of the nation. Invariably, when this stage of life is given the right mindset, there is the likelihood that the future will be gleaming and bright. In a situation where the state of the youth is not given the proper grounding, apparently the future of such youth or nation will indeed be murky and gloomy. A healthy youthful life given the right mindset predisposes a promising and blissful life in the eternal world while a neglected youthhood presumes a miserable end in the hereafter. This cannot be otherwise because life is worthy and commendable only when man lives a decent modest and unpretentious life. Therefore, considering the significance of the youthful stage in man's life, effort is made here to appraise the state of the Nigerian youth with the intent of addressing their weaknesses and reforming their shortcomings from the perspective of Islam. In doing this, it is highly imperative to examine the concept of youth, its magnitude and inherent features from the Nigerian context.

*Department of Islamic Studies, Federal College of Education, Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Conceptualization and quantitative analysis of the Nigerian Youth:

From the Nigerian context, the youth are the people whose age is above the teenage limit but not more than 30 years.¹ According to the United Nation, a youth is a person between the ages where he/she may live to have compulsory education and finds employment. To ensure a statistical consistency across the globe, the United Nation equally adopts 15-24 years as the age limit of youth while the African Youth Charter submits that a youth is a person whose age limit is between 15-35 years.²

Conceptually, youth-hood is defined as the period in human life and spans between childhood and maturity. According to the National Youth Policy, youth is a stage in life that transcends between 15 -35 years of age.³ The Nigeria 2005/2006 National Population and Housing Census reveals that the youths constitute the largest group of more than 50 per cent of the entire population of the country. Specifically, the statistics from the Manpower Board and the Federal Bureau of Statistics indicate that Nigeria has a youth population of 80 million, representing 60% of the total population of the country.⁴ In the early period of 2012, the Minister of Youths and Social Development, Mallam Bolaji Abdullahi, acknowledges the existence of 67 million youth in Nigeria.⁵ This signifies an increase in the percentage of the youth when compared with the earlier figure. The report further upholds that 64 million of them are unemployed.⁶ What this petrifying percentage of the youth population in Nigeria indicates is that much concern needs to be given to them especially in guiding them towards having the right sense of direction.

To the youth, having right sense of direction is highly indispensable as the youthful stage is crucial in human's life. It is the age in which man possesses power and ability to hustle and struggle to do things without much fatigue especially when compared with the old age range of life. But it must be pointed out that at this stage of life; man is bordered with a lot of devilish inspirations, inhumane thoughts and malignant acts. This brought about the concept of juvenile delinquency in the society. This entails the belief that some forms of misconduct are associated with the youthful stage of man's life. Although this scenario cut across youth of all races, creeds and nation, atimes the nature of the misconduct varies from one place to another. The Nigerian experience is clearly explained below.

Some kinds of misconduct prevalence among the Nigerian youth:

Promiscuity:-As child grows, he reaches a stage where he begins to experience various signs of maturity one of which is increase in his stimuli to sexual behaviour and incitement to love affairs. For the men, when this sexual instinct is not checkmated, it

¹ Zeenat Ibrahim, "Role of youths in nation building", <http://www.thenationonline.net/2011/index.php/education/campus-life/23419-role-of-youths-in-nation-building.html>, accessed 10th June, 2015.

² UNESCO, What do we mean by 'youth' <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/youth/youth-definition/>, accessed 20th June, 2015.

³ Federal Ministry of Youth and Women Affairs, "National Youth Population Document", (2009), p.6

⁴ Awogbenle, A.C. & Iwuamadi, K.C. "Youth Unemployment: Entrepreneurship Development Programme as an Intervention Mechanism", *African Journal of Business Management*, 4(6), (2010), pp.831-835

⁵ H.T.Soweto, "42% Youth Unemployment Build a Mass Movement to Fight for Jobs", *DSM (CWI Nigeria)* <http://www.socialistworld.net/doc/5719>, accessed 23rd January, 2013

⁶ Awogbenle, A.C. & Iwuamadi, "Youth unemployment" pp.831-835

The Moral Fiber of Life, Death and Resurrection In The Light Of Islam: Lesson for Nigerian Youth results into situations where they chase women here and there to satisfy their sexual lust. There are instances where uninhibited sexual behaviour of the youth had resulted to exercises such as act of rape or homosexuality. For example, in January 2012, the Nigerian Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development, Hajia Zainab Maina raised alarm on the rampant increase in the rate of rape in Nigeria. Her call resulted in the initiation of the bill on Gender-Based Violence Prohibition Bill which was eventually signed into law.⁷

Just as with the male child, the female child is also inclined towards having sexual relation with the opposite sex or embraces the act of lesbianism. When used to illegal sexual relationship, she harbours the danger of becoming a promiscuous. To such deviant womanhood, the wearing of transparent and translucent dresses becomes a way of life in her morbid to lure men to herself. It is generally believed that men and women who disposed to sexual promiscuity right from youth-hood are known for marital infidelity. The above situation is a typical example of what obtains among the Nigerian youth. Unfortunately, this scenario is further aggravated with the advent of globalisation. The following extract buttresses the negative effect of globalisation as it affects the youth:

Social corruption like pornography, obscenity and dancing becomes a great phenomenon today in most of the Muslim countries. Some media encourage women to dress in tight or scanty clothes purposely to expose their body contour. Most of the western societies have ceased to regard adultery as a sin. They have created the sex industry to cater mainly for the needs and desires of adulterous and sexually perverted people.^{8\}

In 2007, a report published by Eagle's Nest indicates that 60 – 70% of adultery victims are women.⁹ In this vein, Ompede¹⁰ decries that young ladies and married women keep more sexual partners than men. The notion of 'sugar daddy' as widely known among ladies of Nigerian universities and other women in the larger society of Nigeria further validates the promiscuous attitude of the Nigerian youth. Most of the Nigerian universities have become centres for promotion of illicit sexual relations. Some young ladies of these institutions usually make themselves readily available for people who engage them in commercial sexual transaction.¹¹

Sadly enough, some television programmes which are widely patronised by many families have contributed greatly to the demoralisation of many youth. Many atimes children spend hours watching programmes which promote violence, nudity of women,

⁷ Femi Makinde, "Minister seeks end to sexual violence against women", <http://www.punching.com/news/minister-seeks-end-to-sexual-violence-against-women/>, accessed 13th December, 2012.

⁸ Aliyu H., *Islam and Contemporary Problem*, (Zaria: E. and G. Publishers, Zaria, 2008), p.23

⁹ Stephany Alexander, "How adultery statistics affects divorce," <http://www.articles-bases.com/relationships-articles/how-adultery-statistics-affect-divorce-119179.html>, accessed 13th December, 2012.

¹⁰ Ompede. J.Y. "Do men have more sexual partner than women," *Weekly spectator Newspaper*, 11th November, 2007, p.35

¹¹ Akindele, M.& Segun O., 'Student Unrest in Tertiary Institutions of Nigeria: Causes and Remedies', *Journal of Educational Research and Development*, Faculty of Education Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. (2009), p.143

pornography and promiscuity.¹² Alcohol and cigarette have for decades become major advertising programmes on T.V.¹³ As a result of promotion of these deviant practice many youth have been influenced as they grow up consciously or unconsciously.

Perpetration of criminal activities:-Historical records avow that quite a number of belligerent activities perpetrated in the society are championed by the youth. This range from reckless driving, political gangsters, economic sabotage, (vandalisation of public and private properties), homicide, cultism, kidnapping, rape, drug abuse, robbery and all forms of militancy. Empirical evidence on these are numerous as they are acts exhibited by Nigerian youth on daily basis. In 2010, the then Honourable Minister of Information and Communication Professor Dora Nkem Akunyili *at the* 39th convocation lecture of the University of Nigeria Nsukka laments on the rate of increase in cultism in Nigerian Universities. She says:

Cultism which has crept into our university system, has steadily grown, and is rapidly destroying our youths. Cultists should be fished out and dealt with accordingly. Lecturers that support such activities should be given stiffer punishment. To re-build our university education, we must have zero tolerance for cultism and other forms of deviant behaviour.¹⁴

Similarly, the various forms of notorious and duplicitous acts perpetrated through the use of the internet are attributed to the youth. This gave birth to the label “Yahoo boys”. On 31st January 2013, the Edo State chapter of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in collaboration with the Brigade of the Nigerian Army Benin arrested 20 ‘Yahoo Boys’ who were in their twenties. They were caught with 45 laptops, 28 telephone sets, and eight (8) internet modems. They engaged in online dating of foreigners mostly widows.¹⁵ In April 2014, eight (8) undergraduates who were within the ages of 21-29 from different universities were arrested in two houses at Lekki Phase I of Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State. Similar arrest of seven (7) fraudsters was also carried out in Ibadan.¹⁶

An empirical survey conducted on the rate of the involvement of the unemployed youth in militancy reveals that armed militant groups in Nigeria namely Bakassi Boys, Odua Peoples Congress (OPC) and Egbesu Boys are made up of youths whose ages fall within 16 - 17 years (40%), 18 – 19 years (10%), 20 - 21 years (20%), and 20 – 23 years (20%). Approximately 60% of these militant youth are unemployed.¹⁷ In the realm of political thuggery, the Nigerian youth are not left behind as they

¹² Abdulfatah A.Bello, *A Guide to Family Happiness*, (npp:Dahwah Corner Bookstore, 2008,) p.135-137

¹³ Wendy Coghill, “Alcohol Advertising and Its Effects on Youth”, <http://www.studymode.com/essays/Alcohol-Advertising-And-Its-Effects-On-618583.html>, accessed 11 January, 2015.

¹⁴ Dora Nkem Akunyili, “Re-branding of Nigerian Universities” Speech delivered *at the* 39th convocation lecture of the University of Nigeria Nsukka, August 5, 2010.,p16

¹⁵ Wilson Uwujaren, “Yahoo boys, internet scammers Arrested in Benin City, Edo State”, naijiagist.com/20-yahoo-yahoo-boys-internet-scammers-arrested-in-benin-edo-state/ accessed 23rd March, 2015.

¹⁶ Emeka Ibemere, “Rising cases of undergraduate in yahoo-yahoo scams”, www.mynewswatchtimesng.com/rising-cases-undergraduates-yahoo-yahoo-scams/, accessed April 18 2014.

¹⁷ Awogbenle, A.C. & Iwuamadi, K.C., “Youth Unemployment”, op. cit., pp.831-835

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 champion this course and see it as a means of sustaining their hard way of life. An attributive cause is the quest to be rich as quick as possible. This often leads some of the youth into various forms of criminal acts ranging from sacrifices involving human parts or blood and the act of thuggery. In the aspect of stealing and cheating, the Nigerian youth have not only excelled in this respect but equally indulged in various forms of evils.¹⁸ For more than a decade, the militant youths in the Niger Delta have been terrorizing and kidnapping both the expatriate and local oil workers, demanding hefty ransoms. In addition, they engage in bombing, vandalism and destruction of oil pipelines, lives and property in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.¹⁹

Lust for vanity and high rate of cupidity:

The quest for luxury life style has made some Nigerian youth crave various forms of vanity in the names of amusement such as; the love for clubbing, partying and are equally carried away by music and musical instruments. A vast majority of those who patronise the beer parlours and engage in drug abuse are youth. The youth are easily succumbed to easy life lavishing their paltry savings in clubs and gambling not minding the high level of poverty that is creating havoc to the life of both the rich and poor classes of the society. Furthermore, the quest for materialism mostly common among young married women has often led them to adulterous life style. One of the dailies expressed the tendency in the following:

Due to a woman's demands and wants, she easily gets attracted to men with money, power and fame. A woman may love her husband and also continue to stay in marriage but would date a man who can give her gold, expensive jewellery and high class lace materials.²⁰

This proclivity however is not peculiar to only the women folk as their men counterpart share an equally marked tendency to acquisition and vulgar display of wealth and the glitzy life style.

Lack of respect for law and order:

The spirit of juvenile delinquency often stimulates the youth towards believing that everything could be done any how without recourse to the laid down norms, and respect for the established values of the society. The youth are for example perpetrators of examination malpractice, known for shunting of queue in an organised public engagement as well as breaking of bounds in schools.

Factors responsible for the misconducts prevalent among the Nigerian youth:

Dereliction of parental upbringing:

A popular adage says: "The young shall grow and the old shall die". This simply indicates that children, in whatever social milieu they find themselves, are seen as the future generation. A popular axiom which stipulates that "charity begins at home" seems not to be applicable in the recent days as experience has shown that laxity and indeed

¹⁸ Adeniji L. A. & Aleem, A , "The role of Islam in curbing problem behaviours among the Nigerian Youth" in Adeniji A.A. L. Etal, *Peace security and National development*, Journal of the National Association for the Promotion of Studies in Religions Education, Languages And General Studies, (2007), p.221

¹⁹ Chuku, Denne Chinogonum & Johnson Wodi, "Beyond the Niger Delta Question: The rise of the Militants," *Journal of Social Sciences and Development River State*, (2010), pp.78-80

²⁰ Kakaki, B., 'Why Married Women Cheat on their Husband' *Leadership Weekend Newspaper*, 11th August, 2007, p.20

callousness begin at home and are further embraced and nurtured by the society. In the modern day, most parents have shirk from their primary responsibility of ensuring moral upbringing of their children. Instead they are mostly concern with how to accumulate wealth at all time. Unfortunately, children under this condition enjoy excessive freedom which avails them the chance to easily pick up bad habit and exhibit awful manner such as promiscuity and prostitution, cultism, drug abuse, alcoholism, and disobedience to norms and values of the society.

Instead of instilling in the youth the moral virtue of discipline, truthfulness and sense of commitment, the reverse is the case with some parents who, in the name of assisting their sons and daughters indulge in exam malpractice. Furthermore, some parents and guardians are bent towards ensuring that their children get admitted into school of their choice whether they have the requisite qualification or not.²¹

Poverty and unemployment:

The prevalence of poverty and unemployment in the Nigerian society are not only terrifying but rather unbelievable. In 2007 a report maintains that, the Director General of the National Directorate of Employment validates the existence of about two hundred thousand unemployed graduates with NYSC certificates issued five years back.²²

According to a statistical data of the Manpower Board and the Federal Bureau of Statistics, 60% of the total population of people in Nigeria amounting to 80 million people is youth while 64 million of them are unemployed.²³ Corroborating this position, in the early period of 2012, the Minister of Youths and Social Development, Mallam Bolaji Abdullahi, mentioned that the principal problem menacing the Nigerian youth is the challenge of unemployment. Quoting the findings of a research, he noted that out of the 67 million youth in Nigeria 28.14 million amounting into 42% are unemployed youth.²⁴ All these pave way for the minds of the youth to be easily conquered by all forms of devilish thoughts and engrossed in villainous acts. As the saying goes; "An idle mind is the devil's workshop."

Glorification of corruption as against its condemnation:

The rate of corruption in Nigeria is endemic as hardly could a sector of the nation could be safe and secured from this cankerworm. Thrice between 1996 and 2000, Nigeria was labelled as the most corrupt nation. To be specific, this happened in 1996, 1997, and 2000. In 1998, it was rated the fourth most corrupt nation globally and it rose to the second position in 1999, 2001, 2002 and 2003.²⁵ This syndrome has continued to flourish simply because instead of condemning corruption outrightly, it is rather glorified by both the people and the government.

In Nigeria, a person who has looted the nation's resources meant for the entire populace; thereby creating hardship for the nation, is rather granted state pardon,

²¹ Torulagha, P. S., 'The Corrosive Effect of Corruption on Nigerian Educational System', www.qamj.com/article/6000/News7987htm, accessed 9th September, 2010

²² Olu Adewale, "Unemployment Crises at Cross: Nigeria at Cross Road?" The Guardian Newspaper, September, 18, 2007, p.37

²³ Awogbenle, A.C. & Iwuamadi, "Youth Unemployment", op. cit, pp.831-835

²⁴ H.T.Soweto, "42% Youth", op.cit.

²⁵ Goodling, Nicholas A. "Nigeria's Crisis of Corruption - Can the U.N. Global Programme Hope to Resolve this Dilemma?" Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law, 36(3), (2003), pp.997-1026

The Moral Fiber of Life, Death and Resurrection In The Light Of Islam: Lesson for Nigerian Youth venerated with an Honorary Degree or rewarded with a Chieftaincy title. The case of the Ex-Governor of Bayelsa State is an example. While in United Kingdom, he was arraigned for money laundering by the London Metropolitan Police which found about eight hundred thousand pounds cash in his London home. In December 2005, he jumped bail in the United Kingdom and absconded. After his impeachment in December 2005, he was arraigned by the EFCC.²⁶ Eventually in July 2007, he was sentenced to two years imprisonment, having pleaded guilty to the six count charges proffered against him. He was however released soon afterwards as the sentences were to run concurrently and the penalty was counted from the date of his arrest.²⁷

The most disheartening aspect of the above story lies where on the 12 of March 2013, the highest executive body, the National Council of State headed by President Goodluck Jonathan, granted a state pardon to this former Governor of Bayelsa State, who had embezzled the state funds during his tenure as the state governor. These corrupt practices send no any other signal to the youth except the need to be rich at all possible cost since at the end, the end justifies the means. This concretizes their belief that after all they could trail all forms abysmal path to be rich and still be set free by the law of the nation.

Lackadaisical attitude to the concept of hereafter:

The way and manner some Nigerian youth are inclined to worldly gain make it difficult for a reasonable mind to believe that they actually have faith and conviction in the existence of the Day of Recompense. This could be the reason for their lackadaisical attitude to the need to live a life worthy of emulation and commendation.

Consequences of the aforementioned misconduct of the Nigerian youth:

All the various forms of misconducts exhibited by the Nigerian youth have serious repercussion on the perpetrators, their victims and the society at large. Any act of misconduct exhibited by the servant of the creator is condemned and rebuked in Islam. Although this first consequence might not be realised by many in this material world other imminent ones are very much around the corner as they surface one after the other. For example, a promiscuous youth may feel, snug and cozy especially when she continues to realise much material gain from this grubby game. But with the passage of time, some of the sexually transmitted diseases would begin to make themselves noticeable thereby making life miserable for the victim.

The various forms of criminal acts exhibited by the Nigerian Youth often lead to lost of lives and properties. This had over the course of time earned the nation bad image among the comity of nation.

Alcoholism a tradition common among some Nigerian Youth is disastrous to man's health. In addition, material resources are wasted in this and other activities embarked on by them such as the act of gambling and clubbing. As old age set in, man's ability to struggle for means of sustenance shrinks and life become difficult. During this stage, man casts back reflection to the wasted youthful phase of life especially when nothing is left to rely on. The Youthful stage of life no doubt is an opportunity for man to

²⁶ [Mike Odiegwu](http://thenationonline.net/bayelsa-mourns-as-dsp-alamieyeseigha-dies-at-62/), Alamieyeseigha, ex-Bayelsa Gov, dies at 62, <http://thenationonline.net/bayelsa-mourns-as-dsp-alamieyeseigha-dies-at-62/>, accessed 20th March 2016

²⁷ Ibid

lay good foundation for the old age and prepare well for a better eternal life. Like every other opportunity, the Youthful stage when lost, can never be regained. Qur'an

Lessons from the Islamic Concept of Life, Death and Resurrection for Nigerian Youth:

The concept of life, the essence of death and the wisdom behind resurrection are lucidly explained in the Glorious Qur'an and the Noble Tradition of the Prophet (SAW). For the youth to properly appreciate the moral lessons inherent in the aforementioned concepts there is the need for proper realisation of the idea of "man". Man is the most refined being of all the creations of Allah as all are made to benefit him in one way or the other. To live a successful life, man is not left aside but rather provided with an incorruptible and indubitable instruction manual. The Glorious Qur'an says:

A. L. M. . This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah; Who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them; And who believe in the revelation sent to thee, and sent before thy time, and [in their hearts] have the assurance of the Hereafter. They are on [true] guidance, from their Lord, and it is these who will prosper.²⁸

The above verses clarify that the Qur'an is a revelation from Allah (S.W.T.). In addition, undoubtedly, it is full of guidance for man especially those who believe in the unseen, persistently observe the regular prayers and give out the compulsory charity. Among the unseen is the belief in Allah, His angels, Books, Messengers, belief in life after death (life in the grave), the Day of Judgment, and Paradise and Hell-Fire. All these stimulate man towards observance of good deeds and avoidance of the prohibitions of Allah. By so doing man remains guided in this world, protected against the torment of Allah in the next abode and assured of eternal life in Paradise. This class of people as elaborated by the verses are no doubt the successful ones.²⁹ The Nigerian youth have many lessons to learn from the above. Among them is that life is transitional as there is life in this material world so also exists a form of life in the eternal world. In addition, man is provided with a guide to live a meaningful life in this world so as to be safe from the punishment of Allah and rewarded with paradise in the eternal world.

In addition man is trained towards self-realisation so that he could understand the nature of his creation and realise how to make the best out of himself. To this effect, man's attention is drawn to the significance of a part of his body "the heart" to the attainment of success in life or its destruction when neglected. The human heart being the midpoint position from which the human thoughts are conceived before they are translated into utterances and a times action is given utmost consideration in Islam. In view of this, the Prophet (SAW) says:

There is a piece of flesh in the body, if it becomes good (reformed), the whole body becomes good, but if it gets spoilt, the whole body gets spoilt, and that is the heart.³⁰

²⁸ Al-Qur'an, Al-Baqarah: 1-5

²⁹ Ibn. Kathir Ismail Ibn Umar, *Misbāul- Munir Fi Tahdhib Abridged* Version. (Saudi Arabia: Dār As-Salām, 2003), Vol.1, pp.110-118

³⁰ Muhammad Ibn. Ismail, *Sahih Bukhari*, Arabic- English Trans. By Muhammad M. Khan, (Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 1997), Vol. 1. No. 52 p.83

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It was narrated that 'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd said: "The Messenger of Allah said: 'There is no one among you but Allah has appointed a companion for him from among the jinn.' They said: 'Even you, O Messenger of Allah?' He said: 'Even me, but Allah helped me with him, and he became Muslim.'³¹

The first hadith shows that the body contains a piece of flesh from which human thoughts emanate; consequently if this piece of flesh is allowed to conceive bad thoughts, it would invariably lead to its self destruction. But if it conceives good thoughts, it would result into self advancement. A discernible lesson for the youth in the first Hadith quoted above is the knowledge that the Creator made certain things lawful and others unlawful. The second Hadith confirms the existence of a devilish companion attached to each and every individual human being. This devilish being does nothing except to inspire devilish inspirations into the heart of man which when tolerated results into self-obliteration. To this effect, man is enjoined to uphold the lawful things and avoid all forms of devilish inspirations so as to abstain from the unlawful things in the religion. For further guidance, the Glorious Qur'an raises the awareness of the consciousness of man regarding the essence of life as it says:

Blessed be He in Whose hands is Dominion; and He over all things hath Power
He Who created Death and Life, that He may try which of you is best in deed and He is the Exalted in Might, Oft-Forgiving.³²

The experience of life shows that man is atimes tested and as such subjected to various forms of temptation regarding the dos and don'ts of Allah. By implication, for the youth to allow their hearts to be overcome by all forms of promiscuous feelings, such that it translates into illicit sexual relations, homosexuality or lesbianism is tantamount to self destruction. The same self annihilation is experienced in a situation where the youths engage in any forms of crimes, enthrall by lust for vain or disregard compliance with the lay down rules or established moral norms and values of the society. The consciousness of the Youth is drawn to the fact that life is meant to assess man's conduct. While shedding more light on the above verses, Al-Kawlaky relates that the "the best man in deeds" in the sight of Allah and His prophet is he who out of consciousness of the creator shun away from the unlawful and incline towards compliance with the dictates of Allah at all time.³³ The consciousness of the youth towards self realisation in a bid to avert self annihilation and compunction is further stipulated by the Qur'an thus:

The Evil one threatens you with poverty and bids you to conduct unseemly.
Allah promiseth you His forgiveness and bounties. And Allah careth for all and He knoweth all things.³⁴

The above verse clearly shows that the devil makes man to harbour devilish thoughts and incites him towards engaging in all forms of immoral and criminal activities.³⁵ By implication, the devil embellishes in the minds of the Youth for example

³¹ . Muslim Ibn Hajjaj, *Sahih Muslim* Trans. By Nasiruddin Khattab, (Saudi Arabia: Darussalam 2007), Vol. 7, No. 7108, p.215

³² Al-Qur'an, Al-Mulk: 1-2

³³ Al, Kawlaky, Ibrahim Nyas, *Fi Riyahd al-Tafsir* 2nd ed. Vol 6, pp.190-191, (2011), Madinatul Kawlakh, Senegal Al-Kawlaky,

³⁴ Al-Qur'an, Al-Baqarah: 268

³⁵ Shiabud-Deen Mahmud Al-Lusy, Ma'arif al-Qur'an Al-Azim Wa al-Sab'ul Mathāni, Vol. I, pp.254

the acts of promiscuity, alcoholism, drug abuse, and all forms of criminal activities. In furtherance of its guidance for man, the Qur'an specifically itemises a number of deeds that are notable acts of the devil. The acts include alcoholism, gambling, dedication of stones and divination by arrows. In the Glorious Qur'an, Allah (SWT) says:

O ye who believe! intoxicants and gambling, (dedication of) stones, and (divination by) arrows, are an abomination,--of Satan's handiwork: Eschew such (abomination), that ye may prosper. Satan's plan is (but) to excite enmity and hatred between you, with intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah, and from prayer: Will ye not then abstain? ³⁶

Alcoholism makes man to behave irrationally while gambling and alcoholism excite enmity and hatred between people and hinder them from remembrance of Allah. ³⁷ Alcoholism no doubt is responsible for the various forms of criminal acts exhibited by some Nigerian Youth. The acts include kidnapping, cultism, militancy, highway robbery, rape and equally account for the cause of some accidents in our society.

All the above verses illustrate the nature of life which many youth often live. This is a life where the heart becomes subservient to the devilish inspirations that nothing is wrong. The heart sees nothing in being promiscuous or engaged in all forms of criminal acts. Similarly a heart conquered by the devil as elucidated above is given to the lust for materialism and the tendency to become rich at all cost. At the end of the day, the sole motivation is to enjoy all forms of merriments of life and revel in vanity which it considers as a normal routine of life. The concepts of life, death and resurrection are not only interwoven but also transitional. Life is periodic and at the point of termination, leads to death while after the epoch of death comes the era of resurrection. The Glorious Qur'an arouses the consciousness of man regarding the ephemeral nature of life, its illusive feature and the consequences behind all forms of transgression and turning a deaf ear to the path to salvation as it says:

Know ye [all], that the life of this world is but play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting and multiplying, [in rivalry] among yourselves, riches and children. Here is a similitude: How rain and the growth which it brings forth, delight [the hearts of] the tillers; soon it withers; thou wilt see it grow yellow; then it becomes dry and crumbles away. But in the Hereafter is a Penalty severe [for the devotees of wrong]. And Forgiveness from Allah and [His] Good Pleasure [for the devotees of Allah]. And what is the life of this world, but goods and chattels of deception? ³⁸

The above verses contains allot of lessons for Nigerian Youth. Among them is that all the merriments of this world no matter the level of its enjoyment are transient. The similitude of the worldly enjoyment is like the yearnings of a farmer for green vegetation which is attained for a while. After a short period of time, the green vegetation fades away and becomes scattered pieces of dust. The life of man also begins at a stage, reaches the youthful epoch and gradually decline till it reaches its terminal point where death overcomes it unaware. ³⁹ This scenario creates a reflection in the minds of reasonable human beings that life is temporal, death is imminent and resurrection is

³⁶ Al-Qur'an, Al-Mā'idah: 90-91

³⁷ Al, Kawlaky, Ibrahim Nyas, *Fi Riyahd*, op.cit., Vol. 2, pp.170-171

³⁸ Al-Qur'an, Al-Hadid: 20

³⁹ Ibn. Kathir Ismail Ibn Umar, *Misbāul- Munir*, op.cit., Vo 9, pp.490-493

The Moral Fiber of Life, Death and Resurrection In The Light Of Islam: Lesson for Nigerian Youth certain. The Glorious Qur'an further illustrates how short is the whole life on earth compared with life in the eternal world especially when man is posed before the torment of the hereafter. On the Day that the Hour [of Reckoning] will be established, the transgressors will swear that they tarried not but an hour: thus were they used to being deluded!⁴⁰

The above verse indicates that after the enjoyment of this world no matter how long it was, those who turn a deaf ear to the injunctions of Allah shall claim that they only pass through the world in an hour. Nothing shall make them to say this except the chastisement of the hereafter.⁴¹ Among the Qur'anic verses that are relevant to the life of the Nigerian Youth is the following verse.

And on the Day that the Unbelievers will be placed before the Fire, [It will be said to them]: "Ye received your good things in the life of the world, and ye took your pleasure out of them: but today shall ye be recompensed with a Penalty of humiliation: for that ye were arrogant on earth without just cause, and that ye [ever] transgressed."⁴²

The above verse is a description of the disastrous situation awaiting those who have wasted their youthful life in this world by being deviants to the rules of Allah and rebellious to His dictates. For being recalcitrant to the laws of Allah at the expense of worldly enjoyment, they are posed before great torment and subjected to extreme humiliation in the hereafter.⁴³ The Qur'an further says:

But whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a life narrowed down, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgment." . He will say: "O my Lord! why hast Thou raised me up blind, while I had sight [before]? [Allah] will say: "Thus didst Thou, when Our Signs came unto thee, disregard them: so wilt thou, this day, be disregarded. And thus do We recompense him who transgresses beyond bounds and believes not in the Signs of his Lord: and the Penalty of the Hereafter is far more grievous and more enduring."⁴⁴

The above verses also corroborate the teachings of the earlier mentioned verse. These verses shows that whosoever opposes the commands of Allah and His prophet shall live a difficult life. Such people are blind to everything good except those that could lead them to the wrath of Allah. Rejection of the teachings of Allah robs man peace and tranquillity in life. Outward comfort due to abundance of affluence differs from internal peace and serenity. In the hereafter, they are deprived of the mercy of Allah and neglected in pain for being obstinate to the teachings of Allah in the world.⁴⁵

By implication, the Youth who engage in cultist activities, kidnapping of innocent souls, highway robbery and all forms of militancy are deprived of peace and rob of serenity in their live. They are full of agitations, preoccupied with bewilderment and enslaved by sceptical feelings regarding their security at all time. When trapped down by

⁴⁰ Al-Qur'an, Al-Rum:55

⁴¹ Abdullahi bn Fodio, "Kifayatud- Duhafais Sūdāni fi Bayani Tafsiril -Qur'an, Dirasatun wa-Tahkik" by Abdullah Balarabe Sālāme, (Cairo: Al-Qudus, 2012), p.340

⁴² Al-Qur'an, Al-Ahkaf: 20

⁴³ Ibn. Kathir Ismail Ibn Umar, *Misbāul- Munir*, op.cit., Ibn Kathir, Vol. 9 pp.65-66

⁴⁴ Al-Qur'an, Al-Taha: 124-127

⁴⁵ Ibn. Kathir Ismail Ibn Umar, *Misbāul- Munir*, op.cit., Vol. 6., pp.405-407 and Shiabud-Deen Mahmud Al-Lusy, Ma'arif al-Qur'an op.cit., Vol.8, pp.810-811

law enforcement agencies, they resort to self castigation and biting of fingers as they wallow in pain over the nature of life they had lived in the past.

While exploring the consequences behind an oppressive form of life, the prophet (SAW) says:

Do you know who the bankrupt is?" They said: "O Messenger of Allah! The bankrupt among us is the one who has no Dirham nor property." the Messenger of Allah said: "The bankrupt in my *Ummah* is the one who comes with *Salât* and fasting and *Zakat* on the Day of Judgment, but he comes having abused this one, falsely accusing that one, wrongfully consuming the wealth of this one, spilling the blood of that one, and beating this one. So he is seated, and this one is requited from his rewards, and that one from his rewards. If his rewards are exhausted before the sins that he committed are requited, then some of their sins will be taken and cast upon him, then he will be cast into the Fire."⁴⁶

The youth is availed with various forms of enjoyment and amusement in the world but all are inconsequential when compared to the ones that await the submissive servants of God. Moreover the world is transient and ephemeral. The following prophetic tradition makes juxtaposition between the magnitude of the world and the hereafter.

Qais bin Abi Hâzim said: I heard Mustawrid, a member of Banu Fihir, saying: The Messenger of Allah said: "The world compared to the Hereafter is but like what one of you gets when placing his finger into the sea, so look at what you draw from it."⁴⁷ The following is an explanation of a scholar regarding the above hadith.

The *Hadith* is in fact intended to convey the idea that the world, when compared to the Hereafter, is as insignificant as is the drop of water sticking to a man's finger in comparison with the sea. The parable has just been coined to deliver a message. Otherwise in reality, the world does not weigh even as much as we understand from the parable since the world, along with all its paraphernalia, is at best temporal and limited while the Hereafter is limitless and never-ending. And it is a known fact that the limited and temporal cannot be compared with the never-ending and limitless.⁴⁸ In another place in the Glorious Qur'an, Allah (SWT) says:

The mutual rivalry for piling up [the good things of this world] diverts you [from the more serious things] until ye visit the graves. But nay, ye soon shall know [the reality]. Again, ye soon shall know! Nay, were ye to know with certainty of mind, [ye would beware!] Ye shall certainly see Hell-Fire! Again, ye shall see it with certainty of sight! Then, shall ye be questioned that Day about the joy [ye indulged in!].⁴⁹

The above verses illustrate that no matter the extent of pleasure and enjoyment, at an unexpected point comes death. The reality will dawn in the hereafter where man shall see vividly the hell. It further asserts that those who wasted their youthful stage of life in the search for luxuries of life to the detriment of due cognisance to the dos and don'ts of Allah shall be made to see the reality which they were warn about. In addition, they shall be questioned about all the comfort of life availed them by Allah as to how

⁴⁶ Isa Mohammad Ibn Isa At-Tirmidhi, *Jami al-Tirmidhi* Trans. by Abu Khaliyl, (Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 2007), Vol. 4, No. 2418 p.430

⁴⁷ Isa Mohammad, *Jami al-Tirmidhi*, op. cit Vol. 4., No. 2323, p.357

⁴⁸ Ibid

⁴⁹ Al-Qur'an, Al-Takathur: 1-8

The Moral Fiber of Life, Death and Resurrection In The Light Of Islam: Lesson for Nigerian Youth they utilised them.⁵⁰ Among the implied lessons in the above verses for Nigerian youth is that health, wealth and life in general are opportunity for man to make the best use of them. When these fortunes are exhausted in vein by either engaging in illicit sexual relations, perpetration of various forms of criminal activities, lust for vanity, high rate of cupidity and disregard for law and order, the end result is dreadful (eternal punishment in hell).

The belief in the day of resurrection is vital in Islam as it stimulates man towards good work while the reverse makes man to live a dissolute type of life style. The following verses of the Glorious Qur'an shed more light on this as it says:

And they say: "What! When we lie, hidden and lost, in the earth, shall we indeed be in a Creation renewed? Nay, they deny the Meeting with their Lord. Say: "The Angel of Death, put in charge of you, will [duly] take your souls: then shall ye be brought back to your Lord. "If only thou couldst see when the guilty ones will bend low their heads before their Lord, [saying:] "Our Lord! We have seen and we have heard: Now then send us back [to the world]: we will work righteousness: for we do indeed [now] believe." If We had so willed, We could certainly have brought every soul its true guidance: but the Word from Me will come true, "I will fill Hell with Jinns and men all together." "Taste ye then - for ye forgot the Meeting of this Day of yours, and We too will forget you - taste ye the Penalty of Eternity for your [evil] deeds!"⁵¹

The above verses enumerate the consequences of disbelief in the day of resurrection and the pathetic condition which this group of people shall face on this day. It further buttresses that on the day of resurrection, the wrongdoers shall regret for having inclined to a debauched lifestyle to the detriment of being decorous and decent in life. In addition, they would seek for an unattainable request (another opportunity to come back to the world) not minding the fact that each person is accorded just a chance to live on earth. It further affirms that they shall be made to taste the punishment till eternity.⁵² All these evidences suffice for Nigerian youth to reflect on in order to live a life worthy of appreciation and commendation in the hereafter.

Conclusion:

From the foregoing, it is clear that some Nigerian youth often misused their youthful age in life. By so doing, they engage in promiscuity, get engross in all forms of criminal acts, embrace the spirit of lust for the pleasures of the world and exhibit acts of insubordination to rules and regulation. All these are the effects of a number of factors such as bad parental upbringing, poverty, glorification of corruption instead of its condemnation and lack of concern for the belief in the concept of the hereafter. In the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah, the paper explains how man is being assisted towards self-realization so that he could nature of man as a machine that with the aid of its manual could be used effectively and when the manual is thrown aside, the machine becomes a jigsaw puzzle operated at a great peril. Furthermore, the Prophetic Traditions recognise the significance of the heart as the centre from which what translates to human behaviour emanates. The paper affirms the ultimate goal of the devil to take hold of man's heart so as to lead man to self-destruction rather than self-advancement. The importance of

⁵⁰ Muhammad bn Ahmad A-Qurtubi, *Al-Jamā Li Ahkamil-Qur'an Tafsirul-Qurtubi*, (Cairo: Tawfiqiyya Bookshop,nd), pp.132-140

⁵¹ Al-Qur'an, Al-Sajdah: 10-14

⁵² Muhammad Ali Sabuni, *Sofwah al-Tafāsir*, (Cairo: Dār al- Sabūn,), 9th edition, Vol. 3, pp.197-198

making the best use of life is emphasised as death is real and indeed unavoidable while accountability is equally inevitable.

Recommendations:

- Since dereliction of parental upbringing is among the factors responsible for moral laxity of some Nigerian Youth, parents should rise up to their duties on their children in order to correct the anomaly.
- The government and the well-to-do should rise up to the clarion call of freeing the nation from the scourge of poverty. This gesture would assist greatly in engaging the idled unemployed Youth in jobs that would fetch them lawful means of sustenance.
- Islamic scholars should embark on orientation of people to enable them realise the detrimental effects of the acts of oppression and subjugation of people.